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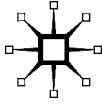
In Praise of Ordinary People

In Praise of Ordinary People

Early Modern Britain and the Dutch Republic

Edited by Margaret C. Jacob and
Catherine Secretan

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Contents

List of Illustrations	vii
Acknowledgments	ix
Introduction	1
<i>Margaret Jacob and Catherine Secretan</i>	
Part I A New Self-Perception	
1 The “Simple Burgher” of D. V. Coornhert (1522–1590): A Dutch Freethinker Opens the Door to a New Age	19
<i>Dorothee Sturkenboom</i>	
2 Common People as Individuals: Hobbes’s Normative Approach to the Ordinary Mind	47
<i>Luc Foisneau</i>	
3 News as a Path to Independence: Merchant Correspondence and the Exchange of News during the Dutch Revolt	65
<i>Jesse Sadler</i>	
Part II The Capabilities of Ordinary People and the Birth of the Commercial and Industrial World	
4 “Ordinary” People and Philosophers in the Laboratories and Workshops of the Early Industrial Revolution	95
<i>Larry Stewart</i>	
5 Accounting and Accountability in Dutch Civic Life	123
<i>Jacob Soll</i>	
Part III New Approaches to the Populist Voice	
6 The People in Politics: Early Modern England and the Dutch Republic Compared	141
<i>Maarten Prak</i>	

vi CONTENTS

7	The Populist Voice of the Early Enlightenment <i>Margaret C. Jacob</i>	163
8	“This Fleshlike Isle”: The Voluptuous Body of the People in Dutch Pamphlets, Novels, and Plays, 1660–1730 <i>Inger Leemans</i>	181
9	Ordinary People in the New World: The City of Amsterdam, Colonial Policy, and Initiatives from Below, 1656–1664 <i>Frans Blom and Henk Looijesteijn</i>	203
Part IV Forging the Individual		
10	Depression and Evangelicalism in the Family of Esther Tuke <i>Phyllis Mack</i>	239
11	Self-Discipline and the Struggle for the Middle in Eighteenth-Century Britain <i>Matthew Kadane</i>	257
	List of Contributors	275
	Index	279

Ordinary People in the New World: The City of Amsterdam, Colonial Policy, and Initiatives from Below, 1656–1664

Frans Blom and Henk Looijesteijn

Introduction

Between 1656 and 1664 the City of Amsterdam, uniquely, possessed a “City Colony” in the Dutch colony of New Netherland. Called New Amstel, this fledgling colony on the South River—the current Delaware—for a brief time cemented the commitment of Amsterdam to the preservation of the Dutch colony in New Netherland, perpetually—and fatally—under threat from English encroachment. Born out of the anxiety of the Dutch West India Company, which saw the numbers of English settlers swell each year, the City of Amsterdam was persuaded to undertake the settlement of the shores of the Delaware river. There, Dutch settlers were few and far between, and were surpassed in numbers by Swedes and Finns. After the difficult early years, the colonization gained momentum after 1660, and the settlement increased considerably until the English invasion in October 1664 put an end to the Dutch colony. Amsterdam turned to other colonial endeavors with less inhibitions and more chance of success, for example, the rich sugar-producing plantations of Guyana. The memory of the unique experiment of the short-lived City Colony quickly faded.

This chapter on Amsterdam and its City Colony does not deal with its history as such,¹ but with what this episode of Dutch colonial history

reveals about the role and the capabilities of ordinary people in this enterprise. For a long time, historians of the Dutch Republic stressed the increasingly oligarchic nature of the Republic's noble and patrician ruling elite, against which the broader population could only put up resistance by vigorously supporting the counterweight of the Prince of Orange, the monarchical and centripetal element in the Dutch state. While much is to be said for this perspective, recent scholarship has shown that the "common man," and especially the Republic's large middle class, did not meekly consent to the oligarchic tendencies in government nor deliver itself wholesale to the Orangist cause.

A strong grassroots republican undercurrent existed throughout the Republic's history, emerging strongly in times of political unrest and opposing both the oligarchic developments within the elites and a too overtly monarchical stance on the part of the princes.² Historians from various subdisciplines have in recent years researched aspects of this undercurrent. Some have stressed for example the tenaciousness of late medieval notions of urban democracy within guilds and other middle-class organizations such as the civic militias and the *meente* in eastern Dutch cities throughout the era of the Republic.³ Others have highlighted contemporary critiques of the way in which the Dutch Republic was governed.⁴ Gradually a new image emerges of the Republic as a political entity riven with ideological strife as well as oligarchic factionalism, a society much less static and a population much less resigned to abuses of power by elite rulers than the traditional image allows. It is to this new social historiography that this chapter aims to contribute.

Amsterdam's burgomasters, the four men who held the reins of the city's government firmly in their hands and who were collectively one of the greatest powers in the Province of Holland, were seriously dependent on ordinary people for their American colonial experiment to succeed. They badly needed colonists, and were prepared to attract as many settlers as possible. As we will show, they went so far as to allow for democratic experiments of considerable magnitude in their colony, consenting to things other Dutch rulers would never have allowed. Indeed, the City's propaganda stressed more and more the liberties that awaited the migrants. Significantly their invitation was taken up with zest by at least two visionary thinkers, who came up with remarkably democratic and egalitarian blueprints for a colonial society. They proposed a society in which the common man was to be his own "boss" and firmly in control of affairs. Of course, there were limits to what was granted by the four men who ruled Amsterdam as velvet-gloved autocrats, but, we claim, their indulgence toward these ordinary people and the democratic thinkers who supported them does suggest that republican ideas of a more democratic

and egalitarian nature found some endorsement among the high and mighty *regenten*.

Amsterdam Beckons . . .

Within the larger framework of the Dutch transatlantic colonies, the North American area of New Netherland significantly gained attention from 1655 onward. This was, paradoxically, due to the declining power of the West India Company (WIC). Brazil, the pearl in the Dutch West Indian crown, was lost in 1654, and chances were that New Netherland would be the next to fall to the neighboring European powers. It was a simple fact of population numbers. As a huge territory, roughly limited by the South River (Delaware River), the North River (Hudson River), and the Fresh River (Connecticut River), New Netherland counted less than 10,000 European inhabitants. Its population was no match for the English neighbors who from time to time encroached upon and even colonized the WIC lands. With New Netherland dangerously low on people to cultivate the territory and defend Dutch trade and commerce there, and the West India Company too weak to do the job, the City of Amsterdam entered into the fray, first by agreeing to take on a colony on the South River, and second, by launching a massive propaganda campaign.⁵

In a first step, Amsterdam acted side by side with the Company, as twin sponsors of the publication of Adriaen van der Donck's influential *Beschrijvinge van Nieuw-Nederlant* (*Description of New Netherland*) in 1655. Adriaen van der Donck (c.1618–1655) had settled in New Netherland in 1641 and had developed into a spokesman for the settlers in their struggle with the West India Company, demanding a modicum of people's representation in the authoritarian governance of the colony. In 1649 Van der Donck returned to the Netherlands to plead the settler's cause with the States-General, a visit that eventually extended to late 1653, when he returned to New Netherland, to die, presumably, in the Peach Tree War of September 1655.⁶ His first comprehensive exposé of New World opportunities was meant expressly to propagate emigration to New Netherland, and it presented the powerful commercial city of Amsterdam, in the persons of its four burgomasters, as the new patrons who will take care of New Netherland now that "the West India Company is in a fallen state."⁷ The City of Amsterdam thus enhanced the ultimate goal of this propaganda, the populating of New Netherland, as Van der Donck writes in the dedication:

And because it is Your daily concern to bring people to that land . . . I felt the urge to give this [description] to my fellow countrymen, to the bold and skillful people in particular. Those who might otherwise not know of

that good and healthy air and the potentials of New Netherland, can now be stimulated to go there.⁸

The *Beschrijvinge* went through a second edition in 1656 and it undoubtedly had the pragmatic purpose of raising the interest of ordinary people. In order to reach its audience, the *Beschrijvinge* was not expensive: the text had a compact layout, in Gothic type, without any illustrations in the first edition. It was a low-cost popular production, issued by Evert Nieuwenhof (c.1631–1702), a fairly unknown low-market-oriented Amsterdam publisher.⁹ However, he did have the print corrected and the book enriched by a map of the colony's territory, which included a view of the town of New Amsterdam on Manhattan, one of the first public images of the overseas area (Illustration 9.1).¹⁰

Amsterdam took its American colonization project very seriously. In line with its patronage of Van der Donck's *Beschrijvinge*, the City also published the circumstances under which people could most profitably migrate. That tract, entitled *Conditiën*, was issued in 1656 as a strong public display of Amsterdam's official involvement in, and commitment to, the population of New Netherland. It was published by the City's authorized printing house of Jan Banningh (c.1588–1658), and on the title page sat Amsterdam's coat of arms, the Saint Andrew's crosses.¹¹

The *Conditiën* addresses "all those who intend to depart as colonists to New Netherland" and presents a list of 35 commitments made to prospective emigrants. The magistrates guarantee a secure transport to New Netherland, cost-free on the understanding that the colonists will reimburse the City on a later date. Furthermore, the settlers are promised free and fertile lands up to 20 or 30 morgen per family¹²—unclaimed by others—in a healthy climate and close to a river navigable by large ships. And they will be provided with a year's worth of clothes, food, and sowing seed. Any further necessities will be on sale for the prices current in the Republic itself, without the Company's toll. For natural resources, the colonists are allowed to take wood, for free, from the surrounding forests, or from their own private property. Also, hunting and fishing in the wilderness will be open and free to anyone. Settlers' mining minerals of any sort are free from taxes for ten years, while all new colonists will have tax exemptions for a number of years and receive the guarantee that any extracted money after the beginning of taxation is spent on local public works (Illustration 9.2).

The ordinary people meant to populate the City Colony were enticed not simply with freedom from costs or taxes. The *Conditiën* also presented them with the prospect of social freedoms: settlers are free to elect three burgomasters and five or seven aldermen—the latter selected from a list of 10–14 names drawn up by the citizenry, from which the director of

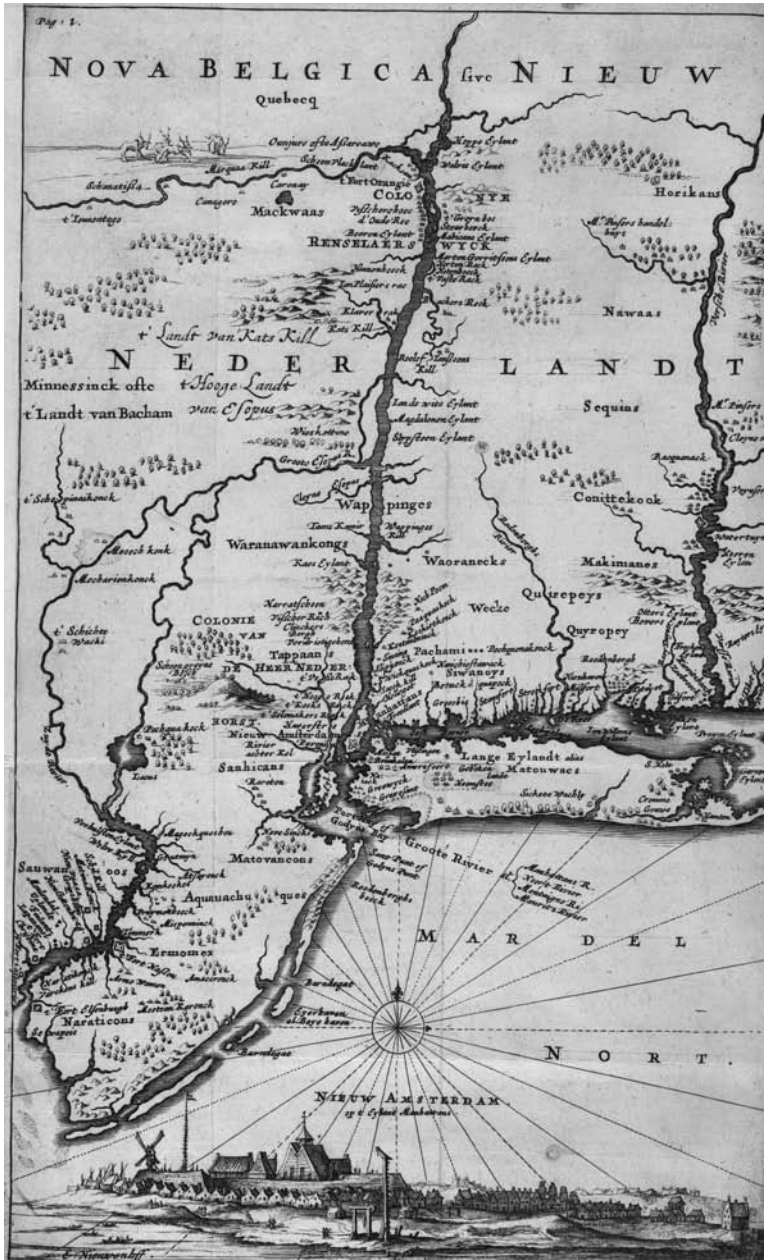


Illustration 9.1 Map of New Netherland and view of New Amsterdam, both added by Evert Nieuwenhof in his second edition of Adriaen van der Donck's *Description of New Netherland* (Amsterdam, 1656). Special collections of the University of Amsterdam

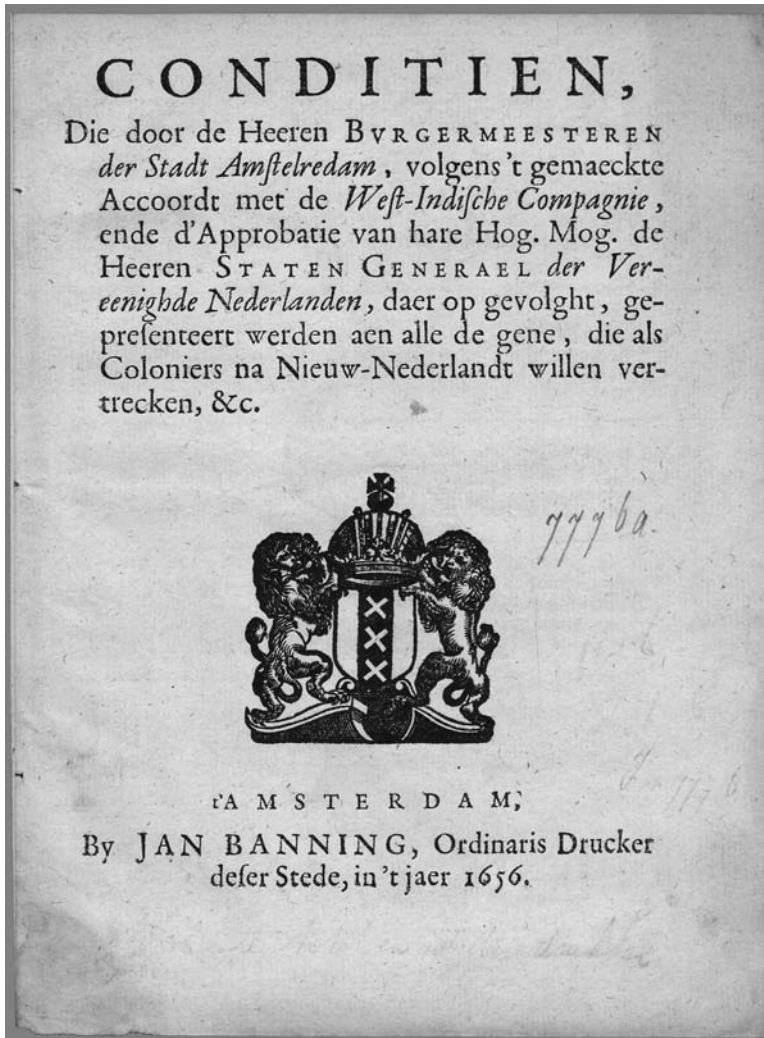


Illustration 9.2 Title page of the *Conditien* published by Jan Banningh. Special collections of the University of Amsterdam

the City Colony will elect the necessary number of aldermen. When the population of the settlement reaches 200 families, they will be allowed to elect a council, which will replenish its numbers by itself, nominate persons for the position of alderman, and appoint the burgomasters. The aldermen administer justice in civil cases worth less than 100 guilders

and small criminal matters, but have to accept the tutelage of the WIC's Director-General and his council. Finally, the City will take care to pay for a schoolmaster who will also read from the Bible and sing psalms.¹³

The interesting thing about the City's public campaign as presented in the *Conditiën* is the overall posture of responsibility and reassurance. Amsterdam lured potential settlers with a set of liberties and freedoms: free land grants, tax exemptions, good trading prices, civic government, election of magistrates, free use of natural resources. That was a radical break from the WIC's former practices, which had aimed at ruthless exploitation of colonists, and, therefore, constantly failed to win the hearts of commoners.

Amsterdam's vigilant book printing industry was keen to take over the City's public campaign. First, the *Conditiën* themselves were reissued by Nieuwenhof as an appendix to the second edition of Van der Donck's *Beschrijvinge*. For this practical information, most relevant to the intended readers of his book, Nieuwenhof had obtained consent to copy the official City pamphlet of the *Conditiën* as published by Banningh in the same year.¹⁴ It was an extremely useful addition to the *Beschrijvinge*, a welcome addition to Amsterdam's propaganda campaign (Illustration 9.3).

In the next few years, Amsterdam's reliable voice in emigration policy and the City's notion of freedom for settlers—as opposed to the former exploitation of workers by the West India Company—were echoed loudly in other media. The pamphlet *'t Verheerlickte Nederland*, published in 1659, fiercely opposed the Company's strategy in managing the colony and specifically advocated the new and free way of colonizing as developed by Amsterdam. The staged dialogue of the pamphlet features three ordinary Dutchmen from the lower middle class—a skipper, a peasant, and an artisan. Discussing how to make a success of populating New Netherland, they come to the conclusion that the best option would be to take the whole area out of the hands of the WIC, as was done in the case of the City Colony, and grant the settlers freedom in property and trade, and autonomy in governance, and exempt them from the heavy tax burdens that merely exploit, rather than enlarge, the population. Moreover, the pamphlet makes a direct link to the *Beschrijvinge* by Van der Donck, as the skipper urges the peasant and artisan to go to a bookshop in town to buy the recent publication “by a man called Verdonck who has lived in the colony for many years and learned a lot about life as it was there.”¹⁵ A footnote—the only one in the tract—explicitates that this means Van der Donck's book. Three years later, and apparently for the same reason, the *Kort Verhael* by Franciscus van den Enden also explicitly names the title, author, and publisher of the *Beschrijvinge*. Both later publications thus underscored the status of the

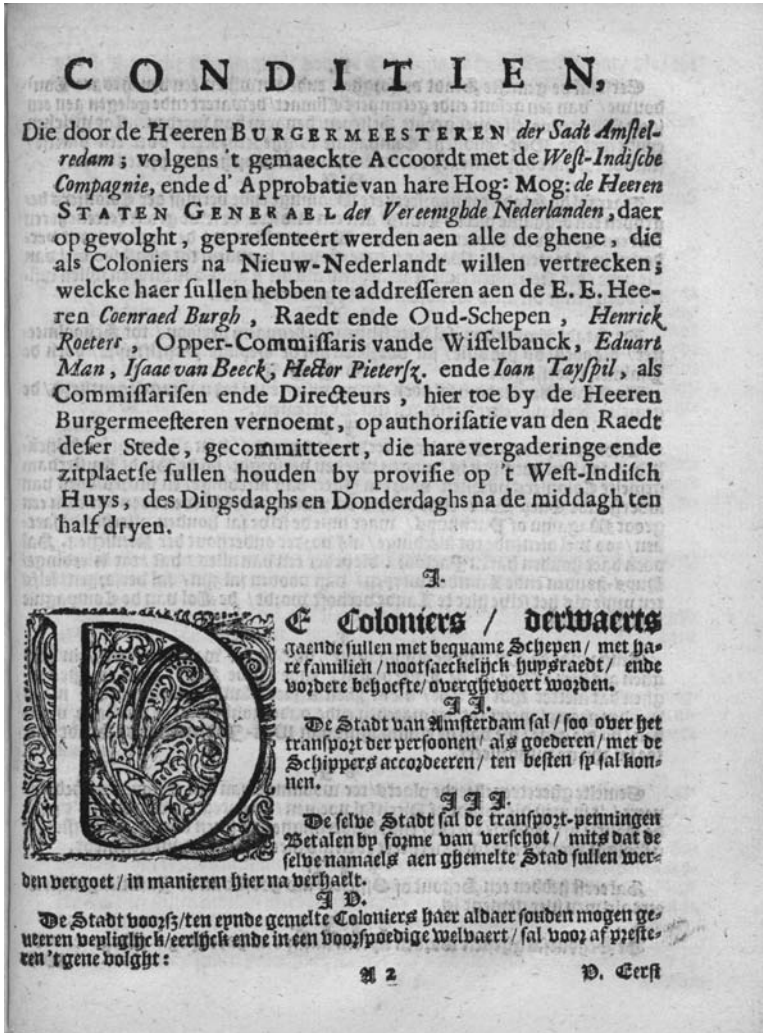


Illustration 9.3 Evert Nieuwenhof's second edition of the *Conditien* adopted in the *Description of New Netherland* (Amsterdam, 1656), copied from the City's contemporary official announcement. Special collections of the University of Amsterdam

Beschrijvinge as the prime source of information about New Netherland. It had become the guide for emigration to America.¹⁶

In addition to the City's patronage of Van der Donck's book and the publication of the *Conditien*, Amsterdam also activated public media like

newspapers to mobilize ordinary people for the City Colony. This was done, for example, in the *Ordinarise Middelweekse Courant* (*The Common Midweek Newspaper*), issued by the Amsterdam-based news provider Sara Vlaminckx (1596–1669), widow of publisher François van Lieshout (1596–1646).¹⁷ The Lieshout printing company worked under supervision of the City magistrates and had a good reputation with official documents. The newspaper layout confirmed the official status of the calls. They were labeled as “Notifications,” which was the technical term for governmental announcements. Also, the calls were issued as news: the City notifications were part of the news, whereas previous WIC newspaper advertisements for New Netherland were printed in the advertisement section.¹⁸ Moreover, the Amsterdam calls for migration had a confident tone, stressing that the City was firmly in charge of the South River enterprise:

Commissioners and Directors of the Colony of the City of Amsterdam, established in New Netherland, notify all land-workers, market farmers and other people who, for a living, are willing to cultivate those lands . . . to report themselves to aforementioned Commissioners and Directors in Amsterdam and to be all set and ready for departure by the end of October.¹⁹

No mention of the WIC—it is clear that the City posed here as the patron offering the prospect of finding a living in its colony.

The Common Man Responds

In order to repair the bad public image of life in the New World, caused by the former practices of the WIC, Amsterdam used the notion of freedom as a key element in its campaign, and framed itself as its champion. This notion was soon picked up by a number of men who originated from the broad middle classes of the Dutch Republic, and responded partly as would-be settlers on their own and partly as visionaries who saw the South River colony as a means to build a new society in which the common man would be to a great extent his own man. These visionaries were Pieter Ploekhoy (c.1620–1664?) and Franciscus van den Enden (1602–1674), who both proposed strikingly similar, yet also quite different plans for an egalitarian, democratic colonial settlement, without a fixed Church.

Franciscus van den Enden, a former Jesuit who had migrated from Antwerp to Amsterdam, had become a fashionable elite schoolmaster in the early 1650s. He compiled a lengthy and glowing description of New Netherland, based on a variety of sources, which was meant to accompany his plan, though it ended up being most often quoted for precisely

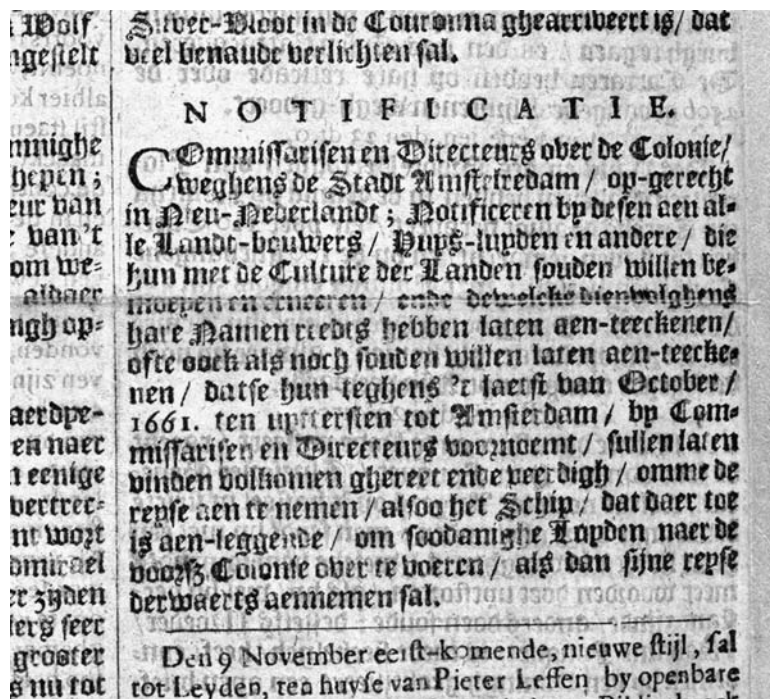


Illustration 9.4 Newspaper notification inviting prospective colonists, October 1661. National Library of the Netherlands.

this description. His *Kort Verhael van Nieuw-Nederlant (Short Account of New-Netherland)*²⁰ was published in 1662, anonymously—he uses the pseudonym H.V.Z.M., *Houdt Van Zaken Meest* or “He who loves things best”—and without mentioning either a publisher or a printer. It is actually a bundle of loosely allied texts. The main body is a description of New Netherland, its native inhabitants, natural resources, and agricultural potential. This section is followed by five other texts, which set out, and if necessary defend, Van den Enden’s conception of a democratic colonial settlement, envisaged in the southern part of New Amstel.

Apart from Van der Donck’s *Beschrijvinge*, Van den Enden published the most elaborate propagandistic text, in which he consistently sings the praises of New Netherland,²¹ and especially the part of it controlled by Amsterdam, the South River area, which he called “the most excellent and choicest part of New Netherland.”²² Indeed, the South River was “a maiden desired by all,” which Van den Enden underlines by quoting earlier reports about the encroachments of the Swedes and the English in the area. The only one so far to address the problem of how to populate it was “this

praiseworthy City and Government of Amsterdam,” through which for one thing the Swedish domination of the South River was now reduced. In order to preserve “this more than precious river,” it should be “offered completely on honor and fair conditions to a formidable power, or gathering of Free and thereto well-endowed men as right affectionate lovers,” rather than disgracefully losing it to strangers, as had happened in the Fresh River area.²³

Freedom played an important role in Van den Enden’s tract, as he regarded the lure of greater liberties across the ocean as the best way to promote emigration and in the process to allow the WIC to maintain its colony in the face of English encroachment. The price was a reduced role for the WIC in the colony. These ideas seem to be partly foreshadowed in *’t Verheerlickt Nederland*, in which a similarly modest role for the WIC was advocated.²⁴ Van den Enden’s preoccupation with freedom also shows in his description of the Native Americans. According to him, noble as they are, Indians hardly ever kill another human, least of all women and children, so there is nothing to fear from them even in lonely forests, and they do not even mind the intrusion of others in their land: “they are not miserly worried, or plagued by envy, over the approaching and settlement of all kinds of peaceful peoples,” because “For them their land is open,” to come and go and to settle. Thus, Van den Enden fashions the Indians as an ideal people from whom the colonists have nothing to fear.

Van den Enden emphasizes the egalitarian and democratic character of Amerindian society, their government being described as being “Free, and wholly popular.”²⁵ He describes the natives as “naturally very free, and magnanimous by nature, whence they, as not being able to bear dominion over them, are opposed to the same,” and gives them a critical voice toward European traditions: “with regard to our respect for our government, they can’t understand that one man can be so much more than another.”²⁶ Without an ounce of experience with the people of New Netherland, Van den Enden fashioned them as the opposite of Europe’s traditional and hierarchic societies, referring to the Indians as “in all manners a most excellent, tractable and freedom-loving Nation, worthy to be invited and bred by all good ways and means to right Christians and Allies.”²⁷

The second visionary, Pieter Plockhoy, may have regarded himself as less eloquent, for he chose to have his tract, published in 1662, accompanied by a propagandistic poem by Jacob Steendam (c.1615–c.1673), a former colonist of New Netherland who was also a prolific poet. Steendam had recently returned to the Dutch Republic and had already in previous years actively taken part in the propaganda campaign for the North American colony.²⁸ His “Prickel-vaerzen” or “Spurring Verses” fully picks up on the idea of freedom. The opening stanza, for example, directly appealed to the great dream of freedom, saying that settlers at the South River will not be

servants to anyone. Indeed, they will be “free lords,” as they will be served themselves, by the abundance of the lands. The words “free” and “freedom” pop up continuously in the poem. In addition to the alluring images of Eden, and the dream of a “Second Brazil,” referring to the Dutch nostalgia for that lost colony, the unique selling point of the South River colony was to be autonomy and freedom under the protection of the champion of freedom, the City of Amsterdam.²⁹

As a former colonist, Steendam was the right man at the right time and place to be involved in this new kind of propaganda. Moreover, he was himself a member of its intended audience, and was active in a circle of men of a similar background with a great concern for civic issues. Around 1660 he belonged to a group of poets in Amsterdam, meeting at an inn called *De Zoete Rust* (*The Sweet Peace*).³⁰ The poets were all ordinary, middle-class men, most of them fortune-seeking immigrants in Amsterdam. Their weekly meetings were not for the sake of art alone: they had a clearly defined social program aimed at discussing and improving social conditions for common people. In terms of religion, most of them were Collegiants, men—and women—who had turned away from the existing churches and met regularly in well-attended “colleges” to debate religious issues freely, without clergy or dogmas—much to the dismay of the Dutch Reformed ministers of Amsterdam. They found common ground in the fact that they all were fed up with traditional ecclesiastical and social hierarchies and privileges for the happy few; thus they advocated tolerance, freedom of the mind and conscience, and social solidarity.

The social engagement of the poets is best witnessed in the volume of poems entitled *Parnassus aen 't Y* (*Mount Parnas on the Shore of the Y River*), which was published almost simultaneously with the “Prickelvaerzen.”³¹ The volume is organized from a set of 15 social-ethical questions concerning the happiness of ordinary people. The poems in *Parnassus aen 't Y* show that Jacob Steendam was among the most active members in the band: he was the one taking on the highest number of socio-ethical questions. Other poets concur incidentally; he writes on basically every occasion. These interventions reveal his major involvement in the quest for happiness of the common people. That is, together with his overseas experience, the reason why he contributed his “Prickelvaerzen” to the Ploekhoy tract. We will now turn to Ploekhoy and his plans, to which Steendam had lent his poetic support.

The Kort en Klaer Ontwerp of Ploekhoy

Pieter Ploekhoy was a Mennonite artisan, born in Zierikzee and later a citizen of Middelburg in the Dutch province of Zeeland, who functioned

as one of the Middelburg Mennonite congregation's unsalaried ministers from 1649 until late 1652. As such he was controversial from the start, perhaps because of the heterodox religious opinions he would express later on, but certainly because of his loose sexual morals. A protracted conflict within the congregation led eventually to his expulsion in 1654. Afterward, he seems to have looked for kindred spirits elsewhere, for example, among the English Quakers, with whom he shared spiritualist ideas. He travelled to London, where he seems to have lived between the middle of 1657 and late 1660. He addressed the vexed issue of Church independence in a tract published in 1658, *The Way to the Peace and Settlement of These Nations*, in which he argued that the government should steer clear of attempts to lord over the conscience of its subjects and instead set up meeting places all over the country, where everyone would be allowed to speak freely on religious matters. This is the only way to ensure civil and internal peace.

While trying to influence government policy on religion, Plockhoy also promoted a second project, publicized in *A Way Propounded to Make the Poor in These and Other Nations Happy*, published in 1659. In *A Way* Plockhoy set out a blueprint for a "society or little commonwealth" in which artisans, farmers, mariners, and scholars might combine and pool their resources, so that, rather than struggle individually on the brink of poverty, they could work together for the greater good of all. The little commonwealth would strive for economic autonomy, and the community's combination of cost saving and diligent labor would result in a profitable enterprise, Plockhoy hoped.

Unlike his attempt to influence government policy, *A Way* became a success, and Plockhoy came close to realizing his "little commonwealth," to founding his society in Ireland. However, the Restoration in 1660 put all of this to an end, and Plockhoy returned to Amsterdam where he attended the meetings of the Collegiants and would later become notorious for defending polygamy.³²

Amsterdam offered a new opportunity to realize his plans for a "little commonwealth"—not in Europe, but in America, in New Amstel. To that effect he drew up a contract with the Burgomasters of Amsterdam, dated June 9, 1662.³³ It was published in Plockhoy's *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp*, the booklet in which he publicized his endeavor, and which also contained an abbreviated version of *A Way*. This abbreviation differs from *A Way* in details, but in general espouses the same ideas (Illustration 9.5).

It is clear from *A Way* and the *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp* that Plockhoy's proposed settlement would be egalitarian, democratic, and religiously liberal, and that it also offered an unusual economic arrangement.³⁴ The society was to consist of "a peaceful, unanimous, and select people" who

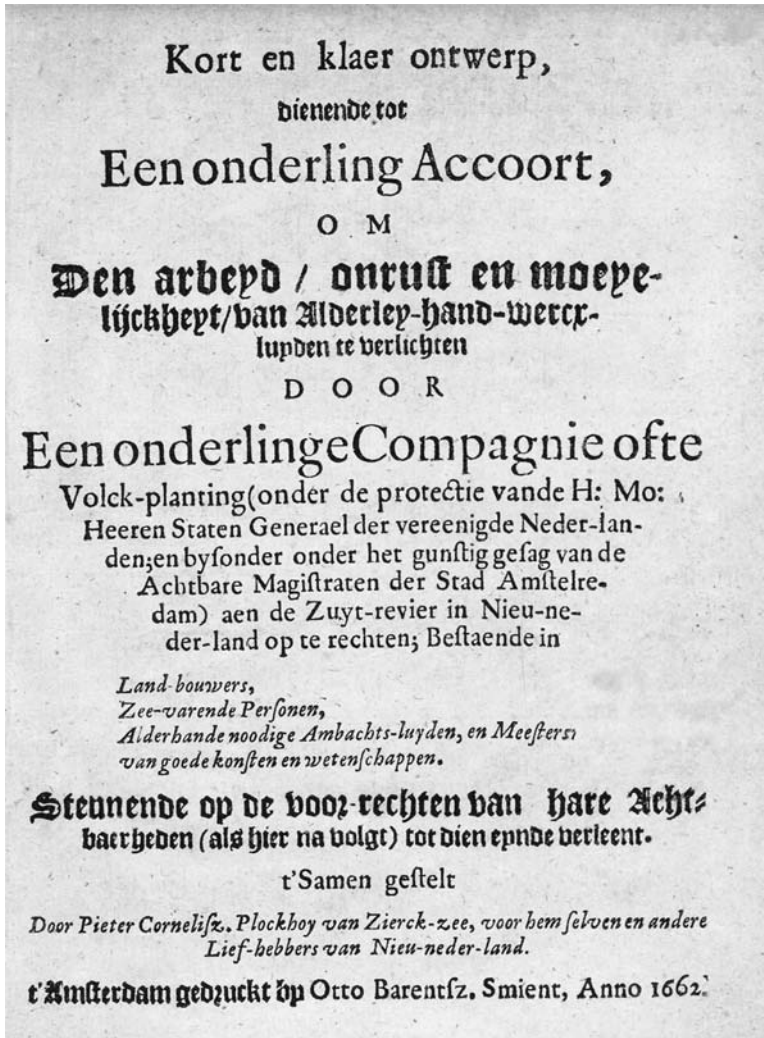


Illustration 9.5 Title page of the *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp* by Pieter Plockhoy. National Library of the Netherlands.

would endeavor communally to achieve an improvement in the situation of “many poor sad households, who live here in great affliction.” The “said many-headed mutual Company,” where everyone’s private property is respected, would stand under the leadership of a general board of directors rather than under the command of one person.

For this mutual company were needed “reasonable and impartial people”: farmers, seafarers, all kinds of artisans, and masters of good arts and sciences, who were all willing to work “with a voluntary unanimity for the common weal, as if under one family.” The profits from all agricultural work, catching of fish or any other labor, would be equally divided among those participants over 20 years old, the unmarried persons not being treated differently from the married ones. The only privilege of the men over the women would be that, once the loans of the burgomasters had been paid back, they would partake in the allocation by lot of the undivided communal lands—if they so wished, for the men could also choose to leave the lands common. All married men and all unmarried men of age would be allocated a parcel of land that they might use as a private plantation to grow whatever pleases them. The sailors, unable to make use of their land, would enjoy other profit from the society, so that they too would enjoy the fruits of the common labor in an equal way with the farmers and the artisans (Illustration 9.6).

A high level of social equality would prevail in Plockhoy’s ideal community. In his view, Christ had done away with hierarchy among Christians, “Abolishing amongst his disciples, all pre-eminency, or domineering, of one over another,” and declaring that his followers should regard themselves as equal brothers. For a radical Christian such as Plockhoy, this meant that all human hierarchies were pointless. What mattered for salvation was not one’s status in life, but one’s faith and acts of faith. Plockhoy reflected: “The world hath her delights in different degrees of Dignities, States, Titles, and offices; exalting themselves above another”; Christ, however, had willed “that everyone shall perform his office as a member of one and the same body.” No one should therefore exalt himself or account himself worthier than the other. What hierarchy there was in his society was based on proven skill and individual leadership qualities, not on inherited status or monetary wealth.

Plockhoy’s plan suggests a strong attachment to the idea that the common man is capable of self-rule. In Plockhoy’s society, the governor would be chosen not “for his riches or wealth . . . but for his wisdom.” All positions of leadership, including the governorship, were for one year only.³⁵ They are expected to circulate: thus one is not eligible for reelection straightaway, but has to wait for a year before again being eligible for the office. Moreover, and strikingly, the governor’s leadership was confined to the executive—collectively, all members of the society formed the legislative. The important, governing laws of the society are to be established democratically. Leadership was also accountable: every six or 12 months “an account shall be given.” The treasury of the society would be entrusted to three men: the treasury chest would have three locks, and “three of the

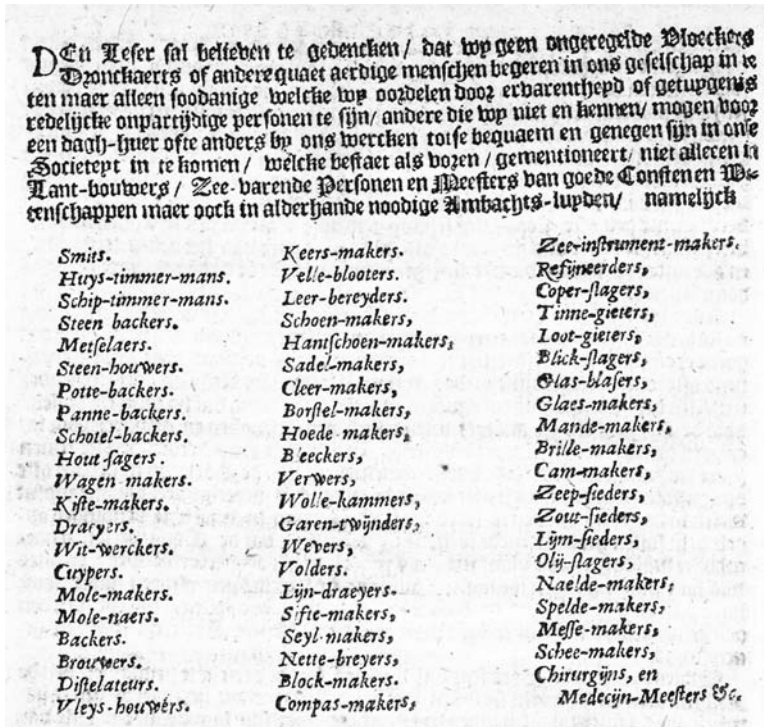


Illustration 9.6 List of workers/ordinary people required for Ploekhoij colony—page 16 of the *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp*. National Library of the Netherlands.

uppermost in the Government, shall allwayes have the keys,” so that the chest could be opened only if all three were present. As the governor was chosen on merit, so were the masters who oversaw their fellow artisans: the best workmen would be appointed to that responsible position. All of these members of the executive ought moreover to be elected for their capability. All status within the society thus depended on merit, election, and accountability, and all members were otherwise equal.

Nevertheless, it seems that decisions about the course to be followed by the society were a male prerogative, since the governor and the masters were spoken of only in male terms.³⁶ There was one explicit exception: oversight of the society’s provisions would be “governed by turns” by a committee consisting of both men and women. Ten to 12 men and women would govern for six months, after which half of them would be replaced by new overseers, while, to ensure continuity, the other half would continue for a further six months to instruct the newcomers. The only domain

in which women could attain a position of leadership was thus closely connected with traditional female housekeeping tasks. Nevertheless, their near-equal share in the profits of the company and their ability to do other, not traditionally female, forms of labor implies a great degree of liberty for the women of the society—unheard of outside it.

A striking, final feature of Plockhoy's project is his espousal of liberty of conscience: everyone was to retain his or her "liberty of conscience," to which end public services would be restricted to reading from the Bible and the singing of psalms. When, as time went by, as a greater number of confessional groups would be present, they would be allowed to convene in private meetings and take care of the upkeep of their ministers. In the communal schools the students would be taught only the Bible, natural sciences, and languages, but no "human Forms of Religion," so that "their judgment is not spoiled by some particular opinion before they have the use of reason." Thus "no Foundation of Sectarianism or partisanship shall be laid in their hearts." Yet, if anyone would want to have his children educated in private schools or by private persons at his own cost, "therein is and remains every person free to do according to the liberty of his conscience."

The *Kort Verhael* of Franciscus van den Enden

Before he published his *Kort Verhael*, Franciscus van den Enden started out, in 1661, as representative of an unspecified number of unnamed "principals," with whom he envisioned an egalitarian, democratic colony without a fixed Church settlement, and on whose behalf he negotiated with the magistrates of Amsterdam. In these proposals, equality was of prime importance: a recurrent phrase in his writings is the word "all-equality." Also in his proposed settlement the officials were to be elected, and capable. A set of 117 concept-articles dealing with the establishment and internal government of a small colony—which, they hoped, might be adopted with approbation of the burgomasters—was presented in early 1662. From it emerges a blueprint of an egalitarian, democratic and religiously fairly liberal society. The first article dealt with the "principal foundation of this Society," that is "All-Equality": that concept is explained by Van den Enden as the basis of a "flourishing Christ-burgherly society, Republic or Commonwealth," and is to consist of as great as possible equality between "more and less sensible, more and less wealthy, male and female gender, ruler and ruled, et cetera." Thus one will be able to attain a society in which every member will be able to flourish. All violent dominance and servile obedience must be prevented in this community.³⁷ Every man, over 24—he may be younger if he is married—and not being in somebody's service,

wanting to join the Society would be welcome, on condition that he would first promise never to strive for dominance over the Society, nor allow anybody else in the Society to strive for such power; and that he will accept and uphold the decisions of the Society, provided those decisions are attained by majority or two-thirds of the votes.³⁸

Other articles detailed such things as the required amount of votes for the making of a decision—for example two-thirds in the case of important ordinances—and votes will be by ballot. The leaders would be chosen by at least a hundred of colonists over age 24, not in service to anybody or in debt to the Society for receiving travel money. The colonists eligible to vote would choose or nominate ten men who are preferably well endowed with material means as well as the brains to match. Their names would be sent to the Burgomasters of Amsterdam, who would choose five of these men to be the new leaders of the colony, for a period of one year only. They would not be reeligible the next year, but only the year after that. These five “servants of the Community” could be supplemented with one or two extra from the Mennonites or those who chose to refrain from armed defense, again from a double number for each post, as assisting servants, but without responsibility for the defenses of the colony. There would also be appointed a bookkeeper who might also be schoolmaster.³⁹

The second article insisted that the society’s members should dispense with “all particular strife, and fierce sectarianism regarding Religion,”⁴⁰ and therefore should content themselves with the Bible having read aloud on Sundays and high holy days, and singing psalms before and after the reading. In fact, the petitioners wanted to exclude as members “stiff-headed Papists obligated to the Romish Chair, usurious Jews, English stiff-headed Quakers, Puritans and audacious stupid Millennialists” and “all stiff-headed pretenders to present-day Revelations” in order not to disturb the peace of the Society.⁴¹ Van den Enden stated that as his principals wanted to found a colony where people of different faiths would be welcome, they did not wish to prefer one sect to another. The Bible was minister enough, Van den Enden’s principals felt,⁴² which suggests there were Collegiants among his principals, and in any case Mennonites, for provision was made for the Mennonites’ abhorrence of violence: instead of physically defending their homes, as is expected of the other colonists, they will instead pay a tax and be exempt from having to vote on military matters.⁴³

That Van den Enden and his principals wanted to exclude the groups specified was not necessarily in contradiction to their understanding of religious liberty: those whose opinions conformed to the exact phrasing would indeed be unlikely to contribute to the stability of a religiously diverse colony. It also suggests that there was room for Catholics critical of

Rome, non-usurious Jews, nondogmatic Quakers and Puritans, and people who were less certain that Doomsday was imminent. Yet to modern ears this may sound like a prejudicial distinction without a difference.

Economically, Van den Enden and his principals were clearly not interested in migrants who were destitute. Settlers were expected to provide enough money for the journey to America and enough money per head to last for a year. Once in America, the colonists would join forces in building shelter for their wives, children, and baggage, sowing the fields, and building a communal, defendable winter-home. After five years this communal period might come to an end after the members of the Society had settled well and were provided with their own house.⁴⁴ This too was an uncommon feature: normally, settlers were expected to start their new life on their own, though with some assistance from the director in situ. According to Van den Enden, the newcomers were all well to do and free of sectarianism. It has been suggested that this might indicate a growing interest in the unusual proposals of Van den Enden and his principals among a number of inhabitants of Amsterdam, who thus became prospective colonists (Illustration 9.7).⁴⁵

Plockhoy and Van den Enden: Partners or Rivals?

Clearly, Van den Enden's and Plockhoy's plans had much in common—both proposed an egalitarian, democratic setup and a religious policy that was in every way the opposite of what was commonly the practice in European states, including the Dutch Republic. No wonder then that previous scholars have often assumed that both proposals refer to the same colonial settlement. As long as it was not known who had published the *Kort Verhael*, it was assumed the author also wrote the *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp*.⁴⁶ Now that it is clear that Van den Enden was the author of the *Kort Verhael*—and all of it, not just a part—the argument has moved somewhat to the possibility of a close cooperation, which went sour from some reason, after which Plockhoy and Van den Enden parted ways—perhaps in April 1662.⁴⁷

The conjecture that Plockhoy and fellow candidate colonists seceded from the group for whom Van den Enden mediated may well be true. Given the religious stipulations in both proposals, both projects may have originated within a Collegiant milieu. Moreover, it is unlikely that they were ignorant of each other—at least Plockhoy must have heard of the lengthy negotiations between Van den Enden and the directors and burgomasters. It is also noteworthy he managed to make a contract with the burgomasters so soon after Van den Enden's last petition, but this is in itself hardly

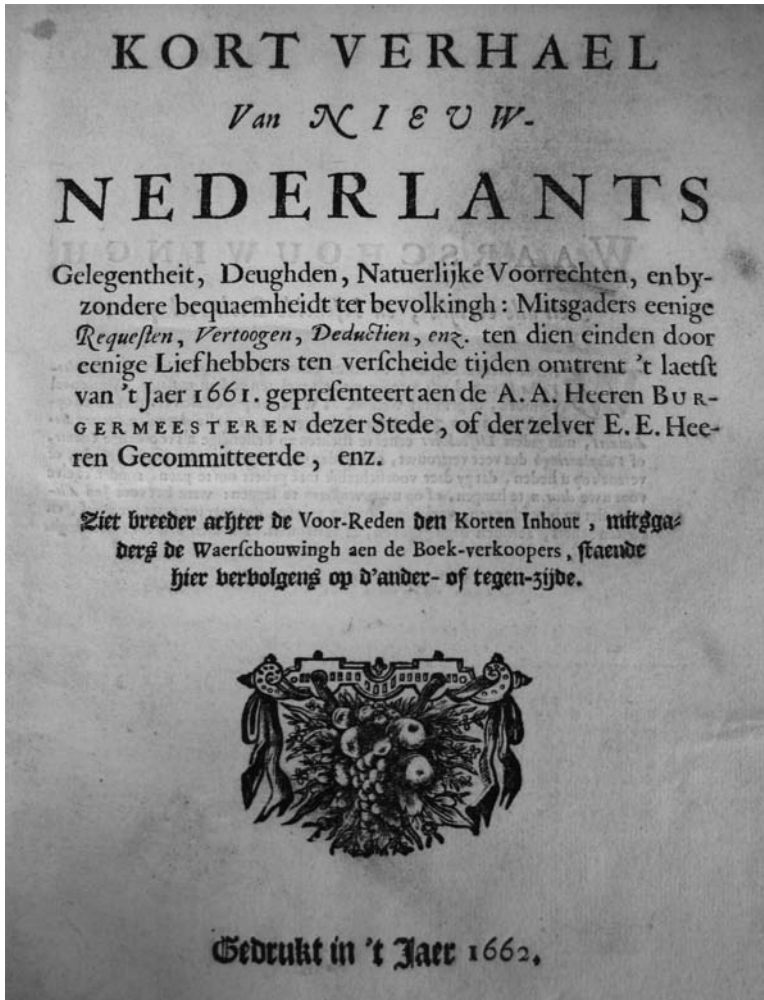


Illustration 9.7 Title page of the *Kort Verhael* by Van den Enden. National Library of the Netherlands.

exceptional. Burgomasters or directors of the City Colony made contracts with immigrants continuously, and the contract with Plockhoy is only exceptional in that it concerned a society or company.

There is however no conclusive evidence linking the two men,⁴⁸ and despite the strong similarities there are also distinct differences. One of the main differences is that Plockhoy aspires to a society, a kind of company

in which the members partake in equal measure. Van den Enden on the other hand aspires to nothing less than a village community, with its concomitant political structure and rights. Unlike Plockhoy's plan, his concept deals mainly with the political aspects of the society, and has little to say on the organization of economic life. It is clear that Van den Enden envisions mainly an agricultural society;⁴⁹ Plockhoy, on the other hand, while the importance of agriculture is visible between the lines, maintains the fourfold labor division he also used in *A Way*, and seems to aim at a more commercially oriented colony. Furthermore, though Van den Enden also proposed an initial period of communal use of the societies' lands, this was ostensibly a temporary measure: after five years the communally cultivated lands would be divided and each family own its own farm.⁵⁰ In Plockhoy's case one can choose to leave the society, but in principle it was to endure as a cooperative community. In fact, the *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp* strongly echoes Plockhoy's earlier tract, *A Way*, to such an extent that it can easily be seen as independent of Van den Enden's plan—which was not published until October 1662, long after the *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp* had appeared.

Whereas Van den Enden negotiated for months, and his plan eventually ended up rejected, Plockhoy seems to have done business with the burgomasters quickly. We will come back to why this should be so. The strong similarities between the two proposals do however point to an interesting and seldom-noticed aspect of this history: the great preparedness of Amsterdam to allow for such a religiously liberal and egalitarian democratic experiment.

Amsterdam and the Projectors

To start with religion, Amsterdam's ruling elite had little interest in blocking religious liberty in their colony. They wanted to populate the colony as quickly as possible. By contrast, the WIC government of New Netherland was much less tolerant of those who did not adhere to the Dutch Reformed creed, and was—along with many ministers of that Church—quite unenthusiastic about the religious policy of the City of Amsterdam.⁵¹ Freedom of conscience was acknowledged in WIC New Netherland—but only behind closed doors. Indeed, when Amsterdam took over New Amstel, the Amsterdam Dutch Reformed ministers voiced fears that the burgomasters would not enforce orthodoxy as strictly as the WIC had done, and their fears were justified. As the magistrates had little interest in the curtailing of semipublic worship in Amsterdam itself, they seem to have been equally liberal in the overseas dominion.⁵² The public style of worship Plockhoy and Van den Enden wished for their colony, confined to reading the Bible and singing psalms, was unlikely to shock the directors and

burgomasters given this liberal religious policy—indeed, when they placed marginal remarks in Van den Enden’s proposal, during the negotiations, they let this pass without comment.⁵³ According to Van den Enden, the would-be colonists’ abhorrence of a minister in their society caused many “suspicious, and insulting, profane accusations.” It is probable that those accusations came from the Dutch Reformed ministers of the city.⁵⁴ Though Van den Enden’s project fell through, the fact the burgomasters had no qualms about approving a similar style of public worship for Ploekhoj’s settlement shows that this aspect of Van den Enden’s proposal could not have been a breaking point in the negotiations.

Amsterdam itself was tightly controlled by its powerful burgomasters, and popular influence had always been limited—and certainly not acknowledged. Of course, the Amsterdam ruling class was dependent on the population’s acquiescence in its hegemony, but vestiges from guild influence or medieval elective procedures still found in other cities in Holland such as Dordrecht and Hoorn seem to have been wholly absent. But for its American colony, things would be different. The Amsterdam burgomasters clearly felt that Ploekhoj’s proposed society might have a viable future and permitted the unusual organization with its democratic traits.

By contrast, Van den Enden aimed at a society where the members would receive the privilege of justice—as if they formed a Dutch village in fact. The difference may have been in scale rather than in principle. Throughout the negotiations, his aspirations—and also that of his principals perhaps—grew from “a village, neighborhood or Christ-burgherly household,” a group of about a hundred men, to one of 600, as the numbers interested in the prospective colony increased. He may already have voiced the staggering number of colonists he mentioned in his *Vrije Politijke Stellingen*, three years later. Though it was by then too late, Van den Enden still believed that his proposal would have ushered in a massive migration to New Amstel: he claimed that a properly democratic colony in America might easily draw the staggering number of 24,000–25,000 settlers.⁵⁵ If he had made such a claim three years earlier, during the negotiations with the burgomasters, he may have met with staunch, and ultimately fatal, skepticism. Indeed Van den Enden’s vehement denial that he was building “Castles in the Air”⁵⁶ may have its origins with a burgomaster observing just that. Besides, Van den Enden’s expanding vision from a democratic colony with equal influence for everyone to a democratic Holland with equal influence for everyone may already have germinated back then, and his political thought developed into a potent brew that would have been much more than the burgomasters were able or willing to stomach.⁵⁷

The Burgomasters of Amsterdam were clearly interested in the greatest number of colonists they could get, but not at the price of giving away control over parts of it, as Van den Enden and his principals desired. But even though they decided that Van den Enden's project was not to their liking, Plockhoy's *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp* is proof that the burgomasters were willing to condone far-reaching institutional experiments in their jurisdiction, for the sake of settling their colony. The freedom they boasted of in their propaganda for the City Colony was thus not an idle phrase—they were prepared to grant it, up to a limit. For at the same time it should be clear to everyone that Amsterdam steered its colony with a firm hand.

Aftermath: Plockhoy and Van den Enden after 1663

Success and failure are relative terms. This also applies to Plockhoy's success, and Van den Enden's failure. Plockhoy landed in May 1663 on the shores of the South River. New Amstel developed quickly in those years. His settlement had every reason to expect a prosperous future, but it was not to be, for in the beginning of October 1664 the settlement was "destroyed . . . to a Naile" by the English invaders, in a prelude to the Second Anglo-Dutch War, which would result in the loss of New Netherland. This level of destruction may have resulted from the fact that this was the only part of New Netherland to resist the English conquest. Some people must have thought there was something worth fighting for. It is unknown what happened to Plockhoy. He disappears from view—six years later his widow was living in Amsterdam.

Van den Enden never managed to found his colony. His success was in a sense to be posthumous. Even after the burgomasters had broken off contact, Van den Enden ostensibly still hoped to attract their support for his plans. That was the reason he published his proposal—and not just that. As he wrote, his "small trouble" of conceiving, writing, and submitting a "small petition" led him to write "books of paper" afterward. Now that petitioning the magistrate had not worked, Van den Enden tried a different strategy—that of influencing the public through the *Kort Verhael*. He had it published without either indication of author and publisher, which suggests that he judged the content of the *Kort Verhael* to be sufficiently controversial as to avoid too much unwelcome governmental attention to either author or printer. The preface of publication is dated Amsterdam, October 10, 1662,⁵⁸ four months after Plockhoy's *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp* had been published. He had expanded the tract into a small book that extended his vision to "all the most principal, most actual and most necessary grounds of a good government of Free Folk."⁵⁹

According to his preface, he was inspired by the success of the writings of Johan (1622–1660) and Pieter de la Court (1618–1685),⁶⁰ and therefore has followed up their invitation of contemplating on the subject of freedom, adding that “this our contemplation of Freedom serves also somewhat to the aim that the Regents of our Fatherland by this also come to experience what the lesser of their inhabitants foster and feed between them for thoughts about Freedom.”⁶¹ Van den Enden thus turned his petitions and proposals into a book which directly engaged with the most intensely debated Dutch writings on politics of his day, and for that purpose also added to the published petitions a reworked proposal based on the 117 articles he had previously submitted to directors and burgomasters.⁶²

Van den Enden’s motivation for publication of the petitions seems the still very real—and ultimately justified—fear that the Dutch colony in America could not survive without a swift and massive migration. He still hoped that Amsterdam would change its policies, for in the *Kort Verhael* he wrote that only “this praiseworthy City and Government of Amsterdam” could be an effective colonizer.⁶³ The burgomasters did however not change their mind, though Van den Enden was not one to give up easily: a year later, in 1663, he extended the range of his writings when he had the tract republished, with a new title page under the title *Zeekere Vrye-Voorlagen*, or *Certain Free Propositions*, and a new dedication. This may have been addressed to the States of Holland rather than the City of Amsterdam, although it is dedicated to the people of Holland as a whole rather than just the States: Van den Enden specifically addresses his tract to his “Fellow Citizens and Countrymen, both Ruler as well as Ruled, Literate and Illiterate.”⁶⁴

To Van den Enden the reissue not only meant to advocate his “Dutch free popular colony” but also to propagate a “free State” in general, and it was the start of a more ambitious program of political writing.⁶⁵ However, the *Zeekere Vrye-Voorlagen* still bears witness to its cradle of colonial propaganda, as it was designed, according to the dedication, to show the “particular advantages of Dutch free popular colonies.”⁶⁶ He grew to see his American endeavor, as he stated much later, as an attempt to develop a new sort of republic, next to Plato’s republic, Grotius’s republic, and More’s Utopia, to be set up in the “New Holland” in America.⁶⁷ Part of his thoughts on a democratic republic he would publish later, in his most well known work, *Vrije Politieke Stellingen*, in 1665.

Eventually Van den Enden even tried to realize a new republican project in France, but with disastrous and fatal consequences for himself and his allies. He was implicated in the so-called Rohan plot, an attempt to incapacitate the ability of Louis XIV to rule France. The plot was

however discovered and the main conspirators—among them Van den Enden—were executed on November 27, 1674.⁶⁸

Conclusion

To sum it up, Amsterdam's magistrates were surprisingly open to egalitarian, democratic ideas coming from the population, at least where it concerned its colonial settlement policy. It was willing to condone, up to a level, such institutional experiments, which it certainly would not have concocted itself—government in a Dutch city was for the people as a whole, but not by the people as a whole. As the city relied on initiatives from below to improve its lawmaking, so too it was prepared to go some way to give room for other ideas from below—provided these ideas did not touch on the position of the magistrates themselves. Hence the protracted and sometimes tense negotiations with Van den Enden and his principals, and their eventual failure. That these negotiations failed was presumably because Van den Enden wanted too much and too soon. Plockhoy's proposal was another matter. Limited in numbers and scope as Plockhoy's colonial experiment was, had the colony survived, his experiment might well have worked. What that might have meant for the development of like-minded settlements can now never be known. But his experiment does show that Amsterdam's magistrates were willing to give room for popular ideas about self-government—as long as it was at the other side of the ocean.

Annex Spurring Verses Prickel-Vaersen

To the Candidates for the Colony and Brotherhood, to be Established on the South River of New Netherland, by Pieter Cornelisz Plockhoy of Zierikzee, with his associates; and the favorable privileges, for that purpose, granted by the Hon. Lords Burgomasters of the City of Amsterdam, June 9, 1662

Aen de Lief-hebbers van de Volck-planting en broederschap, op te Rechten, by de Zuyd-revier van Nieuw-nederland, door Pieter Cornelisz. Plockhoy van Zierck-zee, met sijn medestanders: en de gunstige voor-rechten (tot dien eynde) vande E. E. Achtbare Heeren Burgermeesteren der Stad Amstelredam, haer verleend den 9 van Somermaend 1662.

1.

You poor, who know not how your living to obtain;
 You rich, who seek fortune without end;
 Choose you New Netherland, which no one shall disdain;

Before your time and strength here fruitlessly are spent.
 Here, your labor serves and benefits others
 There, the cultivated lands, will give what you deserve.

(Ghy arme, die niet wel kond aen u noodruft raken:
 Gy rijke, die 't geluck in 't voor-hoofd soecken wild:
 Verkiest Nieuw-nederland, ('t sal niemand billik laken)
 Eer gy u tijd en macht, hier vruchteloos verspild.
 Hier moet gy and'ren, om u dienstb'ren arbeyd troonen,
 Daer komt een gulle grond, u werck met woecker loonen.)

2.

New Netherland is the flower, the noblest of all lands;
 With rich blessings crowned, where milk and honey flow;
 By the most High of All, with doubly liberal hands
 Endowed; yea filled up full, with what may thrive and grow.
 The air, the earth, the sea, each pregnant with its gift,
 The needy, without trouble, from distress to lift.

(Nieuw-nederland is 'tpuyck, en 't eelste van de Landen.
 Een Seegen-rijck gewest, daer Melck en Honigh vloeyd,
 Dat d'alderhooghste heeft (met dubbeld milde handen)
 Begaeft: ja op-gevult, in 't geen daer wast en groeyd.
 De Lugt, de Aerd en Zee, sijn swanger met haer gaven:
 Om (die behoefigh is) oock sonder moeyt te laven.)

3.

The birds obscure the sky, so numerous in their flight;
 The animals roam wild, and flatten down the ground;
 Fish swarm in the waters, twinkling in the light;
 The oysters there, than which none better can be found,
 Are piled up, heap on heap, till islands they attain;
 And vegetation clothes the forest, mead and plain.

('t Gevoogelt doofd de lucht, wanneer se sich vervoeren.
 Het wild-gedierte kneust, en plet de vaste grond,
 De Visschen, krielen in de wat'ren: en beroeren
 Diens klaerheyd: d'oesters (die men nergens beter vond)
 Verheffen hoop op hoop, en maken menigh Eyland:
 'tGewas verciert het bosch: en bou, en hoy, en Wey-land.)

4.

You have your pick, which costs not pains or gold:
 But if you labor give, then shall you also share
 (With trust in Him who you from want here does uphold)
 A rich reward, in time, for all your toil and care.
 In cattle, grains and fruits, and every other thing;
 Whereby you always have great cause His praise to sing.

(Hier hebt ghy deel aen, schoon 't u geld noch moeyte koste.
 Maer so gy naerstigh blijft in d'arbeyd op sijn tijd,
 (In hoop tot hem, die u uyt d'armoed hier verlostte:)
 Gy sult een rijken loon genieten voor u vlijt.
 Aen Vee, aen Graen, aen Fruyt: en duysent and're dingen,
 Waer door gy stof hebt steeds, d'al-gever lof te singen.)

5.

Why always gaze upon home, your town and Fatherland?
 Is God not over all? heavens ever wide?
 His blessings deck the earth, — like bursting veins expand
 In floods of treasures over, wherever you abide;
 Which neither are to monarchies nor dukedoms bound,
 They are as well in one as other country found.

(Wat siet gy op u huys, de Stad of 'tLand uw's vaders?
 Is God niet over-al? den Hemel even wijt?
 Sijn segen dect de aerd: en stort (uyt volle aders)
 Een vloed van schatten: die gy vind waer dat gy sijt.
 Sy is aen Koning-rijck, noch Vorsten-dom gebonden,
 Sy word so wel in 't een, als 't ander Land gevonden.)

6.

And there, a view alive does always meet your eye,
 Of Eden, and the Promised Land of Jacob's seed;
 Who would not, then, in such a formed community,
 Desire to be free; and the rights decreed
 To each and every one, by Amstel's burgher Lords,
 Enjoy? and treat with honor what their rule awards?

(Maer daer, daer siet gy steeds, een levende vertooningh
 Van Eden: en van 't Land, aen Jacobs saad beloofd:
 Wie sou in dat gewest (in sulck een 't samen-woningh)
 Niet wenschen vry te sijn; en yder hoofd voor hoofd,
 Het voor-recht (elck gegund, van d'Amstels-Burger-Heeren)
 Genieten? en 't gesach van haer beleydingh eeren?)

7.

Communities the groundwork are of every state;
 They first the hamlet, village and the city make;
 From whence proceeds the commonwealth; whose members, great
 (as their own) interest in the common welfare take.
 'T is no Utopia; it rests on firm principles,
 Which for true freedom prescribe you settled rules.

(De 't samen-wooningh is, een grond van alle Staten.
 Die eerst gehucht en buert, en Dorp ja Steden maeckt:
 Waer uyt 't gemeene-best ontspringt, wiens onder-saten,

Den welstand van 't gemeen (als eygen) 't harte raectt.
 'Tis geen Vtopia, 't steund op gegronde wetten:
 Die tot de vrijheyd u een vasten Regel setten.)

8.

You will not aliens in those far lands appear;
 As formerly, in Egypt, even was Israel.
 Nor have you subjection or tyranny to fear,
 Since Joseph's eyes do see, and on the compass fall.
 The City's Fathers on the Y, who truly perform their labors,
 Are your protectors; and your countrymen are neighbors.

(Gy sult geen Vremdelingh, in dese Landen wesen:
 Als eertijts Israel, self in Aegypten was.
 Gy hoeft geen dienstbaerheyd noch dwinglandy te vreesen:
 Mits Josephs ogen sien, en letten op 't Kompas,
 De vaders die aen 't Y, haer Stad met lof bestueren
 Sijn u beschermers, en u Land-aerd u gebueren.)

9.

New Netherland's South River, —a second Amazon,
 For you a pleasure garden on its banks concedes.
 Choose you the Swanendael, where Osset had his throne,
 Or any other spot your avocation needs.
 You have the choice of all; and you're left free to choose;
 Keep the conditions well, and you have naught to lose.

(Nieuw-neer-lands Zuyd-revier (of tweede Almasonas)
 Schaft (op haer oevers) u een lusthof: tot verblijf.
 Gy kiest of Swanen-dal (daer Osets rijck en troon was)
 Of wel een ander plaats, tot nut van u bedrijf.
 Gy hebt de keur van al: het staet u vry te kiezen.
 Betracht dit voor-recht wel, gy sult het niet verliesen.)

10.

Discard the base report, unworthy of your ear;
 'Tis forged by ignorance and hate and jealous spite,
 By those who are its authors, to bedim this fair
 Bright morning sun before the laughing noonday light.
 An accident may hinder, but not change the plan,
 Whose gloss, take that away, you then may fairly scan.

(Verwerpt dan 't quaed gerucht (onwaerdigh na te luyst'ren)
 'T is uyt wan-gunst of haat, of on-kun meest verdicht,
 Van haer die d'oorsaeck sijn: om hatigh te verduyst'ren,
 Dees schoone Ochtend-son voor 't lachend middagh-licht.
 Een toe-val mach de saeck wel hind'ren, niet verand'ren,
 Maer neemt se wech, gy sult diens glans en luyster schrand'ren.)

11.

'T was just an accident, which gives them stuff to slight
 That land, which, as I know, no proper rival has;
 In order from your purpose they may you affright,
 Who there desire to live, before you thither pass.
 'T is groundless, every one may easily perceive.
 Who now neglects the chance, great treasures does he leave.

(’T was maer een toe-val, die haer stof geeft te verachten,
 Dat Land dat (na mijn kun) geen eygen weerga heeft,
 Om u (die lust hebt daer te woonen) de gedachten
 T’ont-roeren buyten ’t spoor, eer gy u derwaerts geeft.
 Doch sonder Re’en en grond, ’t geen yder licht kan vatten:
 Die tijd en Plaats versuymd, verwaerloost groote schatten.)

Jacob Steendam,
 Noch Vaster

Notes

1. See for that Frans Blom and Henk Looijesteijn, “A Land of Milk and Honey: Colonial Propaganda and the City of Amsterdam, 1656–1664,” *De Halve Maen* LXXXV (2012), 47–56, and the literature listed there.
2. This is for example argued by Michel Reinders, *Gedrukte Chaos. Populisme en moord in het Rampjaar 1672* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2010).
3. See for example the work of Paul Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer: De schutterijen in Holland, 1550–1700* (Hilversum, the Netherlands: Verloren, 1994); Nico Slokker, *Ruggengraat van de stad. De betekenis van gilden in Utrecht, 1528–1818* (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2010); and the work of Maarten Prak, Chapter 6 in this volume but also his book *Republikeinse veelheid, democratische enkelvoud. Sociale verandering in het Revolutietijdvak: ‘s-Hertogenbosch 1770–1820* (Nijmegen, the Netherlands: SUN, 1999).
4. For example the brothers De la Court, studied by Arthur Weststeijn, *Commercial Republicanism in the Dutch Golden Age. The Political Thought of Johan & Pieter de la Court* (Leiden, the Netherlands, and Boston: Brill, 2012).
5. See for this Blom and Looijesteijn, “A Land of Milk and Honey,” *passim*.
6. For his life and political struggle, see Russell Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World. The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America* (New York: Doubleday, 2004).
7. Adriaen van der Donck, *Beschrijvinge van Nieuw-Nederlant (ghelijck het tegenwoordigh in Staet is) begrijpene de Nature, Aert, gelegentheyt en vruchtbaerheyt van het selve lant ...* (Amsterdam: 1655) fol. *2v: “Ende al-hoewel den Staet vande ghemelde West-Indische Compagnie nu als vervallen schijnt te wesen.”
8. Van der Donck, *Beschrijvinge*, fol. *3v–4r:

Ende also uwe E. W. dagelijks met seer groote vlijt ende sorghe, alles zijt bestellende, om dat Lantschap met bequaeme Colonien van Menschen te versien . . . daerom hebbe ick niet konnen nalaten alle mijne Lantsluyden ten besten, ende voornementlijck veele kloekhertighe en bequame Luyden, mijne Mede-Burgeren, dit te laten toe komen, opdat sij, die andersins soo grondelijck van de goede ende gesunde lucht en vruchtbaerheyt des gemelten Lantschaps Nieuw-Nederland, niet bewust en zijn, te beth mogen opgeweckt worden om derwaerts te gaen.

9. Blom and Looijesteijn, "A Land of Milk and Honey," 49; The Short Title Catalogue Netherlands (STCN) lists 12 publications by Evert Nieuwenhof. All are in the vernacular for common readers.
10. The view of New Amsterdam was based on a drawing, dated around 1650, which was made on the spot and brought to the Republic in order to underline the miserable state of the colony. See M. Gosselink, *Land in zicht. Vingboons tekent de wereld van de 17de eeuw* (Zwolle, the Netherlands: Waanders, 2007), 49–50.
11. *Conditien die door de heeren burgemeesteren der Stadt Amsterdam* (etc.) (Amsterdam: 1656); Koninklijke Bibliotheek, pamphlet nr. 7776a. See for Banningh: M. M. Kleerkooper and W. P. van Stockum, *De boekhandel te Amsterdam, voornamelijk in de 17e eeuw. Biographische en geschiedkundige aantekeningen* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1914–1916), vol. I, 33.
12. A "morgen" was presumably the land one could plough with a span of oxen in one morning, here c.15 or 20 hectares; J. M. Verhoeff, *De oude Nederlandse maten en gewichten* (Amsterdam: P. J. Meertens Instituut, 1982), 101, 115.
13. *Conditien*, 2–5.
14. *Conditien*; Koninklijke Bibliotheek, pamphlet nr. 7776a. This edition was published with "the consent of the City Burgomasters," according to the printer's impressum on the title page: "*Conditien* [etc.] t'Amsterdam, Met consent vande Ed. Hoog. Achtbare Meeren [*sic*], de Heeren Borgermeesteren, by Evert Nieuwenhoff Boeckverkooper op 't Ruslandt in 't jaer 1656."
15. (Anon.), *'t Verheerlickte Nederland door d'herstelde zee-vaart* (s.l.: 1659); National Library, The Hague, pamphlet nr. 8176, 13; see also Frans R. E. Blom, "Picturing New Netherland and New York. Dutch–Anglo transfer of New World Information," in: *The Dutch Trading Companies as Knowledge Networks*, eds. Siegfried Huigen, Jan de Jong, and Elmer Kolfin (Leiden, the Netherlands, and Boston: Brill, 2010), 103–126, 108.
16. Blom, "Picturing New Netherland," 108, 110. See for the way in which Van der Donck resorted to a manipulative fashioning of many elements of the text: Blom, "Picturing New Netherland," 110–114.
17. Kleerkooper and Van Stockum, *De boekhandel te Amsterdam*, vol. I, 367–368.
18. WIC advertisements for New Netherland in *Haerlemsche Saterdaegsche Courant* 1658 (November 19 and 21) and 1659 (March 15).
19. *Ordinarise Middelweeckse Courante no. 41, 1661*, dated October 11, 1661, Commissarisen en Directeurs over de Colonie/ weghens de Stadt

Amstelredam/ op-gerecht in Nieu-Nederlandt; notificeren by desen aen alle Landt-Bouwers/Huyluyden en andere/die hun met de Culture der Landen soudén willen bemoeien en erneren, ende dewelcke dienvolghens hare Namen reedts hebben laten aen-teeckenē/ ofte oock als noch soudén willen laten aen-teeckenē/datse hun teghens 't laetst van October/1661 ten uystersten tot Amsterdam/by Commissarisen en Directeurs voornoemt/sullen laten vinderen volkomen ghereet ende veerdigh/omme de reyse aen te nemen/alsoo het Schip/dat daer toe is aen-leggende/om soodanighe Luyden naer de voorsz. Colonie over te voeren/als dan zijn reyse derwaerts aennemen sal.

20. (H.V.Z.M. (i.e., Franciscus van den Enden)), *Kort Verhael van Nieuw-Nederlants Geleghentheit, Deughden, Natuerlijke Voorrechten, en byzondere bequaemheid ter bevolkingh: Mitsgaders eenige Requesten, Vertooogen, Deductien enz. ten dien einden door eenige Liefhebbers ten verscheide tijden omtrent 't laetst van 't Jaer 1661. gepresenteert aen de A.A. Heeren Burgermeesteren dezer Stede, of der zelver E. E. Heeren Gecommitteerde, enz.* (s.l.: 1662). Frank Mertens has convincingly shown that the tract was published by Jan Rieuwerts and Pieter Arentsz, as he will show in his impending edition of the text and translation. We are much indebted to him for allowing us to read this in advance of publication. All quotations are from his translation.
21. See for example Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 3, 6–8, 10, 12–14.
22. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 10.
23. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 12–13. The Fresh River was the Dutch name for the Connecticut River, lost to the Dutch by virtue of continual English encroachment.
24. 't *Verheerlickt Nederland*, 8–9.
25. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 19–21. Klever believes it is “without doubt” that Van den Enden’s later political theory may have been inspired partly by what he had read about Native American societies; Franciscus van den Enden, *Vrije Politijke Stellingen. Met een inleiding van Wim Klever*, ed. Wim Klever (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 1992), 37.
26. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 19.
27. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 23.
28. Blom and Looijesteijn, “A Land of Milk and Honey,” 50–52.
29. See Blom and Looijesteijn, “A Land of Milk and Honey,” 52–54, for a more detailed treatment of the poem.
30. See for this: R. Cordes, *Jan Zoet, Amsterdammer 1609–1674. Leven en werk van een kleurrijk schrijver* (Hilversum, the Netherlands: Verloren, 2008).
31. Digital edition at <http://www.dbnl.org/titels/titel.php?id=zoet001parn01>.
32. See for the above: Henk Looijesteijn, “‘Born to the Common Welfare.’ Pieter Plockhoy’s Quest for a Christian Life (c.1620–1664)” (Doctoral thesis, European University Institute, November 25, 2009).
33. The original manuscript contract is in SAA, Archive 5023, Groot-Memoriaal 5 (1659–1669), fol. 79–80, but does not differ from the published contract: All further references are therefore to the published contract.

34. For what follows, unless indicated otherwise: Plockhoy, *A Way*, 9–11, 24–25; Plockhoy, *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp*, 3, 6–9. All quotations from the latter are translated from the original Dutch by Henk Looijesteijn.
35. Incumbents could though stand for reelection, since, in Plockhoy's opinion, "he that hath a mind to continue in the Government will have an Inducement to rule well"; Plockhoy, *A Way*, 9.
36. Unfortunately, Plockhoy is vague about whether women had a say in the society's legislative and religious meetings: He does not exclude them explicitly, which suggests that, like many other dissenters of that period, he was not unfavorably disposed to women speaking in public.
37. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 27–28.
38. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 50–51.
39. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 51–53.
40. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 51.
41. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 52.
42. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 28–29.
43. Articles 40–42; Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 54.
44. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 55–56.
45. By Wim Klever: Van den Enden, *Vrije Politieke Stellingen*, 58.
46. If they did not simply conflate the two texts to begin with, as did E. B. O'Callaghan in his *History of New Netherland, or New York under the Dutch* (New York: Appleton, 1855), vol. II, 465–469, who summarizes the *Kort Verhael* and then proceeds with the contract between Plockhoy and Amsterdam without mentioning the *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp*.
47. Klever, for example, thinks Plockhoy only became the spokesman of the colonists after Van den Enden had made himself impossible with the burgomasters, and presumes Plockhoy joined Van den Enden's principals and did book fast results after having removed the more radical concepts in Van den Enden's design in his own *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp*; Van den Enden, *Vrije Politieke Stellingen*, 31–32.
48. Van den Enden writes nothing in the *Kort Verhael* about Plockhoy or his contract with the burgomasters; Plockhoy never refers to him either. The attempts of most notably Klever and Israel to link the two and thus provide Spinoza with Plockhoy as a source of the philosopher's egalitarianism should thus be regarded with some skepticism in the absence of further evidence. See for their opinions Van den Enden, *Vrije Politieke Stellingen*, 31–32; to be sure Klever sees here only an indirect relation: Van den Enden, *Vrije Politieke Stellingen*, 114, note 17. More emphatic is Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment. Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 177; Jonathan I. Israel, "The Intellectual Origins of Modern Democratic Republicanism," *European Journal of Political Theory* 3 (2004), 7–36, 17.
49. See, for instance, articles 43, 55–57, 62, and 114; Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 55, 56, 61. He also pays much attention to agriculture in New Netherland in a chapter devoted to agriculture in the description: Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 23–27. There were of course to be such craftsmen as carpenters and pottery

- bakers, who would cater for essential needs: Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 36. But such crafts as professional weaving were not allowed: article 83, Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 64–65.
50. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 56, article 62.
 51. Evan Haefeli, “The Creation of American Religious Pluralism. Churches, Colonialism, and Conquest in the Mid-Atlantic 1628–1688” (unpublished dissertation, Princeton University, NJ, 2000), 17–18, 49, 86, 91–92, 128–143.
 52. Haefeli, *Creation*, 119, also points this out.
 53. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 50–51.
 54. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 28.
 55. Van den Enden, *Vrije Politieke Stellingen*, 125–126, 131, 241–249; Th. Van Tijn, “Franciscus van den Enden (1602–1674): een zelfbenoemd woordvoerder van het ‘mindere slag’ van ingezetenen van Holland,” in: *Van Amsterdam naar Tilburg en toch weer terug. Opstellen aangeboden aan dr. Johan de Vries ter gelegenheid van zijn afscheid als hoogleraar economische geschiedenis aan de Katholieke Universiteit Brabant op 16 november 1992*, eds. J. F. E. Blasing and H. H. Vleesenbeek (Leiden, the Netherlands, and Antwerp, Belgium: Martinus Nijhoff, 1992), 191–201, 197.
 56. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 66.
 57. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 28; Van Tijn, “Franciscus van den Enden,” 200–201.
 58. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, “Voor-Reeden,” fifth page.
 59. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, “Waarschouwingh.”
 60. The “Free-Writers of Political Considerations, Counts’ and Stadtholders’ Governments, Dutch Interests, Discourses, et cetera,” as he calls them; Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, “Voor-Reeden,” second page.
 61. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, “Voor-Reeden,” second page.
 62. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 33–42.
 63. Van den Enden, *Kort Verhael*, 12–13.
 64. H.V.Z.M. (i.e., Franciscus van den Enden), *Zeekere Vrye-Voorslagen, en Versoeken, tot Bevorderingh van een bestandige, voor Hollandt hooghnutte, en niet min verheerlijkende Vrye Volx Uittzetting etc.* (Amsterdam: 1663), dedication. This edition was published also by Jan Rieuwertsz and Pieter Arentsz, at the cost of the author, as the title page shows.
 65. Van den Enden suggested it was the first part of a series of publications. Eventually, only two of these ever made it into print, the second of it focusing almost exclusively on his blueprint of such a “free State”; Van den Enden, *Vrije Politieke Stellingen*, 29, 125.
 66. Van den Enden, *Zeekere Vrye-Voorslagen*, dedication.
 67. Van den Enden, *Vrije Politieke Stellingen*, 84.
 68. Jan V. Meininger and Guido van Suchtelen, “Liever met wercken, als met woorden.” *De levensreis van doctor Franciscus van den Enden, leermeester van Spinoza, complotteur tegen Lodewijk de Veertiende* (Weesp, the Netherlands: Heureka, 1980), 68–69, 71–72, 98, 104–105, 109, 115, 118–121.