

Introduction

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William III, the ‘King-Stadholder’, was arguably one of the most influential monarchs in early modern history. Instrumental in the reshaping of the religious, constitutional and economic configuration of the British Isles and the United Provinces, he also affected the political history of the greater part of Western Europe. His influence extended well beyond the borders of the countries he ruled and his legacy, especially in Great Britain and Ireland, continues even today. William remains also one of the most neglected sovereigns in early modern historiography, which can be explained, at least in part, by a more general lack of interest in late-seventeenth-century political history. Historians of Stuart Britain seem more fascinated with the ‘real’ revolution of the seventeenth century and the Civil War, whereas Dutch historians still prove reluctant to track the process which ended the Republic’s Golden Age.

At the same time William III did, and still does, inspire controversy. Historians have been keen to stress the revolutionary aspects of his reign and the extreme reactions brought about by these. As a young prince, William became Stadholder by popular demand in 1672, staving off disaster when French forces overran the vulnerable Republic. In Britain as well he was hailed as a hero, this time of parliamentary liberties and the Protestant religion. Yet by the time the King-Stadholder died in 1702 he was seen as a warrior king who had squandered the resources of the land on military conflict. In Britain, the Act of Settlement of 1701 would prove to be a devastating review of his reign, and eventually clipped the prerogative wings of the Hanoverians. In the United Provinces the situation was even more drastic. The stadholderate was re-abolished in most provinces after William’s death, which led to local conflict.¹ The paradoxes of William III’s reign are the subject of this volume of essays. It examines its development and impact on both sides of the Channel, and analyses some of the fundamental aspects central to his policies in an attempt to ‘redefine’ William’s and Williamite significance.

An analysis of Williamite policy must necessarily also take into account the complex personality of the King-Stadholder himself. Scholars have found it difficult to understand William’s deeper motivations. The Dutch historian D.J. Roorda aptly described him as *raadselachtig* (enigmatic).² Perhaps central to William III’s persona

1 This was only the case in those provinces where William had been Stadholder. It should be noted that Stad en Lande en Friesland never experienced a Stadholderless Period. They had their own Stadholder and stadholderly court.

2 D.J. Roorda, ‘Willem III, de Koning-Stadhouder’ in: S. Groenveld, H. Mout et al. (eds), *Rond Prins en Patriciaat: Verspreide Opstellen door D.J. Roorda* (Weesp, 1984), 118–42.

was his steadfast faith and a belief in his own providential destiny, including a dogged determination to realise his role. This was most immediately apparent in his Protestantism, but also in the ways in which he moulded and stretched his positions of power, both as Stadholder and as King. Although William's personality played an important role in events, it was his policies – both domestic and foreign – which made a lasting impact on both British and European political, cultural and religious developments. As Julian Hoppit has accurately observed, although few people took a liking to William the *man*, they admired the *idea* of William and what his reign stood for.³ This volume uses as its starting point this idea rather than the man himself, and considers the impact of and the reactions to his reign in their international context.

Until now, few attempts have been undertaken to study the *de facto* personal union between the British Isles and the United Provinces which took shape under William, nor has there been a satisfactory synthesis of the impact of William's policy in a European context. This volume does not aspire to offer a definitive synthesis of William's reign, but is a comparative study of the policies, processes and effects of William III's reign, from 1672 until his death in 1702, within the context of the British Isles and the United Provinces in Europe. Key issues dealt with are the King-Stadholder's unique position and his use of power, Protestantism, foreign policy and propaganda, as well as the opposition against him. By examining these aspects in a wider than usual geographic and temporal framework, the significance of William's reign will be reinterpreted and redefined, opening up a long overdue discussion.

I

Williamite historiography has not flourished over the past decades.⁴ In English, the now dated biography by Stephen Baxter is in many ways still regarded as the most comprehensive study available.⁵ The tercentenary commemoration of the Glorious Revolution in 1988 attracted great historiographical interest and produced a lively debate, although it focused on the significance of the event itself rather than on William's reign. Since then few studies have appeared, aside from Tony Claydon's study of Williamite propaganda and Craig Rose's recent work on England in the 1690s.⁶ The three hundredth year of William's death in 1702 generated little interest

3 Julian Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty? England 1689–1727* (Oxford, 2000), 135.

4 The erudite two-volume Dutch biography of William III and his published correspondence, both by Nicolaas Japikse, remain milestones in Williamite historiography. Japikse, *Willem*; Japikse, *Correspondentie*.

5 Baxter, *William*.

6 Claydon, *Godly Revolution*; Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty?*; H. Horwitz, 'The 1690s Revisited: Recent Work on Politics and Political Ideas in the Reign of William III', *Parliamentary History*, 15 (1996), 361–77; Rose, *England*; M. Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed. Britain 1603–1714* (London, 1996); Geoffrey Holmes, *The Making of a Great Power: Late Stuart and Early Georgian Britain* (London/New York, 1993).

although it did see the appearance of two new biographies by Wout Troost and Tony Claydon.⁷

Part of the problem of studying the King-Stadholder and his significance is the existence of parallel Dutch and British historiographies, which do not necessarily correspond. The divergence between the Dutch and the British historiographical traditions has left several hiatuses, most obviously a comprehensive discussion of William's complex dual position as stadholder and king.⁸ Indeed, despite the fact that personal unions were not an unusual phenomenon in early modern Europe, which was after all at times dominated by composite monarchies, the Anglo-Dutch alliance has seldom been studied as such.⁹ As a result, the King-Stadholder remains a paradoxical figure: the liberator of the Dutch Republic in 1672, who also displayed quasi-monarchical tendencies, the Whig saviour of English liberties yet also an authoritarian soldier-king, a sovereign in England but a servant in the Netherlands. Contemporaries also had difficulty understanding the phenomenon of the 'king-stadholderate'. When a Dutch ambassador arrived in Paris in early 1698, after the end of the Nine Years War, the Dutch nobleman Wassenaar, explained to a nephew of Louis XIV that William III was King of England and Stadholder of Holland, to which a French courtier aptly commented that rather William was 'King of Holland and Stadholder of England [...] He is King and absolute ruler in Holland, but he is not in England, because there is a Parliament which will know perfectly how to clip his wings if he tries to fly too high.'¹⁰ The complexities of this king-stadholderate have resulted in a fragmented image of William's reign, which calls all the more for a comprehensive Anglo-Dutch approach to tackle this problem.

The importance of William III as both a Prince of Orange and a Stuart king has been addressed by Tony Claydon. His dual position, however, still awaits further examination.¹¹ Such an analysis would also highlight the significance of the political and military interaction between Britain and the Continent. John Carswell was one of the first scholars to look at the importance of the continental context in his work on the

7 Claydon, *William*; Baxter, *William*; Troost, *Willem*, translated into English as *William III, the Stadholder-King: A Political Biography* (Aldershot, 2005).

8 Contemporaries were aware of the complexities of William's dual position, for instance see Heim, *Archief*, I. 30–1, Hop to Heinsius 9 May 1690; *A very Remarkable Letter from King William III. To his Favourite Bentinck, Earl of Portland, in French and English, together with Reflections thereon* in: *A Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts etc.*, ed. J. Somers (4 vols, London, 1748), I. 365.

9 But see A. Th. van Deursen, 'Wilhelm III von Oranien. Der Generalstatthalter der Niederlande (1672–1688)', and J.R. Jones, 'Wilhelm III von Oranien. Der Englische König (1689–1702)' in: H. Duchhardt (ed.), *Der Herrscher in der Doppelpflicht. Europäischen Fürsten und ihre beide Throne* (Mainz, 1997).

10 *The Letters of Madame*, ed. G.S. Stevenson (London, 1924), 83, Duchess of Orleans to Duchess of Hanover 24 Apr. 1698.

11 Claydon, *William*.

causes of the Glorious Revolution.¹² More recently, Jonathan Israel has emphasised the decisive role of the Dutch invasion in the Glorious Revolution as well as its aftermath. According to Israel, William both triggered the revolution and ultimately decided its course.¹³ The continental impact in England, Scotland and Ireland, as a result of William's intervention, remains to be explored in more detail, however. A first step has been taken by Jonathan Scott, when he pointed out the structural Dutch influences which led to 'Anglo-Dutch state building' in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution.¹⁴ In this view, the developments in England after 1688 were just as much the result of this foreign intervention as indigenous processes.¹⁵

One way forward is to use Stephen Baxter's concept of 'Dual Monarchy' as a framework to study the further implications of the personal union of the British kingdoms, Ireland and the United Provinces as a composite monarchy. Although they formed distinct entities, a single policy with regard to foreign affairs, diplomacy and warfare was decided by the King-Stadholder, who conducted a distinctly European policy. One pamphleteer argued in fact that William was neither pro-Dutch nor pro-English, but that he had his own agenda and cared little for the welfare of either state: 'that his Circumstances force him upon the Policy to let his Protection hover, with doubtful Wings, betwixt the two Nations [...], he will be intire to neither'.¹⁶ Indeed, one of the main conclusions of the studies to come out of the tercentenary commemoration of the Glorious Revolution in 1988 was the understanding that the events in Britain formed an integral part of European-wide events and had implications on a global scale. Although, in the words of Andrew Lossky, William '[g]radually [...] ceased to be Dutch; British he never became. In the end, William and his closest collaborators – Waldeck, Heinsius, Dijkveld, Bentinck – became emphatically European.'¹⁷

12 J. Carswell, *The Descent on England: a Study of the English Revolution of 1688 and its European Background* (London, 1966).

13 Jonathan I. Israel, 'The Dutch role in the Glorious Revolution' in: Israel, *Anglo-Dutch Moment*.

14 Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge, 2000), 474 ff. Cf. M. 't Hart, 'The Devil or the Dutch: Holland's Impact on the Financial Revolution in England 1643–1694', *Parliaments, Estates and Representations* 11 (1991), 39–52.

15 On the other hand, Michael J. Braddick's work has stressed local English experience over Dutch imports as the basis of the English state, especially the lessons learned in the 1640s and 1650s (e.g. the introduction of the excise).

16 *A very Remarkable Letter*, 359–60. Cf. R. Ferguson, *A Brief Account of Some of the Late Incroachments and Depredations of the Dutch Upon the English etc.* (London?, 1695), 14: '... that the Dutch and We being so differently Circumstanced, by reason of the discrepant Relations which the Prince of Orange stands in to us and to them, there is an absolute and indispensable Necessity, that he Renounce being their Stadtholder, or cease to be our King'.

17 A. Lossky, 'The Political Ideas of William III' in: H.H. Rowen and A. Lossky, *Political Ideas and Institutions in the Dutch Republic* (Los Angeles, 1985), 55.

At the same time it must be remembered that the ‘Dual Monarchy’ encompassed many smaller entities and was in effect an amalgam of three kingdoms and seven provinces, with distinctive political structures. Within this structure, the peripheral territories (Scotland, Ireland and the Dutch land provinces) were dominated by England and Holland respectively, but at the same time experienced a governmental revitalisation, which reaffirmed their legislative powers in relation to the centre. A recent development in both British and Dutch historiography is a new appreciation of William’s relationship with the ‘peripheral’ areas of his realm(s). Historians now question the traditional Hollando-centric view and pay more attention to the marginal territories of the Dutch Republic, the eastern provinces (*landgewesten*).¹⁸ Arguably William took far less interest in the ‘peripheral’ kingdoms of Scotland and Ireland than England. Although there have been many studies on the three kingdoms in the seventeenth century, a preoccupation with the Civil War and issues of identity have meant that a systematic analysis of Williamite policies towards England, Scotland and Ireland remains as yet unwritten.¹⁹

This raises the question of where the Williamite reign fits into the New British History, with its focus on ‘the Atlantic archipelago’. This new approach was famously pioneered by John Pocock in the 1970s, when he made a plea for British historians to abandon their traditional narrow, national approach and instead, to ‘denote the plural history of a group of cultures situated along an Anglo-Celtic frontier’, including the

18 In this volume, both Olaf Mörke and Simon Groenveld argue that these provinces were used by William as a counterweight to Holland.

19 One exception is David Hayton, ‘Constitutional Experiments and Political Expediency, 1689–1725’ in: Steven G. Ellis and Sarah Barber (eds), *Conquest and Union: Fashioning a British State, 1485–1725* (Harlow, 1995), 276–305. Cf. Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (eds), *The British Problem, c. 1534–1707. State Formation in the Atlantic Archipelago* (Houndsmills London, 1996); Glenn Burgess (ed.), *The New British History. Founding a Modern State 1603–1715* (London, 1999). For the Scottish-Irish perspective, see: Allan I. Macinnes and Jane Ohlmeyer, *The Stuart Kingdoms in the Seventeenth Century. Awkward Neighbours* (Dublin, 2002). For specific studies on Williamite Scotland and Ireland, see P. Hopkins, *Glencoe and the End of the Highland War* (Edinburgh, 1998); P.W.J. Riley, *King William and the Scottish Politicians* (Edinburgh, 1979). For Ireland, see J.G. Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685–1691* (London/Toronto, 1969); J.G. Simms, *The Williamite Confiscation in Ireland 1690–1703* (London, 1956); J.G. Simms, ‘Williamite Peace Tactics 1690–1691’ in: D.W. Hayton and G. O’Brien (eds), *War and Politics in Ireland 1649–1730* (London, 1986); W. Troost, ‘William III and the Treaty of Limerick 1691–1697. A Study of his Irish Policy’ (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leiden, 1983); W.A. Maguire (ed.), *Kings in Conflict. The Revolutionary War in Ireland and its Aftermath 1689–1750* (Belfast 1990); C.I. McGrath, ‘English Ministers, Irish Politicians, and the Making of a Parliamentary Settlement in Ireland, 1692–5’, *English Historical Review*, 119 (2004), 585–613; C.I. McGrath, ‘Securing the Protestant Interest, the Origins and Purposes of the Penal Laws of 1695’, *Irish Historical Studies*, 30 (1996), 25–47; B. Whelan (ed.), *The Last of the Great Wars. Essays on the Three Kings in Ireland 1688–1691* (Limerick, 1995).

American and other British colonies.²⁰ However, if the Revolution of 1688/9 was an Anglo-Dutch moment, then William's entire kingship was a European decade, which brought Europe into the heart of the three kingdoms and connected their political fates.²¹ A three-kingdom approach would be too limiting here, which is perhaps why historians have yet to take up the challenge this poses. In a seminal essay, Tony Claydon has addressed exactly this issue, concluding that 'work on the three parliaments under William [...] has blurred the old historiographies, and caused problems for their clear interpretations of archipelagic development'. Instead, Claydon calls for a re-focus on the continental factors responsible for the changes in London, Edinburgh and Dublin brought about by the Revolution.²² William's reign therefore needs to be studied both at a global and at a provincial and local level in Britain as much as in the Netherlands.

An expanded geographical framework and a comparative approach are thus desirable to review William's reign. Moreover, the same holds true for taking into account the *longue durée*. Again, the British and Dutch historiographical traditions could not be more opposed. In the Netherlands, William's Stadholderate is largely associated with a process of political decline which followed the French invasion of 1672 and the subsequent 'forty years' war', although recently a new school of revisionist historians has started to question this view.²³ Traditionally the Dutch invasion of 1688 is then considered to be a Pyrrhic victory, as it signalled the advent of the demise of the Dutch Republic in the long run.²⁴ Dutch political

20 J.G.A. Pocock, 'British History: A Plea for a New Subject', *Journal of Modern History*, 47, 4 (1975), 601–21, 605.

21 Jonathan I. Israel, 'General Introduction' in: Israel, *Anglo-Dutch Moment*, 1–47, 11.

22 Tony Claydon, "'British" History in the Post-revolutionary World 1690–1715' in: Burgess, *The New British History*, 115–37, 127.

23 Cf. J. Aalbers, *De Republiek en de Vrede van Europa. De Buitenlandse Politiek van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden na de Vrede van Utrecht (1713), Voornamelijk Gedurende de Jaren 1720–1733. I: Achtergronden en Algemene Aspecten* (Groningen, 1980); J. Aalbers, 'Hollands Financial Problems (1713–1733) and the Wars Against Louis XIV' in: A.C. Duke and C.A. Tamse (eds), *Britain and the Netherlands VI: War and Society* (The Hague, 1977); Olaf van Nimwegen, *De Subsistentie van het Leger. Logistiek en Strategie van het Geallieerde en Met Name het Staatse Leger Tijdens de Spaanse Successieoorlog in de Nederlanden en het Heilige Roomse Rijk 1701–1712* (Amsterdam, 1995); Olaf van Nimwegen, *De Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden als Grote Mogendheid. Buitenlandse Politiek en Oorlogvoering in de Eerste Helft van de Achttiende eeuw en in het Bijzonder Tijdens de Oostenrijkse Successieoorlog (1740–1748)* (Amsterdam, 2002).

24 E.g. G. de Bruin, 'Willem III naar Engeland: Een Heuglijke Gebeurtenis?', *Kleio*, 29 (1988), 5–13; S. Groenveld, '“J'equippe une flotte très considerable”: The Dutch Side of the Glorious Revolution' in: R. Beddard (ed.), *The Revolution of 1688* (Oxford, 1988), 244–5: 'It is obvious ... that the Revolution of 1688 played a quite different role in Dutch history to what it played in English history; for the Republic it was, in the short run, an essential stage in the continuing struggle against France and, in the long run, the starting-point of its decline to the status of a second-rank power'. For a discussion of the political theoretical implications, see: H. W. Blom, "'Our Prince is King!": The Impact of the Glorious Revolution on Political

historians, fronted by the Namierite D.J. Roorda, largely agree that the fundamental structures of Dutch politics at a local, provincial and to some extent the national level, remained unaffected by William's dramatic rise to power and his 'quasi-monarchical' tendencies.²⁵ The same held true for 1702, when a remarkably smooth transition was made to the new Stadholderless Period while William's foreign policy was continued.²⁶ Change instead was slow to take place.²⁷ William's stadholderate still awaits a comprehensive analysis, and, like in Britain and Ireland, the 1690s remain particularly barren territory.²⁸

Unlike their Dutch counterparts, British historians have been preoccupied with the profound changes which swept the British Isles after William's invasion. Both Whig and Neo-Whig historians alike have emphasised the Glorious Revolution as a turning point in the political history of the nation: the Bill of Rights confirmed the constitutional monarchy and secured the Protestant settlement. On the other hand, revisionist historians have emphasised the interaction between William's war on the Continent and the political developments in England, which forced him to trade off prerogatives for funds. This latter school claims that it was the Continental war and the subsequent Financial Revolution, which transformed England into a fiscal-military state and thus a major power.²⁹ This revisionism has led to a greater interest in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution, although the event itself still attracts

Debate in the Dutch Republic', *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 10-1 (June, 1990), 45-59.

25 E.g. D.J. Roorda, 'Le Secret du Prince. Monarchale Tendenties in de Republiek' in: Groenveld et al., *Rond Prins en Patriciaat*, 172-92.

26 The exception is M. van der Bijl, who emphasises the disruption caused by William's death in 1702: *Idee en Interest. Voorgeschiedenis, Verloop en Achtergronden van de Politieke Twisten in Zeeland en vooral in Middelburg tussen 1702 en 1715* (Groningen, 1981).

27 For the stadholderly system in the eighteenth century, see A.J.C.M. Gabriëls, *De Heren als Dienaren en de Dienaar als Heer* (The Hague, 1990). There are few satisfactory biographies of earlier Stadholders, but see K.W. Swart, *Willem van Oranje en de Nederlandse Opstand 1572-1584* (The Hague, 1994); A. Th van Deursen, *Maurits van Nassau, 1567-1625: De Winaar die Faalde* (Amsterdam, 2000); J.J. Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik, Prins van Oranje: Een Biografisch Drieluik* (Zutphen, 1978).

28 Cf. J.A.F. de Jongste, 'The 1690's and After: The Local Perspective' in: J. A. F. de Jongste and A. J. Veenendaal, Jr. (eds), *Anthonie Heinsius and the Dutch Republic, 1688-1720: Politics, War, and Finance* (The Hague, 2002). For political thought, see G. O. van de Klashorst, W.W. Blom and E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier (eds), *Bibliography of Dutch Seventeenth Century Political Thought. An Annotated Inventory, 1581-1710* (Amsterdam Maarssen, 1986); E. H. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic: Three Studies* (Amsterdam, 2000); for Dutch foreign policy, see M.A.M. Franken, 'The General Tendencies and Structural Aspects of Foreign Policy and Diplomacy of the Dutch Republic in the latter Half of the Seventeenth Century', *Acta Historiae Neerlandica*, III (The Hague/ Leiden, 1968).

29 For good discussions on these historiographical views, see the introductions by Jonathan Israel in *The Anglo-Dutch Moment* and Lois G. Schwoeer in *Revolution*; John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State 1688-1783* (Cambridge MA, 1990).

most attention.³⁰ Contemporaries themselves as well hotly debated whether the event had brought about drastic changes or, whether, in the words of one disillusioned pamphleteer, ‘The Government is still the same, the King is only chang’d’.³¹ Thus although Whigs and revisionists still disagree about the nature and pace of change after 1688–89, they do agree on the Revolution as the end of one era and the beginning of another.

So where Dutch political historians, and their French counterparts for that matter, tend to discuss the period 1668–1715 as dominated by Ludovican foreign policy and therefore as a coherent period,³² British historians have proved reluctant to do so. Due to the ‘revolution’ in foreign policy, the Revolution of 1688/89 has become a major turning point, dividing late-Stuart history into two parts.³³ As a result, it becomes next to impossible to consider the whole of William’s reign, from 1672 until 1702, as a coherent period. But was the Revolution the big turning point or was William’s reign in Britain as much as in the Netherlands, ultimately characterised by continuity?

These questions of continuity and change and the geographical extent of William III’s reign underline its complications, but also point to possible new avenues of research. William’s policies show some remarkable parallels, which might benefit from a more comparative approach. To name a few examples: William’s reputed ‘ambition’ to claim the crown in 1689 resembled his attempt to claim the sovereignty of Gelre in 1675; the Glencoe massacre had its precedent in the De Witt murders.³⁴ An awareness of these parallels might not only clarify patterns in Williamite policy, a more structural approach may also clarify some of its main features. The warfare and strife which dominated William’s reign both in the United Provinces and the British Isles serves as an illustration.³⁵ These wars led to domestic tension

30 A.G.H. Bachrach, J.P. Sigmund, et al. (eds), *Willem III, de Stadhouder-Koning en Zijn Tijd* (Amsterdam, 1988); Dale Hoak and Mordechai Feingold (eds), *The World of William and Mary: Anglo-Dutch Perspectives on the Revolution of 1688–89* (Stanford, 1996); Robert P. Maccubbin and Martha Hamilton-Phillips (eds), *The Age of William III & Mary II: Power, Politics, and Patronage 1688–1702* (New York/Washington, 1989) does cover the whole period. C.C. Barfoot and P. Hoftijzer (eds), *Fabrics and Fabrications. The Myth and Making of William and Mary* (Amsterdam, 1990).

31 *Political Ballads*, ed. W. Walker Wilkins (2 vols, London, 1860), II. 29.

32 E.g. Groenveld, ‘J’equippe une flotte’, 213.

33 But see T. Harris, *Politics under the Late Stuarts. Party Conflict in a Divided Society 1660–1715* (New York, 1993), 2; Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century. British Political and Social History 1688–1832* (London, 1997).

34 M.W. Hartog, ‘Prins Willem III en de Hertogshoed van Gelderland, 1673–1675. Een Onderzoek naar Voorbereidingen, Motieven en Reacties’, *B[ijdragen en] M[ededelingen der] V[ereniging] ‘G[elre]’*, 69 (1976), 125–55.

35 John Childs, *The British Army of William III* (Manchester, 1987); John Childs, *The Nine Years’ War and the British Army: The Operations in the Low Countries* (Manchester, 1991); Van Nimwegen, *De Subsistentie van het Leger*; Matthew Glozier, *The Huguenot Soldiers of William of Orange and the ‘Glorious Revolution’ of 1688: The Lions of Judah* (Brighton, 2002).

due to the subsequent growth of taxation and increasing centralisation, evoking widespread opposition. Hence the standing army debates in England in 1698–99 could be compared with William’s conflict with Amsterdam concerning the army, in 1683–84.³⁶ Such comparisons may lead to a ‘synchronised’ Dutch and British historiography and a more comprehensive understanding of Williamite policy.

II

The aim of this collection then is to examine the whole of William’s reign in both the Netherlands and the three Kingdoms, by following this comparative approach. For this reason, the essays have been grouped together by topic in an attempt to synchronise Dutch and British historiography. Following this structure the essays have been centred around four main themes. Part I focuses on William III as an international statesman, integrating his activities on both sides of the Channel. It mainly deals with politics, diplomacy and warfare. The remaining three sections take a comparative, bi-national approach to the themes of ‘justification’, ‘representation’ and ‘opposition’.

The first two chapters offer a comparative and complementary overview of William’s reign. The traditional indeterminate position of the Stadholder William III is described by Simon Groenveld in Chapter 1. By addressing the question whether he was a Prince or a Minister, he captures the essence of William III’s ambiguous position. Groenveld considers the extent to which William used his unprecedented power in the United Provinces for his own benefit. The Stadholder performed a crucial role in the Dutch constitution, not only as a counterbalance to the dominant province of Holland, but also in the way in which he unified the federal state and efficiently mobilised its resources. Although William on occasion stretched the authority of his position to its utmost limits and sometimes beyond, there were few actual constitutional changes after his first years in power, the transitional period 1672–75. In Chapter 2 the problems facing William as King are analysed by William Speck. As he points out, William III’s entire reign signified both a turning point for England’s political history as well as a continuation of much older forces. Many contemporaries realised very well that William was partly motivated by self-interest, and revisionist historians have concluded that English liberties were safeguarded *in spite of* William rather than *because of* him. The real changes occurred in the British Isles during the 1690s rather than in 1689 and were the result of gradual ‘unintended consequences’ more so than of a single dramatic event. Speck indeed argues that William tried to retain as many prerogatives as possible, and that most constitutional concessions, such as the Triennial and Place Bills, were wrested from him in a long dispute with Parliament.

36 Charles-Edouard Levillain, ‘William III’s Military and Political Career in Neo-Roman Context, 1672–1702’, *The Historical Journal*, 48-2 (2005), 321–50.

Dutch involvement in the events of 1688/89 has only recently been fully acknowledged.³⁷ Separate domestic English and Dutch considerations traditionally only came secondary to William's European foreign policy, which in turn was thought to be ultimately shaped in response to strategy as conducted in Versailles. John Rule in Chapter 5 describes William III and the diplomacy of the peace talks with France, analysing the changing nature of international affairs as a result of the long coalition wars. The Anglo-Dutch military theme is explored by John Stapleton in Chapter 4, which examines the Dutch contribution to the Confederate Army in terms of officers, provisions and logistic support. His assessment of William III as head of the Confederate Army shows him as much more than just Stadholder or King. His role in Europe was that of a political leader, general and peace negotiator. Although this is perhaps not a novel idea in itself, the implications this role had for Europe are often overlooked. William's fate, as Stadholder in the Netherlands, had always been inextricably linked to the Stuart monarchy. Until the 1960s, he was essentially considered to be an English monarch. It has since then been more clearly recognised that he was also King of Scotland and Ireland. In Chapter 3, Wout Troost studies William's Irish policy, pointing out that the European politics of William III reached much further than the Netherlands, England and France. The intervention of the Emperor in Irish religious affairs underlines the international ramifications of Williamite policy. Elsewhere in this volume, Allan MacInnes draws attention to the situation in Scotland, but also to the 'transatlantic' perspective.

Part II considers the intellectual defence of the Williamite settlement both in the British Isles and in the United Provinces. In Chapter 7, Tony Claydon's essay demystifies, but also reinstates, the idea of William the Protestant Reformer. He points out that William's 'spindoctors' successfully managed to marry two hitherto opposite concepts: Protestantism and Toleration. By combining Protestant language with a largely secular discourse of national independence and the threat of Universal Monarchy, English notions of godly faith shifted, resulting in the idea of William as both a hero of Protestantism and Toleration, and the defender of Christendom. In both England and the Netherlands, William was first and foremost a pragmatist and a politician, despite the Protestant rhetoric, which has misled historians in the past. Although the Dutch Calvinist Voetian faction clearly benefited from his elevation to the stadholderate, his prime objective remained to keep religious struggles under control, as Frits Broeyer argues in Chapter 6. William entertained a broader vision of Protestantism, which transcended national boundaries but also confessional divisions. The pragmatist William accepted the Anglican and Presbyterian settlements for England and Scotland respectively. Furthermore, William resisted the attempts of Irish Protestants to repress the Catholic majority in Ulster. As Wout Troost also argues, he was a tolerant monarch at heart.

37 Israel, 'The Dutch Role in the Glorious Revolution'; K.H.D. Haley, 'The Dutch Invasion and the Alliance of 1689' in: Schwoerer, *Revolution*; Groenveld, 'J'equipe une flotte'.

In Chapter 8, Martin van Gelderen illustrates the role William III played in the development of political thought by considering some of the theoretical justifications for the Glorious Revolution. The importance of the Glorious Revolution as a classical moment in Anglo-American history provides a sharp contrast with the largely neglected Dutch justifications of William's invasion.³⁸ Moreover, its relationship with the so-called 'Radical Enlightenment' was uncomfortable to say the least. In analogy with William Speck's assessment of the political importance of William's reign in the 1690s, it would appear that in intellectual terms as well this needs to be understood as much more complex than has hitherto been the case. In this light, both William and late-seventeenth-century Dutch political thought are in desperate need of further reappraisal, as Van Gelderen's chapter implies.

Part III considers the opposition to William's reign. Despite the revisionism which has characterised Williamite historiography since the 1950s and 1960s, William's enemies are still largely dismissed as 'Jacobites', without actually identifying or differentiating between the members of this group, and their arguments are considered simplistic and one-sided. Moreover, they tend to be seen within the context of Scottish or Irish history, but rarely are they considered as English or even British. The chapters in Part III offer a reappraisal of William's enemies and the language they used. William's opponents in England argued that William undermined English liberties by establishing a military dictatorship and by keeping up the war and thus the standing army. In Chapter 9, Charles-Edouard Levillain poses the question whether William's reputation amongst his opponents as a military dictator was a myth or a reality, while describing how William's military ambitions were perceived as problematic, against the backdrop of both classical and recent notions of dictatorship. The resulting dispute appears to have run much more deeply than the standard account of the standing army debate has hitherto appreciated. In Chapter 10 Mark Goldie and Clare Jackson also address the issue of William the dictator and the perception of Dutch William as the invader from abroad. As a result Whig radicals actually joined forces with Anglican Non-juring Tories in constructing a powerful 'Country' critique, which was both more complex and longer lasting than the traditional Jacobite ideology of divinely-ordained absolute monarchy and hereditary succession. That the opposition to William III was much more constructive and refined than is traditionally understood is also made clear in Allan Macinnes' chapter. In Chapter 11, he describes how opposition to William in Scotland, the traditional heartland of Jacobitism, did not strictly focus on James VII and II and his successors and Catholic, absolutist France. Instead, Scottish opposition played a subtler card and actually appears to have turned towards the Netherlands in its search for a solution to the country's economic and political predicament, for which William to an extent was held responsible. Interestingly enough, constitutional limitations on monarchy and the prospects of a federative alliance with the United Provinces came to provide an alternative to incorporating union with England.

38 Blom, 'Our Prince is King', *passim*.

Part IV considers the representative aspects of William's reign in a comparative manner. One of the most persistent myths surrounding his reign is that while the sciences and arts flourished in Restoration and Augustan England, the martial court of the warrior-king was uncultured. Yet William was one of the most prolific builders and oversaw the laying out of elaborate gardens, as historians of garden history have pointed out in recent years.³⁹ This is confirmed by court historians such as Andrew Barclay, who argues in Chapter 13 that the Williamite court dramatically expanded after 1688 and stimulated the patronage of arts in the process. In Chapter 14, Hugh Dunthorne shows that the seemingly bellicose nature of William III's reign should not obscure the fact that he was in fact also a major patron of the arts. Dunthorne points out how images of William in prints, paintings, medals and coins were used to further the image of the King-Stadholder as a military victor. William's ventures into architecture also provide a new insight into the man and his propaganda machine, especially when we compare his Dutch and English buildings. Kensington Palace, Hampton Court Palace and Het Loo were either built or altered by William. William was a master of propaganda. He employed a brilliant team of court propagandists such as Daniel Defoe and Romein de Hooghe. It seems a paradox of William's reign that despite his clever utilisation of court propaganda he never mastered the intricacies of court life in the way of, for instance, Louis XIV or Charles II, although this aspect also needs more consideration. As Olaf Mörke argues in Chapter 12, the Orange court was an important social and political centre, in which various factions and parties could interact. It also provided William with an independent platform for manoeuvring. Looking at William's court in England, Barclay comes to a similar conclusion in his assessment of the changes after the Revolution of 1688–89. Historians have been fascinated with the apparent 'modern' aspects of William's reign, such as the establishment of the Bank of England and the emergence of a standing parliament. But this has often led to neglect those institutions which provided continuity of government, such as the royal court. As Barclay, and Mörke for the Dutch situation, point out, William consciously modelled his court on that of Charles II in order to accentuate Stuart continuity.

To conclude, the different aspects of William's reign, when considered in their international context, yield a number of novel insights. This collection does not aspire to be either complete or definitive, and inevitably a number of aspects have been neglected, most notably the financial, commercial and economic developments.

39 D. Jacques and A.J. van der Horst (eds), *The Gardens of William and Mary* (London, 1988); J.D. Hunt and E. de Jong (eds), *The Anglo-Dutch Garden in the Age of William and Mary. De Gouden Eeuw van de Hollandse Tuinkunst* (Amsterdam/London, 1988); J.D. Hunt, 'Anglo-Dutch Garden Art: Style and Idea' in: D. Hoak and M. Feingold (eds), *The World of William and Mary – Anglo-Dutch Perspectives on the Revolution of 1688–1689* (Stanford, 1996); For Williamite art see R. van Leeuwen (ed.), *Paintings from England. William III and the Royal Collection* (The Hague, 1988); G.P. Sanders, *Koning-Stadhouder Willem III: Een Leven in Penningen en Prenten* (Utrecht, 2002); Patricia Wardle, *For Our Royal Person: Master of the Robes Bills for King-Stadholder William III* (Apeldoorn, 2002); J.D. North and P.W. Klein (eds), *Science and Culture under William and Mary* (Amsterdam, 1992).

Arguably the Glorious Revolution and the Nine Years War triggered financial and economic developments which ultimately led to the rise of Britain as a Great Power. Ironically, the Dutch Republic, as a result of these same wars, declined after the turn of the century, a process which is still largely neglected by historians, despite recent revisionism, which asserts that the Dutch state was still powerful during the early eighteenth century.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the relationship with the Holy Roman Empire and the Spanish Monarchy remain to be further explored in more detail and other issues, such as for instance the Dutch and British colonies, are still almost completely open to interpretation. This volume then is a first step towards a more comparative approach of William III and his reign, which takes into account some of its proper international context.

40 Van Nimwegen, *De Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden als Grote Mogendheid*.