

# The triumphal medals of William III of Orange and the *histoire métallique* of Louis XIV of France in the wake of the Glorious Revolution

Alexander Dencher\*

## Summary

*This article examines the triumphal medals struck to commemorate the public entry of William III of Orange in 1691 and their reception in France, where these medals were viewed in the context of the *histoire métallique* of Louis XIV. The discussions of these medals in contemporary gazettes highlights their controversial nature, their transformation of the entry's ephemeral architecture into portable, metal monuments, and contemporary perceptions of William as a patron of medals.*

## Samenvatting

*Dit artikel onderzoekt de triomfpenningen geslagen ter gedachtenis van de zegetocht van Willem III van Oranje in 1691 en hun ontvangst in Frankrijk, waar deze penningen werden gezien in de context van de *histoire métallique* van Lodewijk XIV. De discussies in Franse gazettes bespreken de dubbelzinnige aard van deze penningen, hun transformatie van de efemere architectuur van de intocht naar draagbare, metalen monumenten, evenals eigentijdse percepties van Willem als opdrachtgever van penningen.*

Medals played a crucial role in promoting the image of William III of Orange (1650-1702), who was elected stadholder in the Dutch Republic in 1672 and became king of England, Scotland and Ireland alongside his wife Mary Stuart in 1689. More medals were issued to honour William III than any previous English king or Dutch stadholder, but while medals have frequently been described as one of the most important propaganda strategies employed by the stadholder-king and his advisors, little has been said about their function or impact.<sup>1</sup> Medals were struck, cast and embossed in metals ranging from gold to tin and not only circulated the stadholder-king's portrait and actions in Britain and the Netherlands but broadcast his achievements across Europe and

---

\* Alexander Dencher, Université de Paris I – Panthéon-Sorbonne and Universiteit Leiden. Contact: a.r.dencher@hum.leidenuniv.nl

<sup>1</sup> Sharpe, 2013: 418; Sanders, 2006: 9; Van Gelder, 1980: 241. For the importance of medals leading up to and during the Glorious Revolution see Weiss, 2014: 6-23; Schwoerer, 1977: 852-5. For the use of medals during William's triumphal entry see Snoep, 1975: 100.

beyond. How did seventeenth-century audiences respond to these medals? And what exactly was it about medals that made them capable of eliciting such strong responses from contemporary viewers?

This article examines the circulation and reception of medals created by Netherlandish medallists when William III returned to the Dutch Republic in 1691 – the first time since the Glorious Revolution (1688-1689). This period inaugurated a ‘veritable stream’ of medals that commemorated the prince’s successful invasion of the British Isles, the subsequent flight of James II, and the eventual accession to the throne of William and Mary.<sup>2</sup> When William returned to the Netherlands in 1691, arriving at Oranjestad by boat on 31 January, the king immediately travelled to The Hague where he had convened the members of the League of Augsburg to plan a European campaign against Louis XIV of France. The medals struck to commemorate this triumphant return provoked vehement reactions in France, with one critic observing that “every day new medals are struck for the glory of the Prince of Orange”, despite little being achieved at this Congress of Allies.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, Louis XIV “resolved to break off the conferences at The Hague” by launching an early campaign, and by mid-March, the French king’s armies besieged Mons in the Southern Netherlands, spurning William and his allies into an unsuccessful attempt to claim back the strategically important city.<sup>4</sup>

To understand the function of these medals, and the reactions their circulation provoked in France, both must be studied in relation to the contemporary *histoire métallique* conceived for Louis XIV of France, particularly since the rivalry between William and Louis increasingly shaped the production of medals in the Low Countries, England and France from 1689 onwards.<sup>5</sup> Many of the medals struck in 1691 depicted the temporary triumphal arches that were commissioned by the States of Holland and local magistracy of The Hague in anticipation of the arrival of William III and his allies, and on which his victories against Louis XIV and James II in Britain and Ireland were celebrated (fig. 1). Medals by artists like Jan Smeltzing and Reinier Arondeaux transformed these ephemeral monuments into permanent, metal objects that preserved their memory for future generations. Because medals were reproduced and discussed in gazettes and pamphlets they quickly became one of the most effective representations of William’s return, extending the king-stadholder’s triumphal moment and proclaiming his leadership of the League of Augsburg.

---

<sup>2</sup> De Dompierre de Chaufepié, 1902: 235.

<sup>3</sup> “.. on ne voit chaque jour que nouvelles Médailles frappées à sa gloire”. *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 100.

<sup>4</sup> Burnet, 1734: 126-127.

<sup>5</sup> De Dompierre de Chaufepié, 1902: 237.



Fig. 1 – Jan Luyken, *Triumphal entry of William III into The Hague, 1691*. Etching and letterpress, 1691, 307 × 287 mm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-76.310.

In 1692 and 1728 respectively, the numismatists Nicolas Chevalier and Gerard van Loon catalogued approximately thirty medals struck during the short period (31 January - 21 April 1691) when William III resided in the Netherlands. This is comparable to the number of medals associated with his coronation in 1689.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Approximate number of coronation medals quoted in Sharpe, 2013: 437. Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 1-24. For contemporary accounts of the medals struck for William's return in 1691 see Chevalier (1692) and Van Loon (1728). These medals can be broadly categorised as representing the king's arrival in the Netherlands, his triumphal entry into The Hague, the Congress of Allies, and the siege of Mons in the Spanish Netherlands. Medals for the king's return see Chevalier, 1692: 159; Van Loon, 1728: 510-515. For medals commemorating the triumphal entry see Chevalier, 1692: 172-208; Van Loon, 1728: 515-529. Medals for the Congress of Allies see Chevalier, 1692: 209-220; Van Loon, 1728: 529-534. For Dutch and French medals for Mons see Van Loon, 1728: 535-539. See Chevalier, 1692: 216-218 for a description of the siege of Mons.

The first part of this article will identify which of these medals were reproduced in contemporary French publications and follow up with a discussion of French responses to these medals in the context of the medallic campaign of Louis XIV. French medals were conceived to influence future views of the king's reign, or as Robert Wellington so persuasively stated, as "artefacts for a future past".<sup>7</sup> But while French gazetteers in 1691 viewed the Dutch triumphal medals as emanating from William III, it remains uncertain whether they were actually commissioned by the court, or closely affiliated institutions, with the aim of eliciting such responses, or if they were produced independently by medallists.

### Dutch medals in the French Press

Following the success of the Glorious Revolution, gazettes and newspapers across Europe avidly reported the return of William III to the Dutch Republic, particularly his triumphal entry and the Congress of Allies. One pamphlet, entitled *The History of the Royal Congress*, kept English audiences abreast of their new king's journey: "Great and astonishing are the Preparations that are made, for the reception of his Majesty of Great Britain, and the Princes his Allies, for besides his Majesty and his Royal retinue, here is to be seventeen or eighteen Sovereign Princes, and their Retinue, most of which will be here in person."<sup>8</sup> The States of Holland and magistrates of The Hague organised the king's public reception and commissioned triumphal arches from local artists who were led by the architect Steven Vennekool, the artist Romeyn de Hooghe and the royal physician Goverd Bidloo.<sup>9</sup> On 27 February the *London Gazette* reported that "... The court is so filled by men of quality that there were last Monday in the King's Bed-Chamber 30 princes, besides the Electors of Brandenburg and Bavaria, the Governor of Flanders, and a great number of foreign ministers..."<sup>10</sup>

The reception of William III and so many foreign princes at The Hague provoked a remarkably intense response in France, where several publications attacked the festivities and negotiations. The *Mercure Galant* accused William of inviting the foreign princes to The Hague with the intention of forcing them to recognise him as king of Great Britain and thus humiliate them.<sup>11</sup> The stance of the *Mercure Galant*, as well as other French publications discussed here,

---

<sup>7</sup> Wellington, 2015: 15.

<sup>8</sup> *The history of the Royal Congress*, 1691: 29.

<sup>9</sup> For the most comprehensive study of William's triumphal entry into The Hague in 1691 see Snoep (1975) and Dessing (1988).

<sup>10</sup> *London Gazette*. February 19–23, 1691: n.p.

<sup>11</sup> "Mais le but du Prince d'Orange estoit de les faire venir à a Haye pour les voir en cette posture, & se faire ainsi reconnoistre Roy de la grande Bretagne par ce Souverains en personne, & d'une manière indigne de ceux qui on eu cet abaissement [...]" *Mercure Galant*, 1691: 264–265.

reflected the policies of Louis XIV and his ministers, who did not recognise William as king until the Treaty of Ryswick (Rijswijk) in 1697, and actively sought to reinstate King James II, whose court lived in exile at the Château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Moreover, the *Mercure Galant* claimed that “one should not judge the inclination of the [Dutch] people by the appearance of the entry. Politics has ordered all of the paintings by the magistrates, who are all of creatures of this prince”.<sup>12</sup>

The graphic reproduction of medals significantly expanded their audience beyond initial recipients and collectors, allowing medals to play a similar role to the prints and pamphlets that spread propaganda.<sup>13</sup> Two French publications, the *Affaires du Temps* and *Pierre de Touche politique*, which closely followed the actions of William III since the beginning of the Glorious Revolution, published lengthy commentaries on the medals distributed during the king’s reception and Congress at The Hague. The *Affaires du Temps*, probably published by Jean Donneau de Visé (who was also responsible for the *Mercure Galant*), and the *Pierre de Touche politique*, published by Eustache Le Noble, provided a satirical commentary for an expanding Francophone and literate audience who sought out these publications for purposes of entertainment as well as gathering knowledge of current events.

The *Pierre de Touche politique* and *Les Affaires du Temps* provide rare insight into contemporary views of the political use of numismatics by the Williamite regime during a period when the production of medals was attaining new heights. According to Mark Jones, more medals were struck in the Netherlands, France and England from the Glorious Revolution to the Peace of Utrecht than the preceding 75 years.<sup>14</sup> Informed audiences were aware of a precedent for offensive Dutch medals. The *Affaires du Temps* reminded their readers of the medal that challenged Louis XIV’s claims to European dominance, allegedly commissioned by Josua van Beuningen, the former Dutch ambassador, as well as the infamous ‘Mala-Bestia’ medal made by Christoffel Adolphi, which commemorated the humiliating defeat of the British fleet at Chatham in 1667.<sup>15</sup> Yet while Dutch satires of medals for Louis XIV have received some attention, little has been said about French reactions.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> “On ne doit point juger de l’inclination des peuples par l’appareil de l’Entrée. La politique avoit fait ordonner toutes les peintures par les Magistrats qui sont tous Creatures de ce prince” *Mercure Galant*, 1691: 236-237.

<sup>13</sup> Cillessen, 1997: 238-240.

<sup>14</sup> Jones, 1982: 118.

<sup>15</sup> *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 76-77, 293-295. See also Cillessen, 1997: 238-240.

<sup>16</sup> For Dutch satire of French medals see Jones, 1979: 25; Adams et al., 2012: 339; Sharpe, 2013: 440.

*Pierre de Touche politique*

One month after William's return to the Dutch Republic, the *Pierre de Touche politique* published the *Carnaval de La Haye*, which ridiculed the princes who came from "Berlin, Hannover, Munich, Turin and other places, to devotedly make the pilgrimage of Saint William in Holland, and returned loaded with pilgrim's shells, medals, and indulgences..."<sup>17</sup> This statement suggests that the medals distributed to the attendant dignitaries and diplomats were directly commissioned by the court or the States of Holland in order to commemorate the alliances formed by William III as well as his triumphal entry. The mocking of these medals was fuelled by the burgeoning contemporary production of medals and reveals the unease their political usage provoked. Subsequent editions of the *Pierre de Touche politique* as well as *Les Affaires du Temps* reproduced a number of these medals in print and provided more detailed commentary about some of the other medals circulating at the time of William's return.



Fig. 2 – Illustration for *La Pierre de Touche politique* of a portrait medal of William III and a medal by Philipp Heinrich Müller and Friedrich Kleinert accompanied by satirical inscriptions, 1691. Paris, BnF.

In June 1691, several months after reporting the distribution of medals at the Congress, the *Pierre de Touche politique* reproduced two medals associated with the return of William III to the Dutch Republic (fig. 2). One of these medals

<sup>17</sup> "... partis de Berlin, d'Hanovre, de Munik, de Turin & d'autres endroits, venoient faire dévotieusement en Hollande le Pelerinage de Saint Guillaume, & s'en retournoient chargez de Coquilles, de Médailles, & d'Indulgences..." *La Pierre de Touche politique. Le Carnaval de La Haye*, 1691: 21.

reproduced a generic profile portrait of William in Roman dress, which had become a ubiquitous feature of medals produced since the Glorious Revolution.<sup>18</sup> The other design reproduced a known medal by the famous German medallist Philipp Heinrich Müller (1654-1719), which he created in collaboration with the silversmith and coin-dealer Friedrich Kleinert (1633-1714). Kleinert was reputedly the first German medallist to apply machinery to give his medals a raised edge fit for inscriptions.<sup>19</sup> Nicolas Chevalier identified it as one of three silver medals struck to “preserve the memory” of the Congress of Allies, which might suggest some form of central organisation behind their commission; however, Chevalier offers no further information to support this idea.<sup>20</sup>

The obverse of the medal by Müller and Kleinert shows the Olympian council of gods, headed by Jupiter, while its reverse (not shown in the engraving) shows the union of Courage, Concord and Fortitude at the altar of the common good (fig. 3).<sup>21</sup>



Fig. 3 – Philipp Heinrich Müller and Friedrich Kleinert, *A council of the Gods* (obverse) and the union of Bravery, Unity and Wisdom (reverse), 1691. Silver – 50 mm – 47.80 g. Amsterdam, NNC, PE-02853. Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 16-17.

Both images echoed the appeal to unity in the face of French military aggression that was proclaimed by inscriptions on some of the triumphal arches, such as *Deos in praelia confert* (He consults the gods before he goes to battle) and *Res poscit opem et conspirat amice* (The matter requires aid, and friendly con-

<sup>18</sup> Van Gelder, 1980: 242-243.

<sup>19</sup> Forrer, 1907: 174

<sup>20</sup> Chevalier, 1692: 213. The other medals were made by Reinier Arondeaux and George Hautsch. Van Loon, 1728: 531, while not citing Arondeaux's medal in this context, also suggests that the medals by Müller and Hautsch were specifically struck to commemorate the alliance between William III, the United Provinces and the foreign princes.

<sup>21</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 16-17.

federacy).<sup>22</sup> The image of a European federation of princes was also expressed in one of the statues standing on the parapet of the triumphal arch that stood before the court of Holland, representing a female personification of a united Europe, accompanied by the inscription *Uniti fortius obstant* (United together stronger in the face of violence).<sup>23</sup> The corresponding paintings on the triumphal arch showed a very similar scene to the medal's reverse, namely a union of princes, crossing their swords over the altar of Jupiter.

Pamphlets published in 1691 had compared William to the supreme god Jupiter, and one author wrote: "...A Solemn Council of the Gods, held to suppress the Insolence of the Giants ... there is now a Council of Earthly Gods... Assembled really much for the same purpose ...".<sup>24</sup> It is possible that Müller and Kleinert were influenced by such contemporary responses to William's return to the United Provinces and his triumphal entry, and Kleinert issued an important series of medals in collaboration with the Nuremberg Mint, a number of which refer to English history from the Glorious Revolution onwards.<sup>25</sup> However, since both Chevalier and the *Pierre de Touche politique* mention it being distributed to attendees of the Congress in The Hague it seems probable that this particular medal was commissioned, although by whom remains uncertain.

The *Pierre de Touche politique* situated Müller's medal in an imaginary dialogue between two likely recipients: the imperial ambassador Gottlieb Amadeus von Windisch-Graetz and the ambassador of the duke of Savoy, the *Président de la Tour*, both of whom attended the Congress of Allies.<sup>26</sup> By centring their discussion on the medal's form and function, Eustache Le Noble developed his earlier description of medals distributed as pilgrims' badges, and reinforced the French view of these medals as a sign and means of William III manipulating members of the League of Augsburg. This alliance was a politically important if moderately successful instrument in an international campaign against what William perceived as Louis XIV's relentless desire for 'universal monarchy'.<sup>27</sup> The stadholder-king was largely supported in this endeavour by the States of Holland, whose grand-pensionary Anthoni Heinsius proved to be one of his most trusted allies. Both Emperor Leopold I (1640-1715) and Duke Victor Amadeus II of Savoy (1666-1732) had strained relationships with Louis XIV of France, making them important allies to William III and the States of Holland, who sought to bind them to their cause at The Hague.

<sup>22</sup> For a contemporary description of the inscriptions on the triumphal arches see Anonymous, 1691A.

<sup>23</sup> Bidloo, 1691: 71-72. The accompanying illustration is found between pages 62 and 63.

<sup>24</sup> *The History of the Royal Congress*, 1691: 3.

<sup>25</sup> Forrer, 1907: 174-175.

<sup>26</sup> Groenhout, 1691.

<sup>27</sup> Troost, 2011: 284-291.



The dialogues attributed the commission and distribution of the silver medal to the nefarious political ambitions of William III who, they claimed, sought to set himself above all other sovereigns. Windisch-Graetz criticised the medal's representation of William as Jupiter, whom Müller depicted standing on an eagle, the heraldic animal of the Habsburgs.<sup>28</sup> Although Leopold I founded the League of Augsburg in 1686, William was widely considered to be its driving force and when England, Scotland and Ireland joined after William and Mary's coronation in 1689, the league also became known as the Grand Alliance. The victory over the combined armies of James II and Louis XIV at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 raised William's profile as a military leader, and was celebrated as one of the major battles in the triumphal entry of The Hague.

The ambassador also criticised the inscription on the medal proclaiming William's leadership of the League of Augsburg.<sup>29</sup> The inscription, "He conceives in his mind a vast wrath, such is worth of Jupiter, calls together a council" (citing Ovid) was considered to be a particularly contemptuous way to address princes, let alone the Habsburg emperor. Moreover, since William III was not able to rescue Mons, he should not have been identified with the king of the gods.<sup>30</sup> Le Noble further satirised Müller's medal, and the events it commemorated, by inscribing William's portrait with a line taken from Horace: "The Mountains will be in Labor and a ridiculous Mouse will be brought forth (*Parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus*)".<sup>31</sup> This phrase had previously been used on a French medal in 1686 to mock the Treaty of Augsburg.<sup>32</sup>

Early on in their discussion, the ambassadors in *La Pierre de Touche politique* described Müller and Kleinert's medal as an object to be examined with both "eyes and spirit", providing the beholder with aesthetic and intellectual stimulation.<sup>33</sup> In other words, the medal was not merely a passive representation of politics, but possessed a compelling attraction to those familiar with the classical imagery and inscriptions. When the medal is described as a "glorious monument that the Dutch have consecrated to posterity to preserve the memory of the most extraordinary assembly ever held"<sup>34</sup>, it is being characterised as a form

<sup>28</sup> "Ils aient fait graver leur Roi Guillaume sous la figure d'un Jupiter..." *La Pierre de Touche politique. Les lunettes pour les quinze vingts*, 1691: 4-5.

<sup>29</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 16.

<sup>30</sup> *La Pierre de Touche politique. Les lunettes pour les quinze vingts*, 1691: 10.

<sup>31</sup> "Si le médaillon est ridicule dans sa substance, les inscriptions sont bien d'une autre insolence..." *La Pierre de Touche politique. Les lunettes pour les quinze vingts*, 1691: 6.

<sup>32</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 1: 99.

<sup>33</sup> "Je l'ai vue, & l'ai très bien examinée des yeux du corps & ceux de l'esprit..." *La Pierre de Touche politique. Les lunettes pour les quinze vingts*, 1691: 4.

<sup>34</sup> "[...] Ce monument glorieux que les hollandais ont consacré à la posterité pour conserver la mémoire de la plus extraordinaire assemblée qui se soit jamais tenue." *La Pierre de Touche politique. Les lunettes pour les quinze vingts*, 1691: 4.

of public art. These statements connect medals with a larger culture of monumental art associated with political commemoration, and suggest that medals acted in the same manner as larger structures. The memorial function of Müller's medal was shared with the temporary triumphal arches erected for William's return, as both monuments exploited the recent past to drive the current ambitions of the League of Augsburg.

## Les Affaires du Temps



*Fig. 4 – Jean Dolivar, Illustration for Les Affaires du Temps, published probably by Jean Donneau de Visé and Michel Guérout, Paris, BnF.*

In December 1691, almost a year after the return of William III to the Dutch Republic, *Les Affaires du Temps* published a lengthy commentary on the medals struck to commemorate this occasion, illustrated by an engraving by Jean Dolivar (fig. 4). Similar to *La Pierre de Touche politique*, this satirical gazette situated the medals in an imaginary dialogue between various countrymen that lamented the state of Europe since the beginning of the Glorious Revolution. A grumbling, Republican Dutchman opens the discussion by presenting a selection of medals, shown in Dolivar's illustration, which he considers representa-

tive of the many other medals in circulation.<sup>35</sup> These medals enable the author to criticise the rise of William III and the consequences for his allies, but the discussion quickly turns to the nature and function of medals.

The medal at the centre of the engraving exemplifies the major themes of the selection shown in Dolivar's illustration. This medal, designed by the prolific medallist Jan Smeltzing, features William's arrival by boat and one of the triumphal arches in The Hague, and Latin inscriptions taken from the triumphal arches (fig. 5).<sup>36</sup>



Fig. 5 – Jan Smeltzing, *The arrival of William III at Oranjepolder (obverse) and the triumphal arch in front of the Court of Holland (reverse)*, 1691.

Silver – 50 mm – 49.35 g. Amsterdam, NNC, KHA-01632.

Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 11-12.

The obverse shows the most important triumphal arch, erected in front of the Court, accompanied by the inscription *Hic Heroum Honos* (This is the honour of heroes), while the reverse shows William's arrival by shallop at Oranjepolder, inscribed *Servandum Servatus* (Preserved in order to preserve). On the obverse Smeltzing recorded the inscription that covered the frieze of the triumphal arch in the exergue, which proclaimed the celebration of William's new status as Stadholder-King: "To the return of William III, the pious, fortunate, illustrious, victorious, the father of his country, perpetual governor of the United Provinces, the restorer of Belgic liberty, the deliverer of England, the preserver of Scotland, the pacifier of Ireland".<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 101.

<sup>36</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 11-12

<sup>37</sup> PIO. FEL. INCL. GUILIELMO III. M. BRIT. R. TRIOMPHA PATRIA PATRI. GUB. P. C. L. P. RST. BELG. FOED. LIB. ANGL. SERV. SCOT. PAC. HIB. REDUCI. Many of these inscriptions reappear on the medals issued in the wake of the entry. This translation is partially taken from Tindal, 1747: 14.

Several more medals by Smeltzing and other medallists also related to the arrival of William III by boat at Oranjepolder. This had been a topic of several Dutch laudatory poems and pamphlets, stressing the dangers of the journey undertaken by the king to return to his native lands (fig. 6).



Fig. 6 – Arrival of William III at Oranjepolder, 1691, etching by Pieter Pickaert or Laurens Scherm, poems by Jan Norel and Pieter Rabus, published by Jacobus Robijn in Amsterdam. Etching, letterpress and notes in brown ink, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-82. 730.

The poet Pieter Rabus wrote “Is Britain’s Sun, and Holland’s greatest Son... kept from our sight by damp and fog? ... His radiance and Majesty shine like the Sun through mist and darkness.”<sup>38</sup> Solar imagery had already been used to celebrate William III by Jean Roëttiers (also known as Jan or John Roëttiers) in his coronation medal for William and Mary (see *infra* fig. 17), which compared James II’s flight to the divine punishment meted out by Jupiter to the would-be sun god Phaethon.<sup>39</sup> This particular myth also provided subject matter for some of the decorations of the triumphal arch that stood in the public square called the *Plaats*, where Louis XIV, represented by Phaethon, was contrasted with William, who was represented by the true sun god Phoebus. The solar imagery of the medals and triumphal arches were clearly intended to attack the Sun King on his own ground.

The inscriptions on the medals, sometimes directly taken from the triumphant arches, linked William’s recent military successes abroad with the purposes of the Congress of Allies at The Hague. Smeltzing made this explicit in another medal (fig. 7), shown in the lower register of Olivar’s engraving.<sup>40</sup>



<sup>38</sup> “Word nu Brittanjes Zon, en Hollands grootste Zoon...door damp en nevelen gehouden uit onze oogen?... Zijn glans en Majesteit blinkt als de Zonne klaarst uit mist en duisternheid” Pieter Rabus (1660-1702), see Fig. 6. For more examples of descriptions of William III as Phoebus in contemporary pamphlets see the Knuttel Collection of pamphlets in the Royal Library in The Hague: nos. 13608A, p. 4, 7; 13611; 13618, A2; 13624, p. 8, 18; 13635, n.p.; 13635A, n.p.; 13627, n.p.; 13754, 2.

<sup>39</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 1: 662-663.

<sup>40</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 4.



Fig. 7 – Jan Smeltzing, *The return of William III from England, 1691.*

Silver – 59 mm – 76.58 g. Amsterdam, NNC, PE-02841. Hawkins, vol. 2: 4.

This medal allegorised the king's return to the Dutch Republic by showing the rising sun accompanied with the inscription *Recreo, Dum Redeo* (I revive, when I return), alluding to the aims of William III and the States of Holland. The grand pensionary Anthonie Heinsius and the majority of the States supported the stadholders' wars although Republican-minded statesmen resented the large financial burden this entailed, and there was regular opposition from the magistracy of Amsterdam. According to the Dutchman in *Les Affaires du Temps*, the inscription on Smeltzing's medal would appear particularly disturbing to true Dutchmen (i.e. Republicans that supported the States Party), "[The medal] marks the joy that the Prince's creatures, who govern us, supposed the States felt at his safe arrival [...]"<sup>41</sup>

*Les Affaires du Temps* mocked these representations of the king's return by boat, stating that this unheroic event merited neither triumphal arches nor medals, but D. Koene's medal (fig. 8) elicited a more ambiguous response.<sup>42</sup>



Fig. 8 – D. Koene, *The landing of William III at Oranjespolder (obverse) Holland and Joy watch the firework display on the Hofvijver with the second triumphal arch on the Market in the background (reverse), 1691.*

Silver – 45 mm – 36.70 g. Amsterdam, NNC, PE-02850. Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 14.

The inscription, *Quid Metuas Caesarem Vehis* (What have you to fear when you are carrying Caesar?) was criticised for its insolence, since William III had neither crossed dangerous waters nor won countless battles, as opposed to Caesar.<sup>43</sup> Yet the author admitted that the medal accurately portrayed William's authority over the States of Holland: "Nonetheless, it is Caesar, if we believe

<sup>41</sup> *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 106.

<sup>42</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 14.

<sup>43</sup> *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 102.

those who govern, and those who have commissioned these medals”.<sup>44</sup> The medal’s other inscription *Io Triumphe* (Hail, triumphal procession) was also considered appropriate since William III had triumphed over the Dutch Republic, the German emperor, the king of Spain, and all the assembled princes who, as the *Mercure Galant* had commented earlier, prostrated themselves before the king at The Hague.<sup>45</sup>



Fig. 9 – Reynier Arondeaux, William III, accompanied by Ireland, is welcomed by Holland (obverse); the triumphal arch in front of the Court of Holland (reverse), 1691. Silver – 49 mm – 47.79 g. Amsterdam, NNC, PE-O2852. Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 15-16.

The medal by the Dutch medallist Reinier Arondeaux (fig. 9), shown in the top right-hand corner of Olivar’s engraving, was named by Nicolas Chevalier as one of the medals struck to commemorate the Congress of Allies, alongside the medal by Müller and Kleinert.<sup>46</sup> This medal connected William’s victory at the battle of the Boyne in 1690 with his return and the impending mission of the League of Augsburg. It shows Holland welcoming a victorious William III, accompanied by a subdued personification of Ireland. The reverse shows the triumphal arch erected by the States of Holland in front of the Court of Holland (*Binnenhof*), where most of the League’s negotiations took place. In front of the arch, lies the reclining figure of Europe holding a pomegranate, who repudiates the figure of Envy, which represented France. This image was found to be particularly offensive, leading the author of *Les Affaires du Temps* to declare: “If I were not holding this medal in my hands, I would believe that it was a joke, and that no one would ever dare to strike anything like it.”<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 102.

<sup>45</sup> *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 102-107.

<sup>46</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 15-16. Chevalier, 1692: 213.

<sup>47</sup> *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 107.

The large medal shown in the upper register of Dolivar's engraving, depicting the second triumphal arch on the *Plaats*, provoked criticisms for celebrating William's battles against Louis XIV as well as French oppression in Ireland, the Palatinate and the persecution of the Huguenots (fig. 10).



Fig. 10 – Jan Luder, Bust of William III (obverse), triumphal arch on the Plaats (reverse), 1691. Cast bronze – 69 mm. London, British Museum, 1883,0104.11.  
© Trustees of the British Museum. Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 8-9 (scale 90%).

The medal was made by the Dutch medallist Jan Luder, about whom little is known except that he was active in London between 1672 and 1710 and produced many copies of designs by other medallists.<sup>48</sup> The figures and inscriptions of this triumphal arch commemorated the victories won by William on land and at sea, but *Les Affaires du Temps* remarked that its inscription *Soloque, Saloque* (By land and by sea) was more appropriate for “the monuments consecrated to the King of France than the prince for whom all this was invented”.<sup>49</sup> Again it is not clear whether the author means the medals or the triumphal arches, or both. This conflation points to a deeper question: can a small object replicate the effect of a much larger one? We will return to this aspect of medals in our discussion of the triumphal imagery in the context of the *histoire métallique*.

<sup>48</sup> Forrer, 1907: 22.

<sup>49</sup> “Lors que les Etats ont fait fraper cette dernière Médaille, ils n’ont pas fait reflexion que l’Arc de triomphe & la Devise qui est sur sa baze, Solo, Saloque, sont plutôt des monumens consacrez à la gloire du Roy de France, qu’à celle du Prince pour qui tout cela est inventé.” *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 109.



The medals provoked indignation to a similar extent to the triumphal arches, which were also accused of containing misleading imagery. The *Mercure Galant* complained that the ephemeral architecture built for William's arrival left the common people with "impressions wholly contrary to the truth".<sup>50</sup> Another commentator in the *Les Affaires du Temps* proclaimed "If the medals, as well as the triumphal arches, were not so common, they would be valued more"<sup>51</sup>. Both the medals and the triumphal arches positioned William as a successful general and legitimate king when, according to the French, both descriptions were at odds with historical realities. Louis XIV was not alone in refusing to recognise William's kingship as the emperor and the king of Spain had also expressed their doubts.<sup>52</sup> Arondeaux's medal portrayed William as conqueror and although the Battle of the Boyne ended any realistic prospect of James II regaining the throne, revolutionary warfare in Britain and Ireland continued until the Peace of Ryswick (Rijswijk) in 1697.<sup>53</sup>

### Triumphal medals and the *histoire métallique*

It is not surprising that the *Affaires du Temps* and the *Pierre de Touche politique* reacted so strongly to what they perceived as a medallic campaign instigated by William III and his court. Louis XIV of France had long used medals to shape his own public image, and his collection and patronage were widely admired by contemporaries. The English diarist and collector John Evelyn (1620-1706) described Louis XIV as the "Master of the greatest and best Collection of Medals in Europe", while the Dutch courtier and connoisseur Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687) praised the royal medallist Jean Warin (also spelt as 'Varin') for his medallic portraits of the French king and Queen Maria Theresa, which, he wrote, were "... of a resemblance that no portrait painter or sculptor could ever achieve."<sup>54</sup>

The skills of Netherlandish medallists were also admired in France, where several of the medallists creating medals in 1691 had worked for the French king: Smeltzing briefly worked at the Paris Mint before returning to the Netherlands and Reinier Arondeaux worked in England during the reign of William III but

---

<sup>50</sup> *Mercure Galant*. Mars, 1691: 231.

<sup>51</sup> "Si les Médailles, ainsi que les Arcs de triomphe, n'y estoient pas si communes, elles seroient plus estimées." *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 109.

<sup>52</sup> Thomson, 1968: 27.

<sup>53</sup> Pincus, 2009: 264.

<sup>54</sup> Evelyn, 1697: 244. Worp, 1917: 177.

had previously executed medals for Louis XIV.<sup>55</sup> French audiences were well-informed of medals produced in the United Provinces ever since the first contemporary numismatic history, the Abbé Pierre Bizot's popular *Histoire metallique de la République de Hollande*, was published in Paris in 1687 and reprinted several times during the following years.

Triumphal medals by Netherlandish medallists like Arondeaux and Smeltzing proliferated in the wake of the king's return, establishing a new type of medal in the Northern Netherlands. Earlier triumphal medals that were made in the Northern Netherlands associated depictions of battlefields or sieges, evoking the geography of war, with emblems referring to the commanding general's military virtue.<sup>56</sup> William was very familiar with this kind of medallic imagery as paintings of similar triumphal medals commemorating the victories of his grandfather Frederik Hendrik decorated the four jutties of the famous Hall of Orange (*Oranjezaal*) of his residence Huis ten Bosch in The Hague. Although medallists would continue to show images of the cities won in battle, these new medals showed triumphal arches that embodied an abstract notion of victory derived from classical sources.

During this period, medals created in the Netherlands became more markedly classical in appearance, usually considered a result of French influence, and thus were viewed as less authentically 'Dutch' and of lesser art historical importance than medals made before 1672.<sup>57</sup> But in 1691 French critics were faced with medals whose designs recalled the recent monuments built for their king as well as ancient models. The strategy of using medals to circulate and legitimize the kingship of William III and his leadership of the League had been developed by the advisors and artists of Louis XIV for his glory, and were now effectively being used against him. Additionally, the triumphal arches in The Hague generated far more and varied medals than any comparable monument created for Louis XIV (although his long reign ultimately yielded more medals).

---

<sup>55</sup> Forrer, 1912: 544-545. Arondeaux's medals for Louis XIV were ordered by the Comte d'Avaux, French ambassador in the Netherlands. For more information about Arondeaux see Forrer, 1902: 1-32.

<sup>56</sup> Sanders, 2012: 89-90.

<sup>57</sup> For the classical influence in late seventeenth-century medals from the Northern Netherlands see Beliën, 2012: 98. For a recent example of the view that Dutch medals from this period are less interesting see Scher, 1997: 11.



Fig. 11 – Jean Warin, Louis XIV (obverse) the triumphal arch by Charles Le Brun and Claude Perrault (reverse), 1670. Silver – 50 mm – 42.31 g.

London, British Museum, G3,FrM. 62. © Trustees of the British Museum.

The first, unofficial medallic history dedicated to Louis XIV, published in 1689 by the Jesuit priest Claude-François Menestrier, provided only a handful of designs issued in France over a period of several decades that were comparable in style to the medals issued upon William's return in 1691. Only Jean Warin's medal of the triumphal arch of the Place du Trône in Paris (known as Place de la Nation since 1880), built to commemorate the French conquests in Flanders and the Franche-Comté, recalled the triumphal medals made in the Netherlands (fig. 11).<sup>58</sup>

Many Dutch triumphal medals were produced in considerable quantities and using base metals. The use of cheaper metals like tin or copper, which cost less than a fraction of gold, made these medals available to a larger audience than just wealthy collectors.<sup>59</sup> The approximately thirty medals mentioned by Chevalier and Van Loon exist in a variety of metals and the poor relief of some clearly indicates that they were cast rather than struck from a die (see *supra* fig. 10).<sup>60</sup> Although this was much more labour-intensive, the casting method was cheaper than striking medals and enabled collectors to copy desirable medals. According to Hawkins such cast medals in base metals were mostly made by Jan Luder although medallists like F.D. Winter also made important contributions (see *infra* fig. 19).

<sup>58</sup> See Menestrier, 1689: 8, 10, 11, 33.

<sup>59</sup> The engraver and silversmith John Croker (1670-1741) is cited selling small copper medals in London for 1 shilling 6 pennies compared to 30 pounds for a large golden medal in the last decade of the seventeenth century. One pound equalled 20 shillings. Example given by Jones, 1983: 210-211.

<sup>60</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 8-9.

Seventeenth-century medal enthusiasts collected more systematically than in the previous century, adopting a more ‘curatorial’ approach, although collectors were still much focused on antique coins.<sup>61</sup> The triumphal medals struck in 1691, deriving from classical models, must have held great appeal for this erudite public. Judging from the physical evidence, in addition to the illustrated histories published by numismatists like Nicolas Tindal (1687-1774) showing the medals as if displayed in a medal cabinet’s tray (fig. 12), these medals, upon which double triumphal arches are displayed, particularly appealed to amateurs and collectors.

Yet the sheer abundance of these medals and triumphal arches commemorating William’s victories over French and Jacobite forces does not fully explain the outrage expressed by the authors of *Les Affaires du Temps* or *La Pierre de Touche politique*. In France, medals – Wellington’s “artefacts for a future past” – served an important purpose for Louis XIV by securing his legacy through the creation of an enduring visual history of royal achievements in metal, known as

---

<sup>61</sup> Cunnally, 1999: 145.



Fig. 12 – Illustration of the medals of King William III and Queen Mary from Nicolas Tindal's *Continuation of Mr. Rapin's History of England* (1737), p. 591. Paris, BnF. the *histoire métallique*. A medallic history had been conceived by academicians since the early years of Louis's reign, and in 1663 the *Académie royale des inscriptions et médailles* – also known as the *Petite Académie* – was founded by the king's influential minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert. This enterprise exerted much influence in the Netherlands, and Nicolas Chevalier's history, published in 1692, directly referenced the title of the Menestrier's *histoire métallique*, and promised to provide a history of William III by “medals, inscriptions, triumphal arches and other public monuments”.<sup>62</sup>



Fig. 13 – Adriaen Schoonebeeck, illustration for Nicolas Chevalier's *L'histoire de Guillaume III, Roy d'Angleterre* (1692) p. 183. Paris, BnF.

<sup>62</sup> Burke, 1992: 146-147.

Chevalier, Menestrier and the academy clearly viewed medals as acting in the same manner as other, larger monuments, with the commemoration of heroic actions led by deserving individuals. The relationship between medals and architecture had been established in numismatic literature since the recovery of classical antiquity in the Renaissance. Early humanists consistently compared small antique coins and medals to the much larger monuments of ancient Rome and Greece.<sup>63</sup> This was one of the reasons for which ancient coins and medals were celebrated by the influential Italian numismatist Enea Vico, who praised these objects for revealing triumphs, festivities and other public events for which no written records survived.<sup>64</sup> Similarly the French antiquarian Guillaume du Choul used the images of triumphs found on ancient medals to reproduce structures on a much larger scale in his illustrated work on Roman antiquities.<sup>65</sup> For contemporary numismatists, such as Nicolas Chevalier and other French critics, the link between the miniature and monumental was similarly evident (fig. 13).

As is made clear by the titles of the medallic histories, medals were thought of as monuments, connecting the viewer to the past. Late seventeenth-century authors considered medals as a particularly powerful and lasting form of monument. John Evelyn, wrote: “the various ways that men have sought Immortality and Freedom from Oblivion, by Marbles, Statues, Trophies [...] there is nothing in all this Tract of Time that has proved more lasting than these Nummi Memoriales, which we call Medals”.<sup>66</sup> Romeyn de Hooghe’s title-page for Chevalier’s medallic history, which shows a broken statue at Britannia’s feet while she reads William’s *histoire métallique* (fig. 14), brings similar attention to the enduring power of medals while other monuments whither in the face of time.

The medals issued in 1691 preserved the festivities honouring William’s military achievements for future generations. The durability of metal, ensuring the survival of images across the ages, made it a particularly suitable material for commemorative purposes and according to John Evelyn, it was this specific material advantage that induced Louis XIV to create an “academy of Medalists” in France.<sup>67</sup> *Les Affaires du Temps* insinuated that this materiality also appealed to William III, and published a fictive dialogue between him and the Earl of Portland in which the king admitted that their durability made medals a particularly appealing strategy: “I quite like the invention of Medals... they last longer than the paper that tears, and is lost, and it appears to me that one may accord

---

<sup>63</sup> Cunnally, 1999: 11.

<sup>64</sup> Cunnally, 1999: 136.

<sup>65</sup> Haskell, 1993: 16 and Bourriot, 1984: 657–658.

<sup>66</sup> Evelyn, 1697: 1–2.

<sup>67</sup> Evelyn, 1697: 2–3.

more faith to these monuments, which only appear in the name of a State, than to many stories, which are only the work of private individuals [...]"<sup>68</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> "J'aime assez l'invention des Medailles, elles durent plus que le papier qui se déchire, & se perd, & il me semble qu'on ajoute plus de foy à ces monumens, qui ne paroissent qu'au nom d'un Etat, qu'a beaucoup d'histoires, qui ne sont que l'ouvrage des particuliers, & ne roulent que sur leur bonne foy." *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 250.





Fig. 14 – Romeyn de Hooghe, frontispiece for Nicolas Chevalier's *L'histoire de Guillaume III, Roy d'Angleterre* (1692). Paris, BnF.



Fig. 15 – Jean Roëttiers, *Coronation medal of William and Mary*, 1689.  
Gold – 35 mm – 18.5 g. London, British Museum, M. 7730.  
© Trustees of the British Museum. Hawkins, 1885, vol. 1: 662-663.

William III must have been aware of the importance carried by the designs of medals. There was a mixed reception to the official coronation medal struck by the Flemish medallist Jean Roëttiers (fig. 15) after its distribution to various dignitaries, showing the portraits of the new monarchs while the reverse depicted Jupiter punishing the renegade Phaeton for stealing the chariot of his father, Phoebus.<sup>69</sup> One anonymous pamphlet warned that this image could easily be misread as an indictment against arrogance and unlawful usurpation, which, given how William and Mary gained their throne, was a rather delicate subject.<sup>70</sup> The anonymous critic fulminated that such images were particularly dangerous because they “brought such an odious history into mens [sic] minds”.<sup>71</sup>

The threat posed to Louis XIV by the ‘odious history’ of William’s medals must be seen in light of the commemorative purpose of the *histoire métallique* and the ongoing conflict of the Nine Years War (1689-1697).<sup>72</sup> The durability of metallic images and descriptions made medals an effective way of transmitting important events, particularly military successes, to future generations. However, comparisons between late seventeenth-century French and Dutch medals have frequently pointed out that Louis XIV was far more implicated in their

<sup>69</sup> Edie, 1990: 313.

<sup>70</sup> *A letter from a Gentleman in the Country to his Correspondent in the City, concerning the Coronation Medal*, distributed April 11, 1689, 1689: 1.

<sup>71</sup> *A letter from a Gentleman in the Country to his Correspondent in the City, concerning the Coronation Medal*, distributed April 11, 1689, 1689: 2.

<sup>72</sup> For a recent study of the importance of medals to the public representation of the French monarchy see Jones, 2015: 161-176.

design and distribution than William III.<sup>73</sup> The stadholder-king never rewarded nor sanctioned Chevalier's work, despite his attempts to solicit such rewards from the king's secretary Constantijn Huygens Jr. (1628-1697).<sup>74</sup> The surviving record of accounts, archives and correspondence does not give a clear picture of numismatic activities at court, but suggests that William III was not nearly as involved with medals as his French rival.

Moreover, many Dutch medallists, such as Jan Smeltzing, were known to independently produce medals and without commission and collectors in 1691 seem to have found the triumphal medals particularly appealing. While it is possible to identify most of the medals in Dolivar's engraving, the use of engraved dies allowed medallists to recombine images to create new medals and respond to the demand of a growing public of collectors and amateurs (while also making it much easier to mass-produce struck medals). This was also possible with the casting method, which was cheaper, but which also produced less refined relief. The large medal by Jan Luder is one such example where the obverse face would typically show a bust of William III (fig. 16), but also occurs with a view of a different triumphal arch (fig. 17).<sup>75</sup>



*Fig. 16 – Attributed to Jan Luder; Bust of William III (obverse) the triumphal arch in front of the Court of Holland (reverse), 1691.  
Bronze – 73 mm. Amsterdam, NNC, PE-02845 (scale 85%).*

<sup>73</sup> Burke, 1992: 146-147; Beliën, 2012: 113.

<sup>74</sup> Dekker, 2013: 84. On the career of Chevalier see Van der Meer, 2004: 242-249.

<sup>75</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 11.



Fig. 17—Jan Luder, *The triumphal arches on the Plaats and in front of the Court of Holland, 1691.*  
Silver – 72 mm – 162 g. Amsterdam, NNC, PE-02846.  
Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 11 (scale 85%).

There were a significant number of such medals where two reverse side showing triumphal arches were combined. Medals that do not display the usual combination of bust and figure are considered as being produced specifically for the market rather than commissioned.<sup>76</sup> Since every silver or goldsmith was familiar with the art of casting, reproducing desirable medals was a relatively easy task.<sup>77</sup> To a lesser extent amateurs and collectors may also have been responsible for creating copies of medals in plaster or wax, although none survive of the triumphal entry in 1691. John Evelyn included instructions on making moulds of medals in his numismatic treatise, but referred his readers for more technical information to *Des principes de l'architecture, de la sculpture, de la peinture* (1676) by the French court historian André Félibien (1619-1695).<sup>78</sup> This technical knowledge of the material and casting was required in order to detect counterfeit medals, which collectors like Evelyn complained about.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Van Gelder, 1980: 244.

<sup>77</sup> Biemond, 2012: 16.

<sup>78</sup> Evelyn, 1697: 218-220.

<sup>79</sup> Evelyn, 1697: 210-212.



### William III as a Patron of Medals

Although William and Mary are known to have collected medals and antique coins, little is known about their actual patronage of medallists while the surviving correspondence suggests that William III only rarely expressed himself on the subject.<sup>80</sup> On the eve of the Glorious Revolution, the stadholder wrote to his favourite Hans Willem Bentinck, later Earl of Portland, that a new design for an unknown medal should imperatively feature his and Mary's portrait, but that the inscriptions should be entrusted to someone more qualified than himself.<sup>81</sup> This practice was indeed customary, as was the case with Louis XIV. Nevertheless, it is unknown to which scholars this task was entrusted: although the well-known professors Graevius, Gronovius and Spanheim, who collaborated on the entry, would have been more than capable of producing such inscriptions.<sup>82</sup> The compounded process of medallic design, involving patrons, artists and the medallists who interpreted the artistic designs, is further complicated by the near complete absence of preparatory drawings, models or dies.<sup>83</sup> There are, however, more indications that the court was more involved in the medals struck for the king's return than has previously been thought.



*Fig. 18 – Daniel Drappentier, Golden ‘literary reward’ distributed in the name of William III, 1691. Gold – 46 mm – 103.74 g. Amsterdam, NNC, PE-02857. Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 19–20.*

<sup>80</sup> Huygens, 1876: 356, 325. In 1690 Huygens was in England, and recorded the numismatic interest of William III and Mary in his diary. He noted a discussion about ‘pictures, antique sigils and medals’ with the king, while queen Mary kept a collection of medals and cameos, many of which Huygens deemed bad counterfeits.

<sup>81</sup> Japikse, 1927: 53.

<sup>82</sup> Bidloo, 1691: 28. See also Snoep, 1975: 99.

<sup>83</sup> For a detailed example of the design process of medals in the seventeenth-century Northern Netherlands see Biemond, 2012: 17. For preparatory drawings for medals in the Dutch Republic see Scharloo, 1994: 97, 104. For the collection of seventeenth-century Dutch die, and the absence of die for the year 1691, see Van Kerkwijk, 1917: 12–13.

The so-called golden ‘literary award’ (fig. 18), designed by Romeyn de Hooghe and engraved by Daniel Drappentier, is the only medal accounted for in the payment records of the Nassau Demesne Council and is noted by Chevalier as having been distributed after the entry.<sup>84</sup> It was one of the rare medals to be struck in gold, the most recent other example being the coronation medal, whose choice of precious material highlighted the significance of the occasion (and medal) for the court’s public representation. It was also mentioned in the *Europische Mercurius*, which reported that prior to the king’s entry, ‘various commemorative medals’ were handed out by the royal treasurer Willem van Schuylenburch to ‘those who had written laudatory poems of their Majesties’ voyage to England as well as their coronation’.<sup>85</sup> Unfortunately, there was no record of the other medals that were distributed besides the literary award.



Fig. 19 – F.D. Winter; William III (obverse), triumphal arch in front of the Court of Holland (reverse), 1691.  
 Tin – 38 mm – 19.97 g. Amsterdam, NNC, PE-02849.  
 Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 13.

Physical evidence also indicates there was probably some collaboration between The Hague and the Royal Mint in London (fig. 19).<sup>86</sup> This medal, executed by the British medallist F.D. Winter, copied one of Smeltzing’s designs for the triumphal arches.<sup>87</sup> As with many other seventeenth-century medallists, little is known about Winter apart from his activity during the last decades of the seventeenth century, when he produced medals commemorating the events of

<sup>84</sup> Chevalier, 1692: 209. Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 19-20. Sanders, 2006: 76.

<sup>85</sup> “Eindelyk: den Heer Schuilenburg, Raadsheer en Griffier van zyn Brittanische Majesteits Raad, had in ’t begin der Maand verscheidene Gedenkenningen aan degeenen, welke eenige Vaerzen tot lof van haar Majesteiten, zo ten opzichte van hun overgaan na Engeland als komst tot de Kroon, gemaakt hadden, uitgedeeld [...]” *Europische Mercurius*, 1691: 70.

<sup>86</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 2: 13. Beliën, 2012: 113; Sharpe, 2013: 439.

<sup>87</sup> Hawkins, 1885: 175.

William and Mary's reign.<sup>88</sup> Winter was active at the Royal Mint in London under the direction of Thomas Neale, Master and Worker of the Royal Mint from 1678 to 1699, and whose signature appears frequently on medals by him, including several medals depicting the triumphal entry into The Hague.<sup>89</sup> Willem van Schuylenburch, who distributed the medals prior to William's public entry, spent an extended period of time in England during the winter of 1690 and may have acted as an intermediary between the two centres of production.<sup>90</sup> He had previously served as a burgomaster of The Hague and would have been well aware of the preparations undertaken by his former colleagues in anticipation of the king's return.

The frequently overlapping relations between the roles of the States of Holland and the federal States-General means that it was not always possible to determine who exactly commissioned commemorative medals for compensation in the form of medals.<sup>91</sup> French gazettes in 1691 clearly viewed the medals as part of a campaign orchestrated by the court and executed by William's loyal supporters in government. This connection was also suggested by Chevalier, who seemed to imply that medals were struck in The Hague or by order of the States. The *Affaires du Temps* imagined the Earl of Portland admiring this effective collusion between court and state, admitting to William III that: "The majority of medals that have been struck for your glory, and almost always contrary to the truth, are works that you have had fabricated in secret, and then afterwards they are distributed by your order in the name of the States, although they played no part in this."<sup>92</sup> William III may not have directly commissioned all of the medals discussed here, but the golden literary award, which shows medals being distributed in his name, indicates that the king was certainly aware of their importance, as also does his insistence that Mary should appear on the coronation medal.

It seems quite probable that the States of Holland were involved in the production of the triumphal medals distributed in 1691, since they played a key role in organising the Congress and largely financed the festivities held for William's return. This seems to be the case for the medals described as commemorating the congress and perhaps some of the other medals discussed here,

---

<sup>88</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 1: 638. Forrer, 1919: 516-517.

<sup>89</sup> Hawkins, 1885, vol. 1: 638 and vol. 2: 2-3, 8, 12-13. Forrer, 1909: 236. For the most recent discussion of Neale's activity at the Royal Mint see Challis, 1992: 392-393, 395.

<sup>90</sup> Schuylenburch's stay in England is documented in Huygens, 1876: 88, 90, 94-96, 496.

<sup>91</sup> Sanders, 2012: 80-83.

<sup>92</sup> "La plupart des Medailles qui ont esté frappées à vostre gloire, & Presque toûjours contre la verité, sont des ouvrages que vous avez fait fabriquer en secret, & qu'ensuite on a distribuez par vostre ordre sous le nom des Etats, quoy qu'ils n'y eussent aucune part." *Les Affaires du Temps*, 1691: 250-251.

although there is no documented proof for this. Perhaps, by encouraging public bodies, such as the States of Holland, to present William III with public honours, it was made to appear that these medals and triumphal arches originated from the citizens of the Dutch Republic rather than William III or his court. This would have contrasted favourably with the practice of Louis XIV and bolstered William's reputation as the antithesis of a vainglorious monarch. The success of this policy was referenced by the English politician Horace Walpole (1717–1797), who characterised William III as a king who “fought his own battles, instead of choosing mottos for the medals that recorded them...”.<sup>93</sup>

## Conclusion

The medals made for William's return to the Dutch Republic in 1691 promoted him as a victorious general in the same manner as the triumphal entry organised by the States of Holland. The discussions in *Affaires du Temps* and *La pierre de Touche politique* highlight the political significance of medals in the wake of the Glorious Revolution, and particularly those medals that commemorated William's military achievements by reproducing the triumphal arches erected for his return to the Dutch Republic in 1691. These triumphal medals served as a visual statement of William's leadership of the League of Augsburg, which also became known as the Grand Alliance when England, Scotland and Ireland joined following the Glorious Revolution. Their reproduction in contemporary media, and the ensuing debate about the function and meaning of these medals, must be seen in the context of the *histoire métallique* as well as the sharp increase in production of medals within the Netherlands, Britain and France during this period.

The ability of medals to link viewers with the past once led a former director of the Royal Dutch Medal Cabinet to describe the medals made during the reign of William III as “most eloquent witnesses” of history.<sup>94</sup> The preservation and transmission of memory also made the medals one of the most controversial forms of monumental art in Europe from the late seventeenth century onwards. Contemporary observers clearly viewed medals as capable of eliciting the same effects as far more impressive monuments. But the medal's promise (and menace) of prospective history, capable of being reproduced almost at will, and easily portable, must have made it particularly appealing to monarchs like William III and Louis XIV.

---

<sup>93</sup> Walpole, 1871: 280.

<sup>94</sup> De Dompierre de Chaufepié, 1898: 3.



The close iconographies of the triumphal arches and medals may suggest that there was involvement from the States of Holland (who had already financed much of the triumphal entry), especially since a number of medals were almost certainly commissioned for the Congress of Allies. Although there was probably no medallic campaign on the scale of Louis XIV's *histoire métallique*, the significance of medals was clear to William III even if he was less concerned with their appearance than his French rival.

The triumphal entry and medals came at a crucial time in William's reign. Not only was his claim to the throne disputed, but William's predecessor was still alive and actively conspiring against him with Louis XIV. The constant threat of a Jacobite rebellion, which lasted until the very end of his reign, heavily influenced the king's public representation, and made the success of the new regime a priority. Medals served an immediate purpose by proclaiming William's victories abroad against Louis XIV and James II in the images and inscriptions of medals like the one by Arondeaux's medal that declared *One alone has restored our affairs by fighting*.<sup>95</sup> But more importantly, medals ensured the preservation of these events for posterity by transforming the ephemeral architecture of the triumph into permanent monuments.

*This research is made possible by the Johan Huizinga Fund/Rijksmuseum Fund. The author would like to thank Dr. George Sanders for his valuable advice, and Dr. Jan de Hond and Dr. Gijs van der Ham for their helpful comments on an initial draft of this paper.*

### Biographical note

Alexander Dencher is a PhD candidate at the Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne and the Universiteit Leiden where he is currently finishing his dissertation *Commemorating Conquest: The Triumphal Entry of William III into The Hague in 1691*. His research deals with the graphic arts, architecture and decorative arts in seventeenth-century Holland, France and Britain.

---

<sup>95</sup> Tindal, 1747: 18.

## Bibliography

- Anonymous (1689) *A letter from a Gentleman in the Country to his Correspondent in the City, concerning the Coronation Medal, distributed April 11, 1689* (London)
- Anonymous (1691A) *A Description of the Most Glorious and most Magnificent Arches erected at the Hague for the Reception of William III king of Great Britain. With all the MOTTO's and Latin INSCRIPTIONS that were Written upon every one of the said Arches. Translated into English from the Dutch* (London)
- Anonymous (1691B) *The History of the Royal Congress at The Hague...* (London)
- Europische Mercurius* (1691)
- London Gazette* (1691)
- La Pierre de Touche politique. Les médailles. Juin* (1690)
- La Pierre de Touche politique. Le Carnaval de La Haye. Mars* (1691)
- La Pierre de Touche politique. Les lunettes pour les quinze vingts. Juin* (1691)
- Les Affaires du Temps. XI Partie. Les Plaintes de l'Europe contre le Prince d'Orange. I-III. Le Prince d'Orange travaillant à son histoire. IV-V.* (1691)
- Le Mercure Galant* (1691)
- Adams, A., Rawles, S. & Saunders, A. (2012) *A Bibliography of Claude-François Ménéstrier. Printed Editions, 1655-1765* (Geneva)
- Beliën, P. (2012) Ken uw klassieken. Politieke boodschappen in een klassiek jasje op penningen uit de zeventiende eeuw, in *Hulde! Penningkunst in de Gouden Eeuw*, 97-108 (Haarlem)
- Bidloo, G. (1691) *Komste van Zyne Majesteit Willem III, Koning van Groot Britanje, enz., in Holland, ofte omstandelyke beschryving van alles, het welke op des zelfs komste en geduurende Zyn verblyf, in 's Graavenhaage en elders, ten teeken van vreugde en eere, is opgerecht en voorgevallen. Vercierd met kopere Plaatzen* (The Hague)
- Biemond, D.-J. (2012) Johannes Lutma en de penningkunst. Handzame kunstwerken van een beeldhouwer in zilver, in *Hulde! Penningkunst in de Gouden Eeuw*, 11-23 (Haarlem)
- Bourriot, F. (1984) Un ouvrage lyonnais de la Renaissance : Discours de la religion des anciens Romains par Guillaume du Choul, Lyon, 1556 *Revue du Nord* 66, 653-675
- Burke, P. (1992) *The fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven - London)
- Burnet, G. (1734) *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time. Vol. 2. From the Revolution to the Conclusion of the Treaty of Peace at Utrecht* (London)
- Challis, C.E. (ed.) (1992) *A new history of the Royal Mint* (Cambridge)
- Chevalier, N. (1692) *Histoire de Guillaume III, roy d'Angleterre, d'Ecosse, de France et d'Irlande, prince d'Orange, etc., contenant ses actions les plus mémorables, depuis sa naissance jusques à son élévation sur le trône et ce qui s'est passé depuis jusques à l'entière réduction du royaume d'Irlande par médailles, inscriptions, arcs de triomphe et autres monumens publics* (Amsterdam)

- Cillessen, W. (ed.) (1997) *Krieg der Bilder. Druckgraphik als medium politischer Auseinandersetzung im Europa des Absolutismus* (Berlin)
- Cunnally, J. (1999) *Images of the Illustrious. The Numismatic Presence in the Renaissance* (Princeton, New Jersey)
- Dekker, R. (2013) *Family, Culture and Society in the Diary of Constantijn Huygens Jr, Secretary to Stadholder-King William of Orange* (Leiden-Boston)
- Dessing, R. (1988) *Koning-Stadhouder Willem III. Triomfator. De triomfale intocht in Den Haag in 1691* (The Hague)
- De Dompierre de Chaufepié, H.J. (1893) "De historiepenningen en munten betrekking hebbende op het Stamhuis van Oranje-Nassau", published as the second part of W.G.C. Byvanck, *De Oranje Nassau-boekerij en de Oranje-penningen in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek en in het Koninklijke Penningkabinet te 's-Gravenhage* (Utrecht)
- De Dompierre de Chaufepié, H.J. (1902) De Koning Stadhouder Willem III op penningen verheerlijkt *Elsevier's* 12, 223-229
- Eddie, C.A. (1990) The public face of royal ritual: Sermons, medals and civic ceremony in later Stuart coronations *Huntingdon Library Quarterly* 4, 311-336
- Evelyn, J. (1697) *Numismate. A discourse of medals, antient and modern. Together with some Account of Heads and Effigies of Illustrious and Famous Persons, in Sculpt, and Taille-Douce ...* (London)
- Forrer, L. (1902) *Biographical dictionary of medallists* Vol. 1 (London)
- Forrer, L. (1907) *Biographical dictionary of medallists* Vol. 3 (London)
- Forrer, L. (1909) *Biographical dictionary of medallists* Vol. 4 (London)
- Forrer, L. (1912) *Biographical dictionary of medallists* Vol. 5 (London)
- Forrer, L. (1919) *Biographical dictionary of medallists* Vol. 6 (London)
- Groenhout, H. (1691) *Lyst der vorstelyke personagien en gezanten aan het hof van zyn Majesteyt van Groot Brittanjen, gedurende desselfs verblijf in 's Gravenhage, geweest in Maart* (The Hague)
- Haskell, F. (1993) *History and its Images. Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven-London)
- Hawkins, E. (1885) ed. by H. Grueber & A.W. Franks, *Medallic illustrations of the history of Great Britain and Ireland to the death of George II* Vols. 1-2 (London)
- Huygens, C. (1876) *Journal van 21 oktober 1688 tot 2 september 1696. Eerste deel* (Utrecht)
- Japikse, N. (1927) *Correspondentie van Willem III en van Hans Willem Bentinck, eersten graaf van Portland. Eerste gedeelte: het archief van Welbeck Abbey* (The Hague)
- Jones, M. (1979) *Medals of the Sun King* (London)
- Jones, M. (1982) The medal as an instrument of propaganda in late 17<sup>th</sup>- and early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europe; Part 1 *NC* 142, 117-126
- Jones, M. (1982) The medal as an instrument of propaganda in late 17<sup>th</sup>- and early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europe; Part 2 *NC* 143, 202-213

- Jones, M. (2015) “Un compte public de toutes leurs actions à tout l’univers et à tous les siècles”: The King and his Public: dilemmas around the representation of Louis XIV in the Medallion History of his reign *Revue Numismatique* 172, 161-176
- van Gelder, H.E. (1980) Koning-Stadhouder Willem III in de Penningkunst *JMP* 67, 41-48
- van Kerkwijk, A.O. (1917) *Catalogus der verzameling van penningstempels aan 's Rijks Munt te Utrecht* (Utrecht)
- van Loon, G. (1728) *Beschrijving der Nederlandsche Historiepenningen* (Amsterdam)
- van der Meer, G. (2004) Nicolas Chevalier, een veelzijdig medailleur *DB* 28, 242-249
- Menestrier, C.-F. (1689) *Histoire du roy Louis le Grand par les medailles, emblèmes, devises, jettons, inscriptions...* (Paris)
- Pincus, S. (2009) *1688. The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven - London)
- Sanders, G. (2006) *Oranjepeningen in Paleis Het Loo met een catalogus van de penningcollectie van de Geschiedkundige Vereniging Oranje-Nassau* (Rotterdam)
- Sanders, G. (2012) Penningen ter beloning, in *Hulde! Penningkunst in de Gouden Eeuw*, 79-94 (Haarlem)
- Scharloo, M. (1994) Some designs for a medal on the peace of Utrecht (1713-1714), in M. Jones (ed.) *Designs on Posterity. Drawings for medals*, 97-105 (London)
- Schwoerer, L.G. (1977) Propaganda in the Revolution of 1688-1689 *The American Historical Review* 82, 531-548
- Sharpe, K. (2012) *Rebranding rule. The Restoration and Revolution Monarchy, 1660-1714* (New Haven - London)
- Snoep, D. (1975) *Praal en Propaganda: Triumfalia in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de 16e en 17e eeuw* (Alphen aan de Rijn)
- Tindal, N. (1747) *The Metallic history of the three last reigns or a series of medals, representing all the Remarkable Events from the Revolution, to the Death of King George I* (London)
- Troost, W. (2011) To Restore and preserve the liberty of Europe: William III's ideas on foreign policy, in D. Onnekink & G. Rommelse (eds.), *Ideology and Foreign Policy in Early Modern Europe (1650-1750)*, 283-303 (Aldershot)
- Walpole, H. (1871) *Anecdotes of Painting in England* (London)
- Weiss, B. (2014) Medals of the Glorious Revolution: the influence of Catholic-Protestant antagonism *American Numismatic Society Magazine* 13, 6-23
- Wellington, R. (2015) *Antiquarianism and the Visual Histories of Louis XIV. Artifacts for a Future Past* (Burlington)
- Worp, J.A. (ed.) (1917) *De Briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens. Zesde Deel. 1663-1687* (The Hague)