

America's Neglected Debt to the Dutch, An Institutional Perspective¹

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ABSTRACT. America's early constitutional development owes a good deal to the experience and policies of the Dutch Republic. Many of the parallels are direct: In the late sixteenth century, the Dutch fought a successful war to secede from a major empire. They wrote a declaration of independence and adopted a federal model of Republican governance almost exactly two hundred years before the Americans. Somewhat later, the Dutch republic and its political institutions subsequently inspired and protected enlightenment scholars. Its leading political family and army played a crucial role in curtailing English absolutism in England and in England's American colonies, and its federal template provided a model for early American institutions.

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I. Introduction: The First and Second "New Republics"

During the second half of the sixteenth century, the Dutch rebelled against the Spanish crown and established a new republic. It was the first secession from a major European empire. The United States was the second, almost exactly two centuries later. As in the American case, the Dutch revolt began with negotiations with their king over grievances concerning taxation, centralization of political authority, and challenges to religious liberty. As in the American case, the revolt ended with a declaration of independence and the founding of a new federal republic, the United Provinces of the Netherlands. In the process of creating the Dutch republic, the Dutch

developed a theory of legitimate revolt, instituted contract-based federal governance, reinvented both the theory and practice of republican rule, and promoted religious tolerance. These achievements took place more than a half century before Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau put their pens to paper to articulate theories of the social contract and toleration. The United Provinces of the Netherlands subsequently played both direct and indirect roles in the development of enlightenment thought in the seventeenth century, and its leaders played leading roles in revisions of the medieval British political institutions and in preserving the colonial institutions that American colonists took for granted in the eighteenth century.

The history and institutions of the Dutch republic were well known to educated people of the eighteenth century. The chapter on federal governance in Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws* (1748) praises the federal institutions of the Dutch republic. Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776) includes dozens of references to the Dutch economic and political experience. That history also influenced the political and institutional theories of our founding fathers and also the constitutional alternatives considered at the time of the republic's founding. Dutch parallels and politics are noted in the discussions that preceded adoption of the Articles of Confederation, in letters between revolutionary leaders, and in both the federalist and antifederalist papers.

Modern work, however, for the most part neglects the significance of the Dutch republic for founding the American republic. The Dutch republic is scarcely mentioned in contemporary indices of the federalist and antifederalist papers, and it is neglected in major political histories. For example, there is no mention of the Dutch republic in Miller's (1943) account of the origins of the American revolution nor in the index of Morgan's (1988) analysis of the origins of popular sovereignty. Palmer's (1959) impressive overview of the *Age of Democratic Revolution* barely mentions the Dutch republic and then only near its end. Wish's (1950) and Taylor's (2002) overviews of the society and culture of early America spend only a dozen pages discussing the contributions of Dutch colonists and neglect the republic itself. Johnson's (1999) ambi-

tious and widely read history of the United States mentions the Dutch colonists and republic only in passing.

To partially remedy that neglect, this paper traces several important connections between the Dutch republic and American experience during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The first section of the paper develops an overview of the origins and early history of the United Provinces of the Netherlands. It notes similarities between its federal form of governance and declaration of independence and those adopted during the American revolution two centuries later. The second and third sections of the paper analyzes the pivotal roles played by the Dutch republic during the Enlightenment and the Glorious Revolution, both of which had major influences on American colonial political theory and institutions. The fourth section of the paper notes direct effects of the Dutch republic on the settling of America, American political institutions, and the early financing of the American republic. The fifth section concludes the analysis.

The historical narrative is grounded in the new institutional strand of political science (Hall and Taylor, 1996) and in the Virginia approach to constitutional political economy. Its focus is largely on institutional developments. Preexisting institutions affected the early political structure of the Dutch republic. Subsequent institutional innovations and practices affected the routines of Dutch leaders, the ideas of enlightenment political philosophers, and future efforts to devise new forms of federalism. Dutch foreign policy also affected both British and American constitutional developments. It can, thus, be argued that Dutch political institutions established in the late sixteenth century directly and indirectly had significant effects on the constitutional designs worked out in Philadelphia two centuries later.

To claim institutional influence is, of course, not to claim institutional determinism. The narrative developed below also suggests that personality and luck as well as institutions, ideas, and economic interests affected Dutch and American political developments.

II. Parallels between the early Dutch and American Republics

A. Setting the Stage: the “Spanish” Netherlands and the Dutch Revolt

In the fifteenth century, the provinces and towns of the lowland areas now known as the Netherlands and Belgium were gradually accumulated by the Burgundy family of eastern France as it extended its domain along the central corridor of continental Europe through marriage and conquest. The Burgundy territories eventually included much of what we now know as Belgium, Eastern France, Southwest Germany, the Netherlands, and Western Switzerland. A series of well-planned marriages subsequently linked the Burgundian and Hapsburg families, and also the Hapsburgs with the Spanish crown. In this manner marriage and inheritance rather than conquest made Charles V the ruler of both the Holy Roman and Spanish empires, and also made the lowland territories at the mouth of the Rhine part of Spain.

Although fortunate in his parents and grand parents, Charles V was less fortunate in other respects.² Charles V and his successors continued the centralizing efforts of his forebears, and the periphery continued its resistance in words and deeds, including the occasional pitched battle. This was an unsettled period, and the centralization of taxation and appointment powers were hotly contested by local authorities (Israel 1995: 28-34). To these long-standing economic and political conflicts over centralization, the Protestant Reformation added a new religious dimension. In 1517, the same year that Charles V left the lowlands to assume his responsibilities in Spain, Luther’s famous 95 theses were brought to the attention of church officials in Wittenberg. Lutheran and Calvinist doctrines spread throughout Europe in the early sixteenth century. To a significant extent the new conflict over religious doctrine may be regarded as another centralization controversy, insofar as many local religious authorities wished to modify existing practices and avoid sending church revenues to Rome. However, the religious foundations of these controversies produced a new more intense, broad, and divisive source of conflict and civil disobedience.

In the Rhinish lowlands, Protestant groups defenestrated Catholic churches and cathedrals. Spanish officials attempted to reestablish law and order, which they believed required repressing Protestant religious groups and punishing their leaders. However, the brutality of the Spanish Army, the Inquisition in the Rhine's lowlands, and new taxes imposed to finance efforts to "restore order" unified Dutch opposition to their Spanish governors. Order was not restored, but rather completely undone, as eventually was Spanish rule north of the Rhine (Israel 1995: 162-8).

Many of the disputed imperial policies were similar to those that confronted American colonists two centuries later. The Dutch were concerned about the rule of law and religious tolerance. Spanish soldiers were lodged in private homes and private lands were confiscated. Protestants and political opponents were sentenced to death without a proper trial. At first, the Dutch opponents of Spanish policies simply argued that the King should choose his agents from among local elites and respect long-standing traditions of local autonomy. When negotiations fail, however, and political stakes increase, revolutions can become individually rational strategies (Weingast 2006). The Dutch Revolt led to the formation of a new federal republic.

B. Parallels between the Early Dutch and American Founding Documents

As in the American case, the founding documents of the Dutch republic began as treaties of alliance among more or less independent states. In the Dutch case, however, the new documents were not grounded in enlightenment political theory, because it had not yet been written. The agreements were negotiated and signed nearly a century before Hobbes (1651) and Locke (1689) developed their theories of social contract. And, the new government divided policymaking authority between a representative assembly and an independent executive well before Montesquieu's (1748) analysis of the merits of a separation of power. Rather, the new Dutch institutions and policies would affect the thoughts and publications of those unborn political theorists and also, partly through them, the American founding fathers two centuries later.

In 1579 the northern provinces agreed to the *Union of Utrecht*, which was part defense alliance and part constitution for a new federation. The *Union of Utrecht* created a weak central government that accommodated the long-standing Dutch interest in local autonomy by modifying existing Burgundian institutions. American rebels two centuries later would form a very similar government under their *Articles of Confederation*. Article 1 of the *Union of Utrecht* united the seven provinces “as if a single province,” but also assured that the provinces and cities retain their historic privileges and autonomy. Article 2 permanently bound the provinces together in a mutual defense alliance. Very similar terms were adopted by the American states in the first three of the *Articles of Confederation* signed in 1778.

The *Union of Utrecht* specified that all new taxes and declarations of war and peace would require the unanimous consent of the provinces. Other national policies would be determined by a majority of provincial votes. The *Articles of Confederation* also required supermajorities (9/13) for declarations of war and borrowing money and used majority rule for other policies under Article 9. Article 13 of the *Union of Utrecht* called for religious tolerance in accordance with the pacification of Gent. The provinces were free to regulate religious matters, provided that everyone remained free to exercise their own religion. (No provisions for religious tolerance were made in the *Articles of Confederation*.) Articles 9, 16, and 21 specified that the stadhouders were to arbitrate differences among the provinces on matters of general interest and on matters of constitutional law (Barker 1906: 99-100; Rietbergen 2002: 84). In America, the Congress of states delegates retained this responsibility under the *Articles of Confederation*.

Negotiations with the Spanish continued to be fruitless, and thus on July 26, 1581 the States General adopted a declaration of independence (the *Act of Abjuration*). The line of reasoning developed in this pre-enlightenment document is surprisingly similar to that developed by the post-enlightenment document crafted by the committee of Jefferson, Adams, and Franklin in Philadelphia two centuries later. The Dutch declaration espouses a theory of limited govern-

ment, includes a list of grievances, and mentions the natural and ancient rights of man. The *Act of Abjuration* uses the “necessity” of escaping from tyranny as its justification for secession as does the *Declaration of Independence*: (See Table I below.)

Table I
Excerpts from the Dutch and American Declarations of Independence³

Act of Abjuration, 1581	Declaration of Independence, 1776
<p><i>As it is apparent to all that a prince is constituted by God to be ruler of a people, to defend them from oppression and violence as the shepherd his sheep; and whereas God did not create the people slaves to their prince, to obey his commands, whether right or wrong, but rather the prince for the sake of the subjects (without which he could be no prince), to govern them according to equity, to love and support them as a father his children or a shepherd his flock, and even at the hazard of life to defend and preserve them. And when he does not behave thus, but, on the contrary, oppresses them, seeking opportunities to infringe their ancient customs and privileges, exacting from them slavish compliance, then he is no longer a prince, but a tyrant, and the subjects are to consider him in no other view...</i></p>	<p><i>In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.</i></p>
<p><i>All these considerations give us more than sufficient reason to renounce the King of Spain, and seek some other powerful and more gracious prince to take us under his protection; and, more especially, as these countries have been for these twenty years abandoned to disturbance and oppression by their king, during which time the inhabitants were not treated as subjects, but enemies, enslaved forcibly by their own governors...</i></p>	<p><i>... when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, , it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States.</i></p>
<p><i>So, having no hope of reconciliation, and finding no other remedy, we have, agreeable to the law of nature in our own defense, and for maintaining the rights, privileges, and liberties of our countrymen, wives, and children, and latest posterity from being enslaved by the Spaniards, been constrained to renounce allegiance to the King of Spain, and pursue such methods as appear to us most likely to secure our ancient liberties and privileges.</i></p>	<p><i>We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.</i> <i>We, therefore, ... solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved;</i></p>

Note that the first and third excerpts develop an early theory of natural rights and limited governance a century before Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* were published in 1689. The second of the three excerpts from the *Act of Abjuration* demonstrates that the Dutch were initially reluctant to form a completely republican government without a prince or king at the helm. However, no king or queen accepted the proffered throne—most likely because of the military and economic costs associated with doing so. At the time of the Dutch revolt, the Hapsburgs were the most powerful family in Europe, and Dutch success was by no means assured. The southern half of the Rhinish lowlands (Belgium) was successfully subdued by the Spanish and remained in Hapsburgian hands for another two centuries.

The North's successful and fortunate war of succession allowed the procedures specified by the *Union of Utrecht* and its *Act of Abjuration* to become the constitutional core of national governance in the United Provinces of the Netherlands for the next two hundred years. A new republic was established in the northern half of the Rhine's delta, *Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden*, the United Provinces of the Netherlands.⁴

The principal institutions of the Dutch republic were the States General (*Staten-Generaal*) an assembly representing the provincial governments, and the office of stadhouder, which was more than a prime minister (an office not yet invented), but less than a king. The States General possessed significantly more power than the parliaments of England and France at this time. The States General were "self-calling" and represented sovereign provincial interests rather than economic or religious interests, per se. The States General used unanimous agreement for major decisions, as did many of the provincial assemblies, which indirectly gave the provincial and urban governments dominant power over Dutch finance and law. This clearly constrained the centralization of authority in the Netherlands relative to that of England and France.

Dutch stadhouders were selected by the provinces, rather than by a king or prince as in previous times. Each province could select its own stadhouder; although in practice there were normally one or two stadhouders, rather than seven, both chosen from branches of the Orange-Nassau family, who served for life.⁵ The office of stadhouder was usually combined with the office of captain general of the Dutch army, and so resembled the future office of President of the United States. Because of his role as captain general and as an arbiter among the provinces, the stadhouder had a somewhat more encompassing national interest than the provincial members of the States General and often pressed for the provision of nationwide public goods, especially national defense. Stadhouders rose in importance during wars and diminished during times of peace. Occasionally, however, provincial governments chose not to have a stadhouder at all, especially when military threats seemed to be modest.

The decentralized and divided government that emerged from the founding documents of the Dutch republic produced a powerful, prosperous, and relatively tolerant society that attracted immigrants from throughout Europe.

C. Parallels between the Emigration to the Dutch and American Republics

Contemporary mercantilist theories and practices were less binding in the Netherlands than in other European countries, because of its orientation toward international trade and because its decentralized governance generated competition among localities for the large inflows of new capital and labor, which favored relatively open internal and external trade networks. Together these produced rapid economic growth, which encouraged further immigration by increasing economic opportunities for immigrants relative to those available elsewhere in Europe. The population of the United Provinces grew rapidly and commerce expanded, as innovators, capitalists, craftsmen, and scholars converged on the Netherlands. Amsterdam became a metropolis, and many other towns became cities. New universities, newsletters, journals, and printing companies were founded.

Economics, however, was not the only reason for the influx of persons and capital into the Netherlands. If not a liberal state in the modern sense, the United Provinces was a relatively safe haven for nonconformist religious and political ideas. This was also a consequence of its decentralized political institutions, rather than widespread tolerance per se. Although the *Union of Utrecht* called for religious tolerance, as did many of the republic's early political leaders, tolerance was not always supported by provincial and urban governments. However, local autonomy implied that a place could nearly always be found in the Netherlands where nonconforming religious practices and intellectual perspectives would not be contested by local authorities.

As a consequence, thousands of Protestants and other nonconformists from the southern provinces (Belgium) moved to the Netherlands in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. A similar immigration from throughout Europe followed, including thousands of Huguenots from France and several hundred English Puritans. Of course, not all the new immigrants were pleased with life in the Netherlands—half of the pilgrims on the *Mayflower's* voyage to New England were English Puritans who found life in Leiden unsatisfactory, as developed below in section IV. The magnitude and breadth of this immigration, however, clearly demonstrates that Dutch political institutions and their associated tolerance and prosperity were well known throughout Europe in the early seventeenth century.

In addition to people seeking economic and religious opportunities, the United Provinces also attracted individuals and manuscripts with controversial political and philosophical ideas (Dawson 1954). For example, the French philosopher and mathematician, René Descartes, spent more than 20 years living and writing in the Netherlands. In cases in which the controversial persons themselves did not seek refuge in the Netherlands, their books were often anonymously published at Dutch presses rather than at home. Among well-known enlightenment political philosophers, Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau all at one time or another found it necessary to

publish their work at Dutch presses (Dunthorne 2004). Hobbes, who chose refuge in France rather than the Netherlands during the English civil war, also found on his return to England that several of his later books could only be published at Dutch presses (Macpherson 1985: 21-22).

One of its late seventeenth century English intellectual refugees is of particular interest for the purposes of this paper. In 1682, Ashley Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury and organizer of the first national political campaigns in England (against the accession of James II), arrived in the Netherlands, followed a year later by his young protégé, John Locke. Locke remained in the Netherlands for six years. His first and second treatises were finalized during this period, as was his work on religious tolerance. The influence of Dutch political theory and history is evident in his *Two Treatises*. Consider, for example, his influential discussion of tyranny:

[200] the special and greatest point of difference that is between a rightful king and a usurping tyrant is this, that whereas the proud and ambitious tyrant doth think his kingdom and people are only ordained for satisfaction of his desires and unreasonable appetites, the righteous and just king doth by the contrary acknowledge himself to be ordained for the procuring [securing] of the wealth and property of his people.

and on the limited delegation of the authority to govern:

[221] There is therefore, secondly, another way whereby governments are dissolved, and that is, when the legislative, or the prince, either of them, act contrary to their trust.

Both arguments clearly parallel those developed in the *Act of Abjuration* quoted above, and both subsequently influenced American political debate a century later, as evidenced by the excerpts from the American Declaration of Independence.

The magnitude and nature of emigration and the variety of publications produced during the first half century of the Dutch republic demonstrate that the principles of limited government, tolerance, and natural rights were more than mere ideas in the United Provinces (Dunthorne 2004; Goldie 1997: xii; Schwoerer 1990). Substantial immigration continued for many decades. It also bears noting that Locke's fame emerged only *after* his safe return to England from the Netherlands in 1689, where much of his work was initially published anonymously. Miller (

all political historians. Locke's intellectual development, however, is not the only significant connection between the American and Dutch republics.

III. The Glorious Revolution and the Dutch Stadhouder Willem III

The Glorious Revolution of 1688-89 widely regarded to be a decisive moment in English history, the time at which Parliament permanently became a full partner in English governance and the threat of absolutist rule was eliminated. The Glorious Revolution (indirectly) established the balanced model of governance analyzed in Montesquieu's (1748) chapter on the separation of powers, which influenced American intellectuals in the 18th century, and which subsequently became the model for constitutional monarchies around the world in the nineteenth century. The English Bill of Rights adopted in 1689 is often said to be the origin of the bill of rights concept adopted a century later by the eighteenth century constitutional designers of the United States and France. Indeed, some scholars argue that the Glorious Revolution is the pivotal event in modern history (Goldstone 2006).

Most English accounts of the rise of Parliament neglect the very important role that the Dutch republic, its leaders, and institutions played in the military phase of the Glorious Revolution, in the substance of the English Bill of Rights, and the subsequent acts of Parliament through which Parliament eventually achieved dominance. Even fewer mention the role of a pivotal Dutch leader in preserving the autonomy of colonial governance in America.

A. A Digression on the Medieval English Constitution and the Stuart Kings

In the years preceding the Glorious Revolution, both the long-standing structure of English governance and the founding charters and political autonomy of the American colonies were at risk, for similar reasons. The Stuart kings were great centralizers, who attempted to minimize the influence of representative assemblies at home and abroad.

With the exception of the "Long Parliament" that met during the British Civil War, English parliaments were not self-calling prior to 1689. They met at the pleasure of the king or

queen and were dismissed at his or her convenience. Prior to the Stuarts, however, two centuries of common practice implied that Parliament would be called into session every year or two so that parliament could propose new legislation, decide on grievances, and vote on tax matters. Elections for the House of Commons were normally held for each new parliament (although most members were returned unopposed). All new taxes were subject to parliamentary veto. And, kings often wanted additional revenues.

These requirements of England's medieval constitution were repeatedly violated by the Stuarts, which led to two constitutional crises. During the first (following James I and Charles I) there was a civil war, a short period of parliamentary rule, Cromwell's dictatorship, and finally the restoration of the Stuarts to the crown in 1660. When the Stuarts returned to power, Charles II and his brother James II generated a second constitutional crisis by resuming their family's unconstitutional practices. Charles II kept a favorable parliament in session for eighteen years, rather than subject it to new elections, and he stopped calling parliaments when elections subsequently returned a less tractable House of Commons. His brother James II also failed to call parliaments on a routine basis after his accession. In addition, James rewrote long-standing municipal charters and promoted fellow Catholics within local and national governments and within the military, and pressed for religious tolerance of Catholics (Field 2002: 125-30, Morgan 2001: 381-90).⁶ As part of the same effort to consolidate control, James also began to reorganize governance in the American colonies by centralizing political authority.

Together James' local government "reforms" and support of Catholicism clearly made both local elites and Protestant religious communities concerned about worse to come. The local gentry and nobles were well organized, as were mainstream Protestants, but neither group had an army at their disposal. They did, however, have contacts with someone who could potentially raise an army and whose wife was next in line to the throne, namely, Willem III (soon to become William III for the English), stadhouder of the United Provinces of the Netherlands. In

1688 seven prominent Protestant leaders (including five members of the House of Lords, both Whigs and Tories) invited Willem III to drive James II from the throne in order to protect Protestantism and his wife Mary's claim to the throne. The English Parliament could not do this, because it was not self-calling and had not been in session for two years.⁷

B. Willem/William III, the Dutch Invasion, and the English Bill of Rights

To displace James, Willem III first had to persuade the States General of the United Provinces that an invasion of England would advance Dutch interests. Under the Dutch political institutions, the stadhouder had no power to declare war, no navy to transport the Dutch army to England, and no war budget of his own. Willem argued that if he could secure the English crown, the English would take the Dutch side rather than the French side in the next war, which would greatly improve prospects for the survival of the republic. Britain had taken the French side in the previous war during the reign of Charles II, which had nearly ended Dutch independence. Another war with France was thought likely in the near future, which would again threaten the survival of the republic. The States General was persuaded and agreed to fund Willem's English strategy.

A Dutch fleet carrying 21,000 troops arrived in England on November 5, 1688 (Claydon 2002: 28). The Dutch fleet of 1688 was four times larger than the more famous Spanish armada of 1588 (Israel 1995: 850). A much larger, if less experienced, British army marched to meet the Dutch invasion. However, the 40,000-man British army folded in disarray after several high-level defections led James II to reconsider his plans, retreat, and subsequently to flee to France. Willem and the Dutch army marched without significant opposition to London, arriving on December 18, a month and a half after landing. Willem advised the English army to leave London, and it did so, leaving the city in complete control of Willem III and the Dutch army (Claydon 2002: 28-9; Israel 1995: 852). It was the lack of English casualties that made Willem/William III's enterprise a "glorious" revolution, although the Dutch army would remain in London for

many months, and a significant portion of it would battle James' supporters in Ireland and Scotland for three more years where casualties were many (Israel 1995: 853).

The offer of the crown and the conditions under which the crown would be accepted were negotiated within Parliament and between Parliament and Willem/William, with the Dutch army in control of London. It was the first of many constitutional bargains that would be struck between Willem III and Parliament, and not necessarily the most important. On January 27, the parliament resolved that James II had broken the contract between king and people and had vacated his office (Field 2002: 130). This freed Parliament to offer the throne to Mary, who was next in the line of secession. Willem III, however, quietly let it be known that if he were not offered the throne, he would return to the Netherlands along with the Dutch army. Parliament knew that James II was organizing an army in France to retake the throne and expected that he would not be generous with his detractors. As a consequence, the Bill of Rights, in addition to reasserting ancient Parliamentary privileges, offers the throne jointly to Willem/William and Mary (Claydon 2002: 63). It is the only time at which England had two sovereigns.⁸

Overall, the striking feature of the Bill of Rights is how little else is truly new.⁹ To obtain the protection of the Dutch army and avoid civil war, the crown is offered jointly to both William and Mary, not to Mary or William alone (although no rationale for this is explicitly stated). To obtain the crown, William and Mary agree to rule in accordance with the laws of the land, including those enacted by parliament and accepted by the crown—as had been promised many times before in British history by sovereigns at times of accession (Field 2002). To block the return of James II and reassure Protestants, non-Protestants are excluded from the throne. The crown, of course, retained its long-standing right to veto new legislation from Parliament, and many acts of Parliament were vetoed by the crown during the next century or so (albeit indirectly after Queen Anne's reign).

The reforms and precedents that led to parliamentary supremacy came later. Many of these were negotiated between William and Parliament during the next decade or so. Constitutional negotiations between two veto players requires mutual advantage (Tsebelius 2002, Congleton 2007), and opportunities for constitutional exchange between the new king and parliament were plentiful.

C. Willem III as a Constitutional Monarch: Constitutional Exchange and the Strengthening of Parliament 1689–1702

William III was not the usual English heir to the throne. He was not an inexperienced English nobleman raised in a royal and sovereign English household, waiting for his destiny, but rather an experienced middle-aged man from the most distinguished family in the Netherlands, a major power and the wealthiest state in Europe at that time. At its peak in the seventeenth century, the United Provinces dominated international commerce and had occasionally managed to defeat the French army and British navy simultaneously—no small feat for such a small country, albeit often with the help of various allies. From an early age, Willem had been educated in the manner most useful for a future stadhouder: in military theory and in strategies for negotiating with a sovereign republican government (Claydon 2002: 15). During his adult life, he had become very adept at building support both within the provincial governments and within the States General, first in order to reclaim the stadhoudership and then to secure the resources that he wanted for national defense—as national security was the primary charge of the Dutch stadhouder–captain generals (Claydon 2002: 25).¹⁰ Unanimous support within the States General was necessary to obtain new taxes, which required stadhouders to build a broad consensus for the projects that they favored.

As King of England, Willem/William clearly had the long-standing Dutch conflict with France on his mind, and he focused most of his attention on raising English support and money for a continental war with France. This is not to say that Willem was less interested in power and wealth than previous kings, nor that war with France was not in England's long-term interests,

but William/Willem, as opposed to Charles II and James II, was very concerned about French power, had made promises to the Dutch States General, and was used to working within constitutional constraints to advance his interests in a manner that previous English kings were not. It also bears noting that William's crown was more dependent on parliamentary support than had previously been the case, insofar as James II and Mary continued to have more legitimate hereditary claims to the throne. William, consequently, was more interested in parliamentary good will and more willing to trade his newfound royal prerogatives for tax revenues than any previous English king (Claydon 2002: 37).

The new 1689 Parliament, in contrast, was more self-assured and independent than the one that restored the Stuart monarchy and also more interested in shoring up its own authority. The Glorious Revolution had restored Parliament's veto power over taxation, and Parliament was willing to trade new revenues for new constitutional powers. French support for James II's effort to recapture the Stuart thrones also increased Parliament's interest in William's campaign against France. If successful, James II was unlikely to be as generous as his brother had been after the English civil war.

William's success with Parliament is evident in the enormous funding that it provided him for his war with France. The tax base was expanded, and tax rates were increased. Tax receipts more than doubled relative to those of James II, rising from 2 million to more than 5 million pounds in 1694 (Claydon 2002: 125-6). Expenditures rose even more rapidly, with the consequence that British debt expanded to unprecedented levels (North and Weingast 1989). Much of the new debt was purchased by Dutch financiers, who were comfortable with the new bonds, in part because a Dutchman occupied the crown, and in part because the Dutch method of guaranteeing government bonds was adopted. Specific taxes were earmarked for debt service and repayment (Stasavage 2003: 74-8; 't Hart 1993). Central government employment tripled in size from 4,000 under James II to 12,000 under William, while the British army and navy approxi-

mately doubled in size during the nine years war (Claydon 2002: 126). The long-term geopolitical success of Willem/William's "English strategy" is also obvious. The British had been inclined to intervene on the French side against the Netherlands under Charles II and James II, but after William III, English efforts to contain French influence continued for two centuries (Morgan 2001: 402). And, of course, the Netherlands survived as an independent country, except for short periods under Napoleon and Hitler.

The price paid for Parliament's support of the Nine Years War with France (1688-97) is also clear. By the time of William's unexpected death in 1702, the medieval constitution of England had been substantially rewritten.¹¹ Parliament's power of the purse was restored and then enhanced as royal revenues were restricted at the same time that routine governmental expenditures increased. The precedent of audit and earmarked budgets reduced the sovereign's discretion to use tax receipts as he or she desired, and also somewhat reduced the ability of the crown to purchase support in Parliament through appointments. Parliament was now effectively self-calling. It could meet every three years with or without royal invitation, and members of the House of Commons were henceforth routinely judged by their electorates at least once every three years, however small and elite those electorates may have been. The courts were more independent, and justices served for life, subject only to good behavior. Increased freedom of speech and petition opened up the domain of political debate on matters that previously would have been deemed treasonous and punished accordingly.

All of these substantial constitutional reforms were accepted by a Dutchman who had grown to maturity and held executive power in a republic where policy-making authority and the power to tax were distributed in an even *less favorable* manner for the nation's chief executive. To the extent that America's founding fathers patterned their constitutional efforts after that of eighteenth century British governance with its 1689 Bill of Rights, internal free speech provisions, legislative power of the purse, and lifetime appointment of judges, or were influenced by

Montesquieu's analysis of the new British pattern—as is argued by Lutz (1984)—it is clear that a substantial debt is owed to the Dutch: to the States General for funding a Dutch invasion of England in response to Parliament's call for help (and its own security interests) and to Willem/William III for leading that invasion and subsequently trading away a good deal of his new-found royal powers to obtain resources to pursue his continental interests.

IV. Direct Influences of the Dutch on the American Republic

The analysis to this point suggests that Dutch political institutions, its public policies, and the society that it engendered affected English political theory and institutions and thereby American ones in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. To the extent that the Willem's intervention in 1688 also interrupted British efforts to centralize political authority in the American colonies, an even more direct institutional debt is owed to the Dutch republic, insofar as Colonial autonomy clearly facilitated the American Revolution three-quarters of a century later.¹²

Not all the effects of the Dutch republic on the future American one, however, arose through their mutual intercourse with England. Dutch influences were present in the American colonies from their earliest days. Many of the institutions and ideas of the United Provinces were brought directly to North America by immigrants, especially in the mid-Atlantic colonies. Other significant influences were associated with commercial ties and foreign policy decisions of the Dutch republic. Many of these effects also reflect the influence of the political and legal institutions of the United Provinces.

A. Colonization of New England: Leiden Rock and the Speedwell Compact?

It is little known that the European settlement of New England began in the Netherlands rather than in England. Among the early immigrants to the Dutch republic were several hundred English Puritans who had left England for the Dutch republic in 1609, where they would be free to practice their purified version of Anglicanism without interference from the state or central church authorities. About three hundred Puritans settled into the community of Leiden, a boom-

ing commercial center in the relatively progressive province of Holland. Leiden was an attractive town with a new university and several cathedrals recently converted to Protestant use.¹³

The Puritans held service in one of the largest of the Leiden cathedrals, Pieterskerk (formerly, St. Peter's cathedral) in the center of town (Dillon 1975: 96-8).

After a decade or so many of the English "pilgrims" became dissatisfied with life in Leiden. Work for unskilled labor was hard, their children were becoming more Dutch than English, and both the children and the congregation were being affected by the competing doctrines and lifestyles around them. As a consequence, about 50 of the Leiden puritans decided to move away from these "corrupting" influences—this time across the Atlantic, rather than across the channel.

In 1620 the Leiden pilgrims purchased an old ship, the *Speedwell*, and headed out to sea. The Leiden pilgrims rendezvoused with a similarly sized group of Puritans in South Hampton, who had hired a larger craft, the *Mayflower*, and the two groups set off for the New World in their two ships. Unfortunately, the *Speedwell* was not up to its name. It floundered on the high seas, and the Leiden pilgrims, who were evidently not prepared to leave everything to divine providence, sought safety in the English port of Plymouth in southwestern England. There they sold the *Speedwell* and transferred to the larger and more seaworthy *Mayflower*, and so a single ship completed the voyage to the New World (Dillon 1975: 121-5). Upon landing, they named their new settlement after the port at which their fortunate exchange of transportation took place, and their charter for life in the new world after the ship in which they had negotiated its details, while being safely carried across the Atlantic in 1620.¹⁴

Had the *Speedwell* lived up to its name, both the names of their new settlement and founding compact might well have been different, and the connection between the Netherlands and the United States might have been firmly anchored in our founding mythology—Leiden Rock and the *Speedwell* Compact. Instead the Dutch influence is often relegated to a footnote

concerning the shrewd purchase of several islands at the mouth of the Hudson river by the Dutch West Indies company in 1624.

B. Colonization of the Mid Atlantic: New Netherlands and New Amsterdam

Dutch settlement of the mid-Atlantic region was initiated to advance commercial rather than crown or religious interests, and it was for the most part a profitable venture. The Dutch West India Company developed the Hudson River Valley from the islands at its mouth to its headwaters—from what is now New York City to beyond Albany.¹⁵ Its territory included what is now Long Island, western Connecticut, and much of New Jersey and Delaware.¹⁶ Major land grants were made to developers, who established trade relations with the Iroquois Confederacy, enticed Dutch farmers to relocate to the new world, and launched a variety of merchant enterprises. Its capital New Amsterdam was by some accounts the first true commercial center along the Atlantic seaboard (Shorto 2004). Among those attracted to the early Dutch settlements were the Van Buren, Roosevelt, and Van Rensselaer families, who subsequently played prominent roles in American politics.

The Dutch colony of New Netherlands had many significant and durable effects on colonial history, many of which, although not all, were to the good.¹⁷ The Dutch colony was among the most tolerant and cosmopolitan of the European settlements in the Americas during most of its short history. Eighteen language groups and a broad cross-section of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths were represented. These included religious refugees from the less-tolerant Puritan English colonies to the north (Wish 1950: 94; Taylor 2001: 255). Religious and cultural diversity was to be a hallmark of the middle colonies even after British rule replaced Dutch governance in 1664 (Taylor 2001: 271). In addition to assuring religious toleration, Dutch legal practices also accorded women far greater autonomy than under English law. Under Dutch law, women had rights to inherit and own property that were essentially equivalent to men. Wives could make contracts and launch lawsuits on their own accounts (Taylor 2001: 255-6). Many

newsletters and newspapers were published (Wish 1950: 94-9), and New Amsterdam adopted some of America's earliest environmental laws in 1657 (Sopper 1968).

C. Stuart Efforts to Establish Authoritarian Rule in the English Colonies

Shortly after King Charles II was "restored" to the crown, he made an enormous land grant to his brother James that included all of New Netherlands. Two English warships entered Manhattan harbor to support this new claim, and the Dutch negotiated terms of surrender in 1664.¹⁸ Relatively generous terms of surrender were obtained—effectively a bill of rights, which assured religious liberty, free trade, and the preservation of existing property titles. Both the colony of New Netherlands and its port city New Amsterdam were renamed New York, as they became effectively part of James' Duchy. (James was the Duke of York at that time, but would eventually become king as noted above.) James vested governance in his own appointees and attempted to govern his new territory from England (McKinley 1901, Shorto 2004: ch. 15; Taylor 2001: 260).

The Stuart interest in centralizing political authority also led to legal challenges of existing colonial charters. A series of lawsuits were filed that attempted to abrogate the charters of England's northern colonies, claiming that colonial governments had violated or failed to enforce English law. The charges were accepted, and in 1684 the English Court of Chancery annulled the Charter of the Massachusetts Bay colony. This was followed by successful suits against the Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Jersey charters (Haffenden 1958). The year after his accession to the throne in 1685, James II created the *Dominion of New England*, which eventually placed all of New England, New York, and New Jersey under a single authoritarian administration of Governor Andros. James II appointed his own people to rule the Dominion.

Governor Andros, as ordered, restricted local assemblies throughout the Dominion and reduced judicial independence by appointing new judges and suspending the Massachusetts General Court. New taxes were imposed, and existing land claims were challenged. Enforce-

ment of the Navigation Acts was stepped up. Writs against the charters of Maryland, the Carolinas, Pennsylvania, and the Bahamas were pending. If successful, the James' Dominion would have greatly reduced political autonomy throughout the English colonies in North America (Taylor 2001: 276-7; Haffenden 1958; Osgood 1902).

The colonists resisted this centralization of authority as they would similar efforts a hundred years later. The stakes were high, but in this case it was the Glorious Revolution rather than colonial resistance that ended royal efforts at the centralization of authority. Indeed, the colonial revolts in Boston and New York in 1689 were partly stimulated by the Dutch invasion of 1688 (Steele 1989; Taylor 2001: 280).

When James fled to France following the successful Dutch campaign in late 1688, centralizing efforts in the colonies were discontinued, the Dominion was dissolved, and colonial charters and local assemblies were reinstated. In 1691 William III granted Massachusetts a new charter that guaranteed that delegates to its colonial assembly would be popularly elected, albeit with an appointed governor. The old charters for Rhode Island and Connecticut were reinstated (which continued their practice of electing governors). Pennsylvania's charter was revoked, but subsequently reinstated (Taylor 2001: 283-5). Thus, as an indirect consequence of the Glorious Revolution, but a direct consequence of policy decisions made during William III's term of office, the popularly elected assemblies of the colonial governments regained their veto powers over taxation and their control over colonial militias.

These colonial assemblies clearly played important roles in future relations with England and in organizing the eventual American Revolution during the next century. Formally protesting English policies and organizing a war of secession would have been much more difficult tasks without preexisting representative institutions and colonial militia, because many additional free-riding and coordination problems would have had to be overcome. As Olson (1965) points out, collective action is itself a public good.

D. America's Revolution and its First Constitution

After the unexpected death of William III in 1702, the English crown moved to less ambitious heads. Anne, George I, and George II, who were less interested in English governance and colonial affairs than William and the Stuarts had been, and the “blind eye” that had allowed colonial autonomy to flourish in the mid-sixteenth century was again turned to the colonies. Indeed, Kings George I and II did not even speak English. Within Great Britain itself power continued to shift from the crown to parliament during this period, as ministers rose in importance for much the same reason.

With the accession of George III in 1760 and his new ministers, however, British governance returned to more ambitious men, and colonial affairs received renewed attention. Renewed effort to increase control of colonial governance was evident in the appointments of new colonial governors and the imposition of new colonial taxes by Parliament without consulting colonial assemblies (Miller 1943: 227-8, 255-6). Colonial elites were concerned about increasingly costly regulations restricting development and trade (the 1764 Sugar Act, and 1764 Currency Act) and new economic taxes (the 1765 Stamp Act); for financial as well as political and ideological reasons (Miller 1943: 193, 180-3; Wish 1950: 187-91; Schofield 2004).

Enforcement of the long-standing Navigation Acts were again strengthened and judicial authority was transferred from colonial courts to the Admiralty Courts (the 1767 Revenue Act). Protestant groups feared the establishment of an American Episcopalian bishopry, which they regarded with “papist” suspicions (Wish 1950: 194; Miller 1943: 188-91). In 1774 the Coercive Acts were passed, the Charter of Massachusetts revoked, and most local town meetings in Massachusetts once again banned.

Colonial concerns over renewed British efforts at centralization were summarized in a variety of revolutionary slogans, “no taxation without representation,” “don’t tread on me,” and “give me liberty or give me death.” These concerns clearly echoed those of the Dutch revolt in many ways, as noted above. Economic and political stakes were high and rising, which allowed

free rider and coordination problems of organized resistance to be overcome by the colonial governments. The solutions were also similar. The colonial governments negotiated agreements to coordinate resistance to the new laws, first in the form of joint negotiations with the Parliament and King George III. Perhaps the worrying policies could be repealed or revised.

As negotiations failed, they organized a new national government along confederal lines, and subsequently declared independence. Their first experiments with independent governance were clearly influenced by the Dutch experience with decentralized republican governance. Dutch political and economic history was well-known to educated persons and the parallels between the Dutch experience and the American Revolution were clear to many at the time of the War of Independence. As in the Dutch revolt, the colonies initially joined forces to negotiate with a powerful empire to revise its policies and change its colonial governors, for mutual defense when negotiations proved unfruitful, and ultimately to fight for independence.

The historical performance of the institutions of the Dutch republic, thus, directly influenced colonial analysis of alternative constitutional designs. For example, in his discussion of the adoption of Article V of the *Articles of Confederation*, Jefferson recalls vigorous debate regarding its controversial collective decision rule that provided all states the same power:

Mr Hopkins observed, there were four larger, four smaller, and four middle-sized colonies. That the four largest would contain more than half the inhabitants of the confederated States and therefore would govern the others as they please. That history affords no instance of such a thing as equal representation. The Germanic body votes by states. The Helvetic (Swiss) body does the same and so does the Belgic [Dutch] confederacy. Too little is known of the ancient confederations to say what was their practices. (Jefferson's Autobiography, Koch and Peden 1993: 36.)

Jefferson's overview of these first constitutional debates include more references to the Dutch republic than to any other country (Koch and Peden 1993: 33-38).

The *Articles of Confederation* were debated for two years, and ratified by eleven states in 1778, followed by Delaware in 1779 and Maryland in 1781. The government established bore many similarities to the Dutch States General. The new government represented states rather

than persons, it could not directly impose taxes, and it operated via supermajority rule. It also suffered from many of its failings, including indecisiveness and difficulties in settling interstate disputes. The name chosen for the new republic, the United States of America, also bears a striking resemblance to the usual English interpretation of the *Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden*, the United Provinces of the Netherlands. Adams, who evidently spoke and read some Dutch, subsequently attempted to drum up Dutch political and financial support towards the end of the War of Independence, in part, by noting “our common republican and Protestant aspirations” (Grant 2005: 259-60).

Locke’s influential theory of the social contract with its theory of “voluntary” taxation, religious toleration, and right of revolution (1690) played important roles in arguments against the authority of Parliament to intervene in colonial affairs and eventually for independence from the English crown. Locke’s ideas influenced not only colonial scholarship, editorials, pamphlets, and religious sermons, but also the *Declaration of Independence* produced for the Continental Congress by the able committee of Jefferson, Adams, and Franklin.¹⁹ The central argument for independence, as noted above, bore a strong resemblance to that of the Dutch *Act of Abduration* penned two centuries before.

E. Dutch Financial Support for the New American Republic

To conduct a war, resources must be shifted from peaceful to military uses. In a civil society this is normally accomplished through government purchases of labor and capital and financed through a combination of taxation, printing money, and borrowing. The Continental Congress used all three methods of finance, but toward the end of the war, the government of the United States was essentially bankrupt. Inflation was high, commerce was disrupted, and domestic and international sources of borrowed capital, particularly French, had been fully exploited. U. S. “payments” abroad were issued on the basis of foreign loans that did not yet exist (Grant 2005: 273).

Until 1781 loans from abroad were essentially unavailable, apart from France. Financial markets are well aware that revolutions are risky ventures. Nonetheless, both the Continental Congress and state governments sent representatives to the major financial centers of Europe in pursuit of loans. As the most developed financial center in Europe at that time after London and Paris, Amsterdam was a natural destination for American representatives. The Netherlands was initially neutral, which was a consequence of a compromise between domestic interests favoring England (including the stadhouder, Willem V) and those favoring the French and American side, which were well represented in the States General (Edler 1911: ch. 2).²⁰ The Continental Congress sent Franklin, Laurens, and Adams to raise money from Dutch financiers. Franklin failed in 1778, Laurens was captured by the British en route to the Netherlands in 1780, and so the main responsibility for negotiating Dutch loans fell to John Adams (Grant 2005: 269-70; Edler 1911: ch. 8).

At first Adams found this to be an impossible task, as financiers are well aware of the risks associated with revolutions and revolutionary governments. However, as the tide of the War of Independence turned in 1781, the Dutch government and financiers began to take the “American revolt” more seriously. Yorktown fell in October of 1781. In November 1781, a loan guaranteed by France and the States General of the Netherlands was subscribed to by Dutch financiers. In April 1782, the States General formally recognized the new colonial government by accepting John Adams as the diplomatic representative of the United States. It was the second government to do so (after France). By the end of 1782, a Dutch-American treaty of amity and commerce had been negotiated, and another large American loan had been subscribed to without external guarantees, although at a much higher interest rate (5.5% versus 4%; Grant 2005: 274-7).

It bears noting that providing political and economic support for America entailed significant risk in 1782, as suggested by the higher interest rate. The formal end of the war was not

negotiated until 1783, nor was the peace treaty ratified by Congress until January 1784, just before the deadline set by the treaty itself (Jefferson's *Autobiography*, Koch and Peden 1993: 56-9). Moreover, it was not clear that the government of the United States would be creditworthy, because its central government lacked the ability to impose taxes under the *Articles of Confederation*. Without the assurances of the Dutch States General and France, few Dutch financiers would have purchased American bonds.

Indeed, the concerns of the international financial market and the higher interest paid to Dutch financiers for the second subscription reinforced the federalist case for the creation of a more centralized and more creditworthy United States government.

F. Development and Ratification of the Second Constitution of the United States

As a possible remedy to fiscal and national defense problems associated with the *Articles of Confederation*, many of the founding fathers pressed for vesting greater legislative and executive authority in the central government. At this point, the Dutch institutional parallels weaken, although Dutch influence does not disappear. Madison's overview of the second constitutional debates reveals that concerns similar to those previously expressed by Hopkins were raised by Patterson of New Jersey in 1787. In this case, however, the proponents of granting equal power to states were only partly successful. The new Senate retained the principle of state appointed representatives, but a new popularly elected assembly was added in which states had substantially different influence. A new more powerful office of President was proposed, which some, including Madison and Jefferson, thought resembled the Dutch stadholdership.

Many of the papers and letters written to support and oppose the new constitution during the period of ratification refer to the Dutch experience. For example, Hamilton and Madison mention Dutch political institutions and history in several of their *Federalist Papers*. Number 20 uses defects in the decentralized government of the United Provinces as a rationale for further centralization. Madison also argues that the Dutch stadholdership had a unifying influence on

the republic, as a defense of the proposed office of president.²¹ In contrast, Jefferson was concerned with the gradual transformation of the Dutch stadhoudership into a hereditary office of nearly regal power during the eighteenth century; a point that he stresses in his critique of the new office of President in his letter to Madison dated Dec. 20, 1787 and also in his *Autobiography* (Koch and Peden 1993: 76-7 and 403-7). Similar remarks were advanced by George Mason and other anti-federalists, as for example in “What Does History Teach” published by a Newport man in 1788. Indeed, one prominent anti-federalist writer adopted the pen name, John DeWitt, after a Dutch patriot who had opposed centralized authority in the Netherlands during the seventeenth century (Ketcham 1986: 189).

In the end, ratification of the new constitution was conditioned on the promised passage of a bill of rights, which was insisted on by the colonies of New York and Virginia. New York, as noted above, had previously obtained explicit guarantees analogous to a bill of rights when British rule replaced by Dutch rule in 1664, and also in 1683 when a commission of colonists sought and obtained (albeit temporarily) a representative assembly from James II (Lovejoy 1964). In 1787 twenty-six New York leaders, about half of Dutch decent, signed a document declaring that the new constitution would not be ratified by New York without a similar bill of rights (Shorto 2005: 315-6). It was partly at this insistence that the Bill of Rights was accepted by the federalists, and largely New York’s hesitation to accept greater centralization that caused the *Federalist Papers* to be published in New York newspapers. When New York’s newly elected constitutional convention first met in 1788, fewer than a third of the delegates favored ratification (19 of 65) (Wright 1961: 3-5).

The success of the federalists partly accounts for the subsequent neglect of Dutch influences on early American political and institutional developments. Although the first national government created by the *Articles of Confederation* bore many similarities to the Dutch States General, the second national government was quite different. The popularly elected House of

Representatives implied that the United States of America was no longer a confederation, but rather a federal state. The new bicameral legislature used majority rather than supermajority rule for all but constitutional decisions. Minorities were protected by a division of authority (multiple veto players and multiple veto points) and eventually by a bill of rights and Supreme Court, rather than supermajority rule.

The model and history of an important confederal republic, thus, became less relevant for the new more centralized and democratic republic that emerged after ratification.

V. Passing of the Republican Baton

Shortly after Adams negotiated Dutch recognition of the United States and arranged for loans, the Dutch republic was engulfed by the French Revolution, and after a brief period as a liberal democracy, the Netherlands became a kingdom in 1806 when Napoleon decided to make his brother Louis the King of Holland. Dutch decentralization was greatly reduced as King Louis imposed new more centralized political institutions such as centrally appointed mayors which reduced local autonomy. Napoleon's empire also ended the two other long-standing European republics, when his armies captured Venice and Switzerland.

After Napoleon was defeated, the son of the last stadhouder lobbied the English and the other great powers to reestablish the Netherlands as an independent country, preferably as a kingdom. The Vienna Congress of 1814 affirmed this solution by creating a *Kingdom of the Netherlands* with expanded boundaries as Europe was reorganized.²² The territories of the long-independent northern provinces were joined with the southern lowlands, which had remained within the Hapsburg domains.²³ A new constitution was drawn by supporters of the House of Orange, amended to secure support in the new southern provinces, and approved (Kossman 1978: ch. 3). That the new King Willem regarded his station to be above that of even his most imperial stadhouder forebears is evident in his number—not Willem VI, but Willem I. So it was

that just a little more than two centuries after the Dutch republic was founded, the Dutch experiment with republican rule ended in monarchy, a monarchy that continues to the present time.

That the new republic across the Atlantic owed much to a previous republic could now easily be forgotten, even if those debts proved more enduring than the republic itself. Many of the Dutch influences on America institutional developments were unintended consequences of the political institutions adopted via contract at the inception of the Dutch republic. These confederal institutions promoted decentralized governance, economic development, secular and religious tolerance, and also, albeit less successfully, rule-following behavior by its political leadership. Its successful war to secede from a major empire, its institutionalization of tolerance, its support of enlightenment scholars, its contribution to ending English absolutism, and its early financial support for the new republic clearly contributed to the ideas, institutions, and economics upon which the present government of the United States is largely based.

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² Charles V was born in Ghent in 1500. His father Phillip was the son of Maximilian of the Hapsburg dynasty and Mary of the House of Burgundy. His mother Joanna was the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, the rulers of Spain that funded Columbus' famous expedition in 1492. Charles became the King of Spain at the age of 16. Two years later, in 1519, Charles became Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire through his grandfather Maximilian. Thus, through little of his own doing, but as a consequence of his carefully crafted genealogical tree, Charles became the ruler of one of the largest empires ever assembled.

³ The translations of the *Act of Abjuration* are taken from Thatcher (1907: 189-97) as modified by Jerome S. Arkenberg, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1581dutch.html>.

⁴ This short political history of the early Netherlands is drawn from notes drawn from numerous books, colleagues, encyclopedias, and web sources read during my stay at the University of Leiden. However, most of it can be reconstructed from the pages of Israel's comprehensive history of the Dutch republic (1995).

⁵ The Nassau family had long been prominent in the Netherlands. Its senior members had often been appointed stadhouders during Burgundian and Hapsburgian times. The family had ties to German and French noble families and "owned" many properties and titles, including the principality of Orange in France—which accounts for both the title Prince and appellation House of Orange. Willem the Silent, also known as William I in English accounts of Dutch history, played a pivotal role in the early military campaigns of the Dutch revolt, but was assassinated in 1580 before the declaration of independence was adopted and before the revolt ultimately succeeded.

⁶ English Protestants had feared that James II would undo the Protestant Reformation in England when he took the throne. With this in mind, the Earl of Shaftesbury had organized the first nationwide political campaign in order to block James' accession to the throne. Shaftesbury's campaign was sufficiently successful that legislation was passed in the House of Commons to block James' accession, and sufficiently well organized that the Whig (anti-James) and Tory (pro-James) party names came into existence. However, his party's "exclusionary acts" were vetoed by the House of Lords, and Lord Shaftesbury wisely left for the Netherlands in 1682, prior to James' accession in 1685.

⁷ Willem III had previously published a letter disapproving of James II's religious policies, but promised not to intervene in England unless he were invited to do so by leading Englishmen. His letter was published in 1687 and evidently was well received within Protestant circles in England. A copy of the letter is available at: <http://www.jacobite.ca/documents/16880630.htm>. (All those who signed the letter asking for his assistance were subsequently rewarded with elevated titles.)

⁸ Willem/William III was the "third" in both Dutch and English counts. He was the third stadhouder with the name Willem and also the third English king with the name William.

⁹ The Bill of Rights clearly states as much: "[Parliament] do pray that it may be declared and enacted that *all and singular the rights and liberties asserted and claimed in said declaration are the true ancient and indubitable rights and liberties of the people of this kingdom.*" The conservative nature of the Bill of Rights was necessary to secure broad support within Commons and Lords for the bill as a whole. Parliamentary records indicate that many members continued to support James' claim to the crown, and many others were concerned that long-standing constitutional practices should be continued. Only a minority in the recorded debate summaries seem interested in a "glorious revolution."

¹⁰ Holland, the most important of the Dutch provinces, had eliminated the office of stadholdership in 1654, partly at the behest of Cromwell (Israel 1995:722-3). Holland's stadholdership remained defunct until the French invasion of 1672 (Israel 1995: 802).

¹¹ William III, the heroic leader of many military campaigns, died without heirs from injuries sustained after falling off a horse in 1702. Mary's sister, Anne, acceded to the throne.

¹² Among William and Mary's other significant accomplishments as joint sovereigns of England was the establishment of the College of William and Mary in Virginia in 1693 by royal charter (Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, Kock and Peden 1993: 247). As the only college in the colony of Virginia, this gift played an important role in the education of prominent Virginians and, thereby on colonial American politics. Its alumni include four of signatories of the declaration of independence, including its principal author Thomas Jefferson and his law professor, George Wythe. In addition to Jefferson, two other alumni, James Monroe and John Tyler, became presidents of the United States. Alumnus John Marshall became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and author of the pivotal *Marbury v. Madison* decision in 1803 that transformed the nation's highest appellate court into a constitutional court. George Washington is also reputed to have received his surveyor's license at William & Mary.

¹³ The Protestants had recently "traded" facilities with the Catholics, who found themselves worshipping "underground" after the Dutch revolt in much the same manner as the Protestants had worshipped in the years before its success.

¹⁴ The story of the Leiden Puritans is recounted in a variety of books, museum pamphlets, and websites, not all of which are entirely consistent with one another, as true of many histories. Dil-

lon (1975) provides a very thorough and integrated analysis, from which most of the above synthesis can be reconstructed.

¹⁵ The Hudson river and the fine harbors of the islands at its mouth had been explored in 1607 and claimed for the Netherlands by an Englishman, Henry Hudson, in the employ of de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, the Dutch East India company.

¹⁶ The Dutch claimed lands along both sides of the Delaware river, which had also been explored by Hudson. Small outposts were created to defend their claim. In 1638, a Swedish company invaded “their” territory and settled the Delaware valley as far as Trenton, NJ. The log cabin was brought to the Swedish colony by the Finnish settlers. New Sweden was annexed by the Dutch in 1655.

¹⁷ The first African-Americans arrived in Virginia as indentured servants in 1619 on a Dutch ship (Wish 1950: 67-8) at about the same time that Virginia’s democratic House of Burgesses was established. A few years later, slaves were among the earliest settlers of New Amsterdam. The slave trade began in earnest shortly thereafter. Lovejoy’s (1982: 483) estimates that the British shipped 2.5 million slaves, the Portuguese 1.8 million, the French 1.1 million, and the Dutch approximately 350 thousand between 1701 and 1800.

¹⁸ New York briefly returned to Dutch rule in 1673, when Dutch war ships arrived and the English surrendered. New York was renamed New Orange. The colony was returned to the English with the Treaty of Westminster ending the third Anglo-Dutch war in 1674 (Shorto 2005: 308).

¹⁹ The orthodox view of Locke’s importance has been challenged in recent historical work, as noted by Lutz (1984). In a partial defense of the orthodox view, Lutz (1984: 192) notes that during the revolutionary 1760s citations to Locke and Montesquieu account for more than 60 percent of the citations to enlightenment political theorists. After the war’s successful conclusion, Montesquieu’s citations account for 60 percent of enlightenment citations. A contemporary editor of the *Federalist Papers*, Wright (1974: 5) notes that “Montesquieu had a vast prestige in that day. He was almost venerated as the exponent of principles of free government.”

Montesquieu’s two most constitutional chapters were to a considerable extent shaped by the Dutch republic. His chapter on federalism uses the Dutch republic as one of the best examples of federalism. His chapter on divided government focuses on an idealized version of the English government that emerged after William III.

²⁰ Neutrality did not imply the absence of commercial relationships. Dutch traders brought many products to the colonies before the Navigation Acts and smuggled others in after those acts, including gunpowder to the revolutionaries (Edler, 1911: ch. 2, Grant 2005: 253).

²¹ Many of these colonial documents are available on the web from Yale’s Avalon Project, <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/artconf.htm>.

²² The Swiss confederacy reemerged after Napoleon's defeat, but the stability of that old confederacy was undone and required a new constitution in 1848 to restore. The territory of Venice was apportioned to Austria by the Vienna Congress.

²³ Hapsburg forces had defeated secessionists in the South during the Dutch revolt. The new union of the northern and southern provinces at the mouth of the Rhine lasted only until 1830, when the southern provinces seceded from the Kingdom of the Netherlands and formed a new Kingdom of Belgium (Kossman 1978: 154-6).