Professional Bureaucrats

or

Bureaucratic Professionals?

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1. Introduction

Rational structures work best for understanding modern times. Modernity can be characterized as efficient, effective, or better rational (Van Hoof & Van Ruyseveldt, 1996; Van der Loo & Van Reijen, 1997). As a result of industrialization, production rates were raised, which led to a need for more efficient and effective structures to cope with these new complexities. As a consequence the complex, rational, organization emerged, with keywords like specialization and standardization. In his study of these new complex organizations the sociologist Max Weber managed to deduce a new organization model; the bureaucracy (Weber, 1991). As Weber clearly shows in his work, the bureaucracy has a long history, during the late nineteenth century the model gained momentum as an organizational structure.

However a product of modernity, the bureaucratic structure is helpful to analyze organizational structures in pre-modern times. In an effort to understand pre-modern or early-modern public domains the bureaucratic model is indeed often used. For instance, Van Braam used the model to describe early-modern administrative organizations (Van Braam, 1977). Raadschelders applied the model to the administrative development of four local governmental organizations in the northern part of Holland (Raadschelders, 1990). The model is also used in present times, of which the study of Van der Meer and Roborgh is a good example (Van der Meer & Roborgh, 1993).

Although a typical ‘modern’ concept, the bureaucratic model thus seems to be helpful for understanding historical administrative structures. However, because of the fact that it nonetheless remains a modern organizational structure, this paper assumes that the model is not capable of presenting a round picture of early-modern times. It is often argued that early-modern public service was loosely organized,
because of a lack of formal structures. In this paper we argue that other institutional mechanisms play a role too. What in this paper is called ‘proto-bureaucratic’ structures are surrounded by occupational and social institutional mechanisms, which will be framed in terms of ‘proto-professionalism’. This paper thus aims to understand the organization of local government in terms of proto-bureaucracy and proto-professionalism.

After this introduction, the second section of this paper discusses the two theoretical concepts; proto-bureaucracy and proto-professionalism. In the third part we will show proto-bureaucratic structures in practice, by analyzing the function of bailiff in dutch early-modern cities. The fourth part shows proto-professional practices in the ‘Vroedschap’ of dutch cities. The paper ends with a conclusion on how the role of ‘Vroedschappen’ can be understood as associational networks in combination with proto-bureaucratic structures in early modern local government.

2. Bureaucracy and professionalism

In this section we will discuss the concepts of proto-bureaucracy and proto-professionalism. These concepts will be used in section three of this paper to analyze local public functions in early-modern times.

2.1 Proto-bureaucracy

In order to come to an understanding of the concept of proto-bureaucracy we will first describe in short the model of bureaucracy. Then we will link this to the ‘proto’ aspect we added to the concept. Two aspects are central to the concept of bureaucracy; the functioning of the structure, and the position of the bureaucrat in the structure (Weber, 1991). We will discuss the two aspects in this order.
The functioning of the structure is tied to fixed jurisdictional areas. Tasks, duties as well as authority to give commands are linked to these jurisdictional areas. Next to this, continuity of execution is guaranteed. Crucial for this is the impersonal execution of functions. Bureaucracies are hierarchically structured and monocratic. This means that every ‘beambte’ is accountable to one supervisor.

For executing functions, training and education are necessary preconditions. To be able to make full use of its employee’s expert knowledge “official activity demands the full working capacity of the official” (Weber, 1991, 198). All actions in a bureaucracy are filed, all rules can and must be learned.

According to Weber “officeholding is a vocation” (Weber, 1991, 198). With this word Weber pointed at the professional and specialist background that is required for functions in a bureaucracy. Therefore, extensive training became one of the requirements. In order to develop and apply specialist knowledge to the full, bureaucratic functions need to be impersonal. This means that an officeholder can not be the owner of the office, nor can he have any interests that interfere with the interest of the office.

In addition to these professional terms an official function is patterned, or standardized, in several ways. In a bureaucracy, an official is appointed, in contrast to any form of election. In this way an extra guarantee is created for disinterested offices. Related to this are preconditions like tenure for life, fixed salary and patterned careers. As a result of this merit-based system officials can derive social esteem from their position in a bureaucracy.

In summary the bureaucratic model thus contains the following elements (table I, based on Weber, 1991):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functioning of the structure</th>
<th>Position of the official</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Fixed and official jurisdiction areas:</td>
<td>1. Vocation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- regular activities</td>
<td>- expert training is required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- authority to give commands linked to official position</td>
<td>- execution of the function without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- regular and continuous fulfillment of duties guaranteed</td>
<td>personal interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Monocratic and hierarchical structure</td>
<td>2. Function generates social esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Management is based upon written documents</td>
<td>3. Appointed officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Training and education is required</td>
<td>4. Tenure for life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Full working capacity demanded from officials</td>
<td>5. Fixed salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. General rules, which can be learned</td>
<td>6. Patterned careers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table I Features of Bureaucracy (based on Weber, 1991)*

In the introduction of this section we added the term ‘proto’ to bureaucracy. With proto-bureaucracy we mean organizational ‘bureaucracy-like’ structures in pre-bureaucratic times. While respecting the fact that bureaucratic organizations did not exist as described above, organizational structures will be analyzed as were they ‘underdeveloped’ bureaucracies or ‘bureaucracies under construction’ (cf. Wagenaar, 2002). In the introduction we already mentioned the probability that other mechanisms surrounded these proto-bureaucratic structures. In the next section we will discuss this by introducing the second concept of this paper; proto-professionalism.

### 2.2 Proto-professionalism

In the literature, professionalism is vaguely defined as occupational features of a closed group of specialists who “apply abstract knowledge to particular cases” (Abbott, 1988, 8). The idea of closed groups and the notion of abstract knowledge can be found in almost all publications of professionalism (cf. Wilensky, 1964; Larson, 1977; Noordegraaf, 2004; Freidson, 2001). All other aspects remain issues for debate.
In general, professionalism can be regarded as an institutional mechanism, in addition to mechanisms like the market and management. The market is characterized by consumer control, where the managers steer organizations. The profession is a more horizontal mechanism, as professionals steer and control each other (Freidson, 2001, 12).

The profession thus regulates control of a group of specialists or experts. Next to this it also regulates content, by means of training, education and exams. These two components thus form the core of professionalism: content and control (Wilensky, 1964; Noordegraaf, 2007). This institutional mechanism for content and control of the profession then is embodied by an autonomous association, which will guard the borders of the jurisdiction and prescribe what abstract knowledge is obliged to enter the professional status. The association can also take care of educational programs, or at least be partly responsible for training programs organized by an academic institute. This underscores the influence of associations in the composition of knowledge bases, as fundamental knowledge about diagnosing a case and taking correct decisions (Parsons, 1939).

Setting up an association that arranges training programs and examines candidates can be seen as a way to secure quality ex ante. A profession also has ex post measurements. The association for example often has a code of ethics. Some professions even combine this code with rituals like taking an oath. The association also has the power to sanction its members. In extreme cases it can officially ban individuals from the profession.

Often, professions are specialist occupations. Their abstract knowledge is their strength, it functions as a fertile source of social esteem. However, this very same abstract knowledge brings about a twofold risk for the profession. On the one hand,
knowledge must not be too abstract, as it would become too general. The profession then would become vulnerable to adjacent professions. More practical knowledge on the other hand can make the profession too ‘normal’, the intellectual base then is accessible for everyone. A good balance between practical and abstract knowledge thus is necessary for a profession to keep in charge (Larson, 1977; Abbott, 1988).

Weber’s statement on officeholding as a vocation thus can be seen as a professionalist claim, aimed at content more than at control. Officeholding suggests a decent education and certain expert knowledge. In addition to this, full-time work-capacity of an individual is necessary for the job. However, in terms of control, professions have a different approach. Professions, in summary, are characterized by their boundaries that are framed in terms of control and content. ‘Control’ points at the autonomous position of the association in the jurisdiction of the profession, and in an individual sense it has to do with who is and who is not a professional. The aspect of ‘content’ relates to the body of knowledge of the profession and of course the educational program.

Now that we have discussed the two main concepts, we will explain how these concepts are used in this paper.

2.3 Proto-bureaucracy and proto-professionalism

In the last two sections we broadly discussed the concepts of bureaucracy and professionalism. In this section we will elaborate on how we use these concepts in this paper. In this section we will be more specific about how we understand functions of bailiff and city government in general in early-modern times.
Within a bureaucratic structure the organization determines the way the function is executed. Fulfillment of official offices is standardized by the organizational structures and prescriptions. Functions are hierarchical organized, every function only has one superior. With proto-bureaucratisation we thus mean the essence of the bureaucratic model, which can be analysed by the factors presented in table I.

Proto-professionalisation needs a bit more explanation. Professions are characterized as separate groups, organized around an occupation. These associations control the occupation: firstly, in terms of control they influence the boundaries of the profession. The association determines who belongs to the professional group. Secondly, in terms of content, the association controls the technical base of the profession. This body of knowledge is dominant in the daily practice of the profession.

For both bureaucracy as well professionalism *inclusion* and *exclusion* are the keywords. This sociological approach leads to questions about membership: How can somebody become member of a specific group? What daily behavior does the group prescribe? Is there an exclusion mechanism (ex ante or ex post)?

Questions of inclusion and exclusion are interesting both for bureaucracy and for professionalism, because they show the complex relation between the two concepts. In terms of inclusion and exclusion some similarities arise, like the importance of expert knowledge and education. However, the hierarchical approach of bureaucracy is completely different from the peer controlled, horizontal organized, professions. Professionals working in bureaucratic structures thus might find themselves in a confusing situation; a situation of mixed identities and loyalties (cf. Van Bockel & Noordegraaf, 2006).
In bureaucratic structures inclusion is formalized via appointment in a function. Then one has to obey the standards and procedures of the organization. Professionalism in this sense is less formalized. We will therefore analyze what mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion can be found in early modern local government surrounding these bureaucratic structures. What association-like bodies can be found? How can one become member of these bodies? What is the influence of these bodies in the daily practice of local government?

In the next paragraph we will discuss aspects of bureaucracy in the function of bailiff in Dutch cities. Then, paragraph four will elaborate on proto-professional factors that played a role in controlling and structuring the local governmental functions.

3. Bureaucratic structures: the function of bailiff

Bailiffs were responsible for public safety at the local governmental level. Guarding public safety was one of the tasks of the stadtholder, the bailiff, as local representative of the stadtholder in the old monarchical system, combined the tasks of what nowadays is called public prosecutor and police commissioner in the cities. He had a direct responsibility to the stadtholder (not always to the city!) (e.g. Fruin, 1922; Fockema Andreae, 1969). The bailiff made new rules (‘costuymen’ or ‘keuren’), arrested offenders of these rules and was also responsible for the execution of the sentence. In some cities, the distinction was made between higher-bailiffs and lower-bailiffs. Lower-bailiffs were only allowed to prosecute offenders of less significance. In rural areas the function title of the bailiff was different, as his function was comparable to that of the higher-bailiff. Some villages had their own lower-bailiff.
The smaller villages neither had a higher- nor a lower-bailiff, and were part of the jurisdiction of the regional bailiff.

In accordance with bureaucratic standards the bailiffs were appointed on the grounds of contracts or ‘ambtsbrieven’. To analyse the function of bailiff we studied 28 contracts from different cities, all from the province of Holland. We incorporated two cities that were part of the private domains of the prince of Orange: Veere and Buren. This makes it possible to draw conclusions on differences between cities with direct relations to the stadtholder and ‘free’ cities. The other investigated cities are Delft, Enkhuizen, Haarlem and Leiden. Because of the great similarities in the contracts we can argue that the sample we used is representative for at least de cities of Holland during the period 1640 - 1770. We will discuss here the bureaucratic dimensions that are mentioned in the contracts.

3.1 Formal authority

Every letter starts with mentioning who is in charge of the appointment, next to who is responsible for the announcement. Most letters start with the sentence ‘De Staten van Holland en Westvriesland’. In almost all letters the estates announce the appointment. In the periods when the function of stadtholder was held redundant the estates were also in charge of the appointment. In the other periods, the letters refer to the Prince of Orange as the formal authority.

The letters also recall the procedure of appointment by referring to the fact that the appointed person is nominated by for instance the estates. Apparently, other authorities had a strong advisory role in this procedure.

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1 The Estates of Holland and Westvriesland
3.2 Personal qualities

The contracts describe the type of official that is to be appointed, in the following words: “een ander bequaam en gequalificeert persoon daertoe werde gecommitteerd” (NA, H&W-V). The words bequaam and gequalificeerd, literally “skilled” and “qualified” can have several meanings. Of course skilled can refer to skills, like in a craft, qualified can have a similar meaning. However, qualified can also refer to earlier achievements that qualify someone for the position. We will return to this point later.

The contracts elaborate on the skills extensively. In contrast to the other parts of the contract, these passages show a lot of variation. Therefore we grouped the terms that were used in the contracts into three categories: values; knowledge and character. The several qualifications are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Oprechtheyt / Waerheyt (sincerity)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vroomicheyt (religiosity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Getrouwheyt (loyalty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Ervarentheyt (experience)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wysheyt (wisdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Diligentie (diligence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naerstigheyt (assiduity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ernstigheyt (seriousness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kloeckheyt (bravery)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wackerheyt (alertness)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II Qualifications of Bailiffs

This overview shows on the one hand that qualifications in terms of values, knowledge and character were used. On the other hand one can criticize these qualifications for being too general, especially in the knowledge category.

3.3 Governmental authority and tasks

The contracts are clear about the function of bailiff. In every contract the function is described as giving the official ‘volcomen magt, autoriteyt en sonderlingh bevel’,
referring to full power given to the bailiff. The contract states that this authority belongs to the ‘staet ende officie van schout’. This distinction is interesting, since it divides the function of bailiff into two spheres: a sphere of office (tasks and duties) and a sphere of status. Formal authority then can be used to carry out the duties; these are threefold:

- firstly, the bailiff has to protect the honour and the rights of ‘us’, which refers to the official body responsible for the appointment. Depending on whether there is a stadtholder this refers thus to the stadtholder or the Estates of Holland and Westvriesland;
- secondly, the bailiff was responsible for the protection of “the good” and detention of offenders;
- thirdly, the bailiff had to administer justice, together with the schepenen, who were in fact the judges. Therefore the bailiff was assigned to urge the schepenen to reach verdict.

In summary the duties can be summarized in three roles: (1) representative of higher authority; (2) police officer; (3) public prosecutor.

3.4 Salary

One mechanism of financial compensation can be found in every contract: the deal that the bailiff gets a part of the fines he levies, only the percentage varies. Agreements on this had to be reached with the ‘Camere van Reeckeninge’.
In return for this ‘performance related salary’ the bailiff had to pay a sort of rent each year. This was called ‘recognitiegelden’. Only the contracts from the period 1672-1702 lack this obligation.

On the financial topic the contracts of Haarlem included an extra passage. It ordered the new bailiff to accept the servants of the former bailiff and pay their salaries.

Every year, the bailiff had to present his accounts to the Camere van Reeckeninge, together with all the evidence. Then the salary of the bailiff was calculated, based on the total sum of fines.

3.5 Oath and recognition

To formally seal the appointment of bailiff, the candidate had to take an oath, administered by the formal authority. Depending on whether there is a stadtholder, the oath is administered by the stadtholder or the Estates of Holland and Westvriesland. In return, the formal authority ordered the other local governmental officials to recognize the new bailiff and to support the bailiff in the execution of his function. The bailiff had to behave according to his instructions. For these instructions some contracts refer to an old instruction that dates from April, 20th, 1582 (NA, H&W-V, nr 1799 & 1801). Apparently, instructions did not change during this period, and, as stated earlier, neither did the contracts.

3.6 Proto-bureaucracy

In this paragraph we discuss the contracts of the bailiffs in Holland, during the period 1640 – 1770. Based on the investigation of these contracts, the function seems remarkably well structured. For some 130 years, the procedures were not changed,
except for the role of the stadtholder that was substituted for the Estates of Holland and Westvriesland during two periods. Apparently these procedures were not widely debated.

In terms of inclusion and exclusion, some striking similarities with the bureaucratic model can be found in the function of bailiff. By discussing them, we can answer the three questions on inclusion and exclusion posed above.

The first question is about getting entrance to the bureaucracy. According to the contracts a nomination by the highest power is required to get a governmental function. This nomination is based on the extent to which someone is ‘gequalificeert’ (qualified) and ‘bequaam’ (skilled). This means that membership of the Vroedschap as well as certain skills play a role in the procedure of nomination. Merit then not only means expertise, but points at membership of a central governmental body.

The contract then points at certain values; knowledge and character. This can be seen as an elaboration of the merit principle. The oath seals the membership, the official swears he will be loyal to his superior.

The behavior described in the contract is found in the description of the function. The task is threefold: firstly the bailiff has to protect the power of the highest authority, secondly, he has to arrest offenders of the law and thirdly, he has to take care of the prosecution of offenders. For all of his tasks the bailiff is held accountable, the accountability regime is explained in the contract, as well as the status guideline attached to the function.

Based on the contracts it is hard to tell whether any exclusion mechanisms played a role. Of course the criteria to gain entrance to the system also worked as an exclusion mechanism, but the contracts do not make clear how and why someone can
be excluded from the function while in function (except of course for the expiration of the legal term). Misconduct could lead to dismissal, as we know from other sources. This was however a tough procedure, especially during the first year of a term (Haarman, 1925).

In conclusion it can be stated that an extensive bureaucratic structure existed at least around the function of bailiff. It contained mechanisms of accountability, and also selection based on merit was incorporated. However, the meaning of the term merit was rather broad, compared to the later meaning the word got in the bureaucratic model when it referred to expertise or specialism. Because of the role of nominations, functions were part of political spheres, or networks, where advice of stadtholders or noblemen dominated. Lastly, the reward system is similar to the prebendal organization (cf. Weber, 1991, 207), in contrast to the fixed salary system of bureaucracy.

4. Proto-professionalism

As discussed above, in proto-professionalism inclusion and exclusion are keywords. Questions about being member of crucial groups, networks or associations and what it takes to become and be a member of these networks then are of interest. In this paragraph we firstly argue that in early-modern local government a local associative network can be found. Then, we will discuss issues of inclusion and exclusion concerning these networks.
4.1 Local associative networks

Associative networks are capable of controlling content of work as well as managing the network itself. Both qualities can be found in the ‘Vroedschap’, a local council in early-modern Dutch cities. To be more precise: these networks can best be described as a two-layered construction of which the Vroedschap forms the core.

In every city local government consisted of what we would call a council and an executive committee. The burgomasters and schepenen (local judges) formed the executive committee, of which the burgomasters were the most important. One of the burgomasters was elected as president-burgomaster, i.e. the chairman of the board of burgomasters. Normally this was the oldest member, who was burgomaster in the year before.

In addition to this governmental body, the Vroedschap functioned as a council; the board required the Vroedschap’s approval for their decisions. Members of the Vroedschap carried out important governmental functions. In other words, each year several members of the Vroedschap were nominated for the burgomaster’s election. Appointments for other public functions were either decided upon by the Vroedschap or the board of burgomasters. Some functions required membership of the Vroedschap, less important functions were given to for example potential members of the Vroedschap.

The Vroedschap traditionally was a board of wise men; the first part of the word literally refers to wisdom. A Vroedschap resolution of Rotterdam (December 29th, 1615) for example mentions that the Vroedschap selects its members (among other factors) out of a grasp of the most qualified persons. In this sense the Vroedschap can
be compared to for instance a senate in the old Roman empire. Ideally typically, the board consisted of wise men who were able to decide upon issues regarding their city and the fulfillment of the city’s public functions. The most important functions were given to members of the Vroedschap, for the less important functions membership of the Vroedschap was not a precondition.

In the sense of professionalism, the Vroedschap thus refers to both pillars: content in terms of wisdom (knowledge, expertise, experience) as a precondition for membership of the Vroedschap; control in the sense that the Vroedschap decided on the fulfillment of the public functions. Therefore the Vroedschap’s function in city government is not restricted to co-decisional competences or advisory tasks to other bodies. The Vroedschap is positioned at the very root of city government. It decides on inclusion and inclusion in the public proto-bureaucratic structure, based on their own conditions. Therefore it can be regarded as an associational network.

4.2. Inclusion and exclusion

The Vroedschap thus can be interpreted as an associational network. In this paragraph we will try to clarify mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion.

The Vroedschap counted a limited number of members. The maximum depended on how many members the Vroedschap allowed, which was different in each city and varied broadly from twenty to 40 members. The Vroedschappen not only decided on the number of members, they also choose their own members. Members of the Vroedschap were appointed by co-option, which means that the Vroedschap itself controlled its composition.
To become member of the Vroedschap one had to fulfil several conditions. Only the richest, most respectable and wisest persons could become member of the Vroedschap (Bossaers, 1996; 46). In many cities this meant that no member of the Vroedschap was younger than 27 (e.g. Rotterdam) or 30 (e.g. Enkhuizen) years old. In some cities the criterion of the protestant religion was added, next to the fact that one had to have the status of citizen (poorter) for at least five years. Apparently the Vroedschap itself could change rules regarding its membership, as for example resolutions from the city of Rotterdam showed (Unger, 1892). The Vroedschap thus was in charge of the rules they applied to their candidate-members.

The core of the associational network thus applied certain conditions. Around this core a second layer of potential members picked up the less important functions, to gain experience in public functions. These functions were for instance governor of orphanages or hospitals. For these functions, of course the approval of the Vroedschap was necessary.

Experience in lower public functions seems to be an important asset for becoming a member of the core. Prak distinguishes a pattern in the regents’ careers and states that there are two critical points, of which membership of the Vroedschap is the first one (Prak, 1985; cf. Kooijmans, 1985). The patterns in the functions that precede membership of the Vroedschap can be interpreted in two different ways. One might think of these functions as less important and therefore not of interest for the core group of the local gentry. However, one might also look at these functions as a way to gain experience. This is at least a convincing point for the last function one fulfills before entering the Vroedschap: schepen (Prak, 1985; Bossaers, 1995). This function is in the centre of local government and perhaps a good position to show of
for the Vroedschap members. These potential members of the Vroedschap can thus be seen as the second layer of the associational network; the core’s antechamber.

Several studies on the local elites show that these minor functions were given to members of important families. Selection thus was based on membership of one of the dominant families in the local elite network. However, because of the rule that restricted membership to one affiliate per family, potential new members sometimes had to wait until his direct relative resigned from the Vroedschap. Related to this marrying the right son or daughter of an influential family could give access to the local gentry and eventually to important and lucrative public functions. A recent study of the richest regents of the seventeenth century shows how important families are very much interrelated (e.g. Zandvliet, 2006).

Once a member of the Vroedschap, a career in local government was highly possible. The second critical point in a public career was the function of burgomaster. This function could help getting functions outside the city, for instance waterboards, the VOC or functions in the estates of Holland and Westvriesland or even the General Estates. For the higher local public functions the Vroedschap thus was the key to success. Nominating someone from outside the Vroedschap for important functions was rare. Without this membership, a public career thus ended at the highest function for which membership of the Vroedschap was not required: schepen (Prak, 1985).

Members of the Vroedschap were appointed for life. Only extreme situations, like misconduct, could lead to exclusion. Moving to another city also led to resignation from the Vroedschap. Of interest for this paper is the fact that the Vroedschap itself could decide on someone’s membership. In this way the Vroedschap was completely in charge of its own composition, in terms of inclusion and exclusion.
In summary we showed that the Vroedschap can be regarded as a central body when it comes to appointing public officials. The Vroedschap’s function as associational network leads to connections with its affiliates that easily undermine the bureaucratic structure. These are not only occupationally oriented, but also carry social aspects. We discussed here the role of family and family relations, which can be regarded as social aspects of the associational network. All this brings us to the conclusion of this paper.

5. Conclusion: Professionalism and Bureaucracy

As showed in above sections, proto-professionalism as well as proto-bureaucratic structures can be found in early-modern local government. It is showed that a city’s bailiff worked in a structure that is to some extent comparable to the Weberian bureaucracy. Next to this we presented the local Vroedschap as a professional network, that is responsible for the appointment or nomination of local functionaries, of which the bailiff is an example.

Apparently both institutional structures apply for early-modern local government. This has implications for understanding these governmental structures and positions of officials within these structures.

Bureaucratic structures, as we have seen, aim at a certain disinterestedness. The expert-knowledge is used for the tasks and interest of the organisation only. The vertical organization leads the officials, who obey the rules of the hierarchy. For professionals this is obviously not the case. Their horizontal orientation of peer control leads to another tension when working in a bureaucratic structure. Tensions between the bureaucratic and professional model are much discussed in modern literature (e.g. Reissman, 1949; Goldberg et al. 1965; Simon, 1976). The models share
the emphasis on expert knowledge, however, a bureaucrat identifies himself with the bureaucratic structure where the professional derives his identity from the professional group he is part of.

In the early-modern local government case we discussed, the same might be the case. The professional approach of the Vroedschap shows that this body is more than the centre of the elite. Of course professionalism and elitism overlap, but the professional approach accepts content as well as control. The Vroedschap selects its members, not only based on symbols, it also takes content related arguments like religion, wisdom and experience, into account. Therefore, the Vroedschap can be seen as an associational network. To be more precise, the Vroedschap combines an occupational network because it controls public occupations, and a social network that plays a role in inclusion and exclusion mechanisms.

Appointment in the structures of early-modern local government appears to be following proto-bureaucratic rules. However, the nominations for these functions are decided in the associational networks. Therefore, analysis of the working of local government based on the bureaucratic model only tells us half of the story. Around these structures a boundary is guarded by an associational network, that controls entry and content. The scheme below shows the bureaucratic structure surrounded by an associational network.
The scheme shows how the mechanism works. For the important functions members of the Vroedschap are recruited, the minor functions are fulfilled by ‘members’ of the second layer. They are selected by the Vroedschap.

This leads to other interesting questions on tensions between bureaucratic and professional structures, and of course one might question the tension itself. It is reasonable to argue there is a tension, because of the different orientations of the two models. These are questions that still play a role in professionalization literature on loyalty today. Finding a way into bureaucracy via an association that functions like a gate keeper immediately reminds us of the American spoils system, where important administrative functions were politically linked to the winner of elections. In this case, the same loyalty problem occurs. Membership of the Vroedschap leads to an official position, instead of a rational procedure carried out by the bureaucracy itself. The difference however is that the Vroedschap is part of the governmental system and
appears to select based on substantive arguments. In that case an interesting figure can be deduced: a professional association at the helm of a bureaucratic structure steering and reproducing public functions.
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