Reasoning with Turbulence: A Quantitative Analysis of Extraordinary Times in the Digitised Resolutions of the Dutch States-General, 1705-1796

Femke Gordijn

Femke Gordijn finished her research masters in history at Leiden University in early 2022 and was subsequently employed at the Huygens Institute, where she worked as a crowdsourcing and communication coordinator for the REPUBLIC project. She is currently a PhD candidate in legal history at Tilburg University. In the CaPANES project, she researches late medieval legal concepts of economic sovereignty in Bruges and Southampton, c. 1400-1520.

Abstract

In the historiography on the relation between early modern crisis events and the perception of time, autobiographical sources have been studied extensively. Times of crisis were a major reason why people began documenting unfolding events, often with the goal of remembering and learning from what happened. Administrative sources, however, have been largely neglected in this line of research. This article explores how expressions of extraordinary time conditions were articulated in the digitised resolutions of the Dutch States-General between 1705 and 1796. Using a combination of text mining methods and close-reading, this essay establishes a correlation between increases in temporal references in the resolutions and moments of crisis that broke with the ordinary throughout the eighteenth century. Furthermore, the article examines who used such references, when they used them, and what goals they had while doing so. As such, this administrative source corpus forces us to reconsider the different functions that writing about extraordinary time conditions could have.

Keywords: States-general, digital history, text mining, experience of crisis, time perception

Reasoning with Turbulence: A Quantitative Analysis of Extraordinary Times in the Digitised Resolutions of the Dutch States-General, 1705-1796

Femke Gordijn

On 18 July 1740, the Dutch Republic stood at the eve of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748). On this day, the States-General discussed the funding of twelve warships. The provinces of Zeeland, Utrecht, and Groningen were criticised for their slow decision-making process. The precarious time conditions in the Dutch Republic were noted as the reason why the funding of equipment could no longer be delayed:

> This way of treating affairs is incompatible with serving the country, especially in matters of such great weight and consequence, as those that are the subject of the present deliberation, which concern no less than the common security and the preservation of the beloved fatherland against rising misfortunes, which for carefulness's sake can be delayed no longer, *in such perilous a conjuncture of times as the present*, from which troubles and inconveniences might arise, and because of which the state might fall into the utmost danger and perplexity, so that no one who has any knowledge of the state of affairs, should not be convinced that a larger militia is needed, in order to have some peace of mind.[1]

---

1 The Hague, Nationaal Archief (hereafter NA)/Huygens_REPUBLIC, States-General (hereafter SG) 3795, Resolution 18 July 1740: 'Dat deese maniere van behandelinge met den dienst van het Land geensins overeen te brengen is, insonderheyd in zaacken van zoo grooten gewight en gevolgh, als die dewelcke het onderwerp van de tegenwoordige deliberatien maaken, die niet minder betreffen als de gemeense securiteyt, en de conservatie van het lieve Vaderland, tegen opkoomende swaarigheeden, die de voorsightigheyd niet toelaats als verre af zynde te stellen, in een soo haggelijcke conjuncture van tyden als de tegenwoordige, waar uyt troubles en ongemacken souden kunnen ontstaan, daar door den Staat in het uyterste gevaar ende in de uyterste perplexiteyt zoude kunnen vervallen, dat niemand, die eenige kennisse heeft van den toestand van zaacken, niet geconvinceert moet weesen, dat een meerder Militie van nooden is, om eenighsins in gerustheyd te kunnen weesen.' Emphasis added; unless otherwise noted, all translations are the author's. All references to the resolutions are to the original inventory numbers of the National Archives, but 'Huygens_REPUBLIC' was added to signify that these resolutions were queried through the REPUBLIC dataset. This article was written in the context of the REPUBLIC project (Resolutions Published in a Computational Environment), funded by the Dutch Research Council (NWO). I would like to thank the REPUBLIC team – especially Joris Oddens, Rik Hoekstra, Ronald Sluijter, Marijn Koolen, Misja Wessels, and Jirsi Reinders – for the opportunity to write this article and their feedback throughout the process. I would also like to thank the members of the research group Political Culture and History at the Huygens Institute, the organizers and attendants of the 2022 joint conference of the werkgroepen Zeventiende Eeuw and Achttiende Eeuw, the editorial board of *EMLC*, and the anonymous reviewers for reading and commenting on earlier drafts and versions of this article.

The States-General regularly reached similar decisions during times of crisis: wars, political upheaval, and financial setbacks were all matters that the deputies decided upon.[2]

Episodes of political, social, and economic unrest have played an important role in the historiography of early modern time perception, as scholars continue to debate how early modern people grasped and experienced episodes of crisis. Due to the influential work of Reinhart Koselleck, the second part of the eighteenth century – and the revolutionary era around 1800 in particular – have received much attention. Koselleck argued that people were so impressed by the momentous events of this period that it drastically changed their understanding of time, which, in turn, increased the distance that people felt lay between the past, present, and future. This transformed people's temporal perception from a pre-modern cyclical conception to a linear and modern one.[3] More recently, however, scholars of the Dutch Republic have identified earlier moments of rupture, arguing that throughout the early modern period, emergencies and crisis led people to perceive a similar break in time. Koselleck's statements regarding a sharp distinction between pre-modern and modern conceptions of time have also been challenged.[4]

Scholars researching this topic have mostly used autobiographical sources, such as memoirs, diaries, and chronicles. For the eighteenth century, such documents reveal rich private experiences, illuminating the lifetimes of their respective authors.[5] However, previous research also established a connection between the production of such documents and the sense of living in extraordinary times that went beyond the personal. Years of crisis in the Dutch Republic seem to have corresponded with an increased production of diaries and chronicles, revealing how developments upset people's lives.[6] Egodocuments, in this sense, functioned to order the past, present, and future, and an important reason behind their production was to remember and document extraordinary events, in order to learn important lessons.[7] It is exactly because research on early modern time perception and its relation to the experience of crisis has been heavily focused on egodocuments, that this essay explores an entirely different set of sources. Considering the important role of political institutions during periods of crisis, my corpus consists of the resolutions of the Dutch States-General.

Throughout its roughly two-hundred-year existence, the deputies of the States-General deliberated six times a week. At every meeting the decisions were recorded by clerks. As a result, the resolutions were continuously documented in more or less the same manner throughout the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, the latter of which is the period under consideration here. Although political institutions such as the States-General were important during early modern episodes of crisis, the resolutions also reflect more

---

2 Thomassen, *Instrumenten van de macht*, 213.
3 Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft*. For Koselleck's thesis applied to the Dutch Republic, see: Baggerman, Dekker, and Mascuch, 'Introduction'; Van Sas, *De Metamorfose van Nederland*, 157-158.
4 Lauret, *Regentenwerk*, 12-13; Oddens, 'The experience of state formation', 14-15; Pollmann, *Memory in Early Modern Europe*, 10; Deseure and Pollmann, 'The experience of rupture', 328-329.
5 Baggerman, Dekker, and Mascuch, 'Introduction', 3-4.
6 Dekker and Ronnau-Bradbeer, 'Egodocuments in the Netherlands', 258; Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', 241-242; Lassche, Kostkan, and Nielbo, 'Chronicling Crises', 215-230.
7 Baggerman, Dekker, and Mascuch, 'Introduction', 5; Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', 241.

peaceful times. As such, the continuity of the resolutions allows for a systematic and diachronic comparison of time perception and an examination of whether, during crises, people actually expressed a heightened experience of extraordinary conditions as opposed to more peaceful periods. In this article, an expression of extraordinary time is when a textual reference comes with a negative quality attached in such a way that it shows that the writer considered the times unusual. Episodes of crisis refer to periods in the Dutch Republic associated with political, economic, or societal unrest.

The resolutions were the result of processes of argumentation in the context of political decision-making in which a plethora of voices, which regularly conflicted with one another, attempted to get something done. Whereas the deputies of the States-General represented the interests of their provinces, the assembly in The Hague was regularly addressed by international actors, diplomats, local authorities, and individuals from all layers of society, all of whom were pushing their own agenda.[8] Although the resolutions were composed by the *griffier* (clerk), the arguments of those who interacted with the assembly were often included in the resolutions and exact copies of their requests were equally regularly attached.[9] This specific political context raises the question of what function was served through references to extraordinary times. This essay argues that expressions of extraordinary times in the resolutions, and their relation to periods of crisis, leads to insights that force us to reconsider their function in egodocuments, too.

Due to the generally pragmatic tone of administrative documents and the huge number of resolutions by the States-General – the deputies reached about one million decisions in total – it has long been unfeasible to study rather abstract concepts such as time perception in this corpus. This is because such phenomena cannot immediately be found by using existing index terms or by linking specific dates or events to the decisions reached. Systematically tracing and studying concepts that indicate experiences of living in extraordinary times in the resolutions over the course of the entire eighteenth century was practically unachievable.

This situation has now changed. Recent efforts by the REPUBLIC project, which aims to digitise and enrich all the resolutions of the Dutch States-General in a full-text format, as well as the advancement of digital research methods for the humanities, now enable historians to detect and trace abstract phenomena such as time perception in large source corpora.[10] The results of this article will demonstrate the application of concepts of time for almost a century, using text mining techniques that systematically trace such terms in combination with additional qualitative methods. Although inevitably less fine-grained than a close reading of the resolutions, a quantitative approach allows for an extension of the scope of previous work on this topic, which was often based on specific case studies. In a

8   Thomassen, *Instrumenten van de macht*, 176.
9   This observation is based on a sample of resolutions and petitions, but recent work on petitions has also demonstrated this was common practice in early modern Europe: Israeli, 'Petition and response', 25.
10 For more information on REPUBLIC, see https://republic.huygens.knaw.nl (Accessed on 23 November 2023). See also Koolen et al., 'Modelling Resolutions'; Sluijter et al., 'Opening the Gates to the Dutch Republic'; Koolen and Hoekstra, 'Detecting Formulaic Language'.

recent paper Joris van Eijnatten and Pim Huijnen have demonstrated the feasibility of text mining methods for historical studies on time perception. By applying these techniques to modern parliamentary debates, they exposed the changing nature of conceptualisations of 'the future'.[11] This article thus positions itself at the intersection of ongoing historiographical and theoretical debates regarding the early modern perception of time, the field of conceptual history, and that of digital history. By adopting this methodological framework, moreover, I also wish to suggest how the results of the REPUBLIC project might be used for future historical research.

The Digitised Resolutions of the States-General as a Dataset

The dataset underlying this article includes the ordinary (*ordinaris*) and printed resolutions of the Dutch States-General issued between 1705 and 1796. This timeframe was selected because from 1705 onwards the public resolutions were continuously printed, while in 1796 the early modern States-General ceased to exist. Sensitive topics were generally recorded in volumes of secret resolutions, but because they were handwritten, HTR software is required – this proved too time-consuming for the present study. The same applies to the decisions taken over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The resolutions used for this article were digitised using the OCR software Tesseract. The results enable researchers to query the decisions in full-text format. Although the OCR results are not flawless, they exceed the threshold for practical usability.[12]

The dataset used consists of 311,886 resolutions. This number may deviate slightly from the final number proposed by the REPUBLIC project, as algorithms are still being improved and there are still small variations in resolution detection. Fig. 1 illustrates the distribution of the resolutions across time. There was a clear peak in the number of printed decisions during the first decade of the eighteenth century, but after 1711 the average number of resolutions rapidly decreased. The peak during the early 1700s was possibly related to an excessive number of petitions for passports during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1713).[13] Another explanation for the decline in the number of resolutions is that committees in which deputies occupied themselves with a specific topic outside of the regular assembly became increasingly important over the course of the eighteenth century. However, the findings of such committees were also frequently discussed in the wider assembly. It thus remains difficult to provide a definite answer as to why the number of resolutions decreased.[14]

Towards the end of the century, especially in 1781 and 1795, the number of resolutions peaked again. Both years correspond to moments of crisis in the Dutch Republic. In 1781, the Dutch faced tremendous losses in the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780-1784), while in

---

11 Van Eijnatten and Huijnen, 'Something Happened to the Future'.
12 For information about the digitisation process, see Koolen et al., 'Modeling Resolutions'.
13 Thomassen, *Instrumenten van de macht*, 76.
14 Thomassen, *Instrumenten van de macht*, 183.

Fig. 1 *Number of printed resolutions of the States-General by year, 1705-1796.*
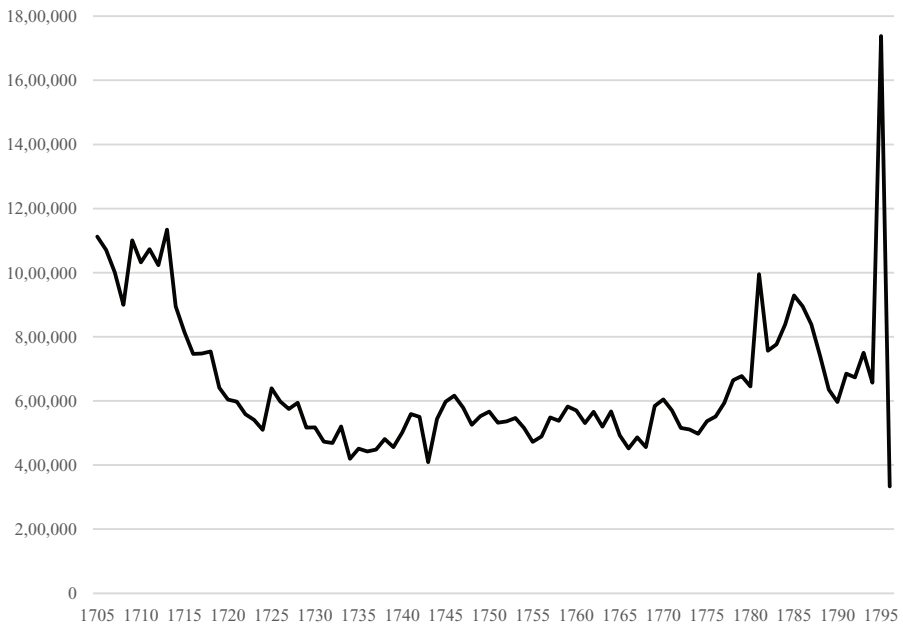

Fig. 2 *Number of tokens in the printed resolutions of the States-General by year, 1705-1796.*

1795 revolutionaries took over the government of the States-General, marking the beginning of the Batavian Republic. Although the number of resolutions might have increased because of such turning points, some caution is needed because alternative explanations have not yet been explored.

While the distribution of the number of resolutions provides insight into the dataset, the number of tokens must also be considered. Tokens refer to the occurrences of linguistic units, or in this case, the number of words per year. A large number of resolutions in a year does not necessarily correspond to more tokens, because the deputies deliberated upon different proposition types with varying contents and lengths. *Missiven* (letters) often contained reports written by government officials, organizations, and diplomats; ordinary people and local governments frequently addressed their wishes in *requesten* (petitions). Other proposition types were composed by the deputies themselves, such as *rapporten* (reports) or *voordrachten* (speeches).[15] Fig. 2 shows the number of tokens in the dataset. While this graph roughly follows the pattern in fig. 1, the number of tokens produced in the early 1700s is relatively low when compared to later in the century. This indicates that many resolutions during the first decade were relatively short.

Detecting Arguments with References to Extraordinary Times

The first step to detect resolutions in which people referred to extraordinary times was to identify relevant keywords. As the Dutch language has changed considerably since the early modern period, querying the data with modern concepts of time was undesirable. An iterative approach was adopted and different concepts and their contexts were initially extracted to explore relevant terms for the experience of time. A pilot study executed within the REPUBLIC project, which used text mining techniques to extract references to time in the resolutions, demonstrated that during the 1672 Year of Disaster, references to extraordinary times occurred regularly.[16] During this year, people increasingly referred to the times they experienced using extraordinary conditional terms when compared to those seen in sample years during the eighteenth century. The deputies and those who addressed the States-General recurrently referred to the times as troubled (*troubele*), sad (*droevige*), or perplexed (*perplexe*).

The first approach for my research, which addresses the entire eighteenth century, was to use keyword lists of adjectives and terms related to extraordinary times and extract the resolutions that contained at least two terms of these lists within frames of twenty-two tokens. Due to the large number of possible combinations, this yielded an enormous dataset with ambiguous results. Consequently, it was decided to simplify the lists of keywords to words related to the term *tijd* (time).[17] The adjectives of the initial experiment were also removed. The query for the contexts of *tijd* and variants again yielded an enormous

---

15 For a description on the different documents in the resolutions, see: Thomassen, *Instrumenten van de macht*, 807-820.

16 This pilot project was executed by Misja van Wessels, who was an intern for the REPUBLIC project in 2022.

17 These words are: *tijd, tijde, tijden, tijds, tijdt, tijdts, tijts, tyd, tyde, tyden, tyds, tydts, tydt.*

Tab. 1 *The thirty most common context words of tyden/tijden.*[18]

1. allen (547)	11. wanneer (72)	21. saacken (35)
2. alle (457)	12. conjuncturen (65)	22. voorgaande (35)
3. voorige (418)	13. saaken (58)	23. zaaken (34)
4. oude (406)	14. vroeger (55)	24. oorlogh (33)
5. omstandigheeden (176)	15. constitutie (53)	25. duure (29)
6. wylen (124)	16. supplianten (52)	26. saecken (29)
7. vroegere (104)	17. immemoriaale (48)	27. oorlog (28)
8. tegenwoordige (96)	18. conjuncture (44)	28. slechte (28)
9. seedert (93)	19. altoos (38)	29. laatste (27)
10. immemoriale (85)	20. nu (37)	30. onheuglyke (26)

number of results (almost 50,000) and manual evaluation was undesirable. A different approach could be to trace references to extraordinary times by examining the contexts of the terms with the aid of n-grams, but this was equally unfeasible since it is as of yet impossible to automatically extract which specific actors used references to extraordinary times, as these actors can, in most cases, not be deduced from collocations alone. Additionally, the majority of the hits of the *tijd* query were related to practical matters, such as delayed decisions or passports that the States-General issued for certain amounts of time. These results were not useful for revealing patterns regarding references to extraordinary times.

However, the extracted term *tyden* (times), and its spelling variant *tijden*, did meet the prerequisites for this study. This query resulted in 4150 hits dispersed over 3259 resolutions. Manual evaluation of these hits was more realistic, as this number roughly corresponds to the average number of resolutions that the States-General passed in a year. The term also occurred throughout the entire century and appeared not to have been subject to developments in early modern language, and so was considered a stable enough concept. The context of the word *tyden* proved to be intertwined with the cultural meaning of time. To demonstrate this, the most common context words for the concepts *tyden/tijden* are shown in tab. 1.[19]

Not surprisingly, many terms displayed in tab. 1 refer to *tyden* in the past tense (*voorige*, *oude*, *vroegere*, *immemoriale*). The past was highly valued in early modern discourse. Age and continuity of practices was one of the aspects that determined the legitimacy of arguments, and people regularly referred to rights and resources that were granted by customary law while addressing institutions.[20] This was also the case in the eighteenth-century resolutions. Nevertheless, there were also terms that related to the present (such as *nu*, *tegenwoordige*, and its variant *jegenwoordige*). The term *wylen* was intertwined with the future in the reoccurring phrase *tyden en wylen* (over the course of time). More important

---

18 Some stopwords were removed, see the Appendix below. Context words were extracted by querying for *tyden/tijden* and the three terms before and after the word (using n-grams of size seven). These phrases were tokenized on the word level, and the words were consequently ranked.
19 In the remainder of this article, the term *tyden* is used to indicate both terms.
20 Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past*, 44; Wood, 'Custom and Social Organisation of Writing', 259; Kadens, 'Convergence and the colonization of custom', 171; Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', 249.

Tab. 2   *Examples of resolutions that include references to extraordinary tyden.*

1	Dat haer Ed:Mo: de jegenwoordige constitutie van tyden en saken overmerckende en hoe seer de vyandtlijcke armateurs by esquadres kruyssende de meester in zee spelen […] omme uyt de equipagie ter beveylinge van de noordt zee twaelf wel bezeylde behoorlijck gemonteerde ende bemande fregatten behooren in zee gebraght te werden. *That the High Mighty [States of Zeeland], considering the present state of times and affairs and how much the enemy squadrons are behaving as the master at sea […], [resolve] that from the fleet for the protection of the North Sea twelve well-sailed, properlfy fitted, and manned frigates will be brought to sea.*
2	Dat hy suppliant bereyt was omme sigh naer de voorschreve resolutie te gedragen dogh dat echter in dese tyden van oorlogh het seer difficiel was in de geconquesteerde plaetsen contanten maghtigh te werden. *That the supplicant was willing to behave according to the aforementioned resolution, but that in these times of war it was very difficult to obtain cash in the places that were conquered.*
3	Dat sy suppliante door dese droevige tyden en groote schade by den jegenwoordigen oorloghgeleden buyten staet was geraeckt om hare crediteuren soo promptelijck als sy wel wenschte te voldoen. *That the supplicant, because of these sad times and the great damage caused by the present war, was unable to pay her creditors as promptly as she wished.*
4	Dat de collecten in de tegenwoordige schaarsche en geldeloose tyden seer weynigh quamen op te brengen waar door het de supplianten niet mogelyck was hare arme ende noodtdruftige gemeente na behooren en vereysch van saken te kunnen assisteren en alimenteren. *That the collections in the present scarce and penniless times have fetched very little, which made it impossible for the supplicants to properly assist and support their poor and needy congregation.*
5	Dat aen de heeren staten van de respective provincien by missive wederom op het ernsthigste sal werden gerepresenteert de noodtsaeckelijckheyt van de equipagie in de noordt zee insonderheyt in de tegenwoordige conjuncturen van tyden. *That a missive will be sent to the lords of the respective provinces, in order to again seriously present the necessity of equipping a fleet in the North Sea, especially in the present conjuncture.*

for this essay are the terms *oorlogh* (war), *duure* (expensive), and *slechte* (bad), as these refer to extraordinary conditions specifically.

The next step was to filter out the resolutions that contained references to *tyden* in the context of extraordinary times. The phrases in which *tyden* occurred were manually evaluated. This resulted in a final dataset of 811 resolutions over the period 1706-1796.[21] To provide an idea of the phrases that were understood as references to extraordinary times, tab. 2 includes some examples. *Tyden* was signified as extraordinary in roughly three ways. First, some phrases refer to specific conditions, such as certain crises (examples two and four). There were also results that include broader references to the extraordinary (example three). Additionally, there were phrases which highlight the time conditions in general (examples one and five). In such sentences, the terms *constitutie* and *conjucture* were often used to emphasise the exceptional nature of the times referred to. Tab. 2 also provides a first indication of the function of references to extraordinary *tyden*. It seems that people did not only refer to *tyden* to indicate their experience of extraordinary conditions; rather, such references served in themselves as arguments to emphasise why the petitioner believed that action by the States-General was required.

Erica Boersma has distinguished different arguments that people employed when addressing the States-General during or immediately following disasters. Petitioners often emphasised why help was urgent; that they were loyal members of the Generality; the reasons why help served the general interest; the fact that victims were worth the help; and arguments of a more general humanitarian nature.[22] Perhaps references to extraordinary

21 This dataset is available via: https://github.com/FemkeGordijn/ReasoningWithTurbulence.git.
22 Boersma, 'Hulp aan slachtoffers van stads- en dorpsrampen', 193-194.

tyden in the resolutions classify as a form of the first element that Boersma distinguished, namely emphasising why help was urgent. The examples in tab. 2 also include snippets of arguments or decisions made on behalf of the provinces represented in the assembly or the deputies themselves (examples one and five). Here, too, it seems that *tyden* was used within an argument to emphasise why measures should be taken.

Finally, all results were grouped by year to establish whether there was a connection between the references to extraordinary times in the resolutions and actual times of crisis. Considering that extraordinary *tyden* was used in the argumentative way as suggested above, the aspect of strategy and rhetoric must be taken into account. Since not all requests for help were approved or even discussed in the States-General, people who petitioned the assembly tried to frame their arguments as convincingly as possible.[23] Possibly, mentions of extraordinary *tyden* were not merely used to express experiences of particular crises, but were also employed tactically at more arbitrary points in time.

There are other possibilities, however. Maurits den Hollander, in his dissertation on the seventeenth-century *Desolate Boedelkamer* of Amsterdam, observed that this resorting to extraordinary times regularly occurred in the arguments of applicants for *cessie van goede* (*cessio bonorum*). A relationship to economic distress in broader society was present in some cases, but the timing of such arguments did not necessarily overlap with the worst financial crises during the century. Possibly, personal managerial skills also played a role.[24] Finally, since individuals and local governments also corresponded with the States-General, it must be considered that crises could also play out at more local levels.

In order to evaluate whether *tyden* was added during arbitrary points in time or not, it is beneficial that most references to *tyden* were made in the present tense (see tab. 2). It seems reasonable to assume that most arguments recorded in the present tense relate to events that took place within the recent past, such as within the year, making it a reliable measure to establish the connection of *tyden* to actual times of crisis. There are also limitations to this approach. Although the initial queries resulted in hits that were ambiguous or not meaningful, extracting resolutions on the one condition that they contained the term *tyden* inevitably left out some equally relevant results. Thus, the results in this article are best regarded as a representative sample of expressions of extraordinary time conditions that occurred in the resolutions. Although further advancement of the REPUBLIC project and the application of more advanced digital history methods may provide opportunities that can refine the used methodology here, the results still prove fruitful.

A Quantitative Analysis of Extraordinary Tyden

Fig. 3 shows the percentage of resolutions with extraordinary *tyden* by year throughout the eighteenth century. The peaks in this graph generally correspond to episodes of uproar that historians of the Dutch Republic have described as moments of crisis, whereas the troughs correspond to more peaceful times. Periods of war, years in which political reforms were

---

23 Reinders, "'De borgers komen uyt alle steden met requesten'", 5.
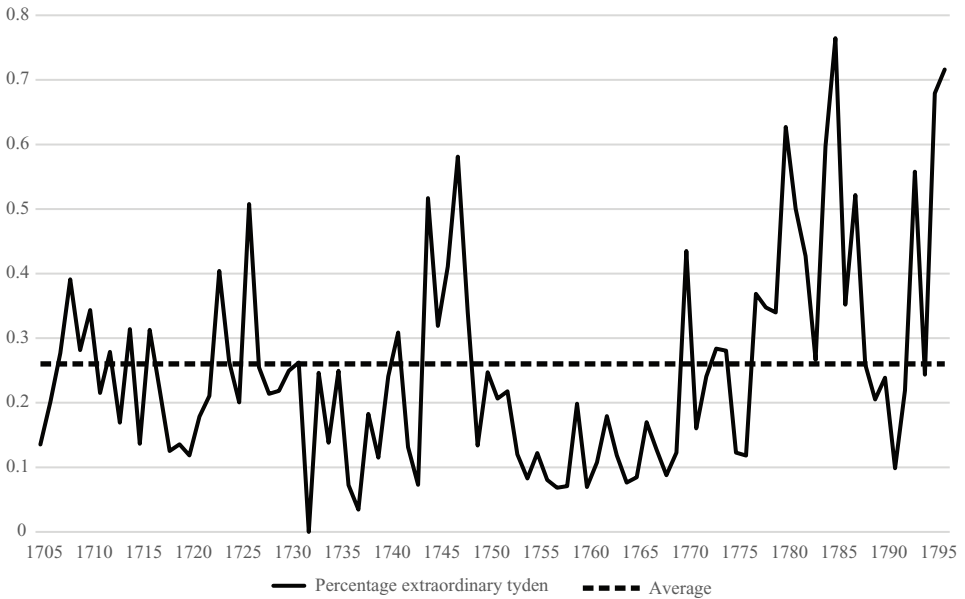**24** Den Hollander, *Stay of Execution*, 212.

Fig. 3 Percentage of resolutions containing extraordinary tyden *by year, 1705-1796.*

implemented, and especially years in which the Dutch Republic was invaded correlate strongly with particular increases in *tyden* resolutions.

During the first years of the eighteenth century, the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714) correlates with the first peak in the graph. The involvement of the Dutch Republic had detrimental effects on its economy.[25] The years 1723 and 1726 reveal other peaks in resolutions that contain extraordinary *tyden*. The Dutch Republic experienced a time of relative peace during this period, however, so it is not entirely clear why the use of *tyden* increased during these years. Between 1740 and 1747 the Dutch Republic was involved in the War of the Austrian Succession. The especially pronounced peak in 1747 corresponds to a key year in this conflict, when French troops invaded the southern provinces of the Dutch Republic and besieged Breda and Maastricht. Simultaneously, political reforms were enacted when William IV of Orange was appointed as stadtholder, marking the end of the second stadtholderless period.

After 1748 a relative decline in the number of results set in, which again corresponds to a period of relative peace in the Dutch Republic. Clear peaks reappear during the last quarter of the century. Here, too, peak years in the graph generally correlate to periods of (armed) conflict, beginning with the years surrounding the American Revolution. The Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1781-1784), and especially its onset in 1780-1781, is another example. Finally, the peaks in the 1780s correspond to the Patriot Revolt of 1781-1787, when political tensions arose between supporters of William V and the reformist Patriot

25 Doedens and Mulder, *Spaanse Successieoorlog*, 351.

movement. Several key years during the Patriot Revolution correlate with high peaks, such as 1785 and 1787, when military operations escalated – in 1787, for instance, Prussia intervened in the Dutch Republic to restore order in favour of the stadtholder. After 1787, when the revolutionaries had largely fled the country, a trough is visible. Notably, another peak set in shortly after the French Revolution, when the War of the First Coalition (1792-1795) started and France invaded the Dutch Republic. The Batavian Revolution of 1795, when revolutionaries took over power in the States-General and France occupied the rest of the country also features prominently in fig. 3.

We can clearly see that references to extraordinary *tyden* increase during times of crisis in the Dutch Republic. These findings reveal that in the eighteenth-century resolutions, heightened references to extraordinary times consistently and quantitatively corresponded to periods of actual crisis. As studies of egodocuments have suggested, there was a relation between periods of crisis and documenting the extraordinary, just as moments of crisis had a profound impact on how people referred to the times they lived in. The end of the eighteenth century, in particular the much-debated revolutionary era, features strongly in the results, which suggests that these times had a great impact on people's experience of time, as Koselleck already argued. Nonetheless, earlier crises – especially the War of the Austrian Succession – reveal equally important peaks, suggesting that an increased awareness of extraordinary times was not exclusive to the end of the eighteenth century. Moreover, fig. 3 demonstrates that *tyden* was not used at random points in time. It appears that neither personal nor local crises were greatly influential factors. These references to extraordinary times seem to be have been reserved primarily for times of general distress and more specifically for periods of armed conflict in the Dutch Republic, and thus within the purview of the States-General.

The above observations leave the question of how exactly *tyden* was used largely unanswered. The results do not show who used it, nor do they show when, why, and how. It is entirely possible that people referenced extraordinary times, even though their arguments were unrelated to an actual crisis. Here, the multifaceted nature of the resolutions proves their value, as the diverse roster of participants illuminates which people used *tyden* and in which context. To achieve this, the *tyden* resolutions were classified as belonging to issues regarding money, domestic and international politics, war, and naval operations, as can be seen in fig. 4. These themes are not surprising, as they comprised the main responsibilities of the States-General.[26] Fig. 5 offers an overview of the actors who used *tyden*: the categories in the graph refer to the people from whose perspective the argument was articulated.

Figs. 4 and 5 reveal that the actors and topics of the *tyden* resolutions were generally related to actual moments of crisis as outlined above. The periods of armed conflict as identified in fig. 3 coincide with an increase in the themes Army_Fleet and War_Conditions. In years of conflict, these results typically comprised at least half of all resolutions containing *zware tyden* (difficult times). This theme was associated with deputies or provinces, who, throughout the eighteenth century, used *tyden* as an argument to emphasise the urgency of increasing naval and military power. War_Conditions is primarily related to actors who

---

26 A justification and explanation of this classification is included in the Appendix.
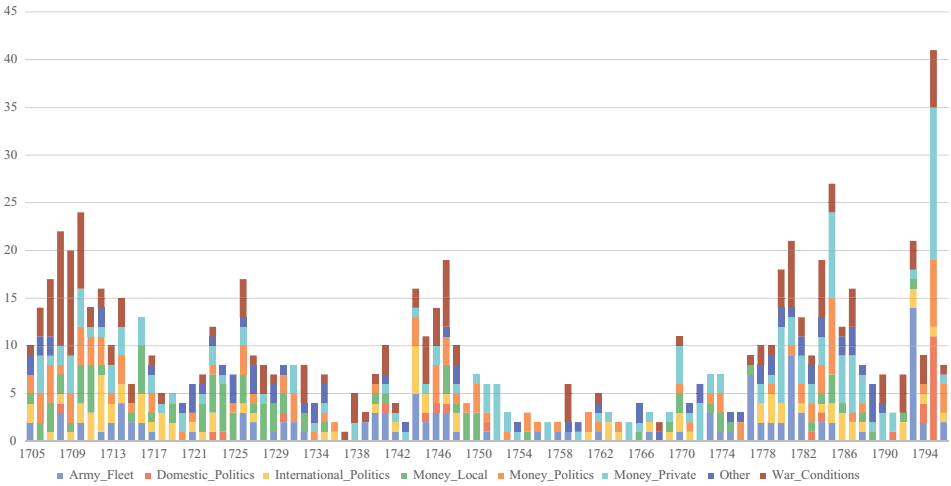
Fig. 4 Number of resolutions referencing extraordinary tyden *by theme, 1705-1796.*[27]
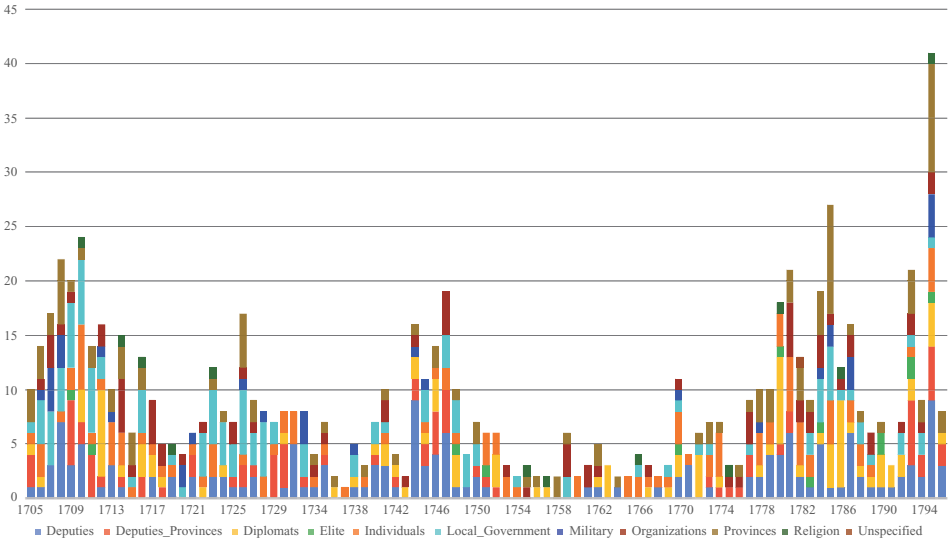

Fig. 5 Number of resolutions referencing extraordinary tyden *by actor, 1705-1796.*

27 The numbers in figs. 4 and 5 are absolute instead of relative, because only the resolutions extracted from the dataset for the purpose of this essay were assigned a theme and actor.

corresponded with the States-General, such as Individuals, Local_Governments, and Military. These were often people who were directly involved in the unfolding war. For example, propositions by the towns of Lille and Tournai, occupied by the allied Anglo-Dutch army in 1708-1709, were highly present during the years that followed.[28] The States-General took up an active political role in these towns and inhabitants quickly turned to The Hague with their problems, using the difficult times they faced in their petitions.[29]

Taxes were continuously raised during the War of the Spanish Succession, which took its toll on the Dutch population. By 1713, the tax burden was thirty-seven percent higher than it had been before 1672, and by 1715 the Dutch Republic was practically bankrupt.[30] Notably, the topic Money_Politics, which concerns financial matters on a more general level, was not much more prevalent compared to later years. However, during the first half of the eighteenth century, references to *tyden* frequently related to the actor Local_Government and the topic Local_Money. Many of these resolutions were from Staats-Brabant. Although frequent communication between Brabant and The Hague was no exception due to its status as Generality Land, Guido de Bruijn has argued that at least during the later years of the seventeenth and the first years of the eighteenth century, it was because of the economic hardships in this area that a stream of petitions reached The Hague.[31] The *tyden* resolutions, then, regularly contained complaints about poor city finances, just as people included references to difficult times to demonstrate why financial measures were necessary. The Local_Money resolutions declined after 1750, which might be explained by the conviction of some historians that the disposable income of people in the Dutch Republic increased, which went hand in hand with a recovery of agriculture.[32]

The Money_Private results (see fig. 4) are useful to compare to the resolutions above. In the first half of the eighteenth century and during more peaceful periods, this category primarily contained requests from ordinary people within the Dutch Republic and diplomats. By way of contrast with what was established earlier, these resolutions regularly related to more personal crises or crises not directly related to the Generality. Diplomats, for example, asked for raises in salaries referring to times of hardships at the places where they were stationed.[33] In the last few decades of the century, Money_Private increasingly included petitions by colonial inhabitants, (overseas) merchants, and members of trade companies. These people typically expressed their worries about the state of commerce, which was no coincidence, given that Dutch trade had collapsed after the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War.[34] The War_Conditions resolutions also refer to the commercial character of

---

28 See, for instance: NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3765, Resolutions 28 January, 31 March, 11 June, 30 and 31 July 1710; SG 3766, Resolution 7 November 1711.
29 Doedens and Mulder, *Spaanse Successieoorlog*, 276.
30 Doedens and Mulder, *Spaanse Successieoorlog*, 351.
31 De Bruijn, 'Den Haag en Staats-Brabant', 454.
32 Van Zanden, 'De economie van Holland', 564, 566; De Vries and Van der Woude, *Nederland 1500-1815*, 275.
33 See for example: NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3779, Resolution 22 April 1724; SG 3807, Resolution 27 July 1752; SG 3825, Resolution 20 August 1770.
34 See, for example: NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3838, Resolution 20 March 1782; SG 3836, Resolution 18 April 1781.

conflict in this later period. In 1781, for example, several plantation directors in Surinam wrote that shipping to the colony was blocked due to the war with England. 'In these circumstances of time', they noted, it was unfeasible that high fees on their bills of exchange should be charged.[35] Petitions from Surinam were relatively common during this period, as in the 1770s an economic crisis had caused profits from the plantation economy to collapse.[36] Thus, while *tyden* was still used as an argument to emphasise the States-General should take immediate action, the changing circumstances during the latter half of the eighteenth century were reflected in the themes and the actors that were attached to the *tyden* resolutions.

It should be noted that the peak years at the end of the eighteenth century offer some exceptions. Grievances from inhabitants of besieged and occupied towns, as well as those who petitioned the assembly with a purpose that was directly connected to crisis events, were relatively less prevalent than in earlier years, especially during the Patriot Revolt. Although actors such as Individuals and Local_Governments still appear, those resolutions which connect clearly to unfolding events were now primarily related to the deputies or provinces themselves. Perhaps this was due to the specific circumstances, because during the revolutionary period existing political institutions, including the States-General, were increasingly criticised from outside.

This possible development during the revolutionary period is related to the topic of Domestic_Politics, which refers to how deputies in the States-General used *tyden* in decisions regarding political and institutional reforms. Fig. 4 demonstrates that while this topic recurred throughout the century, it peaked during the Batavian Revolution, which constitutes a turning point in the institutional history of the Dutch Republic. In 1795 the States-General was taken over by revolutionaries: the new representatives implemented institutional reforms, and a number of *tyden* resolutions reflect these changes. In December 1795, for example, deputies argued that the Dutch East India Company was in need of a new board that would be 'more suitable in the current times' and that 'these times of danger' required a new National Assembly.[37] In light of the debate surrounding the revolutionary period as a catalyst for a switch from pre-modern to modern conceptions of time, it can be noted that the *tyden* argument was, on occasion, explicitly connected to the need for institutional renewals that clearly broke with the past.

Still, these quantitative findings suggest that resorting to extraordinary *tyden* generally occurred in a remarkably steady, or even cyclical fashion in the eighteenth-century resolutions of the States-General. A plethora of different voices from various layers of society, who generally experienced the consequences of the crises that unfolded firsthand, expressed their needs to and within the States-General by referring to the times they experienced. Since the *tyden* argument was used in the context of receiving and granting favours, there was doubtless a strategic aspect attached to it, with details added to make the

---

35 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3836, Resolution 11 June 1781: 'in deese omstandigheeden der tyden'.
36 Prak and Luiten van Zanden, *Pioneers of Capitalism*, 182.
37 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3863, Resolution 24 December 1795: 'meer geschikt naar de actueele omstandighheeden van tyden'; Resolution 28 December 1795: 'deze tyden van gevaar'.

argument more convincing or believable.[38] However, the overall picture seems to affirm the accuracy of the results in fig. 3: the references to *tyden* reflected an increased experience of actual times of crisis in the Dutch Republic.

Second, references to *tyden* were mainly used as arguments in fairly practical contexts, such as receiving money, taking protectory measures, or evading duties, which anticipated a specific action of the States-General during times of crisis. Here, people's references to extraordinary times clearly did not serve to document the details of the crisis they experienced in order to make sense of it or draw lessons for the future, as has often been argued in the case of egodocuments. Instead, people who used the extraordinary *tyden* argument drew from their experience of crisis with the aim of getting something done, even as events unfolded.

Yet egodocuments, and especially the genre of the chronicle, had cyclical aspects similar to those of the *tyden* resolutions. People regularly documented changes in weather, death toll, and prices to illustrate the extremity of the times they lived in. There was yet another function, however. Documenting prices, for example, reminded people to change their consumption habits as prices increased.[39] The cyclical use of extraordinary *tyden* in the resolutions served a similar purpose, namely to put arguments before the States-General during times that diverged from the usual. As a result, one might wonder whether the chronicling of extraordinary times in egodocuments, and thus the increased writing activity during periods of crisis, not only served to document and remember the intensity of events, but also allowed people to discern wider patterns and determine their course of action. In this sense, institutional sources and egodocuments might be closely connected; future researchers may well consider reading the two genres alongside each other.[40]

Extraordinary Tyden *in Context*

What still remains unclear, however, is how the use of *tyden* related to the actual decision-making process of the States-General during such periods: what impact did this argument have? In this article's final section, I evaluate the results of two quantitative categories using a close-reading approach, which also serves as an evaluation of the quantitative approach. I selected the topics of Army_Fleet and Private_Money, because these categories contain arguments made by voices from above as well as from below.

During the eighteenth century, references to *tyden* in the Army_Fleet resolutions primarily served to emphasise the urgency of strengthening the military on land and at sea. The broader context in which these arguments were embedded also remained the same. In 1708, the province of Utrecht refused to invest in the army and fleet. Deputies

---

38 Alan Dyer has drawn a similar conclusion for a series of petitions from English towns to the Crown in the late medieval period. Although exaggerated language was sometimes used, the actual economic situation of the towns generally matched their requests: Dyer, *Decline and Growth*, 47-48.

39 Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', 247-248.

40 A recent project led by Judith Pollmann and Erika Kuijpers resulted in a corpus of digitised chronicles: https://chroniclingnovelty.com (Accessed on 23 November 2023).

responded by claiming that they were 'utterly upset and saddened' and that the refusal was 'against the interest, well-being, and salvation of the state'.[41] During the War of the Austrian Succession, similar arguments were put forward. In 1744, following the French declaration of war against England, the province of Zeeland argued that in 'such critical and dangerous times', the fleet, which was in a worse state than ever, had to be rebuilt with great urgency. As in 1708, the deputies noted that the safety and the salvation of the Dutch Republic were in danger.[42]

These resolutions reflect the early modern conception of the cyclical and classical argument that republics followed an inevitable pattern of rise, decline, and fall. Such beliefs were frequently articulated at times of crisis, when people were especially afraid the state might collapse.[43] In the Army_Fleet resolutions, this argument of decline persisted throughout the century, even in its latter quarter, during which it has been argued that the cyclical conception of time transformed into a modern, linear one.[44]

At the eve of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War, for instance, arguments to build up the fleet in order to save the Dutch Republic from total destruction peaked again. This view was expressed by stadtholder William V, amongst others.[45] The States-General's committee of finances similarly reported that the Republic was 'entirely unexpectedly attacked', suggesting that measures were needed to 'save the fatherland and all that is precious'.[46] This rhetoric was repeated even in 1795, when the assembly was about to be taken over by revolutionaries, as the sitting deputies emphasised that measures adjusted to 'the circumstances of times and affairs' should be taken for the 'salvation and preservation of the country'.[47] Over the course of the century, the application of the *tyden* argument correlated with discourse reflecting a serious concern over the course of events within the assembly. This finding largely confirms the results based on the quantitative analysis.

Taking a yet closer look, these examples also demonstrate another point: *tyden* and its context were frequently used to convince members of the assembly of the necessity of an action. It was thus not the expression of a uniform standpoint shared by all deputies and provinces. In fact, one or more of the provinces had usually done the exact opposite of what was envisaged in the resolution: they had declined to contribute to the army or fleet. In 1708, for example, the province of Utrecht had refused to invest in the army, prompting the deputies of other provinces to argue that Utrecht's collaboration was much needed, using the rhetoric outlined above.[48] The opposite happened as well. In 1744 the deputies of Zeeland defended their particular interest as a maritime province by arguing for additional

---

41 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3763, Resolution 21 January 1708: 'ende haer uyttermaten seer heft gealtereert en bedroeft'; 'tegen het interest en het welwesen ende de behoudenisse van den staet'.
42 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3799, Resolution 7 May 1744: 'zoo critique en gevaarlijcke omstandigheeden van tyden'.
43 Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past*, 58-59.
44 This is in line with the findings of Rotmans, *Enlightened Pessimism.*
45 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3835, Resolution 26 December 1780; SG 3836, Resolution 15 January 1781.
46 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3836, Resolution 15 January 1781: 'daar tegenswoordig de republicq werkelyk op het onverwagste word aangevallen'; 'ter behoudens van het vaderland met al wat daar in dierbaar is'.
47 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3862, Resolution, 6 January 1795: 'naar omstandigheid van tyden en zaaken'; 'tot behoud en conservatie van den lande'.
48 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3763, Resolution 21 January 1708.

warships to protect the coast. Other provinces, in their view, did not take the fleet seriously enough.[49]

All in all, despite increased references to extraordinary *tyden*, the regular deliberation practices of the States-General did not fundamentally change during times of crisis. Deputies still consulted the estates of their respective provinces before taking a decision, and the different interests of the various provinces clearly marked the course of the meetings and the decisions that were subsequently taken by the States-General. Despite the *tyden* argument, no unanimous feeling of urgency resulting from the extraordinary times was reflected in these resolutions.

The Local_Money resolutions further clarify this point. As in the case of the Army_Fleet category, the context of the *tyden* argument remained largely stable. In 1708 the sheriff, aldermen, and authorities of Rosendaal and Nispen requested a loan of four thousand guilders because of the 'present heavy burdens, both of enemy contributions and otherwise, as well as these penniless times and the very poor availability of grains'.[50] In 1723 the sheriff and authorities of the village of Stant requested a similar loan of four thousand guilders, which they promised to repay once the bad times had ended.[51] The year before, three groups consisting of the authorities of the villages of Vught, Cromvoirt, those of Oostelbeers, Middelbeers, and those of Vessem, Wintelre, and Knegsel submitted a petition asking for executory attachment using almost identical language.[52] In 1710 the authorities of Elmpt requested the remission of taxes while in 1786 the authorities and inhabitants of the village of Vlodrop presented a petition asking for their suspension, noting that 'because of the recent bad times, scarcity of grain, failed crops, and hail, the supplicants have fallen into a desolate state and incurred significant debts'.[53] In contrast with earlier petitions, this last one was harshly rejected.[54] This raises an important question: how were the petitions generally received by the States-General?

The deputies' decisions in response to the Local_Money petitions of the first half of the century can be divided into roughly four categories: decisions regarding requests for adjustments to the collection of (local) taxes and other sums of money due to the Generality; regarding loans from the States-General; regarding specific measures that did not involve a payment from the States-General (especially executory attachments); and decisions regarding charity. Resolutions in the same category typically resulted in similar decisions. Resolutions in the first two categories, which in total made up most of the propositions in the Local_Money dataset, were usually referred to the Raad van State; sometimes additional committees were asked for advice. Supplicants often had to wait for months before they received the final decision. The regents of Waalwijk, for example, were notified which

---

49 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3799, Resolution 12 September 1744.
50 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3763, Resolution 25 July 1708: 'de tegenwoordige sware lasten soo van vyandtlijcke contributien als andersints ende de geldeloose tyden ende ser slechte geldinge der granen'.
51 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3778, Resolution, 20 January 1723.
52 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3777, Resolutions 10 and 23 January 1722.
53 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3765, Resolution 8 April 1710; SG 3846, Resolution 27 January 1786: 'Dat ter oorsake van de voorgevallene slegte tyden schaarsheid van graanen misgewas hagelslag der supplianten gemeente van tyd tot tyd geraakt was in eenen desolaaten staat en merkelye schulden'.
54 NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3852, Resolution 4 May 1789.

points of their petition were approved after eight months.[55] This procedure was typical for the States-General during peaceful times too; most petitions were referred to committees or sent to external bodies for advice, most often the Raad van State, which could take a long time.[56] Decisions of the third category, in which local magistrates typically asked for executory attachment to enforce the collection of fees and taxes, were treated directly by the States-General and almost always received a positive decision.[57] Decisions of the last category were more often directly rejected or referred to an external party.[58]

The question, of course, is how important it was to adopt the *tyden* argument for a certain outcome, granted that similar requests resulted in similar outcomes. The outlined categories suggest that it might not have been the *tyden* expression in itself that was decisive, but rather the subject matter to which a petition was connected. This is further demonstrated by a small additional sample of fourteen requests for executory attachments in 1722, none of which contained the *tyden* argument. These petitions led to the same decision compared to those that did refer to *tyden*. Although some contained references to difficult conditions using other phrases, such as more general references to wars and poverty, which might have served a similar purpose as the *tyden* argument, this was not the case for all of the petitions.[59] It is possible, therefore, that the nature of the petition proposed during times of crisis was more decisive than the *tyden* argument in which they were wrapped.

Only a further comparative study of resolutions that do not contain the *tyden* argument may shed definitive light on the matter. However, combined with the observation that deliberation procedures did not really change in connection to the increased use of *tyden*, the points made here bring to light an important limiting factor of the quantitative text mining approach used in this article. The quantitative analysis measured how often categories of people articulated the *tyden* argument in relation to crises, but it missed important, often more implicit, accompanying practices and the impact of this discourse, both of which help to grasp the full meaning.

Conclusion

This essay began with the observation that administrative documents have been largely overlooked in the debate about the experience and documenting of extraordinary times during the early modern period. Relying on both quantitative text mining and a close

---

55 NA/Huygens_Republic, SG 3803, Resolutions 14 February and 25 October 1748.

56 Thomassen, *Instrumenten van de macht*, 191.

57 See, for example: NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3765, Resolution 30 January 1710; SG 3766, Resolutions 24 February, 18 March, 12 May, 12 June, and 27 October 1711; SG 3777, Resolutions 10 and 23 January 1722; SG 3780, Resolution 20 January 1725; SG 3781, Resolution 6 January 1726.

58 See, for example: NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3771, Resolution 21 September 1716; SG 3774, Resolution 28 March 1719; SG 3779, Resolution 6 November 1724; SG 3784, Resolution 19 August 1729.

59 This sample was acquired by using the search command *Executoriaal Generaal*. The relevant resolutions are: NA/Huygens_REPUBLIC, SG 3777, Resolutions 1 and 12 January, 9, 20, and 30 March, 18 and 29 May, 6 and 17 August, 1 September, 7 October, 26 November, 2 and 23 December 1722.

reading of the resolutions of the States-General, this article has made several points. First, times of crisis, as opposed to more peaceful times, consistently correlated with increased references to extraordinary times. The intimate connection between crises and the documenting of such extraordinary conditions, which has already been suggested on the basis of egodocuments, could thus be quantitatively confirmed using administrative documents. Furthermore, this digital and quantitative approach revealed cyclical patterns in how references to exceptional times were used over an entire century – something that would not have immediately appeared obvious when using a more qualitative approach. In combination with the argumentative properties of the results, it became clear that references to extraordinary *tyden* in the resolutions should be regarded as actual incentives that required political action by the States-General in times of crisis. Finally, these findings suggest that we should reconsider the functions of signalling and writing about extraordinary times, and that historians might usefully rely on political sources to intervene in ongoing debates about perceptions of time.

These conclusions also give rise to new questions. It was established that increases in the use of *tyden* coincided with crises which mainly played out on the Generality level, especially armed conflicts. Adopting the same approach to analyse the administrative sources of governmental institutions at other levels in the Dutch Republic might lead to different results. This, in turn, could reveal how inhabitants used the various institutions to which they had access to further specific interests. Other questions relate to the methodology used here. It was not possible to examine how the properties of resolutions with *tyden* fit in the overall characteristics of the digitised resolutions. It remains difficult, for example, to provide a definitive answer to the question why some deviations occurred from the general quantitative patterns regarding the actors and themes at the end of the eighteenth century. In all likelihood, the further development of the REPUBLIC dataset will provide an opportunity to answer questions of this nature, as important metadata will be added to the final dataset. The inclusion of all resolutions prior to 1705, for example, will offer an opportunity to extend research into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A more fundamental limitation, though, is the fact that the text mining method was unable to reveal the broader practical impact of the *tyden* argument. It turns out that expressions of extraordinary times on paper did not necessarily impact the decision-making processes. Even when taking these limitations into account, it is clear that the digitised resolutions of the States-General offer a wealth of data for exploring the rich political and cultural history of the Dutch Republic.

Appendix: Classification criteria of actors and themes in the resolutions

In order to determine who used the argument of *tyden* in the resolutions (the actor) and the themes were connected to these arguments, I manually classified the resolutions into broader categories. I should note that due to the large number of resolutions in the dataset, these categories are only roughly defined – resolutions could, in fact, deal with a myriad of issues. Where resolutions contained multiple or intertwined themes, I classified them in the most applicable category by evaluating how the *tyden* argument was used in its direct context. The tables below list the different categories (both by theme and actor) that are shown in figs. 4 and 5 above.

Tab. 3 Categories of resolutions ordered by theme.

Category	Explanation
Army_Fleet	Policy-making resolutions related to the material build-up of the fleet and army.
Domestic_Politics	Resolutions in which political developments within the Dutch Republic are discussed on the Generality level, such as the appointment or resignation of a stadtholder and institutional changes.
International_Politics	Resolutions about the Dutch Republic's international relations. These includes diplomats requesting certain measures, suggestions to send diplomats to new areas, peace treaty discussions, issues with international powers, and requests from foreign monarchs for collaboration as well as the protection of international trade.
War_Conditions	Resolutions on war and its impact on society. These include complaints from citizens and local government officials about direct consequences of the war, as well as resolutions that contain updates and tactics sent to and from the battlefield.
Money_Politics	Resolutions dealing with Generality finances. These include provinces unable to pay their taxes to the States-General and issues regarding the yearly *Generale Petitie and Staat van Oorlog*. (Sometimes these resolutions are classed as Army_Fleet, when the *tyden* argument was made in explicit reference to the material composition of the army and fleet. If the *tyden* argument concerns monetary contributions, they were classed under Money_Poltics.) This category also includes occasional resolutions related to the VOC and WIC trade companies, and to trade conflicts that affected a large number of people.
Money_Local	Resolutions from (mostly) local governments asking for financial relief by the States-General, generally requesting exemptions from taxes or other financial duties. This category also includes requests for money following or during a war, if these requests remain vague and do not explicitly refer to sieges, blockades, or demolishings.
Money_Private	Resolutions concerning money and trade on a more individual level. These include, for example, (groups of) merchants who, due to certain regulations, lost their profits, or individuals who experienced poverty and asked the States-General for assistance. This category also includes boards of smaller trade companies or collectives of merchants asking for help. Finally, many resolutions in this category refer to individuals seeking a salary raise.
Other	Resolutions on miscelaneous topics too small in number to class separately, such as the assigning of jobs to certain people, the spread of disease, and legal issues.

Tab. 4 Categories of actors who used tyden in the resolutions.

| Category	Explanation
Deputies	Propositions made by deputies without explicitly stating which province they represented. This category also includes committee members and deputies tasked with fieldwork.
Deputies_Province	Propositions made by deputies of specific provinces.
Provinces	Propositions written by (representatives of) the provincial estates.
Diplomats	Foreign envoys to the Dutch Republic or Dutch diplomats abroad.
Local_Government	People in administrative functions on the governmental levels below the Generality. This category excludes members of the provincial estates.
Elite	Propositions sent by foreign powers or by people from the Dutch Republic with a high societal position.
Individuals	Individuals or groups who addressed the States-General. This category includes (groups of) merchants, inhabitants from specific areas, and smaller trade companies.
Military	People working in the army or navy.
Organizations	Large organizations, such as the Council of State, Admiralties, and VOC/WIC trade companies.
Unspecified	Unknown actors.
Deputies_Reaction	This category is *not* included in fig. 5. Some of the resolutions contain reports by deputies, for example when they served as committee member. It is not always clear, however, who the original actor of *tyden* was. There are also occasional double counts, as the reports sometimes contain references to *tyden* previously expressed by an original actor also present in the dataset; in these cases I decided to include the resolutions in the dataset. Fig. 6 below shows the actors *including* the Deputies_Reaction cases, which does not seem to alter the major findings of this essay.
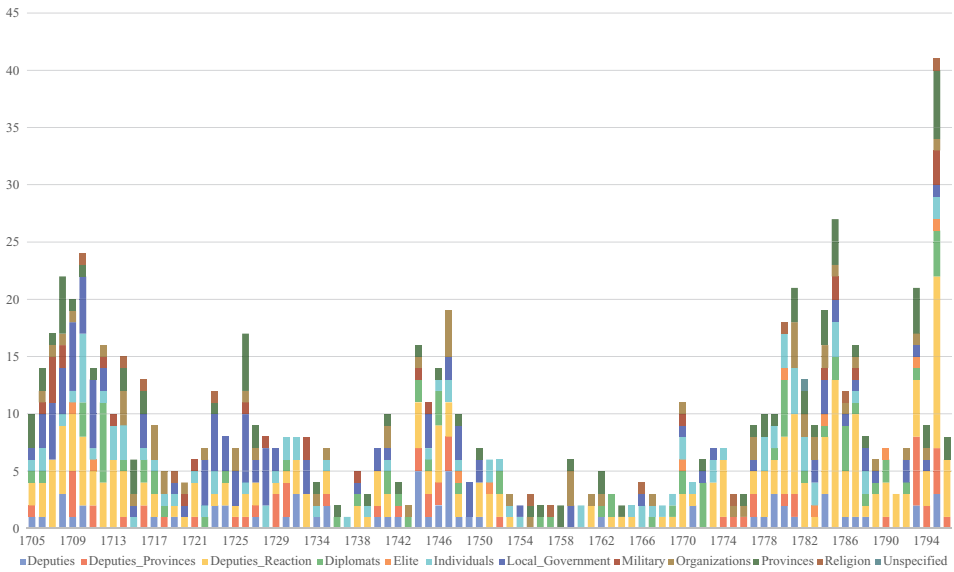
Fig. 6 Number of resolutions referencing extraordinary tyden *by actor, including Deputies_Reaction, 1705-1796.*

Context words removed for tab. 1

Van, in, de, en, ten, op, dat, te, het, als, by, die, ende, tot, af, der, dese, door, was, deese, aan, soo, den, om, niet, een, is, zyn, daar, met, voor, wel, t, hebben, haar, of, sullen, waaren, oock, geen, sy, kunnen, waar, toe, aldaar, souden, worden, over, heeft, welke, soude, des, ter, seer, waren, men, selfs, deselve, selve, ook, dan, hy, onder, deeze, gehad, hebbende, zynde, werden, haer, eenige, gelijck, sulcks, hadde, doen, mogen, hadden, na, al, sal, binnen, geweest, andere, hoogh, verscheyde, mogende.

Bibliography

Archival Sources

The Hague, Nationaal Archief/Huygens_REPUBLIC, States-General 3760-3864, Printed resolutions, 1705-1796.

Secondary Literature

Baggerman, Arianne, Rudolf Dekker, and Michael Mascuch, 'Introduction', in Arianne Baggerman, Rudolf Dekker, and Michael Mascuch (eds.), *Controlling Time and Shaping the Self. Developments in Autobiographical Writing Since the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden 2011) 1-12.

Boersma, Erica, 'Noodhulpbeleid bij stads- en dorprampen in de Republiek', *De Moderne Tijd* 4 (2020/3-4) 187-206.

Bruijn, Guido de, 'Den Haag versus Staats-Brabant. IJzeren vuist of fluwelen handschoen?', *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review* 111 (1996/4) 449-463.

Dekker, Rudolf, and Katheryn Ronnau-Bradbeer, 'Egodocuments in the Netherlands from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century', *Dutch Crossing* 23 (1999/2) 255-285.

Deseure, Brecht, and Judith Pollmann, 'The experience of rupture and the history of memory', in Erika Kuijpers et al. (eds.), *Memory Before Modernity. Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden 2013) 315-329.

Doedens, Anne, and Liek Mulder, *Spaanse Successieoorlog. Het definitieve einde van de Nederlandse Gouden Eeuw* (Zutphen 2021).

Dyer, Alan, *Decline and Growth in English Towns, 1400-1640* (Cambridge 1995).

Eijnatten, Joris van, and Pim Huijnen, 'Something Happened to the Future. Reconstructing Temporalities in Dutch Parliamentary Debates, 1814-2018', *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 16 (2021/2) 52-82.

Hollander, Maurits den, *Stay of Execution. Institutions and Insolvency Legislation in Amsterdam, 1578-1700*. PhD diss., Tilburg University, 2021.

Israeli, Yanay, 'Petition and Response as Social Process. Royal Power, Justice and the People in Late Medieval Castille (c. 1474-1504)', *Past and Present* 258 (2023/2) 1-43.

Kadens, Emily, 'Convergence and the Colonization of Custom in pre-modern Europe', in Olivier Moreteau, Aniceto Masferrer, and Kjell Modéer (eds.), *Comparative Legal History* (Cheltenham 2019) 167-185.

Koolen, Marijn, and Rik Hoekstra, 'Detecting Formulaic Use in Historical Administrative Corpora', *CHR. Computational Humanities Research Conference* (Antwerp 2022) 127-151.

Koolen, Marijn, et al., 'Modelling Resolutions of the Dutch States General for Digital Historical Research', *Proceedings of the International Conference Collect and Connect. Archives and Collections in a Digital Age* (Leiden 2020) 37-50.

Koselleck, Reinhart, *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt am Main 1979).

Lassche, Alie, Jan Kostkan, and Christoffer Nielbo, 'Chronicling Crises. Event Detection in Early Modern Chronicles from the Low Countries', *CHR. Computational Humanities Research Conference* (Antwerp 2022) 215-230.

Lauret, Lauren, *Regentenwerk. Vergaderen in de Staten-Generaal en de Tweede Kamer, 1750-1850* (Amsterdam 2020).

Oddens, Joris, 'The Experience of State Formation. Chronicling and Petitioning on the Dutch Island of Ameland (c. 1780-1850)', *National Identities* 22 (2020/1) 1-22.

Pollmann, Judith, 'Archiving the Present and Chronicling for the Future in Early Modern Europe', *Past & Present Supplement* 11 (2016) 231-252.

Pollmann, Judith, *Memory in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800* (Oxford 2017).

Prak, Maarten, and Jan Luiten van Zanden, *Pioneers of Capitalism* (Princeton 2022).

Reinders, Michel, '"De borgers komen uyt alle steden met requesten". Pamfletten, petities en de transformatie van politieke cultuur in de late 17[de] eeuw', *Holland. Historisch Tijdschrift* 42 (2010/1) 3-17.

Rotmans, Jan, *Enlightened Pessimism. Republican Decline in Dutch Revolutionary Thought, 1780-1800*. PhD diss., University of Amsterdam, 2020.

Sas, Niek van, *De Metamorfose van Nederland. Van oude orde naar moderniteit, 1750-1900* (Amsterdam 2004).

Sluijter, Ronald, et al., 'Opening the Gates to the Dutch Republic. A Comparison between Analogue and Digital Editions of the Resolutions of the States General', *Proceedings of the Digital Parliamentary Data in Action* (Uppsala 2022) 158-166.

Thomassen, Theo, *Instrumenten van de macht. De Staten-Generaal en hun archieven (1576-1796)* (The Hague 2015).

Vries, Jan de, and Ad van der Woude, *Nederland 1500-1815. De eerste ronde van moderne economische groei* (Amsterdam 1995).

Wood, Andy, 'Custom and Social Organisation of Writing in Early Modern England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 9 (1999) 257-269.

Woolf, Daniel, *The Social Circulation of the Past. English Historical Culture, 1500-1730* (Oxford 2013).

Zanden, Jan Luiten van, 'De economie van Holland in de periode 1650-1850. Groei of achteruitgang', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen Betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 102 (1987) 562-609.