

Almost Different but Not Quite: The Dutch Republic, Poland-Lithuania and the Co- dependency of Centre and Periphery

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Examining seventeenth-century Dutch images of men and boys in Polish-Lithuanian dress, this paper argues that these representations played an important role in rehearsing the status of the United Provinces in the wider world. Poland-Lithuania stood in a peripheral relation to the Dutch Republic: a country at the centre of seventeenth-century world economy. The images addressed in this paper suggest, however, that the periphery despite its economic dependency on the centre made the centre itself dependent on the periphery for its own self-image.



*Otto van der Waeyen in Polish costume; painting by Ferdinand Bol, 1656
(Museum Boijmans)*

Tomasz Grusiecki (PhD McGill 2017) specialises in the study of cultural interactions between Poland-Lithuania and the wider world, focusing on the issues of centre and periphery, cultural liminality, and perceptions of selfhood and alterity. He has published on these subjects in, among others, *The Polish Review*, *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, *Journal of the History of Collections*, and *World Art*, with further studies forthcoming. He is currently preparing a book manuscript, tentatively titled *Nativist Simulacra: Poland-Lithuania and the Contradictions of Early Modern Identity, 1500–1700*.