

## How To Be Dutch, the Modern Way

*Legatum Institute History of Capitalism Lecture with Maarten Prak, April 2015*

### The Dutch Golden Age

In the 17<sup>th</sup> the Dutch Republic became an economic superpower, the most scientifically advanced country in Europe and saw the rise of the first 'bourgeois' society i.e. dominated by merchants rather than noblemen.

The Netherlands stood out as being the most tolerant country in Europe, both for religious minorities and intellectuals. It was home to a mix of Christians as well as Jews. The period produced artwork from famous painters such as Rembrandt and Vermeer.

The Dutch East India Company (VOC) was founded in 1602 and was a multi-national corporation financed by shares, much like a modern stock exchange, and became the world's largest commercial enterprise. The Dutch government granted the company a trade monopoly in the water around the Cape of Good Hope (around the southern tip of South Africa). Between 1636 and 1645 the company was able to defeat the British fleet and largely displace the Portuguese in the East Indies.

### Timeline

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| <b>13 BC</b>   | The low-lying Netherlands, inhabited by Germanic tribes, become part of the Holy Roman Empire.   |
| <b>700-800</b> | The Netherlands become part of Charlemagne's Empire  |
| <b>1433</b>    | Most of what is now the Netherlands and Belgium is united by the Duke of Burgundy. Before this the Dutch identified themselves by the town they lived in, or as subjects of the Holy Roman Empire. |
| <b>C15th</b>   | Amsterdam becomes the primary trading port in Europe for grain from the Baltic region. Amsterdam distributed grain to Belgium, Northern France and England   |
| <b>1559</b>    | Spain comes to rule the Netherlands under the treaty of Cateau-Cambresis   |
| <b>1568</b>    | Protestant revolt led by William of Orange against Philip II of Spain's suppression of political liberties   |
| <b>1579</b>    | The seven northern provinces become the United Provinces of the Netherlands in the Union of Utrecht  |
| <b>1602</b>    | Dutch East India Company is established  |
| <b>1609</b>    | The Bank of Amsterdam is established   |
| <b>1637</b>    | The first recorded speculative bubble, 'Tulip mania' bursts  |
| <b>1648</b>    | After a series of wars (collectively 'Thirty Years' War) Spain recognizes Dutch independence in the Peace of Westphalia  |

- 1649** Charles I, King of England and grandfather of William of Orange (William III) beheaded
- 1650** William of Orange (William III) born, a Protestant
- 1673** William III defeats the invading Catholic forces of Louis XIV of France
- 1677** William marries Mary, eldest daughter of James, Duke of York (later to become King James II). James was a Catholic, brother of Charles II and heir to the throne in England. Protestants feared that if he had a son he would become a Catholic king. The marriage between protestant Mary and William of Orange raised the chances of a Protestant heir to the throne.
- 1685** King Charles II dies and James becomes King James II
- 1688** King James gives birth to a son, leading to fears of a Catholic succession. Mary is no longer next in line to the throne. William III invades England in November and James II is exiled to France.
- 1689** ‘Glorious Revolution’ William and Mary become joint monarchs and accept Parliament’s “Declaration of Rights” or the “Bill of Rights”. James lands in Ireland in March with French troops provided by Louis XIV of France, hoping to invade England and recover the throne.
- 1690** William defeats James at the Battle of the Boyne. The victory (a Protestant against a Catholic) is still remembered every year in Northern Ireland in July by the Orange Order.

