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LIBERAL DEMOCRACY VERSUS LATE MEDIEVAL CONSTITUTIONALISM

*Struggles over Representation in the Dutch Republic (1780-1800)**

This article rejects the claim that medieval constitutional arrangements have provided the basis for the development of representative democracy in Europe. Through a study of the late eighteenth century Dutch Republic, it shows instead that medieval institutions formed an obstacle for democratization. Although these institutions did enable the political integration of privileged citizens, they obstructed efforts by liberal reformers to introduce more general freedom and equality for the majority of the population. In fact, resistance against liberal reforms primarily came from groups that were involved in local practices of consultation. Consequently, the reformers tried to further freedom and equality by centralizing the state. However, this effort eventually led to the breakdown of the democratization process, as the supporters of the late medieval institutions used the representative system to resist political change. It turned out that the liberalization of Dutch political system could only be pursued by eliminating representation altogether.

Introduction

Various authors have suggested that there is a relationship between the development of liberal representative democracy in Europe and the existence of a wide variety of late medieval and early modern citizenship arrangements, representative assemblies, councils and courts (Blickle 1997; Downing 1992; Ertman 1997; Gilbert 1975). Brian Downing has advanced the strongest claim. In *The Military Revolution and Political Change* (1992), he argues that the survival of the medieval institutions up to the modern era was an important condition for a successful transition to liberal democracy in Europe. However, he also maintains that these institutions did not survive in every region of Europe up to the end of the eighteenth century. Especially some of the larger monarchical states, like France and Prussia, experienced a phase of military modernization, which led to the strengthening of state authority and the subsequent destruction of medieval constitutionalism by the central ruler. The medieval representative institutions did survive in regions that could avoid the military revolution, or did not have to rely on domestic resources to finance warfare. This happened for example in the Netherlands, Sweden, and England. Downing argues that liberal representative democracy could consequently be more easily developed in these states than in France or Prussia. (Downing 1992, 3, 239-241)

Although Downing shows convincingly how the military revolution affected the survival of the late medieval assemblies, he does not demonstrate how these institutions contributed to the growth of liberal representative democracy. Neither have any of the others authors on early modern constitutionalism looked at the actual processes of democratization from the end of the eighteenth century onwards. How did the late medieval institutions influence the democratization process? And could liberal democracy be developed on the basis of these institutions, as Downing suggests? This article tries to answer these questions by studying the process of democratization in the Dutch Republic between 1780 and 1800. The analysis of the Republic can provide us with new clues because it is one of the clearest examples of European states in which late

medieval assemblies and local forms of citizenship survived largely unchanged throughout the early modern period. Moreover, in the last two decades of the eighteenth century these institutions became the subject of intense public debate, which eventually led to the creation of national representative structures. Thus, the political struggles in the late eighteenth century Republic should give us a very clear idea on how early modern constitutionalism and liberal representative democracy were related to each other.

The article starts out by discussing the structures of representation and consultation of the early modern Republic. We will investigate how the decentralized, city-dominated organization of the Dutch state facilitated the survival of urban citizenship and local, regional and central assemblies. These institutions survived despite efforts of the Stadholder, the political leader and military commander of the Republic, to concentrate political authority in his own hands. The second part examines the attempt of the urban middle classes to turn early modern associations into representative institutions during the 1780's. From 1780 until 1787, the Republic experienced a sustained period of political contention, in which subordinated elites in cooperation with middle class revolutionaries, who called themselves patriots, overthrew the governments of a great number of cities in various parts of the Republic. During this period, no attempt was made to create national representative democracy; instead the patriots concentrated on democratizing local government. This first revolutionary episode ended in 1787, when the Prussian army invaded and restored the Stadholderian regime. The last section looks at the years between 1795 and 1800. In 1795, the patriot movement took control of Dutch government after the French revolutionary armies invaded the Republic. Once in power, the movement fell apart in different interest groups, which each tried to accomplish a specific program of political reform. Part of the patriots strived to establish a national representative government, while another part focused on the democratization of local government. It will be investigated how these two efforts were related to each other, and whether the late medieval traditions of representation and consultation reinforced the attempt to create national representative structures.

Early Modern Representation

The early modern Republic was characterized by regional and central structures of representation and local practices of consultation, which survived until the end of the eighteenth century. This political structure was consolidated during the sixteenth-century Revolt against the Habsburg rulers. In this Revolt, the Dutch cities attained a large amount of political autonomy. Consequently, the state structure was determined by the fear of local elites that a new ruler might try to overstep his range of authority, like the Habsburg emperors had tried to do. In the first article of the Union of Utrecht (1579), which can be seen as the birth certificate of the Dutch Republic, it was therefore declared that:

Each province and the individual cities, members, and inhabitants thereof shall each retain undiminished its special and particular privileges, franchises, exemptions, rights, statutes, laudable and long-practiced customs, usages and all its rights and each shall not only do the others no damage, harm, or vexation, but shall help to maintain, strengthen, confirm and indeed protect the others in these by all proper and possible means. (Quoted by Rowen 1972, 70)

Sovereignty did consequently not reside in any central institution, but was found in each of the seven provinces, which were in turn commanded by the deputies of the cities and the aristocracy (Israel 1995; Prak 2000). Thus, the Republic can be characterized as a city-dominated or capital-intensive state ('t Hart 1993; Prak 1991).

The Union of Utrecht guaranteed that the special rights and privileges of each corporation would be honored. State authority was consequently widely dispersed, as a great number of people and institutions held special privileges. Starting at the local level, each city was characterized by a range of corporations that shared the authority to regulate the urban community with the city government. These corporations, which included the guilds, civic militias, social welfare institutions, universities and churches, operated largely independent from the city government. Their own members ran them, they had their own sources of income, and they could decide who qualified as a member. Since the corporations organized the economy,

education, social welfare, and religion, they effectively controlled the daily life of the inhabitants of the cities. However, not everyone profited. The prime condition to gain access to many of the benefits offered by the corporations was citizenship. This could only be acquired through birth, marriage, or purchase. As only a third of the population succeeded in obtaining citizen rights, the majority was excluded. Thus, urban citizenship was highly particularistic. It not only excluded the majority of the population, it was also exclusively linked to a specific city, which meant that all outsiders were excluded as well. (Prak 1991, 1999)

Citizenship linked the corporations to the city governments. It defined, on the one hand, who belonged to the privileged community of burghers. On the other hand, it regulated access to the local government through the corporations and a well-established system of petitioning. Citizens had a better chance of being heard by the urban administrations. They received special treatment in case they were charged with a criminal offense. On their part, the urban magistrates, who belonged to a small group of very rich patricians, also had a major interest in maintaining the privileges of the citizens and the corporations. First of all, their own position depended on the same system of privileges. It guaranteed that they had the authority to decide the politics of the city. The citizens had the right to issue petitions on matters that directly concerned them, but they were not supposed to interfere with general political affairs. Second, the regents also had a strong financial incentive to protect the local corporate system, as the citizens were the largest contributors to the urban taxes. Furthermore, the corporations assisted the government in collecting these taxes, and they helped to maintain public order. Hence, the relationship between the regents and the citizens was one of consultation and cooperation. However, the regents cannot be considered as the representatives of the citizens, as the latter were not allowed to interfere in the general political affairs of the city, let alone in those of the state. (Kloek & Tilmans 2002; Nierop 1997; Prak 1996)

The magistrates together with the corporations ruled the cities and protected the system of privileges. Within the framework set by the Union of Utrecht, they were able to do so without much interference from central state institutions, which they largely

controlled. Together with the representatives of the aristocracy, the deputies of the urban governments comprised the provincial states, which organized justice, raised taxes, and maintained order within the provinces. Decisions in the provincial assembly were taken by majority vote. The provincial states, in turn, sent their deputies to the States General, which decided on matters that concerned the Republic as a whole, like the declaration of war, the closing of treaties, and the distribution of the provincial taxes. Each province had one vote in this assembly. Moreover, they all had the right to veto any decision made by the other provinces. (Israel 1995; Prak, 2000) Thus, the Republic was characterized by a representative system in which the members of the provincial and central state assemblies did not legislate for the nation as a whole, but for the particularistic interests of the communities and corporate bodies, who had chosen them for this purpose. They had no authority to act on behalf of their communities, beyond the specific instructions that they received from the local rulers.

The Stadholder

Although the provinces and the cities were in principle sovereign, they were not fully autonomous, as they had also sworn in the Union of Utrecht that they would assist each other against foreign enemies.

The aforesaid provinces will form an alliance, confederation, and union among themselves (...) in order to remain joined together for all time, in every form and manner as if they constituted a single province (Quoted by Rowen 1972, 70).

Of course, part of the effort to protect the Republic could be coordinated through the provincial states and the States General, but in times of warfare these institutions were forced to delegate part of their authority to a military commander. In certain periods, the States General contracted such a commander, but for most of the two centuries of the Republic's existence this task was performed by the Stadholder. The origins of this office dated back to the Habsburg period, when the Stadholders were provincial governors who

represented imperial authority. William of Orange (1533-1584), the nobleman who had led the Revolt against the Habsburg emperor, was such a governor. After the Revolt, the authority to appoint the Stadholders, who were all members of the House of Orange-Nassau, transferred from the emperor to the individual provinces. Thus, each province had the right to separately appoint a Stadholder. The consequence of this procedure was that the provinces sometimes decided not to elect a Stadholder or only a few provinces appointed a common Stadholder, while the other provinces had none. There were only two Stadholders in the history of the Republic that were appointed by all seven provinces: William IV (1747-1751) and William V (1766-1795). (Israel 1995, 276-306; Prak, 2000)

Because of his command over the military forces of the Republic, the Stadholder posed a direct threat to the political autonomy of the provinces, cities, and aristocracy. The cities and the aristocracy were obviously aware of this threat and did everything to retain control over the military. They could do so by keeping the extraction of revenue for the maintenance of the army and navy in their own hands. Yet, despite these precautions, the Stadholders did gain influence over the politics of the provinces and part of the cities. They succeeded in this effort not by military means, but through their political privileges. In an increasing number of cities and provinces, the Stadholders had authority over the appointment of local and regional political offices. These authorities, which were different in every province and town, gave the Stadholder a lot of power. In the course of the eighteenth century, the Stadholders even succeeded in constructing a whole system of patronage. (Gabriëls 1990) This gave them a major advantage in the political decision-making process, which in the absence of one sovereign power, necessarily took place through temporary coalitions between groups of urban magistrates, aristocrats and the Stadholder (Rowen 1978; Israel 1995). Thus, despite the precautions against the interference of higher state institutions in local and provincial politics, some measure of political centralization did take place in the early modern period.

Although the Stadholders were able to concentrate political authority in their own hands, they continued to operate within the traditional decentralized state structure of the Republic. They extended their authority by acquiring local privileges, but they were

consequently also limited by the same local and regional privileges. For example, in the province of Holland, the Stadholders had in most cities the right to elect the aldermen, but they only had the choice of the burgomasters in six of the ten largest cities of the province. In Amsterdam, by far the largest city, the influence of the Stadholder over political appointments was virtually non-existent. The Amsterdam regents had signed a contract that tied them to the local political arena. The contract guaranteed that the patricians who had signed it would eventually obtain a position in the local administration. This prevented them from entering into coalitions with the Stadholder. Breaking with the contract would greatly diminish the chances of a regent to attain new political appointments. (Gabriëls 1990, 47-48, 82-83).

Late medieval representation and local consultation could survive in the Republic because the position of all of the political players was guaranteed by the same system of privileges. This system set clear limits to the amount of power that either the Stadholder or the regents could acquire. Only by breaking local and provincial privileges would they be able to expand their authority. However, as the position of the Stadholder depended on the support of local elites and the regents needed the corporations to regulate the urban community, none of the main power players were in the position to ignore or break the system of privileges. Consequently, the provincial and central representative assemblies could survive, and the rights of the urban citizens were guaranteed.

Struggles over Local Representation

During the 1780's, various groups, who called themselves patriots, tried to increase the representative character of local and provincial government.¹ At the time, the Republic experienced a severe military and economic crisis, as a result of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch war (1780-1784). A variety of societal groups tried to use the ensuing legitimacy crisis to improve their political and socio-economic position. Various reform plans were proposed. All of them argued that the privileges of the Stadholder should be limited and local autonomy maintained.

They also insisted that the relationship between the regents and the group of privileged citizens should be strengthened, which made representation into a central subject of political contention. As the patriot movement started to take control of government in a large number of cities through a series of urban revolts, it became possible to turn the late medieval assemblies into real representative institutions. However, it was not at all self-evident how this should be done. Since the various patriot groups occupied different socio-economic and institutional positions, they also had different ideas on representation. The relationship between the patriot groups determined the extent to which the early modern particularistic structures could be turned into actual representative institutions and opened up to the politically excluded parts of the population.

The patriot regents and aristocrats took the most conservative stance on the issue of representation. The members of this group were interested in political reform because most of them held subordinate positions in local and provincial government. As the Stadholder determined the political relations in many provinces and towns through his system of patronage, the rebellious elites primarily directed their criticism at this system. Their main objective was to gain the upper hand over the regents and aristocrats that were linked to the Stadholder. To achieve this objective they needed the assistance of other socio-economic groups, which they successfully mobilized by arguing that the interests of the people should be represented. Notwithstanding this claim, most of them were not interested in creating a system, in which the people would have the authority to elect their own representatives. They wanted to bring about a shift in the balance of power, without fundamentally altering the existing political structure. (Gabriëls 1990; Prak 1991; Te Brake 1989)

The main programmatic statement of the patriot regents and aristocrats was the pamphlet *Aan het Volk van Nederland*, which was published in 1781 by the nobleman Joan Derk van der Capellen from the province of Overijssel. In the 1770's, Van der Capellen had clashed with the supporters of the Stadholder and was suspended from his position in the provincial assembly of nobles (Te Brake 1989, 43-50). In *Aan het Volk*, which was published anonymously, he decried the injustice that had been done to him and launched a general attack on the Stadholderian system of patronage. Van der Capellen claimed

that Stadholder William V was responsible for the disasters that had befallen the Republic. The Stadholder had accumulated too much power in his own hands by abusing his rights of patronage and his control over the military. *Aan het volk* called out to the entire population to appoint burgher deputies to pressure the provincial states to start an investigation into these allegations. Moreover, it urged the people to form civic militias to take the defense of the Republic into their own hands. Finally, it argued that the country belonged to the entire population, to the rich and the poor, and not to the Stadholder. (Capellen tot den Pol 1966, 129-131) In effect, Van der Capellen claimed sovereignty for the people. However, he did not argue for representative government on the basis of this claim. Like the rest of the patriot elites he wanted to maintain the structure of government in its original form. Yet, at the same time, *Aan het Volk* effectively proposed to increase the rights of burghers by urging them to set up civic militias and appoint burgher deputies.

The appeal of *Aan het volk*, and other patriot pamphlets that were published around this time, met with a large response. From 1783 onwards, middle class burghers started to set up civic militias in a great number of cities throughout the Republic. Although these militias were officially created to defend the Republic against foreign enemies, in practice they were a particularly powerful instrument to pressure the regents into making the government more representative. (Prak 1999, 149-153; Te Brake 1989, 147-155) In contrast with the patriot regents, the middle classes, organized in civic militias, were interested in making government more representative by giving the burghers influence over the appointment of local magistrates. Their most important political declaration was formulated in the summer of 1785 by the delegates of the civic militias in Holland. This declaration, called the *Leyden Draft*, maintained that the Republic was in an economic and military crisis because its original constitution, which was in principle perfect, had been corrupted in two ways. First, the accumulation of power in the hands of the Stadholder had undermined self-government at the local level. This was the same argument as had been advanced by *Aan het Volk*. However, in addition the *Draft* argued that the local elites had become too independent from the sovereign people to whom they owed their mandate.² Consequently, it contended that the only way to restore

the Republic's wealth and military prominence was to give the people a say in the election of their governors.³ This second argument was new. By combining the idea of the sovereignty of the people with the demand for representative government, the civic militias took a crucial step that Van der Capellen and many other local elites had not yet been prepared to take.

Nevertheless, the *Draft* at the same time remained firmly within the traditional political framework of the Republic. It emphasized that the right to elect public officials would certainly not be given to everyone, but only to the 'true burghers, who by their property and occupation had a substantial and direct interest in the maintenance of the constitution'.⁴ In this sense, the *Draft* confirmed the position of the privileged burghers and their local corporations, such as the guilds, the civic militias, and the social welfare institutions. It even denounced the rest of the population as a furious mob. Given the socio-economic position of the middle class burghers, the wish to exclude the rest of the population is understandable. However, the *Draft* not only recommended to limit the electorate, it also intended to restrict the influence of the citizens over their delegates. The *Draft* proposed that the elected councilors would be appointed for life, and that the deliberations of the local and provincial assemblies should be free from interference from burghers.⁵

The *Draft* was probably written with the objective to accommodate the interest of various socio-economic and political groups, which did not necessarily agree among each other. Claiming that the local magistrates should be appointed for life and that they would be able to deliberate freely without any popular interference was clearly a major step in the direction of the patriot regents, who did not want to lose their prominent political position. However, the *Draft* also tried to satisfy the urban middle classes, which consisted of artisans, shopkeepers, and small merchants. These groups, who in many cities constituted the core of the patriot movement, were primarily interested in protecting their socio-economic position. They were hard-hit by the economic crisis that had set in from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards. To keep their heads above water, they wanted to ban all possible competition from rural merchants and artisans, who had lower production costs. Moreover, the artisans, shopkeepers, and small merchants also wished to continue excluding

the non-privileged part of the urban population from practicing an independent trade. (Lourens & Lucassen 1994; Prak 1999; Te Brake 1989, 147-155; Vries & Woude 1997; Zanden & Riel 2000) The *Draft* exactly appealed to these sentiments, as it emphasized that the interests of the 'true burghers' should be protected against the mob (Prak 1991). Thus, the reforms proposed by the patriot middle classes, on the one hand, enhanced the representative character of the early modern institutions. On the other hand, they also prevented further democratization, as the non-privileged groups were firmly excluded from the representative system.

The Limits of Early Modern Representation

The urban middle classes and the regents were not the only groups that were active in the patriot movements. Research has made clear that the movement also included unskilled laborers and members of the higher middle classes, or bourgeoisie (Te Brake 1989, ch. 4-6). Especially this latter group, which was among others composed of lawyers, professors, writers, doctors, notaries, larger merchants, and industrialists, played a crucial role. The bourgeoisie was in absolute numbers rather small compared to the middle and lower classes, but they were highly educated and well connected to the political elite. Already before the rise of patriotism they were organized in learned academies, Masonic lodges, reading associations, literary clubs, and improvement societies (Mijnhardt 1992). They were the group in Dutch society most influenced by enlightenment ideas on the sovereignty of the people, representative democracy, freedom of trade, speech, and religion. Their interest in these ideas was not only inspired by idealism, but also by self-interest. The guilds, for example, were for large traders and industrialists mainly an obstacle, as they created a great number of regulations and raised additional taxes. For lawyers, professors, writers, doctors, and notaries the guilds were of little importance. (Lourens & Lucassen 1994) Unlike the artisans and shopkeepers, they did not have to fear competition from rural producers or lower socio-economic classes. Besides economic reasons, the higher middle classes were also driven by political considerations. Especially the lawyers, as we will see in the period after 1795, clearly

had the potential to pursue a political career, but they were prevented from doing so by the political monopoly of the nobility and patricians. Although only factions of the bourgeoisie fully embraced the enlightenment ideas, the fiercest opponents of the guild system, the privileges of the reformed church, and the monopoly of the regents and nobles could be found in this group (Davids 2001). Consequently, the bourgeoisie was the one group that was interested in transforming the late medieval assemblies and local citizenship arrangements into liberal democratic institutions.

The program for such a transformation was also formulated in a number of documents. Perhaps the most influential was the *Constitutional Restoration* (1784-'86): a two-volume political handbook, written by the journalists Cerisier and Swildens. In addition to giving the privileged burghers influence over the appointment of local councilors, it proposed to reform the corporatist organization of the state. The *Constitutional Restoration* maintained that the guilds should be opened to people from 'all classes and professions'.⁶ It even claimed that Jews should be admitted. Moreover, it denounced the discriminatory regulations against Remonstrants, Mennonites, and Catholics, who were all excluded from political office.⁷ Even more hostile to the particularistic features of the Republic was the pamphlet *Thoughts on the appointment of regents*, which was probably written by the young lawyer Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck (Klein 1995, 264-266). It launched an attack on the privileged position of the Reformed Church, and depicted the guilds as 'a real monopoly' by which 'many inhabitants were exposed to the most extreme extortions'.⁸

Despite the efforts of the bourgeois patriots to liberalize the political system, the relations between the patriot groups within the decentralized state structure favored the conservation of the existing particularistic institutions. The enlightened members of the bourgeoisie were either condemned to remain politically isolated or cooperate with the other socio-political groups. This dilemma was perfectly expressed in the creation of the *Leyden Draft*, which was edited by Schimmelpenninck, the cloth producer Pieter Vreede, and the journalist Wybo Fijnje. Initially, the higher middle class editors wanted to include an article in the *Draft*, which stated that all discriminatory laws against those who were not members of the

Reformed Church should be abolished. (Klein & Rosendaal 1994, 90, 98) This article would satisfy neither the regents nor the urban middle classes. Consequently, it was deleted from the official publication of the *Draft*.

Because higher middle class revolutionaries, like Schimmelpenninck, Swildens, and Vreede, were trapped in the local political arena, they could not pursue the liberalization of the particularistic state structure. Consequently, the patriot movement pushed for a particularistic form of representation, which excluded the non-privileged sections of society. Clearly there was a tension between the early modern corporatist tradition and liberal representative democracy. Only if bourgeois patriots had been able to transfer political authority to higher state institutions that were not controlled by the regents and corporations, would it have been possible to abolish the particularistic features of the Dutch state and establish a more inclusive form of representation. During the 1780's, this was not an option as none of the patriot groups had any ambition to centralize the state. Even the bourgeois revolutionaries subscribed to the early modern Republican tradition that equaled centralism with absolutism. There was not yet a model of political organization available that combined the unified state with freedom. This only changed after the French Revolution. Besides the absence of political models that combined freedom and centralism, the higher middle class patriots also lacked a powerful coalition partner to abolish the system of privileges. As neither the patriot regents nor the middle classes were prepared to cooperate, they needed an outside coalition partner to transform the state.

In the absence of such a partner and an attractive centralist model, the patriot revolts focused on the dismissal of the ruling regents and the extension of the political rights of the privileged citizens. This was the scenario that was successfully played out in a great number of cities throughout the Republic. Eventually in the summer of 1787, the patriot cities controlled a majority in the provincial states of Holland, Groningen, and Overijssel, while Utrecht and Friesland were divided between rival Estates (Te Brake 1989, 60). However, before the patriot movement could take control of the Republic as a whole, the Prussian army invaded and restored the regime of the Stadholder in the late summer of 1787.

Local Corporatism versus National Representation

The tension between democratization and the local corporatist tradition became even more explicit in the years after 1795, when the patriot movement took control of government after the French revolutionary armies invaded the Republic. Many of the patriots that had played a prominent role in the revolts during the 1780's obtained important political positions in 1795. Particularly the members of the bourgeoisie, i.e. the lawyers, merchants, professors, industrialists, notaries, and doctors, took control of local, provincial and central government.⁹ They were able to do so because of their role in the revolutionary movement and their skills and contacts. The patriot regents also took important positions, but they were a minority.¹⁰

Although many of the revolutionaries of the 1780's occupied key political positions, the patriot movement had been transformed, as several ideological changes had taken place in the period between 1787 and 1795. In reaction to the failure of the local, corporatist revolution and the success of the French Revolution, part of the patriots had adopted the unified state model and the ideals of universal freedom and equality. For these unitarists the Union of Utrecht had lost its authority. In 1793, the lawyer and writer Samuel Wiselius, for example, called this Union internally contradictory and insufficient as the constitutional basis for the Republic (Wiselius 1828, 193). The unitarist reform program was fully developed after the French invasion in 1795. Part of the bourgeoisie patriots, together with segments of the subordinated religious groups such as Catholics, Jews, Mennonites, and Remonstrants, started to argue that the problems of the Republic could only be solved by centralizing political authority. These groups were interested in the unification of the state because this was the most effective method to dissolve the corporations, liberalize the economy, and emancipate the discriminated religious minorities. During the 1780s it had already become clear that it was very difficult to abolish the system of privileges in a local political arena, where the corporations exerted a lot of influence. By transferring political authority to superior state institutions, the local trap could be avoided. Consequently, the unitarist-minded patriots

maintained that sovereignty resided with the united Dutch people, and could only be exercised by institutions that represented the people as a whole (Gou 1975, 12-18, 25, 61-74). Or as the Unitarist Amsterdam society for *One and Indivisibility* expressed it: 'As the sovereignty of the people cannot be divided, its exercise should also be one and indivisible'.¹¹

Directly connected to the notion of the sovereignty of the united Dutch people was the ideal of national representative democracy. The unitarist magazine *De Democraten*, of which Wiselius was one of the editors, explicitly maintained that 'in initiating this revolution, we intended a democracy by representation'.¹² The magazine contended that such a form of government results in the most effective and powerful administration, as the governors are neither subjugated to the people, like in a direct democracy, nor fully independent from them, as in an elected aristocracy. The unitarists emphasized that it was crucial that the establishment of representative democracy was linked to the creation of a centralized state. Otherwise, as the unitarist politician Van de Kastele warned, 'the government of one province will be aristocratic, the other fully democratic, while the third democratic by representation' In addition, he threateningly added: 'Who won't say that not one province will have an eminent ruler', i.e. a stadholder.¹³ Thus, the unitarists concluded that general popular sovereignty could only be guaranteed by means of a unified liberal representative state.

Although there was now a model available that combined centralism with freedom, this did not imply that a national liberal democratic state could also be established. The introduction of the unitary state model further complicated the relations within the patriot movement, as various groups held on to key aspects of the decentralized corporatist state model. The urban middle class patriots continued to defend their local corporatist institutions. They were especially eager to do so, as their socio-economic position was under pressure as a result of the economic crisis, which only worsened after 1795 (Zanden & Riel 2000, 87-108). The middle class patriots stuck to the reform program they had already advanced during the 1780s. In cities throughout the Republic they tried to increase their political influence by pushing for a direct form of local democracy (Bruin 1986, 115-202; Kuiper 2002; Prak 1999, 201-261). Even

though they advanced a radicalized version of the original patriot program, it was still built on the late medieval notion of representation, in which the city government was supposed to represent the interests of privileged sections of the urban community. For example, the Amsterdam middle class patriots after 1795 primarily fought for greater influence over local government, instead of a more inclusive representative system. Many artisans, shopkeepers, and small merchants were in favor of the exclusion of the lower classes and the Jews from the political process.¹⁴

Not only the urban middle classes wanted to maintain crucial features of the early modern state model, but a major part of the bourgeoisie also held on to local and provincial political autonomy. They did so for different reasons. Especially many of the lawyers were, much like the patriot regents, attached to the autonomy of local and provincial institutions, in which they had traditionally occupied important positions.¹⁵ Consequently, many of them shared with the patriot regent Johan Pieter Farret the opinion that:

The unity of this Republic should only exist in those matters without which the safety and the happiness of the entire Republic cannot be promoted. [...] Yet, all that does not belong to the general interest, but to the domestic affairs of the provinces, the cities and villages, should not be centralized.¹⁶

Among the supporters of this federalist state model were also many bourgeois patriots who at the same time wanted to abolish the local corporatist system. Schimmelpenninck, for example, maintained that the political unification of the Republic was a sure road to 'Eastern despotism' (Gou 1983-'85, II, 141). These politicians were still thinking within the framework of the Union of Utrecht, in which centralism was considered a direct threat to local and provincial freedom. They were as suspicious of the plans of the unitarists as they had been of the ambitions of the stadholder.

Another part of the bourgeois patriots who had their reservations about the creation of fully centralized state, were motivated by financial considerations. The financial reorganization of the state was a contentious subject because the financial problems of the Republic were very unevenly distributed across the provinces. Holland,

Zeeland, and Utrecht had much higher debts than the other provinces. Especially the debt of Holland had become extremely large by 1795. With a debt of about 455 million guilders, which took up no less than 70% of the annual provincial tax revenue, Holland was on the point of bankruptcy (Zanden & Riel 2000, 53). The patriots from the provinces without debts, Friesland, Groningen, Drente, Gelderland, Overijssel, and Brabant, were against financial unification. They were especially opposed to the amalgamation of the provincial debts, since this entailed that the joint provinces would have to share the enormous debt of Holland. Even many of the unitarists from these provinces opposed financial centralization, despite the fact that this would mean a major step in the direction of a fully unified state. By contrast, the majority of the patriots from Holland, even most of the federalists, wanted to use the revolution to achieve financial unification. The bourgeois patriots from Zeeland and Utrecht joined them in this quest. (Fritschy 1988; Gou 1983-'85, I, pp. 8-58, 204-224; Pfeil 1998)

Struggles over State Formation and Democracy

The contradictory interests within the patriot movement made it impossible to establish a stable representative system, as different groups advanced opposing democratic ideals and state models. This led to multiple confrontations on the local, provincial, and central state levels. In these struggles the early modern tradition of representation and citizenship was directly opposed to the unitary liberal democratic state model. For example in Amsterdam the bourgeois unitarists criticized the attempts of the middle class patriot groups to create a direct form of democracy in that city. Throughout 1795 and '96, the patriot clubs and assemblies had demanded that the voters would be given the right to issue binding proposals to the city government. At first the municipality, which was dominated by bourgeois federalists, resisted. However, after several violent confrontations it gave in. The voters were authorized to issue proposals and dismiss representatives who refused to cooperate.¹⁷ Although this was not exactly direct democracy, it came pretty close. The bourgeois unitarists, who had initially supported the democratic

claims of the middle class patriots¹⁸, made it clear that the new organization of the Amsterdam government conflicted with their reform plans. The unitarist magazine *De Democraten* maintained that the regulation could prove to be an obstacle for the implementation of representative democracy on the national level. It argued that only the united Dutch people were sovereign and that no individual part, not even the people of Amsterdam, had the right to make separate regulations.¹⁹

The conflict over the two models of representation and sovereignty was not only played out within the cities, but also between provincial and local governments. One of the most heated struggles occurred between the Amsterdam municipality and the provincial States of Holland. The provincial government was dominated by unitarist politicians, who wanted to subordinate local government to the authority of the provincial assembly, a first step in the direction of a unified Dutch state. This attempt brought them into direct conflict with the federalist minded Amsterdam governors. The first clash occurred in the spring of 1795, when the States of Holland demanded an oath of allegiance of the municipalities and their civil servants to the People of Holland and its representatives. The provincial assembly argued that such an oath was only natural, as the sovereignty of the people of Holland had been proclaimed at the time of the revolution. The municipality of Amsterdam did not share this perspective. In their opinion they just as much embodied the sovereignty of the people as the provincial states. They argued that the oath implied an act of deference that had not even been demanded by the old States of Holland. Moreover, they made clear that considering the provisional character of the provincial assembly they were in no position to dictate to Amsterdam the rules according to which its public officers were to operate.²⁰ Eventually, this conflict could only be resolved after a provincial committee had, with the help of the military commander of Amsterdam, imprisoned the members of the municipality.²¹ Although the provincial governors gained the upper hand by this action, it was certainly not the end of the dispute, as further conflicts occurred in the fall of 1795 and the spring of 1796.²²

The conflicts in Amsterdam and Holland revolved around two questions. Who are the people? And who are the legitimate representatives of the people? These questions were obviously highly

explosive in the decentralized Republic, where local, provincial, and central state governors could all make a legitimate claim to represent the sovereign people. The problem was that only after the first question was answered it became possible to settle the second. In the absence of such an answer, no permanent representative structures could be established. The patriot clubs and assemblies refused to accept the authority of the local governors as representatives of the people, while the local governors rejected the sovereignty of the provincial people and their representatives. Consequently, every government regulation was provisional and intermediary. There was only one way out. All of the patriots, whether they were federalists or unitarists, agreed that the disputes had to be settled by a new constitution, which would have to be created by the national assembly that had replaced the States General in March 1796.²³

Although the agreement that a constitution was needed, seemed to provide the Dutch revolutionaries with a common goal, it evidently did not solve anything. The representatives in the National Assembly, who were overwhelmingly from a bourgeois background, still had to create a proposal that satisfied the majority of the voting population (Gou 1975; Elias & Scholvinck 1991). Even amongst each other the representatives found it hard to find a common ground. The only subject that they all agreed upon was the elimination of the corporate system.²⁴ However, this was highly contested by the urban middle classes, who protested by issuing large numbers of petitions (Gou 1975, 218-219; 1988-1990, I, 1-76). Apart from the elimination of the corporations, the representatives were divided into factions that advanced elements of either the unitarist or federal state model. On the one hand, the federalists from Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht supported financial unification, but refused to cooperate with the creation of a sovereign national state. On the other hand, the unitarists from Friesland, Groningen, Drenthe, Overijssel, Gelderland, and Brabant were in favor of political centralization, but did not want to endorse financial unification. Only the unitarists from Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht supported both political and financial unification, but they were a minority in the national assembly. (Elias & Scholvinck 1991; Gou 1975, 1983-'85)

If each of the main political factions had stuck to their turf, it would have been neither possible to pursue financial, nor political

centralization. However, after months of constitutional debates the representatives from Holland were able to convince a few of the unitarist-minded politicians from the provinces with small debts to support financial unification. Because of this support, a parliamentary majority was able to include financial unification in the constitution proposal.²⁵ Even though this was a major breakthrough, it did not solve the larger conflict, as no such coalition could be constructed on political unification. The federalists from Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht were prepared to partly centralize political authority to solve the financial problems of their provinces, but they were certainly not willing to go all the way and create a sovereign national state (Gou 1983-'85, II, 56-61). Hence, the assembly decided to maintain part of the sovereignty of the provinces, which was a decision that made the constitutional plan unattractive for the unitarists.

As the constitutional proposal only pleased the bourgeois federalists from Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht, it was rejected by an overwhelming majority of the voters in August 1797. No less than 108,781 people voted against the plan, while only 27,955 were in favor. Not in one single province did the proposal obtain a majority (Colenbrander 1908, 106). After nearly two years of constitutional debate it was clear that the National Assembly would never be able to create a constitutional proposal that would satisfy the majority of the voters. With many patriot groups holding on to crucial features of the decentralized corporatist state model, the representative system had become an obstacle for the reform of the state. The representatives in the National Assembly, consequently, started to search for ways around the representative system (Gou 1988-'90, I, 1-76). The unitarists were most successful in this effort. They brought about a coup d'état in January 1798.²⁶ With the help of a few Dutch troops and the approval of the French regime, they arrested 23 members of the National Assembly on the ground of federalist sympathies. The remaining Assembly was asked to swear their hatred for the Stadholderate, aristocracy, federalism and anarchy. A total of ten members refused to take this oath, and were consequently asked to resign as well. Another 28, who had taken the oath, voluntarily left the assembly, as they did not agree with this breach of democratic procedures.²⁷

When the decimated National Assembly continued its sessions, a series of resolutions were proclaimed that turned the Republic within a few days into a centralized state. All the provincial sovereignties were invalidated, and a sovereign central executive body was created (Pfeil 1998, 188-194). The reformed National Assembly subsequently produced a proposal that built on the existing plan, but took the centralization of the state one step further. It not only proposed to unify the provincial debts and introduce a national system of taxes, but it also intended to permanently transfer provincial sovereignty to the central state. (Gou 1988-'90) To make sure that the proposal was approved by the population, the unitarist regime purged the provincial and local governments and the voting assemblies. In Amsterdam, the federalist minded local representatives were replaced by unitarist politicians in March 1798.²⁸ After the reform of the Amsterdam government, a special committee with far-reaching authorities purged the voting assemblies (Breen 1914, 74-75). The purge was a success. The constitution was approved by a majority of 153,913 against 11,597 votes (Colenbrander 1908, 132-134).

Although a Dutch national representative state had now been created on paper, this was certainly not because of the survival of the late medieval institutions of representation and citizenship. In fact, the constitution could only be established after the late medieval institutions had been destroyed and its supporters ousted from the political process. The corporate tradition and the decentralized system of representation were clearly at odds with liberal representative democracy. Even after the constitution had been founded, the advocates of the early modern decentralized state model continued to undermine the construction of a national liberal representative state. The federalist politicians, who returned to parliament after a second coup in the summer of 1798, obstructed the unification process through the national assembly, while local patriot groups resisted the elimination of the corporations. This resistance completely paralyzed the central state. Two years after the coup of 1798, there was still no new national system of taxation and the provincial and local governments still ruled largely autonomously. In the mean time, the financial and economic problems of the Republic only grew larger.

Eventually, the struggle over the two models of political organization made it impossible to consolidate the representative

system. Both unitarist and federalist politicians came to the conclusion that this system arrested the reform of the state. In March 1801, the unitarist Wiselius, who had always been in favor of a liberal representative system, maintained that the powers of the National Assembly should be substantially reduced and those of the government enhanced. The federalist Schimmelpenninck proposed to turn the National Assembly from a permanent body into an institution that was only in session during limited periods of the year (Gou 1995, 543-547, 558-562). By abandoning their support for the representative system, the patriot politicians gave way to new, French-supported military coups, which took place in 1801 and 1805. Each of these coups, which no longer referred to the sovereignty of the people, reduced the influence of the legislative and strengthened the power of the executive (Gou 1995, IX-XXVII; 2000, IX-XXVII). By 1805, the Republic had been turned into an authoritarian state.²⁹

Conclusion

In contrast to what Downing and others have said, the late medieval institutions of representation and citizenship did not facilitate the establishment of liberal representative democracy. Although late medieval constitutionalism might have been an important source of inspiration for democratic reformers at the end of the eighteenth century, the actual medieval institutions obstructed the creation of national representative democracy in the Dutch Republic. The late medieval institutions did enable the integration of a substantial part of the population in the local political process, but this form of democratization was bound to clear limits. Late medieval representation and citizenship was based on the idea that the regents were the representatives of the privileged part of the urban community. Consequently, this type of representation in principle excluded the non-privileged majority of the population, and simultaneously affirmed the political monopoly of the regents. Both characteristics obstructed the creation of liberal representative democracy, which is founded on the notions of universal freedom and equality.

In the 1780s, the majority of the patriots pursued democratization within the local system of privileges. This was attractive for both the patriot regents, who wanted to hold on to their political position, and the corporate middle classes, who were hit hard by the economic decline of the second half of the eighteenth century. Only the bourgeoisie was aiming for another type of representation, which was not based on privileges but on economic criteria. Influenced by the enlightenment ideas on freedom of trade and natural human rights, the revolutionary members of the bourgeoisie wanted to abolish the political and socio-economic privileges of the corporations, specifically those of the Reformed Church and the guilds. Even though individual journalists and lawyers did publish pamphlets that argued for the liberalization of the corporate community, they were, during the 1780's, not in the position to eliminate the system of privileges. Within the decentralized political structure, the bourgeois patriots were trapped between the regents and the corporate middle classes, who were not prepared to cooperate.

Only after the French invaded in 1795, were the bourgeois revolutionaries able to break free from the local trap and pursue the liberalization of the political structure. At this point, some of them had adopted the unified French state model and the ideal of national representative democracy. Subsequently, a struggle developed in which the late medieval institutions of representation were opposed to the unitary liberal democratic state model. Supporters of the two models came at the local, regional, and central state level in conflict with each other over the way in which representation, finances, and the economy should be organized. As different groups within the patriot movement had strong interests connected to the early modern decentralized particularistic state, it was impossible to create a national liberal representative state through the representative system. Eventually, the various patriot factions sought a military resolution of the conflict, which in turn led to the breakdown of the democratization project. It was precisely the resistance of the groups that supported the local and provincial representation, which prevented the creation of national representative democracy. After the representative system had been effectively abolished in 1801 and 1805, democratization did not again become a subject of contention

until the 1840s when the Dutch state had more or less been completely centralized. By 1840, the chief features of the late medieval particularistic state structure had been abolished by a series of authoritarian regimes. It was only when the political authority was fully centralized and the local system of privileges eliminated that national representative democracy could be developed and subsequently consolidated.

The final question is whether the opposition between late medieval constitutionalism and liberal representative democracy could only be found in the Dutch Republic, or similar struggles also occurred elsewhere. So far, there has not been done a lot of research on the subject. A major exception is Charles Tilly's *Contention & Democracy in Europe 1650-2000* (2004). In this book, Tilly studies among other things the democratization process in Switzerland, in which late medieval representation and citizenship also survived up to the end of the eighteenth century. It turns out that in Switzerland similar confrontations over representation and sovereignty took place as in the Republic. Tilly points out that in Switzerland the fiercest opposition against national democracy came from those who practiced 'direct democracy' at home. As in the Dutch Republic, the proponents of the local systems of representation were a restricted class of local citizens, who jealously guarded their privileged position. These privileged citizens subsequently clashed with liberal activists, who tried to pursue greater freedom and equality by promoting national representative democracy. Consequently, these liberals became advocates of a strong central government, much like the bourgeois unitarists in the Republic. In Switzerland, the tension between the two models of representation eventually led to a civil war and a period of dedemocratization. (Tilly 2004, 170-184) Thus, the analysis of both the Republic and Switzerland shows that there was by no means a smooth transition from late medieval representation to modern liberal representative democracy. In fact, it suggests that the problem of European democratization was not only to wrestle political control from authoritarian rulers, but also to eliminate the late medieval and early modern institutions of representation and citizenship.

Notes

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- 1 For a more detailed account of the patriot struggles see: S. Klein, *Patriots Republicanisme. Politieke cultuur in Nederland, 1766-1787* (Amsterdam, 1995); S. Schama, *Patriots and liberators. Revolution in the Netherlands, 1780-1813* (New York, 1978); W. Te Brake, *Regents and rebels. The revolutionary world of an eighteenth century Dutch City*, (Oxford, 1989).
- 2 *Ontwerp om de Republiek door eene heilzaame vereeniging der belangen van regent en burger, van binnen gelukkig en van buiten gedugt te maaken* (Leiden, 1785), pp. 3, 13-15.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 61.
- 4 *waare burgeren, dat is dezulken, die door hunne bezittingen en betrekking een weezenlyk en onmiddellijk belang hebben in de handhaving der constitutie.* *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- 5 *Ibid.*, pp. 37, 48-49, 67.
- 6 *Grondwettige herstelling van Nederlands staatswezen* (Amsterdam, 1785-'86), part I, p. 214.
- 7 *Ibid.*, pp. 219, 225.
- 8 *Bedenkingen over het aanstellen van regenten, in een vrij gemeenebest*, (1786), 140-142.
- 9 Of the twenty-one men that took control of Amsterdam government, no less than eleven were merchants, and three were lawyers. Of the rest, only one, a shopkeeper, could be considered as a member of the middle class. (See: J. Breen, 'De Regeering van Amsterdam', *Jaarboek Amstelodamum*, XII (1914), pp. 111-120; Municipal Archive of Amsterdam (GAA), *Citizens register & Baptismal register*). The representatives in the national assembly were also overwhelmingly from a bourgeois background. Of the 150 men that sat in the first national assembly, 39 had a juridical training. The educated professionals, which included professors, doctors and brokers, were also well represented with 21 members in parliament. The merchants (17), and the Reformed ministers (13), had a substantial number of representatives as well. By contrast, the middle classes were extremely underrepresented, with six

- shopkeepers and artisans in parliament. (See A. Elias & P. Scholvinck, *Volksrepresentanten en wetgevers: de politieke elite in de Bataafs-Franse Tijd 1796-1810* (Amsterdam, 1991).
- 10 The patriot regents and those directly related to them did much better. They had no less than 31 representatives. (See Elias & Scholvinck, *Volksrepresentanten en wetgevers.*)
 - 11 'De oppermagt des volks geenszins kunnende verdeeld worden, zal ook haare uitoeffening een en ondeelbaar (...) moeten zijn' (*Aanmerkingen der Societeit voor Een en ondeelbaarheid*, 1797)
 - 12 'Wij beoogden by het daarstellen deze revolutie eene democratie by representatie' (National Archive (NA), arch. Gogel (arch.nr. 2.21.005.39), inv. 73, 'De Democraten', 48, 6 April 1797, p. 59.
 - 13 'Dan kan de regeeringsform van de huishouding van het eene gewest zijn aristocratisch, van het ander zuiver democratisch, van het derde democratisch bij representatie, van het vierde gemengd; en wie zal ons zeggen, dat er niet een huishouding zal zijn met een eminent hoofd?' (See L. de Gou, *Het plan van Constitutie van 1796* (Den Haag, 1975), p. 70.)
 - 14 Breen, 'Regeering', pp. 19-68; GAA, Archive New Municipal Government (NSB), inv.nr. 1075, 'Minutes General Meeting of Amsterdam neighborhood of assemblies', 10 April 1795.
 - 15 Based on an analysis of the results of several rounds of voting in the national assembly (L. de Gou, *Het Ontwerp van Constitutie van 1797* (Den Haag, 1983-'85). And biographical information on the representatives (Elias & Scholvinck, *Volksrepresentanten en wetgevers*)
 - 16 'De eenheid derhalven deeser Republicq behoort alleen te bestaan in alle zulke zaaken zonder welke de veiligheid en het geluk der geheele Republicq niet kan bevorderd worden. [...]Edog al wat tot de algemeene belangens niet behoort, maar het privatif huishouden der gewesten aangaat behoort hun zo min ontnoomen te worden als aan de onderscheide steden en dorpen van ieder gewest en aan ieder ondeeligen in dezelve de beheering in hunne huishoudelijke zaaken behoort ontnoomen te worden.' (Gou, *Plan van Constitutie van 1796*, pp. 32, 54.)
 - 17 Breen, 'Regeering', pp. 19-68. GAA, NSB, inv.nr. 1075, 'Minutes General Meeting of Amsterdam neighborhood of assemblies'. What substantially contributed to the success of the clubs was that the composition of the Amsterdam government had changed after several rounds of elections, which took place every half a year. The number of patriot regents and lawyers had declined in the city council, while a few middle class men had been chosen as representatives.

- 18 For example, the bourgeois unitarist members of the Revolutionary Comity in the city supported the claims of the burghers (GAA, NSB, inv.nr. 1, 'Proceedings of the Revolutionary Committee', January 4 - July 3 1795).
- 19 NA, arch. Gogel (arch.nr. 2.21.005.39), inv. 73, 'De Democraten', 15, 22 September 1796.
- 20 GAA, arch. NSB, inv. 14, letter of 19 March 1795 of the provisional deputies of Amsterdam in the provincial assembly to the government of Amsterdam.
- 21 GAA, NSB, inv. 4, 'Minutes provisional representatives of the people of Amsterdam', 20 – 22 March 1795.
- 22 GAA, NSB, inv. 153-155 'Register of letters of the Representatives of the people of Amsterdam to the provincial and central state institutions', 1795 – 1797
- 23 Although all of the patriots agreed that a new constitution was needed, the creation of the national assembly had been difficult. Three provinces, Friesland, Groningen, and Zeeland had resisted the establishment of the assembly on the basis of the conditions agreed upon by the other provinces. Only after the provincial representatives of Friesland had been overthrown by a coup, was it possible to establish the new national assembly. (H. Colenbrander, *De Bataafse Republiek*, (Amsterdam, 1808), pp. 59-82; A. Elias, 'Van Raad van State, Comite te Lande en Staatsraad (1795-1810)', in W. Scholten (ed.) *Raad van State 450 jaar*, (Den Haag, 1981), pp. 113-139; J. Kuiper, *Een Revolutie ontrafeld. Politiek in Friesland 1795-1798*, (Franeker 2002), pp. 94-135.)
- 24 On in August 1796, the representatives decided to separate the state and the church. A month later they also agree to abolish the guilds. (Gou, *Plan van Constitutie van 1796*)
- 25 On 20 January 1797, a majority of 60 to 45 voted in favor of the amalgamation of the provincial debts. Of the 60 votes, 49 originated from the most indebted provinces: Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht. The remaining 11 votes came from a few of the unitarist representatives from the landed provinces. (*Dagverhaal der handelingen van de Nationale Vergadering representeerende het volk van Nederland*, (Den Haag, 1796-1798), IV, pp. 493-580; Colenbrander, *Bataafsche Republiek*, pp. 100 – 106; Elias & Scholvinck, *Volksrepresentanten en wetgevers*)
- 26 In the elections of September 1797, the French radical revolutionary party had reinforced its control over government, which gave the unitarists the hope that the French would assist in a coup d'état. The French, who thus far had not interfered with the constitution making process, were becoming impatient and were willing to enforce a

- breakthrough. A coup subsequently took place on 22 January 1798. (Colenbrander, *Bataafsche Republiek*, p. 111)
- 27 For a detailed account see: L. de Gou, *De staatsregeling van 1798* (Den Haag, 1988-'90), pp. XI-LXVI.
- 28 Whereas the majority of the Amsterdam governors before the coup had been members of the Reformed Church, now two-third were Catholic, Jewish, Lutheran, or Mennonite. Moreover, the regents and juridical professionals had completely disappeared from the municipality, which was now fully dominated by merchants, industrialists, educated professionals, and some artisans. (Breen, 'Regeering', pp. 111-120; GAA, *Citizens register & Baptismal register*).
- 29 Although there still was a legislative body, it no longer had the right of initiative or amendment (T. Pfeil, *Tot redding van het vaderland. Het primaat van de Nederlandse overheidsfinancien in de Bataafs-Franse Tijd 1795-1810*, p. 405).

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