Introduction

A tale of three cities

When John Farrington, the erstwhile English consul in Syria, traveled through northern Europe in fall 1710, he, like many other wayfarers, visited the major cities and recorded his impressions in a series of notes. Of Amsterdam, he observed: "[it] is one of the Noblest & Richest Cities in Europe & is very well noted for the Greatness and Exclusiveness of its Trade, wch: extends itself to all parts of the known World . . . [and] the chief strength of it lyes in the Wealth & multitude of Inhabitants, in their numbers of Ships." Traveling on, he turned north, stopping in Hamburg, "a City that may deservedly be counted among one of the first Rank [located] in a fine Country & good Air, on the River Elbe not far from the Sea."[1] Our traveler did not make station in Antwerp, perhaps because the city was Catholic, still part of the Spanish Habsburg imperium, and at the time caught up in the War of the Spanish Succession. Others who went to Antwerp came away with similar perceptions. A century earlier, an Italian voyager found Antwerp to be "the market of many lands from everywhere in the world."[2] As these observations suggest, economic prowess first and most forcefully impressed all those who stopped in Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Hamburg. They regarded these emporia with awe and wonderment, if occasionally with envy and even resentment. The mid eighteenth-century encyclopedist, Johann Heinrich Zedler, esteemed Antwerp as "a beautiful, great, well-fortified and illustrious merchant city," similarly valued Amsterdam as "the main town of the United Netherlands and one of the most eminent mercantile centers in the whole world," and praised Hamburg

[1] [John Farrington, ascribed], "An Account of a Journey thro Holland, Frizeland – Westphalia &c in severall Letters to a Friend," from August to December 1710, BL, Add. Mss. 15570, 7, 29, 83 (according to the original pagination).

[2] Quoted in Jan-Albert Goris, *Lof van Antwerpen: Hoe reizigers Antwerpen zagen, van de XVe tot de XXe eeuw* (Brussels: N.V. Standaard-Boekhandel, 1940), 170.

as "a famous, large, rich, and populous Hanse, mercantile, and free Imperial city."[3]

If the first impression of each city was its unmistakable imprint as commercial center (*handelsstad* or *Handels-Stadt*), almost as striking was their political make-up; all three were equally renowned (or notorious) as what the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries called republics. "Republic" is a slippery term that contemporaries employed in several ways. The much older idea of republic as a *res publica*, that is, "a state, republic, or commonwealth" and its secondary meaning of "the general good or welfare," persisted. That definition, however, gathered beneath its broad umbrella multiple political types, from monarchies to states not ruled by crowned heads. The way in which "republic" is used here, conjoined with "merchant" to produce "merchant republic" and, for that matter, "merchant republicans," is narrower; it denotes a political entity governed by citizens who assumed the task of administration as part of the civic and political duties incumbent on them and who viewed merchants and mercantile values as essential components of that republicanism. This understanding of "republic" remains quite comprehensive, but nonetheless does not sprawl to the point of forfeiting all substance. Early modern people, after all, distinguished between republics and monarchies with little trouble. Still, not all republics were identical and this book argues that profound differences, as well as significant similarities, characterized the three merchant republics of Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Hamburg.

The vignettes quoted above are typical. Contemporaries unfailingly sorted Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Hamburg into the same category but this self-evident, and quite real, sameness veils equally telling dissimilarities. The identicality that encyclopedists and travelers projected in their accounts tends to ignore the richness of varied histories and smooths over peculiarities. The historian must ask, as I do here: Were the cities themselves – their economies, their governments, their inhabitants, their political cultures, their religions, and their whole way of viewing and approaching the world – indeed so undifferentiated and so easily subsumed under the one term of commercial republic?

In many ways, all three cities were indeed very much of a muchness. That congruence struck not only contemporaries. Historians, too, have repeatedly linked them as what Fernand Braudel termed the economic "motors" of European civilization and in their status as independent, self-governing entities. However, if early modern commentators and later scholars all remarked the similarities, many also noted differences and sometimes the comparisons fell out to the benefit of one or the other. When Aulus Apronius visited Antwerp in 1677, the greater prosperity of Amsterdam struck him forcefully. "The Exchange . . . was so empty that we met hardly thirty men there during an entire afternoon, while in Amsterdam or London we would have seen several thousands." The inveterate wag, Karl Ludwig von Pöllnitz, a century later,

[3] Zedler, 1 (1732): col. 1810; 2 (1732): col. 727; 12 (1735): col. 333.

pronounced: "Antwerp . . . completely fallen from her previous glory. Once it was the greatest emporium in Europe. Amsterdam fed on her carcass."[4] Contemporary travelers proved fond of expressing comparisons in the form of cyclical, almost providential ebbs and floods. The Frenchman, Auguste Pierre Damien de Gomicourt, near the close of the century believed that: "The commerce of Antwerp . . . raised itself on the ruins of Bruges. Amsterdam avenged Bruges in drawing to its harbor the greatest part of Antwerp's trade." Already, by the late sixteenth century, writers had already taken up the idea that Antwerp's pre-eminence directly profited from Bruges's decline, much as a century later Amsterdam would benefit from Antwerp's "devastation."[5]

These observations fail to mirror actualities faithfully, of course. Even on-the-spot witnesses often misjudged circumstances or lacked the background to interpret them, turning away in perplexity from situations locals found no need to ponder. Nonetheless, their views reflect a pertinent reality and one prevalent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Scholars, too, have tended to stress the features these cities shared and slot them into similar historical pigeonholes. Letter-writing wayfarers like Apronius, Pöllnitz, and Gomicourt strung cities together along lines of economic growth very much as Braudel later did. Post-Braudelian scholars have often followed suit. Peter Burke pointed out that "the city which benefited most from Portuguese expansion was not Lisbon." It was rather Antwerp that grew fat on the returns from the spice and silver trades. "Antwerp's dominance was," Burke continues, "short-lived," however. Genoa displaced Antwerp by the 1550s, "in other words, before the revolt of the Netherlands, let alone the blockade of the river Scheldt by Holland and Zeeland." The golden calf of economic success subsequently fell to Amsterdam, the last in Braudel's series; "its successors, like Britain in the age of the industrial revolution, were not cities but national economies."[6]

The relay of economic baton-passing Burke postulated is incomplete, however. The immediate heirs to Amsterdam were not national economies per se, but powerful financial and mercantile centers, like Paris and London (connected, of course, to national economies), and other commercial nerve centers, cities like Hamburg, but also Bristol, Charleston, Philadelphia, and Livorno. Eighteenth-century observers would never have forgotten these and certainly would not have passed over Hamburg. One way to write about these cities, then, would be to follow and expand the chronological progression that Braudel and Burke sketched out and examine, in turn, Antwerp at the zenith of its glory between 1490 and 1565; Amsterdam during the Dutch Golden Age, 1580–1650 (perhaps extending to 1672); and Hamburg at the height of its early

[4] Apronius and Pöllnitz quoted in Goris, *Lof*, 87, 149.

[5] Auguste Pierre Damiens de Gomicourt, *Le Voyageur dans les Pays-bas autrichiens, ou lettres sur l'état actuel de ces pays* (Amsterdam: Changuion, 1782–4), 3: 7.

[6] Peter Burke, *Antwerp, A Metropolis in Comparative Perspective* (Antwerp: Martial & Snoeck, 1993), 6–7.

modern commercial greatness, roughly 1750–99. But because this book is not an economic history, it would seem odd to follow a program dictated primarily by economic dominance.[7] Because my interests are political and cultural (in terms of perceptions, attitudes, identities, and memories), I have chosen instead to compare these cities during the same chronological period, running roughly from the Peace of Westphalia (1648) to the end of the *ancien régime* in the early 1790s, in order to demonstrate how three such "merchant republics" coped in a world poised on the threshold of modernity; the "long eighteenth century" serves as a shorthand designation for this almost 150-year period. The study's endpoint is probably more apparent and more easily justified historically than its beginning. The 1790s saw the breakdown, if by no means the complete dissolution, of the old European administrative, legal, and political systems and the dawn of the age of the democratic revolutions that drastically recast political life in western Europe. Of course, 1648 is the date of the Peace of Westphalia that created the "Westphalian system" and ushered in the political, religious, and diplomatic settlements that formed the basis of the European Old Regime.[8] Of necessity, the book frequently dips back into the period before 1648 to elucidate developments and trends in politics, economics, and social practices that continued well into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries or, at times, held on even longer.

Moreover, the nineteenth century, too, is a frequent visitor to these pages. Nineteenth-century scholars, and especially local historians and home-grown moralists, wrote a great deal about the "world of our fathers," sometimes approvingly but just as frequently critically, commenting with head-shaking despair on the decline of traditional virtues, rampant greed, thoroughgoing governmental corruption, cronyism (*Vetternwirtschaft*, *nepotisme*), lamentable innovations in business, and bemoaning bitterly the ostentation and luxuriousness that had corrupted older burgher morals and lifestyles. Nothing changes less than moralistic handwringing; it is perhaps the commonest expression of civic anxiety and one that picks up and repeats older tropes, reviving battles long since won or lost, rehashing triumphs and defeats. That commentary and those analyses have, however, influenced the writing of histories about the

[7] Oscar Gelderblom has recently written an excellent comparative economic history of Dutch and Flemish cities for an earlier period: *Cities of Commerce: The Institutional Foundations of International Trade in the Low Countries, 1250–1650* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

[8] Peter Wilson, *The Thirty Years' War: Europe's Tragedy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 751–4. The idea of a "Westphalian system" pertains mostly to international relations, but the Peace of Westphalia had profound effects on most western European polities that ranged far beyond the realm of foreign policy, diplomacy, or the concept of nation-state sovereignty. Heinz Duchhardt (ed.), *Der Westfälische Friede: Diplomatie, politische Zäsur, kulturelles Umfeld, Rezeptionsgeschichte* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998) and especially the articles by Heinz Schilling, "Der Westfälische Friede und das neuzeitliche Profil Europas" (1–32) and Reinhard Steiger, "Der Westfälische Friede – Grundgesetz für Europa?" (33–80).

long eighteenth century more profoundly and subtly than one might first imagine. Major political and philosophical concepts, such as corruption, were to a large extent constructed by nineteenth-century authors. Those constructions have embedded themselves deeply in our historical consciousness and have lived on to affect the writing of history in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, although they have hardly passed without question; indeed, they have often excited vigorous historical debate. Thus, at several points in the analysis presented here, the historical dialog expands into a three-sided conversation between the long eighteenth century, subsequent histories and commentary (especially nineteenth-century ones), and modern historical methods and inquiries.

Other circumstances, too, dictate these particular chronological divisions. These determinants are political and cultural rather than solely economic (not to suggest, by any means, that one can uncouple these historically or analyze them in isolation from one another). The book addresses not just the economic development of three powerful cities, but rather the self-understanding, social practices, political cultures, and political economy of three *merchant republics*. The phrase is simultaneously a description and an argument.

Both halves – "merchant" and "republic" – require explanation; it is one of those famous metaphorical "empty vessels" into which various historical vintages have been poured. Not everyone in Amsterdam, Antwerp, or Hamburg was a merchant, of course. Not all inhabitants lived from commerce even indirectly or possessed clear connections to the mercantile or financial worlds. Nonetheless, commerce defined them all or, at least, the city they inhabited. Additionally, many characteristics of the merchants described in this book – for example, an emphasis on transparency in business dealings – were by no means peculiar to merchants.[9] Such broader validity, however, strengthens rather than weakens the case for arguing that merchant values were widespread; even if not exclusively mercantile, neither did they derive solely from the pursuit of trade. A merchant republic was firstly what has been called (in this case, for sixteenth-century Antwerp) a "community of commerce": a polity that achieved consensus around, and identified itself with, commerce. That understanding glued the community together, despite differences and tensions. Yet, a valuation and validation of merchants' practices existed symbiotically with a political sense of being a republic.[10]

Moreover, while it is natural for historians to have highlighted the role of these three cities as economic pace-makers, and while that economic

[9] Artisans used trademarks to assure quality in production, thus making that quality apparent, or rather *trans*parent, to all. See Bert De Munck, "Skills, Trust, and Changing Consumer Preferences: The Decline of Antwerp's Craft Guilds from the Perspective of the Product Market, *c.*1500–*c.*1800," *IRSH* 53 (2008): 197–233.

[10] An Kint, "The Community of Commerce: Social Relations in Sixteenth-Century Antwerp" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1996), 1. Similarly, Gelderblom, *Cities*, especially Chapter 2 on "Commercial Cities," 19–41.

emphasis is anything but misplaced, it is as well to remember, as Simon Schama observed, that "at the center of the Dutch world was a burgher, not a bourgeois . . . [and] the burgher was a citizen first and *homo oeconomicus* second."[11] For a book like this one predicated on the real existence of merchant republics (and not just as ideal types), this inherently political definition channels the direction the volume takes and the interpretations it advances. Concurrent with the identification of Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Hamburg as merchant republics is their sameness as burgher states where the concept of citizenship served "ideologically . . . [as] an over-arching, non-denominational concept of community."[12] While religion, or religious differences, could act as acid that ate away at unity and while perceived economic injustices could generate tensions and even hostilities, a commonly held concept of citizenship functioned as an adhesive binding each community together. A generalized affirmation of citizenship, however, did not mean that everyone agreed on what the concept, and the reality, represented. To take a simple example: Could Jews be citizens?

The concept of citizen is, of course, central to discussions of republicanism. The term "citizen" as I have used it on several previous pages may jar some historical sensibilities. The word most historians prefer to describe the members of an urban polity who enjoyed certain specified rights and privileges and who bore political and civic duties is, of course, *burgher* (*poorter* in Dutch and *Bürger* in German). Any understanding of citizen that suggests political equality certainly does not correspond to the early modern category of burgher. For that matter, most early modern cities recognized and granted differing states of citizenship that ranged from those permitted to reside and work in the city to those who could exercise full political rights. The first group was quite large (although not greater than the group of inhabitants who were *not* citizens of any kind); the second usually small, sometimes tiny. The *Oxford English Dictionary* offers a useful definition of citizen as "an inhabitant of a city or (often) of a town; esp. one possessing civic rights and privileges, [that is] a burgess or freeman of a city."

That definition corresponds closely to the early modern meaning. It has the further advantage of stressing civic rights rather than political ones as the crucial determinant of citizenship. Thus, the term citizen and burgher are used almost interchangeably here in order to stress two critical points. First, not only those who enjoyed full political rights (meaning access to government office) engaged in politics or political action; the political culture of these cities encompassed a much wide group of people. Second, burgher-citizens greatly valued their civic rights, perhaps even more than their political ones, especially

[11] Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Fontana, 1991), 7.

[12] Maarten Prak and Jan Luiten van Zanden, "Tax Morale and Citizenship in the Dutch Republic," in Oscar Gelderblom (ed.), *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), 165.

in a merchant republic where those civic rights included protection of property and granted economic advantages to citizens that neither mere inhabitants nor aliens possessed. In addition, although they never held political office, women could also possess civic rights as female citizens (*Bürgerinnen* in German or *poorteresse* in Dutch). Finally, the term burgher is frequently used in a cultural context and thus often appears as an adjective: burgher values, burgher lifestyles, and, especially, burgher identities. The word "citizen," therefore, appears particularly apt for the opening chapters focusing on politics, that of burgher more appropriate for the later chapters on identity and economic life.[13]

If all three cities clustered more or less comfortably within the capacious tent the designation of merchant republic spanned and shared many characteristics, they were by no means identical; differences as much as similarities marked their histories. Whereas the commonalities are immediately visible and constitute structural realities, the differences become apparent when one begins to investigate in depth the mercantile and political worlds of each in comparison with the others. That probing reveals the problems inherent in trying to herd all three cities into the corral of merchant republic. At times the degree of mercantile-ness was more or less pronounced. If each city was a republic in the sense of being more or less self-governing, republican-ness also varied from place to place and from time to time.

Scholars familiar with the history of these cities might find the depiction of them as "merchant republics" somewhat troubling, objecting in almost equal measure to each word. Historians who have closely studied Antwerp's evolution over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries would quickly point out that real trade no longer dominated economic activity. While they acknowledge that the closing of the Scheldt river had by no means throttled Antwerp's international commerce, fortunes created in these years mostly derived from financing and manufacturing. The evidence here is incontestable and based on diligent archival work.[14] Nonetheless, the continuing mercantile *character* of Antwerp is equally incontrovertible. Trade and finance formed an indissoluble amalgam of many merchant careers, as the contemporary term merchant banker indicates. Even when active trade declined, mercantile traditions, values, and memories persisted and continued to be esteemed and extolled. In Antwerp, however, the high percentage of nobles in government

[13] *OED*; *HRG*, 1: 738–47; Christopher R. Friedrichs describes "the set of inhabitants who made up the acknowledged political community" as "the group of adult males known as citizens, freemen, *bourgeois*, *Bürger* or the like." *Urban Politics in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 4.

[14] Karel Degryse, *De Antwerpse fortuinen: Kapitaalsaccumulatie, -investering en -rendement te Antwerpen in de 18de eeuw* (Antwerp: Genootschap voor Antwerpse Geschiedenis, 2006); Hilde Greefs,"De terugkeer van Mercurius: Die divergende keuzes van de zakenelite in Antwerpen en het belang van relatie netwerken na der heropening van de Schelde (1795–1850)," *TVSEG* 5 (2008): 55–86.

and the relative paucity of merchants complicate the picture. Thus, for Antwerp the strength of the merchant-republic appellation in these years is perhaps weaker than for its two sister cities.[15]

For Amsterdam, the objections would differ. Active trade remained a central part of the economic make-up of the city, albeit bound up to an even greater degree with finance than in either Antwerp or Hamburg. Many historians of Amsterdam would, I think, more vigorously dispute my characterization of Amsterdam's citizens as merchant republicans, or at least suggest that the term needs to be applied with considerable caution. First, they would point out that in Amsterdam by the middle of the seventeenth century (and probably earlier), a professional governing class, an oligarchy of the famous Dutch regents (*regenten*), had developed and its members simultaneously retreated from commercial pursuits. They subsequently devoted themselves to governing as their vocations, although never as a group divorced themselves from trade entirely and remained deeply involved in banking, finances, and commercial speculations. Admittedly, men who actively engaged in trade seldom made the leap into the golden circle of regents.[16] That historical interpretation, too, has long been accepted and a good deal of truth adheres to it. At the same time, the separation between oligarches and merchants or between governors and merchants was never entirely clear cut. Mercantile life continued to thrive in Amsterdam (if not as expansively in the eighteenth century as before 1672), even as finances increasingly assumed more weight. Thus, practices in governing and trading continued to dominate a great deal of rhetoric, political and moralistic alike, precisely because they were also urban realities.

Perhaps the tightest overlap between merchants and governors existed in Hamburg. Although domestic troubles often brewed up around charges that some members of the government acted as monarchs and treated other citizens as subjects, the disjunction between active traders and members of the most important governing councils loomed less large. A professional ruling class, akin to the Amsterdam regents, never took root in Hamburg. Indeed, such a development was to some extent constitutionally prohibited. The majority of seats in the city council, for example, went to merchants by law. In Hamburg, as also in Amsterdam and Antwerp, far more important for understanding the demography of government was the increasing number of those trained in law, but that was a phenomenon that pertained almost everywhere in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century continental Europe.

Several other features determined equally important, and sometimes critical, dissimilarities. None of these disparities, however, ruptures the boundaries of merchant republic nor erases major likenesses. Sheer size was one easily observable difference: Amsterdam's population numbered about 200,000 by the mid seventeenth century; Hamburg only approached 120,000 toward the end of

[15] Antwerp in earlier centuries fit the mold perfectly, of course. Gelderblom, *Cities*.
[16] *Ibid.*, 3.

the eighteenth century; and Antwerp remained much smaller with only about 65,000 people in 1700. Religion was another: Hamburg was the Lutheran "orthodox Zion of the north," Antwerp a Catholic bulwark, and Amsterdam mostly Calvinist but, like the Dutch Republic as a whole, lacked a state church. Each city harbored resident religious minorities (if in differing proportions), including some economically prominent ones among their Catholic, Jewish, and Mennonite populations.[17] Urban economic fortunes diverged as well. Each city knew a "golden age," although the characteristics of each *âge d'or* varied as did its timing. Antwerp took pride of place as the greatest entrepôt of the sixteenth century; Amsterdam's economic power reached its zenith in the mid seventeenth century; and Hamburg thrust its way into the economic limelight only after 1750.

Politically, too, the cities displayed manifest similarities and dramatic contrasts. All three were republics and not only in the broad sense of a polity or public affairs (*res publica*). All three often described themselves as a *respublica mixta* referencing thereby the almost universal idea of the perfect state as one combining aristocracy, monarchy, and democracy in roughly equal measures. Outside observers, too, viewed these cities as partaking of, as here for Hamburg, "something of the Democratical, and something of the Aristocratical."[18] More important in functional terms, each city governed itself or at least controlled its internal affairs. Obviously, the degree of freedom each had to determine its own fate varied. One must acknowledge, for instance, good reasons for regarding Antwerp as not very much of a republic during the long eighteenth century, considering its position within two different Habsburg empires: the Spanish and the Austrian. Still, and especially in its self-understanding and in its political memory (particularly of the Calvinist Republic of 1577–85), many politically active Antwerpeners insisted on viewing the city as a republic and argued for its traditional liberties *as* a republic.

The fundamental dialectic between commonalities and divergences carries over into debates about early modern republicanism. The idea of republican*ism* proves every bit as complex as that of republic. Surely no work has guided the discussion of republics and republicanism more profoundly than J. G. A. Pocock's magisterial study of the "Machiavellian moment." Praised and

[17] Joachim Whaley, *Religious Toleration and Social Change in Hamburg, 1529–1819* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Michael D. Driedger, *Obedient Heretics: Mennonite Identities in Lutheran Hamburg and Altona* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

[18] Martin van Gelderen, "Aristotelians, Monarchmachs and Republicans: Sovereignty and *respublica mixta* in Dutch and German Political Thought, 1580–1650" and Hans Erich Bödeker, "Debating the *respublica mixta*: German and Dutch Political Discourses around 1700," both in Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (eds.), *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, vol. 1: *Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 195–217, 219–46; Thomas Lediard, *The German Spy, or, Familiar Letters from a Gentleman on his Travels thro' Germany, to his Friend in England* (2nd edn.; London: Cooper, 1740), 178n.

valued, or criticized and attacked, as a "grand ideological synthesis," the book's impact persists. Since its publication in 1975, it remains virtually impossible to discuss the subject without acknowledging *The Machiavellian Moment* as a benchmark.[19] The book's brilliance rests on the author's perception of a "single intellectual phenomenon" that developed over a millennium, stretching from the medieval world, through the age of Machiavelli, and ending in debates that animated political thought in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England and America. Pocock's Machiavellian moment occurred when a republic confronted the problem of maintaining its stability and the political virtue that sustained it. Accordingly, political commentators of the time located a major cause for the decline of republican virtue and civic commitment in the loss of independence. The lure of wealth and, especially, wealth gained through commerce, created or tended to create dependence that inevitably weakened, and eventually obliterated, civic commitment.

Much debate on republicanism, or on "the republican alternatives," continues to revolve around just these issues. Besides remarking the innate inclination for republics to degenerate into anarchy or fall to tyranny, contemporaries also perceived them as inherently unstable and even feeble political entities for reasons besides the inertial yet also seemingly inevitable loss of virtue. How could republics forestall, for example, the decline of civic virtue and prevent the dissolution of the polity altogether, considering their haphazard political organization and their general military impotence? The Old Swiss Confederation, for example, baffled early modern observers. With its limited territory, weak political structure, and lack of a dynastic center, why was it "one of the most durable confederations in the history of the world?"[20]

Pocock's synthesis, therefore, has not gone unchallenged. What Pocock termed "the quarrel between virtue and commerce" seems unsuited as a useful analytical category for anyone seeking to understand political cultures in mercantile centers like Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Hamburg. In these merchant republics, commerce was never seen as antithetical to republicanism or to virtue, despite the repeated fulminations of moralists.[21] In Amsterdam and

[19] J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975); Cesare Vasoli, "*The Machiavellian Moment*: A Grand Ideological Synthesis," rev. art. *JMH* 49 (1977): 661–70.

[20] See, for instance, André Holenstein, Thomas Maissen, and Maarten Prak (eds.), *The Republican Alternative: The Netherlands and Switzerland Compared* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008). The quote comes from Andreas Würgler, "'The League of the Discordant Members' or How the Old Swiss Confederation Operated and How it Managed to Survive for so Long," in *ibid.*, 29. Admittedly, the Dutch Republic was for a time a significant military power or, at least, able to finance major military campaigns and the Swiss provided mercenaries for many European states.

[21] See, in particular, Wijnand Mijnhardt, "The Limits of Present-Day Historiography of Republicanism," *De achttiende eeuw* 37 (2005): 75–89; Jonathan Israel, "Monarchy, Orangism, and Republicanism in the Later Dutch Golden Age" (Second Golden Age Lecture, Amsterdams Centruum voor de Studie van de Gouden Eeuw, Universiteit van Amsterdam, 11 March 2004).