

Cambridge University Press
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Helmer J. Helmers, Geert H. Janssen
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*The Cambridge Companion to
the Dutch Golden Age*

During the seventeenth century, the Dutch Republic was transformed into a leading political power in Europe, with global trading interests. It nurtured some of the period's greatest luminaries, including Rembrandt, Vermeer, Descartes, and Spinoza. Long celebrated for its religious tolerance, artistic innovation, and economic modernity, the United Provinces of the Netherlands also became known for their involvement with slavery and military repression in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. This *Companion* provides a compelling overview of the best scholarship on this much debated era, written by a wide range of experts in the field. Unique in their balanced treatment of global, political, socio-economic, literary, artistic, religious, and intellectual history, its nineteen chapters offer an indispensable guide for anyone interested in the world of the Dutch Golden Age.

HELMER J. HELMERS is assistant professor in early modern Dutch literature and culture at the University of Amsterdam. His previous publications include *The Royalist Republic: Literature, Politics, and Religion in the Anglo-Dutch Public Sphere, 1639–1660* (Cambridge, 2015).

GEERT H. JANSSEN is professor of early modern history at the University of Amsterdam. He is the author of *The Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, 2014) and *Princely Power in the Dutch Republic: Patronage and William Frederick of Nassau, 1613–1664* (2008).

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Edited by

HELMER J. HELMERS
University of Amsterdam

GEERT H. JANSSEN
University of Amsterdam



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New Delhi – 110025, India
79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

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Contributors

PEPIJN BRANDON is senior researcher at the International Institute for Social History and assistant professor at the Free University, Amsterdam. A specialist in the history of capitalism, war, and slavery, he is the author of *War, Capital, and the Dutch State (1588–1795)* (2015).

STIJN BUSSELS is professor in art history at Leiden University, and the principal investigator of the European Research Council-funded project ‘Elevated Minds: The Sublime in the Public Arts in Seventeenth-Century Paris and Amsterdam’. He is the author of many publications on power and aesthetics in the Dutch Golden Age.

HAROLD J. COOK is John F. Nickoll Professor of History at Brown University, whose most recent research has focused on the relationships between commerce, medicine, and science in the Dutch Golden Age. He is the author of *Matters of Exchange: Commerce, Medicine, and Science in the Dutch Golden Age* (2007).

WAYNE FRANITS is Distinguished Professor of Art History at Syracuse University. A specialist in seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish art, his extensive publications have explored a variety of topics within the field, ranging from genre painting and portraiture to the work of the Dutch followers of Caravaggio. Franits is the author of *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (2004).

MICHIEL VAN GROESEN is professor of maritime history at Leiden University. His research focuses on print culture, the culture of imperial expansion, and the politics of global interactions. His most recent book is *Amsterdam’s Atlantic: Print Culture and the Making of Dutch Brazil* (2017).

xii List of Contributors

HELMER J. HELMERS is assistant professor in early modern Dutch literature and culture at the University of Amsterdam. His research focuses on early modern public opinion and diplomacy. He is the author of *The Royalist Republic: Literature, Politics, and Religion in the Anglo-Dutch Public Sphere, 1639–1660* (Cambridge, 2015).

THEO HERMANS is professor of Dutch and comparative literature at University College London. He has published extensively on translation theory and on Dutch and comparative literature. He is the editor of *The Literary History of the Low Countries* (2009).

DANIELLE VAN DEN HEUVEL is associate professor in history at the University of Amsterdam. She has published widely on the position of women in early modern society, retailing during the consumer revolution, and street vending. She is the author of *Women and Entrepreneurship: Female Traders in the Northern Netherlands, c. 1580–1815* (2007).

JONATHAN ISRAEL is Professor Emeritus in historical studies at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. A specialist in Dutch history and the history of the European Enlightenment, he is the author of *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477–1806* (1995) and a trilogy on the Enlightenment. His most recent book is *Revolutionary Ideas: An Intellectual History of the French Revolution from The Rights of Man to Robespierre* (2014).

GEERT H. JANSSEN is professor of early modern history at the University of Amsterdam. His fields of interest include the cultural history of politics, religion, and migration in the Low Countries. His most recent book is *The Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, 2014).

CHRISTINE KOOI is professor of history at Louisiana State University. She has published widely on the history of the Reformation in the Low Countries, and is the author of *Calvinists and Catholics During Holland's Golden Age: Heretics and Idolaters* (Cambridge, 2012).

DIRK VAN MIERT is assistant professor in early modern cultural history at Utrecht University, and principal investigator of the European Research Council-funded research project 'Sharing Knowledge in Learned and Literary Networks: The Republic of Letters as a Pan-European Knowledge Society'. He is the author of *Humanism in an Age of Science: The Amsterdam Athenaeum in the Golden Age, 1632–1704* (2009).

DAVID ONNEKINK is assistant professor in the early modern history of international relations at Utrecht University, with a special interest in the Dutch Republic and in religious history. He has edited many books on the Dutch Republic; his latest monograph is *Reinterpreting the Dutch Forty Years War, 1672–1713* (2016).

CHARLES H. PARKER is professor of history at Saint Louis University. His research interests focus on the religious and cultural history of early modern Europe, with a particular emphasis on the Low Countries. He is the author of a number of monographs, including *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age* (2008) and *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age, 1400–1800* (Cambridge, 2010).

JUDITH POLLMANN is professor of early modern Dutch history at Leiden University. Her work focuses on early modern identity formation, the history of early modern memory, news and public opinion, and the history of the Dutch Revolt. Her most recent book is *Memory in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800* (2017).

MAARTEN PRAK is professor of social and economic history at Utrecht University. His research concentrates on the lives of the inhabitants of European – and especially Dutch – towns during the Middle Ages and early modern period. He is the author of *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 2005).

J. LESLIE PRICE is reader emeritus in history at the University of Hull. As a specialist in the history of the Dutch Republic, he has written many works on this subject, including *Holland and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century: The Politics of Particularism* (1994) and *Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (2011).

CLAARTJE RASTERHOFF is a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Amsterdam. As a historian of arts and culture, she specializes in early modern and modern cultural industries. She is the author of *Painting and Publishing as Cultural Industries: The Fabric of Creativity in the Dutch Republic, 1580–1800* (2016).

ANGELA VANHAELLEN is professor of art history at McGill University. She specializes in the study of seventeenth-century Dutch visual culture. Her book *The Wake of Iconoclasm: Painting the Church in the Dutch Republic* (2012) was awarded the Roland H. Bainton Book Prize by the Sixteenth Century Society.

Acknowledgements

Until not so long ago, to study the Dutch Golden Age meant learning Dutch first. Outside art history, the scholarship on the culture and history of the Dutch Republic was written for the most part by Dutch historians, and mostly in Dutch. Primary sources, too, had been only haphazardly translated into English, German, and French. The vibrant history of one of the most remarkable countries in early modern Europe had effectively been put behind lock and key for generations of non-Dutch students who did not have the time or stamina to learn the Dutch language. In recent decades, this has changed considerably. From the 1990s onwards, a productive and highly visible generation of both Anglophone and Dutch scholars have published major works on the Golden Age in English, thereby opening up the relatively closed world of Dutch scholarship and enthusing a large international public for the subject. Providing a broad overview of a thriving and by now thoroughly international field of study, this book very much builds on their collective work.

In editing this book, we have profited from the stimulating environment offered by the University of Amsterdam. We are also grateful for the support of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and the Huntington Library, San Marino. The wonderful people at Cambridge University Press could not have been more helpful and supportive, and Karen Anderson's careful editing has been indispensable in turning our manuscript into a book. Anne-Rieke van Schaik did a great job on the index. It was the exchange students in our English-language courses on the Dutch Golden Age who first opened our eyes to the need for and potential of a *Companion* on the subject. It is to all those talented time travellers around the world this book is dedicated.

Notes on Terminology

Changing borders and linguistic preferences in seventeenth-century Europe can be confusing, and a few words on the use of terminology may therefore be helpful. Regarding place names we follow common practice in English, which is not always consistent. Notably, the towns of Den Haag and Antwerpen have been anglicized (The Hague, Antwerp), but not Leiden or Vlissingen. It has long been customary in academic scholarship to adopt the geographical vocabulary of Dutch colonialists when referring to their conquered possessions in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. For pragmatic reasons this companion follows common practice but also provides alternative, current names where possible. Batavia (Jakarta), New Amsterdam (New York City), and Formosa (Taiwan) are cases in point. The personal names and titles of the leading aristocratic family in the Dutch Republic, the House of Orange-Nassau, have been anglicized throughout. Stadhouder Frederik Hendrik thus becomes Stadholder Frederick Henry and the Brazilian governor Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen is here referred to as John Maurice of Nassau-Siegen. The names of other statesmen (e.g. Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, Johan de Witt) are given in Dutch. The irregular use of patronyms in seventeenth-century Dutch calls for pragmatism. Jan Pieterszoon Coen has been spelled out, but Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn just becomes Rembrandt – as the master himself liked it.

Chronology of the Dutch Golden Age

War and peace	Domestic politics	Economy and global presence	Arts and publishing
1579: Union of Utrecht			1575: Leiden University established; 1580: William of Orange's <i>Apology</i>
1585: Taking of Antwerp by Habsburg forces	1584: William of Orange assassinated in Delft 1585–1625: Maurice of Nassau stadholder		1585: Franeker University established; 1586: Coornhert, <i>Zedekunst</i>
1590–1600: Maurice of Nassau's reconquests	1585–1609: Holland and Zeeland towns accommodate immigrants from Southern Netherlands	1595–7: First voyages to East Indies	1596: Jan Huygen van Linschoten's <i>Itinerario</i> ; Stevin, <i>Constructing Fortifications</i>
1600: Battle of Nieuwpoort	1586–1618: Oldenbarnevelt Land's Advocate of Holland	1600: Dutch ship <i>De Liefde</i> reaches Japan	1604: Karel van Mander's <i>Schilder-Boeck</i>
1609–21: Twelve Years' Truce	1606–9: Debates on peace	1602: VOC founded	1608: Teellinck, <i>Philopatris</i>
1609–10: States Army under Maurice besieges Jülich	1610: Arminians submit their <i>Remonstrance</i>	1607–12: Beemster polder 1609: Amsterdam Exchange Bank	1609: Hugo Grotius' <i>Mare liberum</i> 1611: Bourse of Amsterdam built by Hendrick de Keyser

(cont.)

War and peace	Domestic politics	Economy and global presence	Arts and publishing
1612: Maurice elevated to the Order of the Garter	1612: Jewish Synagogue opens in Amsterdam	1614: New Netherland established	1613: Heinsius' <i>Cupid's Craft</i>
1614: Second War of the Jülich Succession threatens Truce	1617–19: Arminian controversy; fall of Oldenbarnevelt regime; Synod of Dordt	1619: Batavia (Jakarta) becomes VOC headquarters in Asia	1617: Opening of the Nederduytsche Academie (Dutch Academy)
1618: Bohemian Revolt, start of Thirty Years War	1619: Execution of Oldenbarnevelt	1620s: Massacres at Banda Islands (Indonesia)	1617: Bredero, <i>Spaansche Brabander</i>
1620: Fall of Prague; king of Bohemia flees to The Hague	1621: Anthonie Duyck grand pensionary of Holland	1620: Pilgrim Fathers leave Leiden	1618: First newspaper published in Amsterdam
1621: Truce ends		1621: WIC founded	
		1623: Amboyna massacre	1621: Starter, <i>Friesche Lusthof</i> (songbook)
1625: Breda taken by Spanish	1625–47: Frederick Henry stadholder	1625: Fortress at New Amsterdam (New York)	1625: Cats, <i>Houwelick</i>
			1625: Vondel's <i>Palamedes</i>
1629: Imperial troops briefly occupy Amersfoort; Frederick Henry takes Den Bosch	1629–31: Jacob Cats grand pensionary of Holland	1628: Piet Heyn captures Spanish silver fleet near Matanzas (Cuba)	1626: Elzevier printer of Leiden University
			1629: Honthorst, <i>Allegory of Lust</i>
1630: Peace negotiations with Spain	1631–6: Adriaan Pauw grand pensionary of Holland	1630–54: Dutch in Brazil	1634: Van Ostade, <i>Carousing Peasants</i>
1632: Frederick Henry takes Maastricht			1637: Descartes' <i>Discours de la méthode</i>
1635: Treaty with France	1636–51: Jacob Cats grand pensionary of Holland	1637: Dutch take slave-trading fortress of Elmina (Ghana) from Portuguese; tulip mania	1637: States' Bible published
			1638: Amsterdam Theatre opens
1637: Frederick Henry takes Breda	1638: Maria de Medici visits Amsterdam	1639: VOC becomes Japan's exclusive European trading partner	1640: Lakenhal built in Leiden
			1642: Rembrandt paints <i>Night Watch</i> ; Hooft's <i>Dutch Histories</i>

(cont.)

War and peace	Domestic politics	Economy and global presence	Arts and publishing
1642–8: English Civil Wars	1641: William II marries Mary Stuart	1640s: VOC conquers Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Malacca (Malaysia)	1645: Bontius, <i>Siege of Leiden</i> (play)
1643–5: Wappinger War in New Netherland	1647: Frederick Henry dies		1647–55: Amsterdam Town Hall built
1648: Peace of Münster	1647–50: William II stadholder	1642–4: Abel Tasman reaches Tasmania and New Zealand	1648–50: Huis ten Bosch decorated 1650: Casteleyn’s <i>Hollandtsche Mercurius</i>
1650: William II assaults Amsterdam, dies of smallpox soon afterwards	1651: <i>Grote vergadering</i> States General	1651: English Act of Navigation	
1652–4: First Anglo-Dutch War	1650–72: Stadholderless regime		1653: Huygens, <i>Hofwijck</i>
1653: Battle of Ter Heijde, first naval battle in Anglo-Dutch War	1653–72: Johan de Witt grand pensionary 1653: Orangist riots in Holland and Zeeland	1652: VOC settles at Cape Colony (South Africa)	1654: Vondel, <i>Lucifer</i> 1654: Rembrandt, <i>Portrait of Jan Six</i>
1658–60: War in Sound with Sweden; Dutch alliance with France and England (Haags Concert)	1660: Controversy on the education of William III	1661: VOC lose Formosa (Taiwan) to Chinese	c. 1658: Vermeer, <i>The Milkmaid</i> 1662: Rembrandt, <i>Syndics</i> ; Blaeu’s <i>Atlas Maior</i>
1664–7: Second Anglo-Dutch War 1665–6: First Munster War	1666: Orangist Captain Buat executed for high treason in The Hague.	1667: English take New Netherland, including New Amsterdam; Dutch acquire Suriname	1668: Koerbagh’s radical treatise <i>A Light Shining in Dark Places</i> published
1668: Triple Alliance between Dutch Republic, England, and Sweden		1667: Makassar (Sulawesi) taken by VOC	1670: Spinoza’s <i>Tractatus Theologico-Politicus</i>

(cont.)

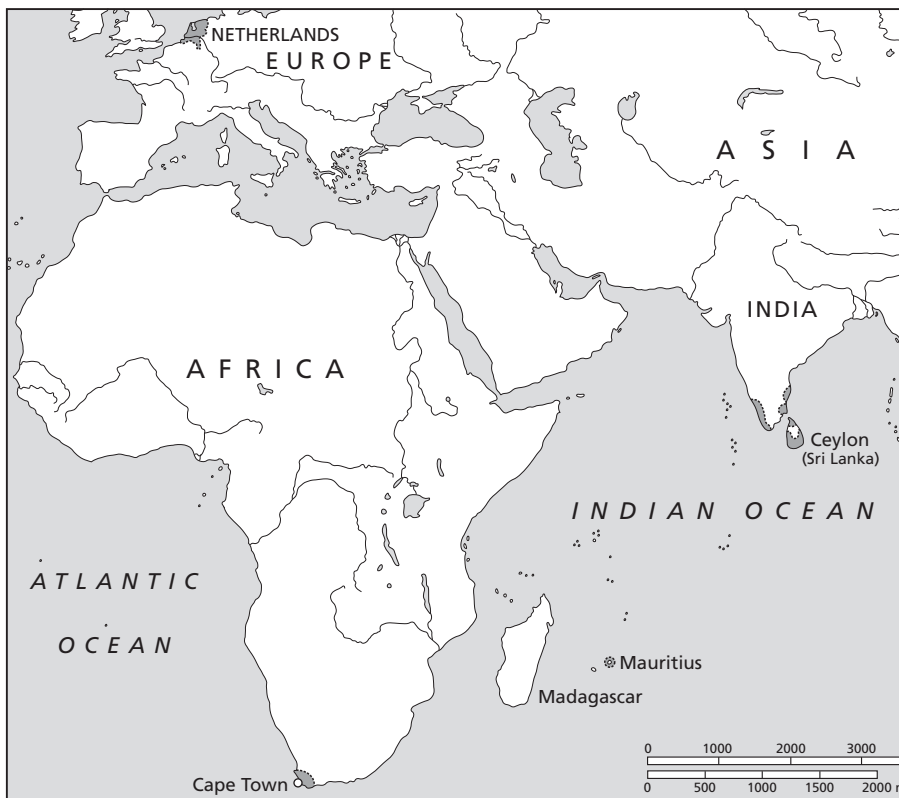
War and peace	Domestic politics	Economy and global presence	Arts and publishing
1672: Invasions by France, Cologne, and Münster; Third Anglo-Dutch War 1678: Peace of Nijmegen	1672–1702: William III stadholder 1672–88: Gaspar Fagel grand pensionary of Holland	1674: WIC dismantled	1675: Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam
1685: Revocation of Edict of Nantes	1685: Influx of Huguenot refugees	1684: VOC makes peace with Bantam	1686–92: Loo Palace built
1688: Invasion of England by William III	1692: William III intervenes in religious conflict between Cocceians and Voetians		1688: William III's <i>Declaration of Reasons</i> published
1697: Peace of Rijswijk			1690: Christiaan Huygens' <i>Traité de la lumière</i>

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Map 2. Map of Dutch territories in the Atlantic



Map 3. Map of Dutch territories in the Indian and Pacific Oceans

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