



- **Britse krakers in Leiden [Hendriks, Nimanaj & Van der Steen]**
- **Risk Management in 16th Century Antwerp [Dreijer]**
- **Napoleon and the Dutch War Subsidy [Hay]**
- **Mapping Foreign Migration to Belgium [Heynssens]**

# Making War Pay for War

*Napoleon and the Dutch War Subsidy, 1795-1806*

Mark Edward Hay

TSEG 17 (2): 55-82

DOI: 10.18352/tseg.1102

Les avantages de cette brillante conquête pour la République sont immenses: elle lui donne des trésors, des magasins, des chantiers, des vaisseaux et surtout dans les affaires politiques et commerciales de l'Europe une prépondérance, dont il est impossible de calculer les effets et les suites.

The representatives-on-mission with the Army of the North, reporting back to Paris after the conquest of the Dutch Republic in January 1795.<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

Just over one decade ago, Pierre Branda published a study of Napoleonic public finance. The study marks a turning point in the historiography of Napoleonic war financing because, through relying on well-researched quantitative data, Branda lays to rest the long-held myth that Napoleon 'made war pay for war'. However, the Franco-centric conceptualization of Napoleonic resource extraction and the temporal delineation have resulted in a prism that omits certain sources of revenue. This omission has a bearing on Branda's overall assessment of Napoleonic war financing. Through exploring French resource extraction in the Netherlands through forcing the Dutch to pay for the maintenance of a French contingent, this article builds on Branda's work to shed a new light on the success of Napoleonic resource extraction and war financing.

In her struggle against much of Europe, Revolutionary France faced uneven odds, both in terms of manpower and in terms of resources. The

<sup>1</sup> Archives diplomatiques (France) [FR-AD], Correspondance Politique, Hollande [CPH], 586, Representatives-on-mission to the Committee of Public Safety, 21 January 1795.

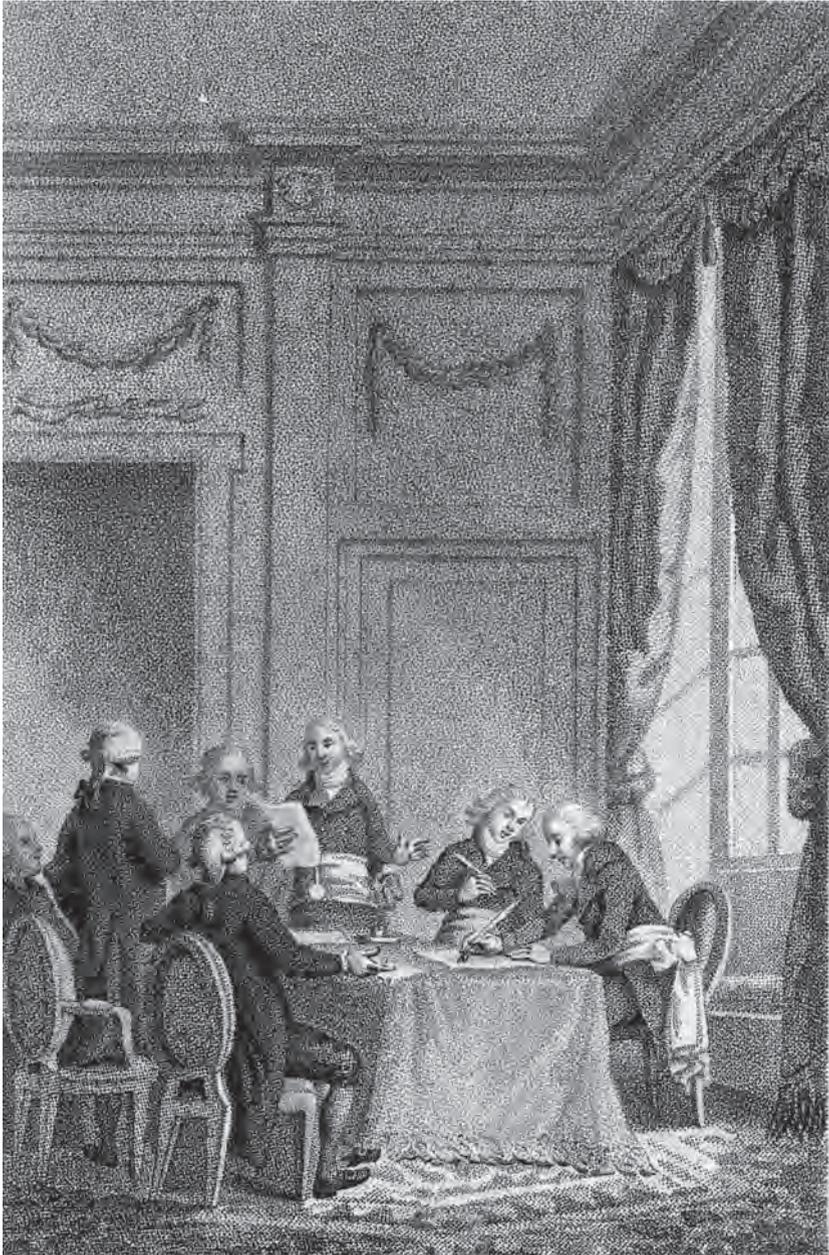
conception of the *levée en masse* remedied France's shortage of manpower.<sup>2</sup> However, in resource mobilization no such quick fix existed. France was a rich country with considerable capital accumulation, but at the end of the eighteenth century, she possessed neither the financial infrastructure nor the trust to mobilize the required resources at short notice. The turmoil unleashed by the Revolution did little to improve French public finances.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, France was forced to extract the resources necessary to fight her wars abroad. The Netherlands, with its perceived abundance of wealth, soon became a principal target for France. This article explores French resource extraction in the Netherlands through examining one of the resource extraction instruments that was implemented by France with the signing of Treaty of The Hague on 16 May 1795.

France extracted resources from the Netherlands for almost two decades. Moreover, French resource extraction evolved considerably as a result of the increasing French demand for resources, the rise to power of Napoleon Bonaparte and the gradual integration of the Netherlands into the Napoleonic Empire and the Napoleonic fiscal-military state. The two principal instruments of French resource extraction were an indemnity of 100 million guilders (*f*) and an obligation to pay for the maintenance of a French contingent, which was *de facto* a Dutch subsidy of the French war effort. Both instruments were introduced with the Treaty of The Hague of 16 May 1795, which brought the Revolutionary War between France and the Dutch Republic to an end and which saw a regenerated Batavian Republic re-enter the war on the side of France.<sup>4</sup> The Dutch indemnity is explored in-depth in the historiography. There is a broad consensus that the Dutch indemnity was timely and a great windfall to France, and that it was a near insurmountable cost to the

2 J.-P. Bertaud, *The army of the French Revolution. From citizen-soldiers to instrument of power* (Princeton 1988) 102-132.

3 J.C. Riley, *The Seven Years War and the old regime in France. The economic and financial toll* (Princeton 1986); T.J. Sargent and F.R. Velde, 'Macroeconomic features of the French Revolution', *Journal of Political Economy* 103:3 (1995) 474-518; J.F. Boshier, *French finances 1770-1795. From business to bureaucracy* (Cambridge 1970); F. Crouzet, *La grande inflation. La monnaie en France de Louis XVI à Napoléon* (Paris 1993).

4 Archives nationales (France) [FR-NA], 284AP/10/6, Traité de paix et d'alliance entre la République française et la République des Provinces unies du 27 floréal, 3<sup>e</sup> année de la République; FR-NA, 284AP/10/6, Articles séparés et secrets. Dutch original: Nationaal Archief (Netherlands) [NL-NA], 1.01.02, Staten-Generaal, 12597.281, Traité de paix et d'alliance entre la République française et a République des Provinces unies du 27 floréal, 3<sup>e</sup> année de la République; NL-NA, 3.01.29, Financie van Holland, 913, Articles séparés et secrets. An accessible copy is found in: M. Kerautret, *Documents diplomatiques du Consulat et de l'Empire*, 3 vols (Paris 2002) I: 24-33.



*Illustration 1 Signing of the Peace of The Hague, 16 May 1795. Print by Christiaan Josi (Amsterdam 1800) (source: Rijksmuseum Amsterdam)*

Dutch which locked the Batavian Republic into a subordinate relationship with France.<sup>5</sup> Beyond the odd reference, there is no discussion of the Dutch war subsidy. So as to provide a fuller picture of Napoleonic war financing, this article examines how France imposed the obligation to pay for the maintenance of a French contingent on the Dutch, how successive French regimes exploited this obligation to extract the maximum possible amount of resources from the Netherlands and, finally, how much the resources extracted through this instrument contributed to Napoleonic war financing.

First, this article examines briefly the historiography of French resource extraction in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic era to highlight the merits and demerits of past approaches. Then, the Dutch war subsidy will be explored to show how the limitations of the current historiography can be addressed. Through drawing on undisclosed Dutch archival material – the hitherto overlooked accounts of the administrative body that was charged with the financial management of the French contingent in the Netherlands, the final section quantifies the Dutch war subsidy, before embedding the findings in the historiography of Napoleonic war financing.<sup>6</sup>

## The historiography of French war financing

The topic of French war financing and resource extraction in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic era has attracted a good bit of scholarly attention, but focused, in-depth studies are few and far between. A first study is Rupelle's *Les finances de la guerre de 1796 à 1815*.<sup>7</sup> Rupelle offers a chronology of French war financing from the Directory to Napoleon's first abdication to substantiate the argument that Napoleon's rise to power marked a turning point in French war financing because he placed resource extraction in dependent states on a more stable footing

5 F. Crouzet, 'Aspects financiers de la relation franco-batave,' in: A. Jourdan and J. Leerssen (eds.), *Remous révolutionnaires. République batave, armée française* (Amsterdam 1996) 52-53; R.R. Palmer, *The age of democratic revolution. A political history of Europe and America, 1760-1800*, 2 vols (Princeton 1959-1964) II: 186-187; T.C.W. Blanning, *The French revolutionary wars 1787-1802* (London 1996) 137; S. Schama, *Patriots and liberators. Revolution in the Netherlands 1780-1813* (London 2005) 207-210; R. Kubben, *Regeneration and hegemony. Franco-Batavian relations in the revolutionary era. A legal approach 1795-1803* (Leiden 2009) 197.

6 NL-NA, 2.01.14.03, Eerste Commissaris over de Franse Troepen in Dienst der Bataafse Republiek.

7 S. de la Rupelle, 'Les finances de la guerre de 1796 à 1815,' in: E. Boutmy et al. (eds.), *Annales de l'École libre des sciences politiques* (Paris 1892) 25-62, 649-669.

through transforming the largely ad hoc resource extraction into formal treaties of subsidy. However, this was only successful until 1808, after which Napoleon was less successful in imposing his will on his foes. Rupelle must be acknowledged for venturing into uncharted territory to produce a good study, but with the benefit of more than a century of reflection, one must conclude that the study has several weaknesses. First, Rupelle has overlooked some methods of resource extraction, such as the obligation of dependent states to place their armed forces at the disposal of France, which should be considered a subsidy of the French war effort. Second, Rupelle has relied on prospective French budgetary data, rather than the definitive accounts, which impedes his ability to assess the success of French war financing.<sup>8</sup> A final flaw is that Rupelle omits the years 1792-1795, which saw extensive plundering and requisitioning by France.

Two historians do explore the early years of French resource extraction. In his six-volume financial history of France Marion examines French resource extraction in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic era in the broader context of French public finances, 1715-1914.<sup>9</sup> The broader perspective, and his retracing of Rupelle's research leads to a revision of some of Rupelle's estimates, but because Marion relies on the same erroneous data as Rupelle, his figures are equally unusable. The second historian to explore French resource extraction in the early Revolutionary era is Belhost.<sup>10</sup> The study stands out for attempting to quantify the resources that were extracted in a certain territory. However, Belhost's quantification is flawed because he relies only on select diplomatic sources, without following up on how the financial transactions were executed. As this research shows, the sums of extracted resources fluctuated considerably due to a variety of factors, resulting in the actual transfers differing considerably from what was intended. For this reason, one cannot fully rely on Belhost's findings.

A recent study that addresses the limitations in the historiography is Branda's *Le prix de la gloire*.<sup>11</sup> It explores Napoleonic public finance 1803-1814 and includes an examination of Napoleonic war financing and resource extraction. The correct budgetary data has been employed

8 Rupelle, 'Les finances de la guerre', 56; P. Branda, *Le prix de la gloire. Napoléon et l'argent* (Paris 2007) 575-577.

9 M. Marion, *Histoire financière de la France depuis 1715*, 6 vols (Paris 1914-1931).

10 J.-F. Belhost, 'Le financement de la guerre de 1792 à l'an IV', in: G. Antonetti (ed.), *Etat, finances et économie pendant la Révolution Française* (Paris 1991) 317-345.

11 Branda, *Le prix*.

and Branda has also gone to great lengths to corroborate his findings with secondary sources, though non-French literature has been left aside mostly. The merit of Branda's work lies in his new conceptualization of French resource extraction. He distinguishes three types of resource extraction. First is the seizure of property, goods, and capital, and the appropriation of fiscal revenue during military campaigns, which is referred to as ordinary contributions. Second is extraordinary contributions, which refers to the financial gain derived from treaties, such as reparations, indemnities, or other financial contributions. Third is the savings and contributions to the French war effort resulting from the obligation of dependent states to place (parts of) their military forces at the disposal of France, or to pay for the upkeep of French forces stationed in their territory.<sup>12</sup> This francocentric conceptualization has disclosed resource flows that have been overlooked hitherto. Additionally, Branda has developed a methodology for calculating resource extraction that others have found impossible to quantify, such as the savings on the French war effort as a result of forcing dependent states to place their armed forces at the disposal of France.<sup>13</sup> This approach has allowed Branda to argue that Napoleon failed to make his wars self-financing. Branda's research findings are listed in table 1.

**Table 1 Napoleonic War Financing (1803-1814), according to Branda.**

Source	Sum in mln francs	% of war expenditure
Domestic resource mobilization	1,859	43.4
Resource extraction abroad	1,799	42.0
Credit	123	2.9
Deficit	503	11.7
Total expenditure on war	4,284	100

Source: P. Branda, *Le prix de la gloire. Napoléon et l'argent* (Paris 2007) 283-295.

A criticism to Branda's conceptualization is that it implies a rationality and clarity to French resource extraction that was rarely present. In practice the various methods of extracting resources are not so neatly distinguished. For example, when French forces invaded the Nether-

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 314-335.

<sup>13</sup> Branda, *Le prix*, 600-601; P. Branda, 'Did the war pay for the war? An assessment of Napoleon's attempts to make his campaigns self-financing', *Napoleonica. La Revue* 3 (2008-2009) 2-15.

lands in late 1794, they extracted considerable resources through plunder and requisitioning. In the negotiations leading to the Franco-Dutch peace, the Dutch managed to have the sum of requisitions, though capped at *f* 10 million, deducted from the indemnity of *f* 100 million.<sup>14</sup> Thus, Dutch ordinary contributions became intertwined with Dutch extraordinary contributions. Such nuance only becomes visible when resource extraction is studied from the perspective of states on the receiving end of French efforts. A second criticism is that Branda has overlooked some resource flows from beyond the borders of France, such as from the Netherlands. The omission is understandable, as it results from the temporal delineation of his study. Branda defines the Napoleonic era as the years 1803-1814 to coincide with the Napoleonic Wars, and he searches for resource extraction instruments that were introduced in these years. This overlooks resource extraction that was implemented by previous regimes, and which was inherited by the Napoleonic regime. Such is for example the case with the Dutch war subsidy.

## The Treaty of The Hague and the Dutch war subsidy

Secret article 3 of the Treaty of The Hague stated that a French contingent would be taken into the pay of the Batavian Republic, but other than that this was to include salary, clothing, military equipment, and lodgings and that the French contingent would be capped at 25,000 men, the article did not contain any specifics. The details of the agreement were agreed on 27 July 1795.<sup>15</sup> The preamble of the treaty specified the makeup of the French contingent and it set out the conditions of the deployment. Two articles are of particular interest. Article 1 of the preamble stated that France was not permitted to rotate troops into the Batavian Republic. This was added to prevent France from replacing fully equipped and provisioned French troops in the Batavian Republic with deprived troops from elsewhere. Article 3 of the preamble stated that the commander of the French contingent was prohibited from unilaterally transferring (parts of) the French contin-

14 G. Schimmelpenninck, *Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck, en eenige gebeurtenissen van zijnen tijd*, 2 vols (Amsterdam 1845) II: 312-313.

15 Koninklijke Bibliotheek (Netherlands) [NL-KB], Knuttel, 22478, Articles convenus [...] Pour régler le service, l'administratoin, l'habillement, l'équipement et la solde des 25000 hommes de troupes françaises, qui doivent rester dans les Provinces-Unies, conformément au traité de paix et d'alliance fait entre les deux Républiques.

gent to outside the Batavian Republic. This was to ensure that France would not pin the costs of her military campaigns on the Batavian Republic. The treaty proper reiterated the commitment to take the French troops into Batavian pay (article 2). The Batavians were also to provide lodgings for the French contingent (article 4). Ideally, the French troops would be housed in military barracks, but if no such buildings were available, the troops would be quartered in public buildings. The commitment to equip the French troops was elaborated on to mean that the Batavian authorities were to provide the French troops with all that they required: clothing, shoes, weapons, accoutrements, etc. (article 5). Furthermore, the French contingent would receive daily rations of foodstuffs and fodder (article 3) in accordance to French military regulation as per Law of 2 Thermidor, Year 2 (20 July 1794). Finally, hospitals would be set up for wounded or ill French soldiers (article 6).

To ensure a timely payment of the salaries to the French contingent a Committee for the Payment of French Troops was set up. The lodgings of the French contingent, and the erection and running of the French hospitals, was organized by the Batavian Army, but its costs were compensated by this committee too.<sup>16</sup> The provisioning of the French contingent was done by merchants in the Batavian Republic. After a delivery of goods, the merchants were reimbursed by a second newly created body, the Committee for the Delivery of Victuals and Necessities to the French Troops.<sup>17</sup> Both committees made their payments through drawing on the Batavian treasuries. The funds were levied through both committees submitting their expenses to the Committee for the French Alliance, which was a governmental department that replaced the old regime Council of State and which was charged with translating revolutionary principles into policy and maintaining amicable relations with France.<sup>18</sup> The Committee for the French Alliance would then submit a petition for extraordinary defence (a budget) to the Batavian States-General. In the decentralized early Batavian Republic, the States-General repartitioned the budget amongst the provinces of the republic according to a set quota, after which the provinces would levy the revenue through their respective systems of taxation.

<sup>16</sup> NL-NA, 2.01.14.01, Comité te Lande, 162, Instructies voor het Comité tot betaling der Franse troepen in soldij der Bataafse Republiek.

<sup>17</sup> NL-NA, 2.01.14.01, Comité te Lande, 162, Instructies voor het Comité tot bezorging der behoeften en noodwendigheden der Franse troepen in soldij der Bataafse Republiek.

<sup>18</sup> A.M. Elias, 'Van Raad van State, Comité te Lande en Staatsraad (1795-1810)', in: *Raad van State 450 jaar* (The Hague 1981) 113-128.

Within several months, it became clear that the management of the upkeep of the French contingent was too cumbersome. The two committees were merged into a single body, the Committee for the Administration of French Troops, and rather than levying revenue only after being petitioned by the Committee for the French Alliance, the Batavian government resorted to levying revenue in advance at a rate of *f*1,065,000 per month.<sup>19</sup> This arrangement was not entirely satisfactory either. The provinces were slow in levying their quotas, which led to insufficient funds for the Administration and arrears in the maintenance of the French contingent.<sup>20</sup> The French military authorities in the Batavian Republic were quick to exploit this state of affairs by submitting requests for emergency funding. In the spirit of the recently concluded alliance, the Batavians honoured these requests without much deliberation.<sup>21</sup> However, it was not long before rapidly increasing costs forced Batavians to reflect on their approach to funding the French contingent. On 24 May 1796 the Batavian government set up a committee to investigate the functioning of the bodies responsible for the maintenance of the French contingent. The investigative committee faced many challenges, not in the least because the accounts of the various committees were found to be deficient. It took the committee six months to puzzle together a picture of the maintenance of the French contingent based on the flawed administration. The conclusions were worse than expected.

It was discovered that the Administration had frequently financed troops in excess of the stipulated 25,000 men. The most shocking case of overpayment occurred in September 1796, when the contingent numbered 26,000 troops, but the French military authorities submitted a request for payment of 36,000 troops. Not only did the Administration fail to cap payments at 25,000, but it did not even bother to ascertain whether the paper strength of the French contingent corresponded to the actual strength. The salaries were simply paid out. The investigative committee concluded that for a period of six months a total of *f* 4,294,057 guilders was paid out in salaries. If the Administration had abided by the treaty, the salaries should not have exceed-

19 NL-NA, 2.01.14.01, Comité te Lande, 138, *Petitie van f* 1,000,000 tot het versorgen der fransche troupes voor de drie eerstkomende maanden, 16 oktober 1795.

20 NL-NA, 1.01.02, Staten-Generaal, 11085B, 'States-General to the Representatives of Friesland, 29 February 1796'.

21 For example, on 28 December 1795 a request for funding for the defence of the Batavian frontiers was submitted: NL-NA, 2.01.14.01, Comité te Lande, 138, *Petitie van f* 1,300,000 voor de besorging der levensmiddelen voor de Frontierplaatsen, 28 december 1795.

ed *f* 1,842,134. In other words, the Administration had overspent by *f* 2,451,923. The delivery of provisions and equipment to the French contingent was equally chaotic. Most reflective was the case of a payment of *f* 451,780 in deliveries to the French Army of the Sambre and the Meuse, which was not covered by the treaty and which was not even in Batavian Republic at that time. According to the investigative committee the total expenditure on the French contingent for a period of 12 months stood at *f* 20,612,812.<sup>22</sup>

Such costs were unsustainable. To bring order, the Batavian government dismissed incapable staff, reorganized the Administration and placed it under closer governmental oversight.<sup>23</sup> From 21 March 1797, the former Committee for the Administration of the French Troops continued as the Administration for the Victuals, Pay and Necessities of the French Troops in the Pay of the Batavian Republic, under the direction of First Commissioner Jan Willem Janssens.<sup>24</sup> The reorganization was a success. Henceforth, the French contingent could rely on regular payments and provisions.

No sooner had agreement been reached on adequate funding of the French contingent, than a new bone of contention arose. Article 17 of the Treaty of The Hague stated that the French contingent would remain in the Batavian Republic for the duration of the war. However, secret article 3 of the treaty could imply that, after the conclusion of a general peace, the French contingent, or part thereof, could remain in the Batavian Republic. The contradiction of article 17 and secret article 3, and the ambivalent phrasing of secret article 3, ensured that the obligation to maintain a French contingent became a topic of heated negotiations, with the Batavian government hoping to cut expenditure by reducing the size of the contingent, or removing it from Dutch territory altogether, and France hoping to maintain the largest possible contingent at the cost of the Batavian Republic for as long as possible.

When the Treaty of Campo Formio of 17 October 1797 ushered in a continental European peace, a first opportunity to renegotiate the obligation to pay for the upkeep of the French contingent presented itself.

22 NL-KB, Knuttel, 22895, Rapport van de personeele commissie tot onderzoek naar de directie en werkzaamheden van het comité van administratie der Fransche troupes in soldy dezer republic; gedaan aan de Nationale Vergadering, representeerende het volk van Nederland, 25 november 1796.

23 NL-KB, Knuttel, 22895, Extract uit het Register der Decreeten van de Nationale Vergadering representeerende het Volk van Nederland, 2 december 1796; NL-KB, Knuttel, 22895, Extract uit het Register der Decreeten van de Nationale Vergadering representeerende het Volk van Nederland, 14 december 1796.

24 NL-KB, Knuttel, 22895, Extract uit het Register der Decreeten van de Nationale Vergadering representeerende het Volk van Nederland, 21 februari 1797.

The Batavian government charged a special delegation to negotiate a reduction of the French contingent in Paris.<sup>25</sup> The mission failed because it became embroiled in the ever-factious Batavian politics. In addition to renegotiating the French contingent, the delegation hoped to gain French approval for regime change in the Batavian Republic. The official Batavian ambassador to France caught word of this and he orchestrated the delegation's arrest. This staved off regime change in the Batavian Republic, but the opportunity to renegotiate the French contingent was lost too.<sup>26</sup>

France also attempted to renegotiate the upkeep of the French contingent. In April 1798, the French ambassador at The Hague, Charles-François Delacroix, was instructed to open negotiations with the Batavian government. His aims were to maintain the French contingent at a strength of 25,000 men and to secure more advantageous employment conditions.<sup>27</sup> By May 1798 Delacroix had secured a new agreement that allowed France to replace up to one quarter of the French contingent with troops from elsewhere and to deploy up to three quarters of the contingent abroad. Furthermore, the new agreement obliged the Batavian Republic to pay France 1.2 million francs annually to facilitate recruitment for the French contingent in the Batavian Republic.<sup>28</sup> The new agreement thus revised the conditions for the upkeep of the French contingent decidedly in favour of France. It marked a clear break with the Treaty of 27 July 1795 in that France could rotate deprived troops into the Batavian Republic and in that France could deploy up to 18,750 men for operations abroad. Needless to say, the new agreement greatly increased the costs of the upkeep of the French contingent. However, and despite French pressure to put the new arrangement into law swiftly, the Batavians never ratified the agreement. In May 1798, the Batavian regime was desperately trying to keep a lid on domestic political turmoil. In June the situation became untenable, and on 12 June 1798 a coup installed a new caretaker government, the Batavian Interim Executive Authority, which did not deem it appropriate to take such weighty decisions. The new regime that came to power in August 1798, the Batavian Executive Authority, was required to submit the

25 H.T. Colenbrander, *Gedenkstukken der algemeene geschiedenis van Nederland van 1795 tot 1840*, 10 vols (The Hague 1905-1922) II: 717, Instructie voor J. Eykenbroek, 6 februari 1798.

26 Schama, *Patriots and liberators*, 284-342.

27 FR-AD, CPH, 599, 'Delacroix to Talleyrand, 16 June 1798'.

28 NL-NA, 1.01.02, Staten-Generaal, 12597.283, *Traité secret entre la République française et la République Batave* [1 June 1798].

new agreement to the Batavian Representative Body for approval, but it declined to do so because it did not want to be associated with a treaty that was so disadvantageous to the Batavian Republic. The upkeep of the French contingent thus remained on the footing as set out in the Treaty 27 July 1795. The arrangement remained unsatisfactory to both parties, but at least it was a compromise of sorts that worked.<sup>29</sup>

The Anglo-Russian military invasion of North Holland in August 1799 rendered this fragile compromise unsustainable. In order to defeat the invasion, France expanded her military presence in the Batavian Republic.<sup>30</sup> The French authorities were never in doubt that the Batavian authorities should bear the costs of all the French forces defending the Batavian Republic. However, the Batavian government could not afford to fund the inflated French contingent. Batavian public finances were already in a bad state, and the invasion exacerbated affairs by impeding tax collection and by forcing the mobilization of the Batavian armed forces at great cost.<sup>31</sup> Both governments felt they were in the right – the Batavian government because it adhered to treaties that limited its financial contribution and the French government because it believed the extraordinary circumstances of the invasion demanded extraordinary financial sacrifices – and both governments refused to budge. The result was that the French armed forces in the Batavian Republic remained underfunded. In response French officials submitted a steady stream of requests for urgent funding and they resorted to requisitioning on the spot, whereby it was then left to the Batavian authorities to distinguish funding for the French contingent, which they were obliged to pay, from funding for supernumerary French forces, which they were not obliged to pay.<sup>32</sup> The Administration was not up to this task, and the service effectively broke down.

By the beginning of October 1799, the expenditure on French armed forces in the Batavian Republic had spiralled out of control to the extent that once more an investigation into the upkeep of the French contingent was ordered.<sup>33</sup> The review report was drawn up by the Batavian

29 Schama, *Patriots and liberators*, 321-353; C. Rogge, *Geschiedenis der staatsregeling, voor het Bataafsche volk* (Amsterdam 1799) 562-605.

30 J. Zuurbier, et al. (eds.), *De lange herfst van 1799. De Russisch-Engelse invasie in polder en duin* (Castrium 1998).

31 T.J.E.M. Pfeil, *'Tot redding van het Vaderland'. Het primaat van de Nederlandse overheidsfinanciën in de Bataafs-Franse tijd 1795-1810* (Amsterdam 1998) 201-308.

32 NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 696, Geheime Agenda, 20 september 1799; NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 696, Geheime Agenda, 13 november 1799.

33 NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 696, Geheime Agenda, 7 oktober 1799.

Agent for War, Gerrit Jan Pijman, and the Administration's First Commissioner Janssens.<sup>34</sup> It revealed that the French contingent consistently exceeded the stipulated 25,000 men. In the light of the military operations in the Batavian Republic, this was perhaps understandable. More serious was that the investigation revealed that the French contingent was top heavy. The staff of the contingent was larger than necessary and there were too many officers in relation to rank and file. Secondly, the investigation revealed abuses that indicated intentional abuse of the Batavian obligation to maintain a French contingent. Many officers with the French contingent allowed themselves to be paid out at higher ranks than they held, and rather than live frugally, as the Batavian authorities had expected, the staff of the French contingent took up residence in the grandest of buildings and lived lavishly.<sup>35</sup> Thirdly, the investigation revealed that the French officials repeatedly violated the latest treaty on the upkeep of the French contingent, the Treaty of 27 July 1795. Deprived French troops were frequently rotated into the contingent and fully equipped and provisioned troops were deployed for operations abroad without consent of the Batavian authorities. Moreover, by refusing to submit the overviews of the troops present in the Batavian Republic, it seemed as if France tried to cover up their violations of the treaty.<sup>36</sup> The exposé of abuses and violations by the French military authorities reinvigorated the Batavian drive to renegotiate the terms of the upkeep of the French contingent. To this end the report on French abuses and violations was forwarded to Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck, at this time the Batavian Extraordinary Minister Plenipotentiary at Paris, with instructions to secure a reduction of the French contingent to 10,000 troops, of which the staff and composition of the contingent would be pre-approved by Batavian authorities and whose salaries, provisions and lodgings would be provided according to Batavian standards.<sup>37</sup> However, any hope for a quick resolution was dashed by unfolding political events in Paris.

In sum, the Revolutionary strategy of resource extraction can be characterized as imposing harsh peace conditions, including a war sub-

34 NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 658, Geheime minuut-notulen, 21 november 1799.

35 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 680, Extrait de la revue passé à La Haye [...].

36 NL-NA 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 470, 'Janssens to Pijman, 21 November 1799'; NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 658, Geheime minuut-notulen, 21 november 1799.

37 NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 658, Geheime minuut-notulen, 21 november 1799; FR-AD, Correspondance politique, Hollande, Supplément [CPHS], 22, Extract uit het Register der Besluiten van het Uitvoerend Bewind der Bataafsche Republiek, 21 november 1799; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 680, 'Van der Goes to Schimmelpenninck, 21 November 1799'.



Illustration 2 *The Defeated Pay the Fine* (source: Print by James Gillray [possibly, MH] from David Hess, *Hollandia Regenerata* (London, 1795) Rijksmuseum Amsterdam)

side, and maximising resource extraction through allowing officials on the ground to abuse bilateral agreements, in which they were greatly assisted by a disorganized Batavian administration. Only once did the Revolutionaries attempt to renegotiate the Batavian obligation to maintain a French contingent, but this failed in the face of Batavian opposition.

## Napoleon Bonaparte and the Dutch war subsidy

Schimmelpenninck's instructions reached him just after an ambitious young general by the name of Napoleon Bonaparte seized power in France. Malcolm Crook has argued that what sets Bonaparte's coup of Brumaire apart from previous coups was that it was consolidated.<sup>38</sup> Bonaparte's consolidation of power was in no small part due to his ability to mobilize the resources which allowed him to channel domestic disorder towards pursuing military victory abroad. However, upon seizing power Bonaparte found the French treasury empty, with no quick fixes available.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, the First Consul's efforts to mobilize resources were directed at the place where he believed resources could be had at short notice, the Batavian Republic.

On 29 November 1799, Schimmelpenninck was summoned to a meeting with Bonaparte and the recently appointed Minister of Foreign Relations, Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand. At the meeting, the First Consul demanded an immediate voluntary contribution of 6 million francs, in exchange for which he was willing to make a range of diplomatic concessions, including on the obligation to maintain a French contingent.<sup>40</sup> The Batavians were open to negotiation, but the discussion got bogged down as a result of Schimmelpenninck's insistence on an explication of the concessions France was willing to make, which his counterparts were reluctant to do.<sup>41</sup> Bonaparte's first response was to apply pressure to reveal to the Batavians that holding out on an agreement came at a cost too. For instance, since the withdrawal of the Anglo-Russian invasion force from the Batavian Republic, the French contingent in the Batavian Republic had dwindled to about half its stipulated size. On 16 January 1800 the First Consul threatened to reinforce the contingent to its full strength, which would increase the costs of maintenance consid-

38 M. Crook, *Napoleon comes to power. Democracy and dictatorship in revolutionary France, 1795-1804* (Cardiff 1998) 71-95.

39 M.-M.-C. Gaudin, *Mémoires, souvenirs, opinions et écrits du duc de Gaëte*, 2 vols (Paris 1826) I: 134-144; M. le duc de Gaëte [M.-M.-C. Gaudin], *Notice historique sur les finances de France* (Paris 1818) 28-42; R. Stourm, *Les finances du consulat* (Paris 1902) 41-114.

40 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 647-648, 'Schimmelpenninck to Van der Goes, 29 November 1799'.

41 NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 470, 'Van der Goes to Executive Authority, 3 December 1799'; NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 658, Geheime minuut-notulen, 5 december 1799; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 680, Extract uit het Register der Besluiten van het Uitvoerend Bewind der Bataafsche Republiek, 5 december 1799; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 680, 'Van der Goes to Schimmelpenninck, 5 December 1799'; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 648, 'Schimmelpenninck to Van der Goes, 9 December 1799'.

erably.<sup>42</sup> Schimmelpenninck was unpleasantly surprised by the threat, but, assessing that the measure would not alleviate Bonaparte's immediate need for funds, he took it as bluff.<sup>43</sup>

Having concluded that Schimmelpenninck was the primary obstacle to a swift conclusion of an agreement, Bonaparte decided to circumvent the Batavian minister altogether through entrusting the new French ambassador at The Hague, Charles-Louis Huguet de Sémonville, with renegotiating the conditions of the French contingent.<sup>44</sup> Upon his arrival in The Hague on 23 January 1800, Sémonville submitted two notes. In the first note Bonaparte seemingly reached out to the Batavian government by conceding that the supernumerary officers with the French contingent did not have the right to claim pay from the Batavian authorities, and he indicated that Paris would recall them. However, the note went on to point out that without salary payments the supernumerary officers lacked the means to travel back to Paris.<sup>45</sup> If the first note was at least presented as a compromise, the second note was straightforward. The Batavian government was informed that Bonaparte had dispatched troops to reinforce the French contingent to its full strength of 25,000 troops. If the Batavian government wished to change the itinerary of the French troops, it could do so by accepting to pay for the maintenance of a force of 18,000 French troops for a period that would be backdated as well as extended into the future.<sup>46</sup> Neither sum, nor dates were specified, but it was sure to amount to a couple of million guilders.

The French demands and the willingness to escalate matters shocked the Batavians, but at least the cards were on the table. The Batavian response was calculated. The Batavian Executive Authority authorized the payment of the supernumerary French officers.<sup>47</sup> This

42 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 682, 'Authorising Officer of the French contingent in the Batavian Republic to Pijman, 16 January 1800'; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 682, 'Pijman to Executive Authority, 17 January 1800'; NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 213, 'Janssens to Schimmelpenninck, 2 February 1800'.

43 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 692, 'Talleyrand to Schimmelpenninck, 21 January 1800'.

44 NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 213, 'Schimmelpenninck to Van der Goes, 31 December 1799'; NL-NA, 2.21.005.39, Collectie 039 Gogel (1752-1820), 3, 'Van der Goes to Gogel, 6 January 1800'; NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 34, Net registers (verbaal) met korte inhoud van stukken ingekomen bij het Agentschap der Buitenlandse Betrekkingen met de daarop genomen besluiten, 22 januari 1800.

45 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 682, 'Sémonville to Van der Goes, 23 January 1800'.

46 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 682, 'Sémonville to Van der Goes, 25 January 1800'.

47 NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 659, Geheime minuut-notulen, 28 januari 1800; NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 659, Geheime minuut-notulen, 29 januari 1800.

was presented as a concession to France, but in fact it was also self-serving. Sémonville's note had made clear that the supernumerary officers would linger in the Batavian Republic until their discharge was bought off. The longer their discharge was put off, the more it would cost.<sup>48</sup> As for the reinforcements for the French contingent, the Batavian Executive Authority informed Sémonville that they were pleased to receive the additional troops.<sup>49</sup> For one part, the reinforcements were welcome since part of the Batavian army had just been stood down.<sup>50</sup> For another part, the Batavian Executive Authority seems to have wanted to call Bonaparte's bluff. It was known that France needed to reinforce other theatres of war more urgently than the Low Countries, from where the Anglo-Russian forces had withdrawn.<sup>51</sup> The Batavian Executive Authority's response was a gamble, for had Bonaparte indeed reinforced the French contingent, the Batavians would have been hard pressed to levy the required funds.

Fortunately, the gamble paid off. By the second week of February 1800, the reinforcements had not yet been dispatched, and Talleyrand raised the idea of reducing the French contingent with Schimmelpenninck. Now it was Schimmelpenninck's turn to direct his counterpart to The Hague, where the negotiations on those issues should supposedly take place.<sup>52</sup> In a detailed letter to the Batavian Agent for Foreign Affairs Maarten, Baron van der Goes van Dirxland, Talleyrand indicated that France was willing to reduce the French contingent and to make concessions regarding another drawn-out Franco-Batavian dispute – the joint use of the port of Flushing – in exchange for a sum of 50 million francs. The Batavian authorities were stunned by the demand. The Batavian Executive Authority could offer no more than 6 million francs for the reduction of the French contingent and the renunciation of all French claims to Flushing.<sup>53</sup> The disparity between the French demand and the Batavian offer made any compromise impossible. After this latest exchange, no further negotiations were held and the efforts to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement on the French contingent petered out.

48 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 698, 'Janssens to Schimmelpenninck, 2 February 1800'.

49 NL-NA, 2.01.01.04, Uitvoerend Bewind, 659, 'Van der Goes to Sémonville, 30 January 1800'.

50 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 680, Extract uit het Register der Besluiten van het Uitvoerend Bewind der Bataafsche Republiek, 12 december 1799.

51 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 649, 'Schimmelpenninck to Van der Goes, 24 January 1800'; NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 59, Net registers (verbaal) met korte inhoud van stukken ingekomen bij het Agentschap der Buitenlandse Betrekkingen met de daarop genomen besluiten, 4 februari 1800.

52 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 649, 'Schimmelpenninck to Van der Goes, 8 February 1800'.

53 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 682, 'Van der Goes to Schimmelpenninck, 14 February 1800'.

Bonaparte's victory at Marengo on 14 June 1800 had immediate implications for Franco-Batavian relations. The gradual return to a continental peace, culminating in the Treaty of Lunéville (9 February 1801), raised Batavian hopes that the article stipulating the removal of the French contingent could be invoked. Both in Paris and The Hague, Batavian officials raised the issue, but the overtures were ignored.<sup>54</sup> It was not until the summer of 1801, when preliminary peace talks with Britain had started, that the First Consul would consider the continued presence of the French contingent in the Batavian Republic. The issue was broached by General Charles Pierre François Augereau, the commander-in-chief of the French contingent in the Batavian Republic, during a meeting with Pijman. Augereau intimated that a full withdrawal of the French contingent was out of order until a general European peace had been achieved, but that Bonaparte was open to a reduction of the contingent in exchange for financial compensation. At the time, Pijman was only a member of the Batavian Council for American Possessions and Establishments. It was not until he was elected to the Batavian Executive Authority on 4 June 1801 that Pijman had the opportunity to raise the proposal with his peers, who were quick to agree to re-open negotiations.<sup>55</sup>

A first major difference of opinion related to whether France had the right to maintain troops in the Batavian Republic after a general peace. In accordance with earlier treaties, the Batavians insisted on the withdrawal of all French troops. Bonaparte, however, insisted on a continued presence for two years.<sup>56</sup> There was also some haggling over the height of the financial compensation. Augereau proposed a sum of *f* 10 million, plus a *f* 1 million bonus for the rank and file of the French contingent. The Batavians would not go further than *f* 5 million.<sup>57</sup> The issues were hammered out fairly quickly, and by 29 August 1801 a new agree-

54 FR-AD, CPH, 605, 'Van der Goes to Sémonville, 19 March 1801'; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 631, 'Schimmelpenninck to Van der Goes, 21 March 1801'.

55 G.J. Pijman, *Bijdragen tot de voornaamste gebeurtenissen voorgevallen in de Republiek der Vereenigde Nederlanden, sedert het jaar 1778, tot en met het jaar 1807* (Utrecht 1826) 103-106.

56 Napoléon Bonaparte, *Correspondance générale*, 15 vols (Paris 2004-2018) III: 735, 'Napoleon to Augereau, 25 July 1801'; FR-AD, CPHS, 23, 'Pijman to Augereau, 9 August 1801'; FR-AD, CPHS, 23, 'Pijman to Bonaparte, 9 August 1801'; Bonaparte, *Correspondance*, III: 752, 'Napoleon to Talleyrand, 14 August 1801'.

57 Pijman, *Bijdragen*, 108-110; FR-AD, CPHS, 23, 'Augereau to Bonaparte, 11 August 1801'; FR-AD, CPHS, 23, Note en proposition; FR-AD, CPHS, 23, Projet du règlement pour les troupes Françaises qui passent comme auxiliaires dans la Republic Batave; FR-AD, CPHS, 23, 'Talleyrand to Augereau, [20 August 1801]':

ment was reached.<sup>58</sup> The new arrangement was a fair balance of interests. The Batavians secured a reduction of the contingent from 25,000 troops to 10,000 troops and the full withdrawal of the French contingent at a general European peace. France would be paid a lump sum of *f*5 million, and those French troops that left the Batavian Republic would be clothed and equipped at Batavian expense to the sum of *f*1 million.<sup>59</sup>

When the Treaty of Amiens (25 March 1802) heralded in a general European peace, the Batavians hoped to invoke the article obliging France to withdraw its troops from the Batavian Commonwealth, as the Republic was renamed after the coup of 16 October 1801.<sup>60</sup> However, France refused to do so, insisting that the French contingent remain in the Netherlands so that it could be shipped off conveniently from Dutch ports to take possession of Louisiana, which was retroceded to France per Third Treaty of San Ildefonso (1 October 1800).<sup>61</sup> The expedition was scheduled for mid-August.<sup>62</sup> The Batavians accepted this delay, though to fix the date of withdrawal they passed a resolution that terminated the maintenance of the French contingent on 23 September 1802.<sup>63</sup> The deadline for departure came and passed with no consequences for France. Throughout November and December 1802, there were repeated Batavian calls and ultimatums for the withdrawal of the French contingent, but these were met with silence.<sup>64</sup> Then, in January 1803, the French position changed. Talleyrand outright denied France had committed to withdrawing the French contingent from the Netherlands, and he insisted that French troops remain in place until France was satisfied that the Treaty of Amiens was implemented fully.<sup>65</sup> The change in the

58 FR-AD, CPHS, 23, 'Augereau to Talleyrand, 27 August 1801'.

59 NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 428, Convention entre le Gouvernement de la Republique Française et celui de la Republique Batave, 29 août 1801.

60 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 636, 'Schimmelpenninck to Van der Goes, 10 April 1802'; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 686, 'Batavian Council of War to Berthier [Minister of War], 15 April 1802'.

61 Bonaparte, *Correspondance*, III: 959, 'Napoleon to Victor [Commander-in-Chief of the French army in The Netherlands], 27 April 1802'; F.P. Renaut, *La question de la Louisiane, 1796-1806* (Paris, 1918) 49-74; Kerautret, *Documents diplomatiques*, I: 159-162, 176-178.

62 Bonaparte, *Correspondance*, III: 1008, 'Napoleon to Victor, 28 June 1802'.

63 NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 686, Extract uit het Register der Besluiten van het Staatsbewind, 2 augustus 1802; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 686, 'Van der Goes to Schimmelpenninck, 6 August 1802'; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 686, 'Van der Goes to Schimmelpenninck, 10 August 1802'; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 638, 'Schimmelpenninck to Van der Goes, 16 August 1802'; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 660, 'Schimmelpenninck to Talleyrand, 2 September 1802'.

64 NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 215, 'Schimmelpenninck to Van der Goes, 4 November 1802'; FR-AD, 606, 'De Vos van Steenwijk [Ordinary Ambassador at Paris] to Talleyrand, 6 December 1802'.

65 NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 23, 'Sémonville to Van der Goes, 1 January 1803'; NL-NA, 1.02.14, Legatie Frankrijk, 702, 'De Vos van Steenwijk to Van der Goes, 19 January 1803'.

French position was the consequence of increasing tension between the signatories of Amiens, principally Britain and France, which raised the possibility of a renewal of hostilities.<sup>66</sup> In this context France was wise to retain a military presence in such a strategic location as the Low Countries. However, the benefit of hindsight must not be allowed to condone French actions. Bonaparte's correspondence reveals that he never intended to withdraw its troops, whatever the international circumstances.<sup>67</sup>

Having secured a continued military presence in the Batavian Commonwealth, Bonaparte pushed for these troops to be maintained at Batavian expense once again.<sup>68</sup> Recognising that a host of unpaid French soldiers roaming the country would not spell good for the Dutch population, in April 1803, the Batavians conceded to provide lodgings and sustenance for the French contingent.<sup>69</sup> This concession only further encouraged France. By early May 1803, sustained French pressure had enticed the Batavians to agree to paying the salaries of the French contingent too.<sup>70</sup> All that remained now was to translate these arrangements into a formal agreement. Britain's declaration of war on France, on 18 May 1803, provided the final push. On 25 June 1803, France and the Batavian Commonwealth renewed their alliance. Article 1 of the treaty stipulated that the Batavians took into their pay a French contingent of 18,000 troops.<sup>71</sup> The make-up of the contingent and the conditions of employment were hammered out later by Schimmelpenninck, who had returned to Paris as Ordinary Ambassador, and General Jean Gérard Lacuée, State Councillor and President of the Section of War.<sup>72</sup> The treaty remained the final arrangement until the Netherlands was relieved of this obligation in July 1806, when Louis Bonaparte ascended the throne of Holland. Napoleon did attempt to seize upon the poor performance of the Dutch armed forces during the British invasion of

66 P.W. Schroeder, *The transformation of European politics 1763-1848* (Oxford 1994) 231-245; A.W. Ward and G.P. Gooch (eds.), *The Cambridge history of British foreign policy 1783-1919*, 3 vols (Cambridge 1922-1923) I: 309-327.

67 Bonaparte, *Correspondance*, III: 785-786, 'Napoleon to Talleyrand, 19 September 1801'.

68 NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 234, 'Sémonville to Van der Goes, 28 March 1803'; NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 234, 'Sémonville to Van der Goes, 29 March 1803'.

69 NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 53, Minuut geheime notulen van het Staatsbewind, 18 april 1801.

70 NL-NA, 2.01.01.05, Staatsbewind 445, 'State Authority to Legislative Body, 9 May 1803'.

71 NL-NA, 2.21.005.03, Collectie 030 Canneman 1930 (1795-1815), 1, Conventie van Parijs, 25 juni 1803.

72 *Convention entre les Gouvernements Français et Batave pour régler l'entretien des troupes Françaises en Batavie* (S.l. 1803).

Walcheren in 1809, to force his brother into signing a treaty to take a French contingent of 6,000 troops into Dutch pay.<sup>73</sup> But because several months later the Kingdom of Holland was annexed to the Empire, the treaty remained a dead letter.

In assessing the Napoleonic strategy for extracting resources from the Netherlands, one must emphasize that when Napoleon seized power, the Batavian Republic was formally allied to France. Thus, Napoleon did not have the opportunity to introduce new resource extraction instruments. The opportunity for extracting resources was therefore limited to exploiting existing treaties. Fortunately, the treaties that obliged the Batavians to maintain a French contingent were ill-defined and open to interpretation. In the negotiations that followed, the Napoleonic regime maintained the initiative through dictating when and where negotiations took place and alternating between isolating the negotiations and merging them with broader diplomatic affairs. The willingness to escalate disagreement and the calculated application of diplomatic and military pressure meant that the Napoleonic regime usually emerged triumphant. Ultimately, the Napoleonic regime succeeded in maintaining a French contingent in the Netherlands beyond its legal date, whilst having the Batavians to pay for the privilege. Perhaps, then, a fair assessment is to say that if the Revolutionaries played a strong hand admirably, Napoleon played a weak hand extremely well.

## Quantifying the Dutch war subsidy

The historiographical representation of the Dutch war subsidy is mixed. Godefroi estimates the cost of the upkeep of French forces at *f* 7.5 million per year.<sup>74</sup> Kubben proposes an average of *f* 10 million per annum.<sup>75</sup> Crouzet gives an estimate of *f* 13 million for the first year, with the cost of upkeep thereafter declining to *f* 10 million annually.<sup>76</sup> Schama and White set the cost at *f* 10-12 million per annum.<sup>77</sup> The two foremost authorities in Dutch fiscal history, Fritschy and Pfeil, estimate the cost of the upkeep for the French contingent at approximately *f* 12 million

73 *Convention pour l'administration de corps de 6,000 hommes de troupes Françaises, à payer par la Hollande* (S.l. 1810).

74 L.S. Godefroi, *De eerste fase van de financiële unificatie van Nederland (1796-1801)* (Rotterdam 1986) 44.

75 Kubben, *Regeneration and hegemony*, 286.

76 Crouzet, 'Aspects financiers', 53.

77 Schama, *Patriots and liberators*, 389.

annually.<sup>78</sup> The lack of historiographical consensus is of course problematic, though a qualified argument could be made for setting the annual costs at *f* 10-12 million. However, whilst such a figure may suffice to highlight factors contributing to the ongoing fiscal crisis in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Netherlands, or to shed a light on the tensed Franco-Batavian relations, it is inadequate for quantifying the resources extracted by France because it lacks substantiation and implies that the cost of the French contingent remained stable. An examination of Dutch archival sources is needed to provide an accurate picture of the costs of the Dutch war subsidy.

The Batavian Republic was obliged to pay for a French contingent from the signing of the Treaty of The Hague on 16 May 1795 until the revoking of the obligation on 31 July 1806, with accounts definitively closed on 24 August 1807. These eleven years and 76 days can be divided into four periods. First, the period from the signing of the Treaty of The Hague on 16 May 1795 to the eve of the reorganization of the Administration for the French contingent, 20 March 1797. Second, the period from 21 March 1797 to the eve of the signing of the treaty on the reduction of the French contingent of 29 August 1801. Third, the period from 29 August 1801 to the eve of the signing of the third treaty on the upkeep of the contingent on 1 November 1803. Fourth, the period from 1 November 1803 to the withdrawal of the French contingent.

Due to a lack of accounts of the committees responsible for maintaining the French contingent until the reorganization of 21 March 1797, it is difficult to establish with precision the cost of the upkeep of the French contingent for the first period. However, some circumstantial evidence exists. As mentioned, the investigative committee concluded that the upkeep of the French contingent stood at *f* 20,612,812 for a period of 12 months, or approximately *f* 1.7 million per month. Were this figure applied to the first 22 months, the upkeep would amount to *f* 37.79 million. Schimmelpenninck's memoirs give a sum of *f* 20,811,467 from the signing of the first contract on 27 July 1795 to 21 March 1797.<sup>79</sup> If Schimmelpenninck's figure were applied to the period from 16 May 1795 to 20 March 1797, the upkeep of the French con-

78 W. Fritschy, 'De "Generale Beleenbank" en de financiële problemen in de beginjaren van de Bataafse Republiek' in: *Jaarboek voor de Geschiedenis van Bedrijf en Techniek* 3 (1986) 112; Pfeil, *Tot redding*, 129; T.J.E.M. Pfeil, 'Het Nederlandse bezuinigingsbeleid in de Bataafs-Franse tijd (1795-1810): illusie en werkelijkheid', in: W. Fritschy, J.K.T. Postma and J. Roelevink (eds.), *Doel en middel. Aspecten van financieel overheidsbeleid in de Nederlanden van de zestiende eeuw tot heden* (Amsterdam 1995) 134.

79 Schimmelpenninck, *Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck*, II: 312-313.

tingent would have cost *f* 22.89 million. It is difficult to weigh off these two authoritative sources. What supports Schimmelpenninck's figure is that it more or less corresponds to the initial estimate of the costs of the upkeep of the French contingent by the Committee for the French Alliance, which was *f* 1,065,000 per month, and that the Batavian government estimated a comparable sum for the upkeep of the Batavian army of similar establishment.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, a sum of approximately *f* 12 million annually would not necessarily be incompatible with the findings of the investigative committee. In response to the excessive expenditure on the French contingent in the first year, the investigative committee advised to deduct overpaid amounts from future payments.<sup>81</sup> It is unclear if the Batavian government succeeded in this, but it is not unlikely. Fortunately, from the reorganization of the Administration in March 1797 the accounts of the upkeep of the French contingent were kept diligently and reviewed regularly. An overview of the costs of the French contingent is given below. From table 2 it can be seen that, after the chaotic first period, the per annum costs of the French contingent dropped to significantly below the historiographical consensus of *f* 10-12 million per annum. Nevertheless, the cost of the French contingent was still considerable. Table 3 gives the expenditure on the French contingent as a percentage of Dutch ordinary fiscal revenue. The large slice of Dutch ordinary fiscal revenue earmarked for maintaining a French contingent may go some way substantiating the tensed relations and difficult negotiations between the reluctant allies from the conquest of the Dutch Republic in 1795 to Louis Bonaparte ascension to the Dutch throne in 1806.

In total a sum of *f* 95,976,461 was transferred to France under the obligation to maintain a French contingent. The relevance of these figures for the history of French war financing is twofold. First, they shed a new light on the perceived success of French resource extraction instruments. In the historiography there is ample recognition of the importance and success of the *f* 100 million indemnity that France imposed on the Dutch at the Treaty of The Hague.<sup>82</sup> However, what is less

80 NL-NA, 2.01.14.01, Comité te Lande, 138, Calculatie van kosten gerequireerd werdende tot betaaling en onderhoud der Nationale Armée [...], 14 maart 1796.

81 NL-KB, Knuttel, 22895, Rapport van de personeele commissie tot onderzoek naar de directie en werkzaamheden van het comité van administratie der Fransche troupes in soldy dezer republicq; gedaan aan de Nationale Vergadering, representeerende het volk van Nederland, 25 november 1796.

82 Crouzet, 'Aspects financiers', 52-53; Palmer, *The age of democratic revolution*, II: 186-187; Blanning, *The French revolutionary wars*, 137; Schama, *Patriots and liberators*, 207-210; Kubben, *Regeneration and hegemony*, 197.

**Table 2 Cost of the French contingent per contract, 1795-1806 (in guilders f).**

	Cost	Per annum cost
Contract 1: 16/05/1795-20/03/1797	22,892,610	12,378,967
Contract 2: 21/03/1797-28/08/1801	35,869,116	8,071,657
Contract 3: 29/08/1801-31/10/1803	15,550,856	7,148,693
Contract 4: 01/11/1803-31/07/1806	21,663,879	7,875,813
Total		95,976,461

Sources: NL-NA, 2.01.14.03, *First Commissioner on the French forces in the Batavian Republic Service, 156-193, Accounts of the Commissariat for the French troops in the payment of soldiers of the Batavian Republic [...]*; G. Schimmelpenninck, Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck, en eenige gebeurtenissen van zijnen tijd, 2 vols (*Amsterdam 1845*) II: 312-313.

**Table 3 Cost of the French contingent and Dutch ordinary fiscal revenue, 1795-1806.**

Year	Batavian ordinary fiscal revenue (f)	Per annum cost of French contingent (f)	Expenditure on French contingent as % of ordinary fiscal revenue
1795	32,800,000	7,630,869	23.3
1796	?	12,486,876	?
1797	?	9,818,535	?
1798	25,600,000	9,507,254	37.1
1799	33,800,000	8,669,958	25.7
1800	33,800,000	7,425,307	22.0
1801	33,800,000	5,727,253	16.9
1802	33,800,000	8,250,722	24.4
1803	35,000,000	6,041,886	17.3
1804	35,000,000	8,354,893	23.9
1805	35,000,000	7,351,856	21.0
1806	42,700,000	4,711,049	11.0

Sources: Dutch ordinary fiscal revenue: due to the opaque nature of Dutch public finance, it is difficult to piece together a picture of Dutch fiscal revenue. No estimates exist for 1796 and 1797. The remaining figures have been drawn from: T.J.E.M. Pfeil, 'Tot Redding van het Vaderland'. Het primaat van de Nederlandse overheidsfinanciën in de Bataafs-Franse tijd 1795-1810 (*Amsterdam 1998*) 122, 209, who relies on estimates by Alexander Gogel. Per annum cost of the French contingent: Sources: NL-NA, 2.01.14.03, *First Commissioner on the French forces in service of the Batavian Republic, 156-193, Accounts of the Commissariat for the French troops in the payment of soldiers of the Batavian Republic [...]*; G. Schimmelpenninck, Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck, en eenige gebeurtenissen van zijnen tijd, 2 vols (*Amsterdam 1845*) II: 312-313.

well known is that France only received *f*75 million of this indemnity, because half of the funds were transferred in newly-created paper currencies that could only be liquidated at a considerable discount. Thus, as this research shows, as an instrument of resource extraction the obligation to pay for the upkeep of a French contingent was more successful than the indemnity.<sup>83</sup>

However, the figures do not quite come into their significance until they are applied to Branda's research on Napoleonic war financing. As mentioned, Branda has defined the Napoleonic era as the years 1803-1814, to coincide with the Napoleonic Wars. However, this temporal delineation overlooks resource extraction instruments that were put in place before Napoleon's rise to power but which he inherited. As this article shows, the Napoleonic regime was well aware of the resource instruments in place and it was quick to exploit them ruthlessly. Thus, any study of Napoleonic resource extraction and war financing must include these resource flows. Table 4 corrects for this faulty temporal delineation of the Napoleonic era and divides the Dutch war subsidy according to the date on which Napoleon seized power, 9 November 1799. Table 5 applies these findings to Branda's research. Whilst this pilot study does not suffice to fully close the deficit in Napoleonic war financing, it does allow for a significant reconsideration of the success of Napoleonic resource extraction, and by extension Napoleon's famed ability to make war pay for war.

**Table 4 Resources extracted by revolutionary and Napoleonic France under the Dutch obligation to maintain a French contingent, 1795-1806.**

	Sum in <i>f</i>	Sum in francs
Revolutionary Era: 16/05/1795-08/11/1799	46,534,519	105,633,358
Napoleonic Era: 09/11/1799-31/07/1806	49,441,942	112,233,208
Total	95,976,461	217,866,566

Sources: NL-NA, 2.01.14.03, *First Commissioner on the French forces in the service of the Batavian Republic Service, 156-193, Accounts of the Commissariat for the French troops in the payment of soldiers of the Batavian Republic [...]*; G. Schimmelpenninck, Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck, *en eenige gebeurtenissen van zijnen tijd, 2 vols (Amsterdam 1845) II: 312-313. Exchange rate: 2.27 francs per guilder, as per estimate in F. Crouzet, 'Aspects financiers de la relation franco-batave,' in: A. Jourdan and J. Leerssen (eds.), Remous révolutionnaires. République batave, armée française (Amsterdam 1996) 52.*

83 J.B. Manger, *Recherches sur les relations économiques entre la France et la Hollande pendant la Révolution Française (1785-1795)* (Paris 1923) 109-142.

**Table 5 Napoleonic War Financing (1803-1814), according to Hay.**

Source	Branda Hypothesis		Hay Amendments	
	mln francs	% of war exp.	mln francs	% of war exp.
Domestic resource mobilization	1,859	43.4	1,859	43.4
Resource extraction abroad	1,799	42.0	1,911	44.6
Credit	123	2.9	123	2.9
Deficit	503	11.7	391	9.1
Total expenditure on war	4,284	100	4,284	100

Source: P. Branda, *Le prix de la gloire. Napoléon et l'argent (Paris 2007) 283-295.*

## Conclusion

This article shows that the current scholarship underestimates the success of Napoleonic war financing because it adheres to a francocentric conceptualization of French resource extraction in the years 1803-1814. Through adopting the perspective of a state on the receiving end of French resource extraction and expanding the temporal delineation to include the early years of Napoleonic resource extraction, this study has shown that Napoleonic war financing was more successful than hitherto believed. Through power play, bluff and bluster, the Napoleonic regime exploited the resource extraction instruments that had been introduced by previous regimes. The case of the Dutch war subsidy shows that, through these means, Napoleon extracted more than 112 million francs from the Netherlands. These resources have not been included in current assessments of the success of Napoleonic war financing.

Whilst this pilot study does not suffice to contest recent research conclusions, it is important to emphasize that but one instrument of French resource extraction in the Netherlands has been explored. The Napoleonic regime extracted additional resources through other means, such as the continued illegal sale and exploitation of the domains of alien sovereigns, ecclesiastical orders, and individuals in the Batavian Republic that had formally been transferred to Batavian ownership per

Treaty of The Hague of 1795, the extraction of resources through the manipulation of the terms of the joint use of the Dutch port of Flushing, and the loans raised in the Netherlands by King Louis on behalf of his brother's war effort.<sup>84</sup> It may well prove that resources extracted through such means would go far to further close the deficit in Napoleonic war financing. Moreover, the argument, that the Napoleonic regime continued to extract resources in the Netherlands through the strategies and instruments introduced by previous regimes, may well apply to other states that followed a trajectory from occupation to integration into the French Empire similar to the Netherlands. It is hoped that this study opens similar lines of inquiry for other parts of Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe so that a fuller understanding of French resource extraction and war financing in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic age may be gained, and that historians may once and for all pass verdict on the persistent myth of Napoleon making war pay for war.

## About the author

Dr Mark Edward Hay read history in Amsterdam, Leiden, Paris and Oxford before taking up an AHRC-funded doctorate in history from King's College London. His doctoral research, titled *Calculated Risk. Collaboration and Resistance in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Netherlands, 1780-1806*, explored Dutch financial diplomacy in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic era. Subsequently, Mark took up the Economic History Society Power Research Fellowship at the University of London to explore the role of female financiers in the consolidation and national re-orientation of the Amsterdam capital market, 1810-1820. He now teaches economic and international history at the Erasmus University Rotterdam.

E-mail: hay@eshcc.eur.nl

84 Domains: NL-NA, 2.01.08, Buitenlandse Zaken, 423, Verdrag tussen de Franse en de Bataafse Republiek, gesloten 5 jan 1800 te Parijs [...]; FR-AD, CPHS, 23, Convention du 15 nivose an VIII; Flushing: H.J.J. Bijleveld, *Verhandeling over de geschillen met Frankrijk, betreffende Vlissingen, sedert 1795 tot op den afstand dier vesting in 1807* (Middelburg 1865) 128-182; King Louis' loans: Pfeil, *Tot redding*, 473-490.

