Sumptuous Memories, Studies in seventeenth-century Dutch tomb sculpture
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Citation for published version (APA):

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On 14 November 1613 the members of the States-General inspected several models for a tomb for William the Silent in the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft. A few months later, on 8 February 1614, they examined the plans submitted by the Amsterdam sculptor Hendrick de Keyser. His proposal was approved four days later, so in the space of only three months the commission was awarded for the most important sepulchral monument erected in the Netherlands in the entire seventeenth century. The paucity of archival records means that we know nothing about the details of the selection procedure, such as the names of the other artists who submitted models in 1613. Since there were very few competent sculptor-architects in the Republic at the time, it is unlikely that there was any serious competition. De Keyser seems to have been the hot favourite from the outset, for he had considerable experience with funerary sculpture. Before receiving the commission in 1614 he had already made three memorials and one tomb, among them the memorial tablet for Admiral Jacob van Heemskerck, which was also ordered by the States-General. Hendrick de Keyser was extremely versatile and ambitious. He has gone down in the history of art not just as the maker of figurative and decorative sculpture and buildings, but also as a designer of stained-glass
windows for churches, lanterns, small bronzes and silverware. As
Amsterdam's official sculptor he headed the municipal mason's yard,
part of the Office of Works, and had assumed most of the duties of the
city architect. From around 1605 he designed almost all the new
buildings in Amsterdam. With his artistic qualities, international
outlook and innovative approach, Hendrick de Keyser had all the
qualifications to make a success of the large and prestigious
commission for the monument to the Prince of Orange (fig. 68).

A tomb for a Protestant prince

It was no light task that the States-General had placed on his
shoulders. He had to design a tomb in accordance with a number of
seemingly contradictory aims. It naturally had to give an impression of
the prince's personal honour, fame and memory while doing justice to
the glory of the young Republic and the position of the States-General
as its sovereign power. In grandeur it was to yield to no princely tomb
abroad, but without borrowing their predominantly Roman Catholic
iconography. In short, De Keyser's charge was to make a Protestant,
republican tomb with a princely dimension, and he acquitted himself
well. He undoubtedly consulted his patrons, and between them they
came up with a Protestant variant of the royal tomb that had evolved in
the second half of the sixteenth century in France, England and
Flanders. It proved to be a remarkably happy compromise between
several opposing demands, and with it De Keyser established himself
once and for all as the country's leading sculptor, although he never
lived to see the tomb finished. When he died on 15 May 1621, his son
Pieter took over the running of his workshop, which completed the
tomb around 1622.

The basis of De Keyser's design was a free-standing canopied tomb
of the type introduced for royalty in neighbouring countries in the
sixteenth century. It was also reasonably well-known through the
engraved designs in Ducerceau's Second livre d'architecture of 1561 and
through a book of prints published by Vredeman de Vries two years
later. The architecture takes the form of a temple or a canopy, which
serves as the support for an iconographic programme glorifying the
dead ruler. He is presented, with or without his wife, on two levels and
in two ways. Within the canopy he is the gisant, recumbent and dead;
outside it he is alive and in full armour. Here, too, there are all sorts of
sculptural details proclaiming his qualities and fame. A standard
element of the programme is the depiction of his virtues in the form of female personifications. It has been pointed out repeatedly that Hendrick de Keyser was inspired by the French royal tomb of Henri II and Catherine de Médicis in the abbey church of St Denis, completed some 40 years before (fig. 69), but English ideas probably also played a role, albeit a lesser one."

There are certainly striking similarities between the French tomb

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69 Francesco Primaticcio and Germain Pilon, *Monument of Henry II and Catherine de Médicis*, 1563-70, Abbey Church, St Denis
and the Prince of Orange’s monument, but the differences are more important. De Keyser broadly followed the French design, borrowing the canopy form, the double depiction of the deceased and the four personifications of his virtues. It also gave him the idea of combining different kinds of marble with bronze. The dead figures on both tombs are portrayed in cool, white marble, their pendants *en vif* in the warmer, golden yellow bronze. De Keyser took a more subtle approach by choosing Italian portoro (“black Italian mixed marble” according to the plans of 1614) for the columns, obelisks and cladding. The golden yellow veins in the black portoro establish a colourful relationship between the black marble niches and the yellowish bronze statues. The use of white Carrara marble for the rest of the architecture and the *gisant* was new for the Netherlands, where it had never before been employed in sculpture on such a scale, as De Keyser was well aware.

The most notable difference between the two tombs lies in the way the live ruler is depicted. The French king and his wife kneel in prayer on the roof of their temple, which was the usual position on royal tombs of the period. The living William the Silent, however, is shown on the front of his monument (fig. 70), not as a *prian* but “assis,” enthroned like a general in ceremonial armour and cast in bronze, thus highlighting his military process, not his piety. The traditional pose of a kneeling ruler sunk in prayer for all eternity was probably unacceptable to the Protestant States-General, being too reminiscent of Roman Catholic ideas about prayer. This resistance would only have been heightened by the fact that the hated Spanish King Philip II had himself, his father Charles V and members of their families portrayed in this way in the basilica of El Escorial.

De Keyser fell back on another visual tradition for the form and position of the seated, living prince – that of the triumphant general. This type of seated commander-in-chief had taken root in Italy back in the second half of the fifteenth century, among others in paintings of triumphal entries. A good example is Piero della Francesca’s *Triumph of Federigo da Montefeltro* (Galeria degli Uffizi), which was painted around 1474. There the mailed general is seated on a triumphal car surrounded by personifications of Fame and four virtues – precisely the same elements as appear on the Delft tomb. They give the front of the monument, in particular, the air of a triumphal arch with the victorious prince seated beneath it. The account of an English traveller who inspected the tomb in 1711 confirms this iconography: “[...] his own Statue sitting under the Triumphall Arch in Brass, behind

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De Keyser may have modelled this triumph iconography on the celebrated triumphal entry into Antwerp of Prince Philip (later King Philip II) in 1549. He may have taken his inspiration from the lavishly illustrated description of the event by Grapheus, with prints by Pieter Coecke van Aelst. One shows the legendary giant Antigonus seated in a classical marbled portal like a Roman general in a pose similar to William’s in Delft (fig. 71). The idea of placing four large obelisks (which themselves symbolise the prince’s glory) on top of the tomb may also have been taken from the entry of 1549, where they crown the triumphal gate honouring Spain as a trading nation (fig. 72). It is very understandable that the tomb embodies such elements from the iconography of triumphs, for they turn it into a mark of honour for the successful general whose actions led directly to the birth of the Dutch Republic. The epitaph speaks of William in similar terms. The two flanking personifications on the front, Libertas and Justitia, expressly give this princely triumph the image of a just struggle for liberty.

The depiction of a seated general later became a recurring theme in Orangist iconography. The combination of the seated likeness of William the Silent and his gisant sometimes gave rise to confusion. A few seventeenth and eighteenth-century visitors to the church thought...
that the seated general was Prince Maurits, William’s son. That misapprehension would have been reinforced not only by the explicit mention of Maurits in the epitaph but also by his international renown as a soldier.

The sculptor demonstrated his artistic bravura with the bronze personification of flying Fama, who balances on the ball of one foot at the back of the tomb (figs. 73, 74). This also struck an English traveller in 1705, who remarked: “ [...] yet the Figure representing Fame is incontrovertibly far superior to all the rest, which is also of Brass. She holds a Trumpet in her Mouth to sound aloud the glorious Achievements of the interred Hero. Let me just add, that this Statue supports itself wholly upon the Toes of the left Foot.” The statue is indeed a very successful depiction of a figure seemingly floating in the air, and as such is a variant of the well-known theme of the flying Mercury. De Keyser undoubtedly knew the much copied Mercurio volante by Giambologna, and possibly also the versions by Willem van Tetrode or the prints by Jan Muller after the large bronze Mercury and Psyche by Adriaen de Vries (fig. 75). The little dog lying at the dead prince’s feet establishes a playful link between Fama and the marble
effigy. In its traditional role as a symbol of loyalty it is looking up at Fama a little nervously, as if she has woken him with her trumpet blast (fig. 74, 76). With this anecdotal motif De Keyser subtly breached the tomb’s air of decorum and breathed new life into a traditional sepulchral motif.

There is a clear departure from foreign funerary traditions in the depiction of the dead prince. The effigies on the French royal tombs in St Denis lie there as “transis,” stripped of all the paraphernalia associated with their position in life. In contrast to the priants on top of the tomb, the recumbent bodies are semi-nude and humbled in their shrouds to drive home the lesson that all men are mortal and the body just a perishable husk. Their arms are crossed on their breasts in a way that mirrored the contemporary practice of laying out the dead in state. All the other royal tombs of the period, such as those in Westminster Abbey, which De Keyser certainly saw during his visit to London, and in Roskilde in Denmark, present the deceased less realistically, with folded hands as if turned to stone in mid-prayer. According to the plans, De Keyser had the choice of depicting the prince “clothed, clad in armour, or in a prince’s gown.” He opted for the latter. William of Orange lies on his deathbed in his nightgown with slippers on his feet and an embroidered nightcap on his head (figs. 76, 77, 78). A pamphlet of 1621 published on the death of Louise de Coligny, William’s widow, confirms the informal nature of the clothing in its description of the tomb, which was nearing completion. “Lying on the tomb on a slab of fine touchstone, hewn most artfully from life in white marble, is the aforesaid Lord Prince in his gown and daily attire.” His “daily” doublet is partly unbuttoned, the meaning of which is uncertain but which certainly heightens the informality of the gisant. The motif may be associated with the superstition that the soul could leave the body more easily if the deceased’s clothes were unbuttoned. If that is so it reinforces the idea that the prince is portrayed on his deathbed, shortly after breathing his last. The half-open eyes also suggest a moment shortly after death and before the body was formally laid out and placed on a bier. This is probably how the prince’s body was indeed dressed as he lay in state for viewing by the public in the weeks leading up to the funeral. Such night attire, which could be construed as bad form, might be a
reference to sleep as a metaphor of death. De Keyser may have drawn his inspiration from sixteenth-century French and English tombs on which the deceased is explicitly depicted as if asleep. It is interesting to note that the States-General decided on a similar form of public lying-in-state after the death of Prince Maurits: "[...] to do the same in pomp and solemnity, so that all desirous of doing so could at least be admitted to see him lying on his bed, clad in his nightgown." De Keyser laid William of Orange's arms beside the body, which heightens the impression of someone who had peacefully passed away. In doing so, the sculptor, whether or not prompted by his patrons, gave shape to a new, realistic depiction of the deceased on his tomb. The traditional *gisant* was stripped of its Roman Catholic motif of prayer without completely eliminating the aspect of the hope of resurrection. The eternally sleeping prince forms a sensitive contrast with the triumphant, seated general on the front of the tomb.

From the Italo-French tradition of royal tombs, once again notably that of Henri II, came the idea of placing bronze personifications of virtues at the corners of the tomb. However, De Keyser departed from his models by incorporating them more into the architecture, situating them in diagonally placed niches. These "four female statues, each six feet high" ("vier vrouwenbeelden van bronce elcx ses voeten hooch"), as the plans put it, are a complete departure from the iconographic
tradition. The figures at the corners of Henry II's tomb represent the
four cardinal virtues of Justice, Fortitude, Prudence and Temperance.
Taken in conjunction with the three theological virtues in reliefs at the
bottom of the tomb they formed, as it were, a basis for good, Roman
Catholic kingship. The personifications in Delft cannot be construed
exclusively as personal virtues but as symbols of wider political ideals.38

Hendrick de Keyser,
Monument of William of
Orange, detail of the effigy,
1614-22, white Carrara
marble, Nieuwe Kerk, Delft
De Keyser and his patrons took Justitia and Fortitudo from the classical doctrine of virtues, but paired them with Religio and Libertas (figs. 79-82). Religion and liberty, which were the stakes in the Dutch uprising against Spanish rule, were thus very fitting for the tomb of the leader of the Revolt. Moreover, both concepts, along with Fortitudo and Justitia were regarded in early seventeenth-century political theory as the foundations of the state. The tomb derives its republican character in part from the striking combination of these four concepts. The iconography gives it a political slant that underscored the legitimate sovereign nature of the young Republic. Alongside personal praise of the prince, the tomb embodies a topical political ideology that made it an exceptional and carefully conceived variant of the traditional royal tomb. However, it was a republican subtlety that went over the heads of foreigner travellers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for the four women were invariably seen as depicting the personal virtues of the Prince of Orange and, as far as we know, never as allusions to the principles underpinning the Dutch Republic.

The political significance of the tomb is echoed in the epitaph, in which William of Orange is hailed as *Pater patriae*, father of his
country. With its roots in ancient Rome, it was an honorific title of a decidedly republican stamp. In Rome it was first formally conferred on the hero Camillus for his presumed role in defending the city against the invading Gauls, and was later bestowed on Cicero for his efforts in thwarting the Catiline conspiracy. The title gained a new lease of life in Italy in the fifteenth century when the republican city-state Florence awarded it to its great leader Cosimo de' Medici after his death in 1464. The Signoria was well aware of the classical and republican nature of the initiative, which was never repeated in Florence. Elsewhere in Italy, Niccolò II d'Este of Ferrara and the Genoese admiral Andrea Doria were honoured with the epithet. Following the Roman example, the title was conferred on remarkable and wise men who had rescued a republic from a perilous situation. It accordingly has a dual significance, referring on the one hand to the saving of the state by the recipient, while on the other hand the “fatherhood of the state” was associated with the just leadership and authority of a *paterfamilias*.

The Delft epitaph was written around 1620 by Constantijn Huygens,
who proudly announces that he was chosen in preference to Daniël Heinsius and Hugo Grotius. Huygens undoubtedly knew the Florentine example of proclaiming Cosimo de'Medici *Pater patriae* from a portrait medallion belonging to his friend Jacob II de Gheyn, who made engravings of this and five others in his collection. It is inconceivable, though, that Huygens introduced the concept on his own, given its political implications.

The decision of the States-General to honour William the Silent as *Pater patriae* with a public tomb cannot be seen in isolation from this republican tradition. By doing so it placed itself firmly among the ranks of famous republics, from Rome to Florence, thus affirming its own role as a sovereign power. However, it went a step further than its predecessors by building a tomb for William, the first one ever erected at public expense for a father of his country. Even the commission for the tomb of Cosimo de' Medici, who is called *Pater patriae* in the epitaph in the floor of the church of San Lorenzo, was not a state but a family affair.
The Protestant nature of the princely tomb designed by De Keyser was accentuated even further by placing it in the former chancel of the church, on the spot once occupied by the Roman Catholic high altar, although that location was also a continuation of the age-old custom of burial ad sanctos. Placing the tomb of the Prince of Orange in what had once been the central focus of the Catholic liturgy implicitly accorded him the role of a Protestant martyr for his fatherland. The interment of his heart in the centre of the tomb in 1620 by his widow Louise de Coligny gave it the nature of a monumental, secularised reliquary. Like late medieval shrines, it was a richly ornamented, architectonic receptacle for the well-nigh sacred remains of the nation’s first leader. The Catholic saint had made way for the Protestant hero.
Reputation

A new type of tomb executed in such costly materials and of such a high artistic standard – in fact one of the most modern tombs of its day – could not fail to make a deep impression on contemporaries both at home and abroad. Numerous travel journals from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries attest to this, some of them dating from only shortly after the tomb was erected. In addition, prints of it were published, and between 1650 and 1670 it featured very regularly in paintings and even on Delftware (fig. 83). It seems fair to assume that this fashion was dictated by the political climate at the time, the First Stadholderless Period, when republican views predominated. The monument then became a symbol *par excellence* of the Orange dynasty and a focus for Orangist sentiments. Pieter Bor, in his *Nederlandsche oorlogen* of 1621, extolled the virtues of the almost finished tomb, and
went so far as to praise its maker as “that peerless, celebrated artist, architect and sculptor renowned throughout Europe, Master Hendrick de Keyser” (emphasis added).53

Abroad, in the German countries in particular, the tomb was soon recognised as the most important Protestant example of a royal tomb. It was immediately imitated in that of the Protestant Joachim-Ernst, Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach (1583-1623) by Abraham Grass, which was erected between 1626 and 1632 in the abbey church of Heilsbronn (fig. 84). Although far simpler in design (and also modified in the course of the seventeenth century), the tomb shows a bronze gisant laid out in the same way as William of Orange. The margrave, clad in armour, has his arms at his sides. By his head is a bronze, hovering Fama blowing her trumpet, who would be inconceivable without the example in Delft. The four mourning putti in bronze seated on the edge of the tomb were also taken from De Keyser’s ensemble. The margrave had close ties with the Dutch Republic. He was trained in the art of war by Prince Maurits, and stayed in the Netherlands in 1601 and 1602, and from 1604 to 1608 as a soldier and diplomat in the service of the Republic. Upon returning to his homeland he became a leading champion of the Protestant cause, and played a prominent part in the Protestant alliance of German nobles.54

An echo of the gisant of William of Orange is found in the small model of 1633 executed in Kelheim stone by Georg Schweigger of the deceased Swedish king, Gustav II Adolf, one of the leaders of the Protestant forces in the Thirty Years’ War (fig. 85).55 It was probably made in the context of Swedish plans to erect a monument with the Protestant king’s likeness near Lützen, where he fell in battle.56 As in Delft, one is struck by the complete absence of the pathos that so often characterises Catholic royal tomb sculpture. There is also the same preference for realism. William of Orange is portrayed in informal dress, the Swedish king is girded for war. Instead of regalia he holds a pistol in his right hand as a token of his death on the battlefield.

When Hendrick de Keyser died in 1621, his son Pieter was left to finish the work on the Delft tomb. Pieter de Keyser was both the literal and symbolic heir of the workshop which had supplied the first really new type of tomb for a Protestant prince. He was therefore solemnly bound to follow the course charted by his father.57 In the words of a contemporary, Pieter was “a young man in the prime of life, nurtured in architecture in his father’s bosom, whose footsteps he assiduously emulates and follows.”58
The tomb of Willem Lodewijk of Nassau in Leeuwarden

Pieter de Keyser soon got the chance to prove himself. Prince Maurits died in 1625, but no state tomb was ordered for him. In a sense his inclusion in the epitaph in Delft was his interment. De Keyser did, however, receive a commission for a similar tomb as a result of the death in 1620 of the first Frisian stadholder, Willem Lodewijk of Nassau, a nephew of William the Silent. It was ordered by the States assembly of Friesland, and was to be installed in the choir of the Great Church in Leeuwarden. In part the States was acting in the spirit of the deceased, for Willem Lodewijk had stipulated in his will of 1617 that he was to be buried beside his wife. He also left 3,000 guilders for an “Epitaphio oben in den Mauer” (Memorial on the wall), which may have been another reason for the States’ initiative. Pieter de Keyser delivered the tomb in 1625, so he must have received the commission some years earlier, probably in 1622 or 1623, shortly after finishing the Delft tomb. Sadly it was totally destroyed by members of the anti-stadholder Patriot faction in 1795. Today it is known only from a detailed engraving in Salomon de Bray’s Architectura moderna of 1631 and from a few general descriptions (figs. 86, 87). Information about the genesis of this tomb, too, is very scant.

The illustration in the Architectura moderna demonstrates that Pieter de Keyser delivered a great deal more than the “Epitaphio oben in den Mauer” mentioned in the stadholder’s will. De Bray’s accompanying text tells us that it was commissioned by the States of Friesland and that Pieter was responsible for the design but left the execution to an unnamed “former pupil.” The engraving shows that it was a wall tomb with a sarcophagus-shaped podium and a fairly austere architectonic structure crowned with an arched, broken-bed pediment flanked by volute-shaped sides. Willem Lodewijk knelt on a cushion and was turned slightly towards the viewer. He wore a ceremonial suit of armour with his helmet beside him on the left and his gauntlets on the right. He
was flanked by two free-standing personifications of virtues, to the left Fortitudo, to the right Prudentia. Although both belonged to the traditional pantheon of a ruler’s virtues, contemporaries explicitly attached them to the Frisian stadholder. Ubbo Emmius for example, in his biography of Willem Lodewijk published in 1621, praised his wisdom, courage, resolve and sense of justice. On the rear wall of the tomb were eight family coats of arms and an angel’s head. The moulding at the top was decorated with a laurelled skull and two
mascarons, probably Medusa heads as in Delft. The stadholder’s coat of arms was displayed in a lobate cartouche in the middle of the pediment, while the arched sides were draped with two suits of armour and other trophies. The design clearly betrays Pieter de Keyser’s debt to his father. Various motifs immediately recall the Delft tomb, such as the broken pediment, the auricular work with the coat of arms and the mascarons. Trophies had also been planned for the top of the Delft tomb, and feature in early depictions of it, but were eventually omitted for some unknown reason. The austere architecture was also rooted in the oeuvre of Hendrick de Keyser, in whose facade and gateway designs one finds closely related motifs and forms.

The kneeling count

Count Willem Lodewijk’s kneeling pose is both surprising and original. In Delft, Hendrick de Keyser had deliberately broken with this tradition of depicting a ruler as a priand, but his son opted to follow it in Leeuwarden, although that does not mean to say that he was reverting to Roman Catholic sepulchral traditions. Despite its Catholic roots and possibly Papist connotations, the kneeling motif was used sporadically on tombs in the Republic, such as those of Willem van der Rijt and Judith Aeswijn (Bergen op Zoom, 1625) and François van Aerssen and his wife (Sommelsdijk, c. 1642, now demolished, figs. 88, 89). The intention in both cases was to portray the deceased’s faith and trust in God and not, as in the Catholic tradition, the eternal prayer for salvation. The epitaph on the Van der Rijt tomb, while alluding directly to the poses of the dead couple, is vague about the intention of their prayers – perhaps deliberately so. The epitaph makes the praying figures more of an example for the living: “Hope is not placed in God in vain, and prayers, when heartfelt, will surely avail.” Figures kneeling in prayer are regularly found on tombs in neighbouring Protestant countries, and were actually widespread in
Monument of Willem van de Rijt and Judith van Aeswijn, photograph taken after the extensive restoration of 1984, 1625-41, red Belgian marble, Doornik limestone, Savonnières, Bentheim sandstone and touchstone, Grote Kerk, Bergen op Zoom

sixteenth and seventeenth-century England, not least because of the work of emigré Flemish sculptors. An early eighteenth-century poem about Westminster Abbey sums up this development as follows:

Upon their backs the ancient Statues lie,  
Devoutly fix'd, with Hands uplifted high,  
Intreating Pray'rs of all the passers-by.  
At length they changed the Posture by degrees,  
And plac'd the Marble Vot'ry on its knees,  
There Warriors rough devoutly Heav'n adore,  
And Statesmen kneel who never knelt before.
Nor were there any great objections to this visual form in Lutheran countries, despite Luther’s rejection of intercessory prayer as a way of saving the souls of the dead. The mediation of the Virgin and saints for the salvation of souls was also unacceptable, but Christ’s importance as intercessor between God and man was due to his crucial role in the story of redemption. The many priants on Lutheran tombs and painted and sculpted memorials accordingly express first and foremost the religious conviction of the deceased, and are often combined with scenes from Christ’s Crucifixion or Resurrection. While their Roman Catholic precursors are above all devotional, the praying Lutherans are primarily confessional. Numerous tombs with priants were built in northern and central Germany in the late sixteenth century, and there too, as in England, emigrants from the Low Countries played a significant part in their spread. One of the earliest seems to have been Cornelis Floris’s tomb for Duke Albrecht of Brandenburg in Königsberg.

The priant of Count Willem Lodewijk was not a direct successor to these sixteenth and seventeenth-century worshippers. The Frisian stadholder may be kneeling, but that is as far as the resemblance
between these priants goes. His pose is far more expressive. He has not joined his hands in prayer; the right one is pressed against his breast, while the other is extended diagonally forwards. The face is raised to the heavens. The count emerges frontally from the tomb, whereas the priants in most wall tombs remain within the enclosing architecture and are actually turned away from the viewer. Finally, there is no priedieu or prayer-book, which are stock motifs on priant tombs. This deviant form is not unique, and was certainly not introduced by Pieter de Keyser, even if the Leeuwarden tomb was one of the early versions. De Keyser’s models were to be found in Germany. In the choir of the Marienkirche in Freiberg, Saxony, is one of Europe’s most grandiose family mausoleums, created between 1559 and 1594: the mortuary chapel of the electors of Saxony. Standing in the middle is the tomb of Elector Moritz, which was executed by an international group of artists between 1559 and 1563 (fig. 90). It was designed by Italians (the De Thola brothers) and executed by the Antwerp sculptor Anton van Zerroen. Following the example of the royal tombs in Innsbruck and St Denis, this Lutheran tomb was
crowned with a prian. In a highly specific and personal variant of the traditional figure praying in perpetuity, the elector is shown gazing up at heaven with his left hand outstretched. In his right hand he holds a sword that rests on his shoulder. The meaning of this unusual iconography is made clear by the realistic, rocky ground on which Moritz is kneeling. He died fighting for the Protestant cause in the Battle of Sievershausen, and he is shown here on the battlefield, giving thanks to God for his victory. In other words, he is presented as a Protestant martyr in a fictive but recognisable pose: the true Christian ruler and defender of the Lutheran faith. Between 1589 and 1594 six wall tombs for Elector Augustus and his family were erected around

91 Giovanni Maria Nosseni, Carlo de Cesare and others, *Monuments of the members of the ducal family of Saxony*, 1589-94, Marienkirche, Freiberg
this monument (fig. 91). The kneeling bronze sculptures of this dynastic ensemble in their niches face the life-sized statue of the resurrected, triumphant Christ. The women are depicted as priants, but the poses of the male members of this devout gathering are derived directly from the kneeling statue of Elector Moritz, although the gestures they make with their hands are sometimes different and more varied. The completion of this electoral ensemble made this the first princely, Protestant mausoleum.

The gestures, kneeling poses and frontal placement of the figures against shallow niches make for a very striking similarity between this Saxon monument and Pieter de Keyser's wall tomb for Count Willem Lodewijk. Details like the cushions on which they are kneeling and the helmets and gauntlets laid to one side heighten the correspondence. It is by no means impossible that Pieter de Keyser or his Frisian patrons were inspired by this important and religiously unimpeachable mausoleum, given its huge reputation. The Freiberg tombs became an obligatory stop on every traveller's itinerary soon after they were completed, and were not unknown in the Dutch Republic as a monumental example of Protestant court art. Contributing to their fame were the many printed descriptions published in the seventeenth century, among them the Kurtze Beschreibung of 1619, which contained an engraving of the tombs. There were good dynastic grounds for the court of the Frisian stadholders to look to Saxony for cultural inspiration. Willem Lodewijk was directly related to the Saxon house through his wife, Anna of Orange, who was a granddaughter of Elector Moritz. However, it is unclear whether Pieter de Keyser was himself responsible for the introduction of this new, Protestant priant in the Netherlands, as suggested in the Architectura moderna, and if so whether he had seen the Freiberg mausoleum with his own eyes. It is most likely that was supplied with information by advisers from Frisian court circles or from the States assembly.

Contemporaries of the Frisian stadholder would have had little doubt about the connotations of Willem Lodewijk's pose and body language. The kneeling count had not been turned to stone in eternal prayer; his pose was ceremonial in nature, and was standard procedure at the court of the Spanish Habsburgs when meeting a ruler. According to that code of conduct, the gesture of kneeling with one's hand on one's heart expressed humility and submission. In the statuary group by Baccio Bandinelli and Giovanni Caccini of Pope Clement VII crowning Charles V emperor (Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, 1542-1595) the latter is
shown in this humble pose.\textsuperscript{84} The persistence of this formula is well illustrated by the identical gesture that King Carlos of Spain made in 1997 when visiting the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{85} In an allegory by Abraham van den Tempel of 1651, the personification of Liberty kneels in the same humble way at the feet of the City Maiden of Leiden as she welcomes the personification of the cloth industry (fig. 92).\textsuperscript{86} Submission is also the meaning of the manual gesture in Rembrandt’s portrait of the preacher Johannes Uytenbogaert. Laying one’s hand on one’s heart could also lend weight to an oath of fealty, as happened in 1558 when William of Orange, standing before the imperial \textit{chapelle ardente} during the funeral of Charles V in Brussels, struck himself on the breast to express his loyalty to Philip II as his new ruler.\textsuperscript{87} The pose was also used on the stage. In 1761 James Burgh prescribed the gesture of placing the right hand on the chest for a passage in which the actor proclaimed his faith in eternal life.\textsuperscript{88} It is found in adoration scenes from the second quarter of the seventeenth century in Roman Catholic, Flemish sepulchral art, an example being the tomb of Bishop Cruesen in Mechelen (1669), where it is directed towards the risen Christ as the Redeemer (fig. 13).\textsuperscript{89}

Pieter de Keyser’s design differs from all the other related tombs in lacking a statue of Christ, whose presence is merely suggested by Willem Lodewijk’s upward gaze and gesture. The invisibility of the divine mystery, the absence of an image of Christ, gives the Leeuwarden tomb a specifically Calvinist aspect. The Frisian count’s gesture and pose express his submission and fidelity to the invisible God, so he is presented above all as a professing, submissive Christian ruler; as the “pious hero,” in the words of Isaac da Costa, and not in his role as a military commander, as his uncle is in Delft, nor as a supplicant for intercession.\textsuperscript{90} The humble pose also marks Willem Lodewijk as a wise ruler, for humility was regarded as the root of all virtues.\textsuperscript{91}

\textbf{Earlier design}.

A drawing, hitherto unpublished and unstudied, from an early stage in the design process, shows that Pieter de Keyser originally envisaged a tomb that was closer to the one in Delft in its iconography and splendour.\textsuperscript{92} The drawing is a side view of the monument, which would have stood 22 Amsterdam feet high (fig. 93). The seventeenth-century inscription “PH Lewarden” confirms that it was made by Pieter Hendricksz (de Keyser) and was for the tomb of the Frisian
stadholder. The letter A on the drawing suggests that there was a second one, labelled B, of the front elevation. Assuming that the edifice was symmetrical, the side view provides some clues as to the form of the full design.

The tomb would have consisted of a black marble portico of Doric columns supporting a pediment. The portico was flanked by two marble statues of personified virtues (only Prudentia with her mirror and snake is recognisable), while a third (Justitia, judging by the sword) topped the pediment, which evidently had a broken apex. The missing statue was probably of Fortitudo, which was the most appropriate virtue for a military man and is the one that stood on the tomb that was eventually erected. The choice of these virtues corresponds to the image presented in the panegyric literature about the stadholder, and would have been made by the States of Friesland. On either side of the pediment was a putto. The sides of the entablature, which were probably to have been made of white marble, like the pedestals and capitals of the columns, contain reliefs with trophies of arms. Willem Lodewijk’s sarcophagus was to be sideways on to the viewer beneath the portico, with him lying on it as a gisant. At the head or foot of the tomb De Keyser drew the seated stadholder in ceremonial armour with his commander’s baton. However, this lateral position is not very satisfactory, and raises the question of what was planned for the other side. The epitaph would probably have been

92 Abraham van den Tempel, *Liberty kneeling at the feet of the City Maiden of Leiden*, 1651, canvas, Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden
Pieter de Keyser, *Design for the monument of Willem Lodewijk van Nassau* (side view), c. 1622-23, pen and ink, Nationaal Archief, The Hague
placed on the rear wall above the tomb, together with Willem Lodewijk's family coats of arms. Pieter de Keyser quite clearly derived the essence of this design from the tomb of the William of Orange. The double representation of the deceased as a gisant on the tomb and seated as a military commander was his father's invention. The virtues on their tall pedestals placed outside the architecture also recall the Delft work. The lofty, austere architecture, however, gives Pieter's design a more classical look than his father's, which can be seen as a development of the burgeoning Classicism of Hendrick de Keyser's final years. 95

One can only speculate why this design was never executed. It seems obvious that financial constraints played a part, given the much smaller scale of the completed tomb. At over six meters high, the first version is more than a third higher than the second one. 96 It was probably De Keyser's patrons who opted for a reduced and thus less expensive design containing just one statue of Willem Lodewijk, two personified virtues instead of three, and an architectural setting that was lower and shallower. However, it is also conceivable that the States of Friesland wanted to avoid too great a resemblance to the tomb in Delft. The sculptor achieved this by showing the count kneeling. It was the stadholder's military qualities that were the focus in the earlier design, but now they were replaced by the religious, eschatological aspect. That emphasis fitted in perfectly with the picture that contemporaries paint of Willem Lodewijk as an avowed and extremely pious Protestant. Ubbo Emmius described him in his 1621 biography as deeply devoted to the true faith, and spoke of his "matchless piety," reporting among other things that he served as a model for others in public and private prayer. 97 A small military treatise of 1674 with a commentary by the count ends with his words, which could almost be taken for a motto: "Piety is the foundation of all virtues and the fount of all good things." 98 This is the miles Christianus speaking, which is precisely how he is depicted on his tomb.

That both the patrons and the sculptor were aware of a connection between the Leeuwarden and Delft tombs is also suggested by the Architectura moderna, in which they are grouped together as the only examples of sepulchral art; all the other tombs and memorials from the De Keyser workshop are missing. The chronology of the genesis of the two tombs also leads one to suspect that the Delft tomb kindled the Frisian desire for a monument honouring their own stadholder, for it was ordered around 1623, when William the Silent's tomb was nearing completion.

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Count Willem Lodewijk’s exceptional position in Friesland, paralleling William the Silent’s in other provinces of the Republic, also lends some support to the idea that there was an element of competitive patronage between province and state. Three years after William was made stadholder in 1580, his nephew the young Count of Nassau was appointed his northern deputy with the title of lieutenant-governor at the request of the States of Friesland. William’s death in 1584 opened the way for Willem Lodewijk to become stadholder of Friesland, which happened in October that year. He was also governor of the Groningen Ommelanden. As commander of the armies in the northern provinces he played the key role in freeing Friesland from Spanish rule, and as stadholder he contributed to the concord and development of the province. Following William the Silent’s example in founding Leiden University, Willem Lodewijk was active in establishing an academy at Franeker. As a consequence of his great contribution and devotion to Frisian interests, Willem Lodewijk was posthumously honoured with the epithet “our father,” or “us heit” in Frisian, a provincial and less formal equivalent of the Pater patriae bestowed on William the Silent. Unlike the Prince of Orange, Willem Lodewijk’s honorary title was never officially conferred on him. As Jacobus Trigland put it in his Kerckelijcke geschiedenissen of 1650: “He was therefore called and honoured by the Frisians with the name of father, or heit as they say in their language.” The first time that the count was called “Father” was probably in the poem written by Jan Starter in 1621 to accompany the engraving of his funeral cortège: “The Father who constantly ensured that the state flourished in harmony and peace through his far-sighted care.” The same term is also used in the Architectura moderna: “Those [the States] of Friesland, being no less grateful and indebted to their protector and father, his Princely Grace Count Willem of Nassau [...], some time later ordered this present costly tomb to be made and erected for him.” This formulation, which follows immediately after the description of the Delft tomb, seems to suggest that the States of Friesland felt the need to honour their father of his country in the same way as the States-General had commemorated William of Orange. The honorific “Father,” however, lacks the official status of Pater patriae, as demonstrated by the absence of any reference to it in the count’s epitaph. All the same, “us heit” undoubtedly aroused the same sentiments among the Frisians as “father of his country” did on a national level, so in a sense Count Willem Lodewijk was an alter William of Orange,” as was confirmed by the erection of his tomb.
The monument may also have served to support the latent Nassau claims to William of Orange’s legacy. Prince Maurits had stipulated in 1621 that his half-brother Frederik Hendrik was to be his sole heir, but only if he could guarantee the continuity of the Orange dynasty. If he died without producing a male heir the legacy would pass to the stadholders of Friesland. Frederik Hendrik finally married in 1625, when the Leeuwarden tomb was almost finished, thereby considerably reducing the chances of the Friesland stadholders of coming into their inheritance. In the light of this testamentary issue between the houses of Orange and Nassau, the erection of Count Willem Lodewijk’s tomb was an almost inevitable response to the one in Delft. The permanent presentation of Willem Lodewijk as a Nassau hero stressed the public image and “honour and dignity” of the Nassau branch of the family in
no uncertain terms, thus strengthening the dormant claim to William
the Silent’s legacy.\textsuperscript{105}

Given this background, Pieter de Keyser’s tomb should be seen as an
expression of Frisian pride, as a fitting tribute to the “founder of
Friesland’s independence,” and finally as a public expression of
support for the dynastic interests of the Nassaus.

Sweden

After the completion of the Leeuwarden commission there is only one
tomb which is known for certain to have been designed and executed
by Pieter de Keyser and his workshop, and that is the one for the
Swedish nobleman Erik Soop (1592-1632).\textsuperscript{106} According to the epitaph,
this large wall tomb was erected in 1637. It was originally in the
chancel of Skara Cathedral in central Sweden, but in the course of
several restoration programmes it was moved all around the church
(fig. 94).\textsuperscript{107} It was probably ordered several years previously, around
1634-1635, and apparently cost 6,000 Reichsthalers in ready money.\textsuperscript{108}
It was commissioned by Anna Posse, the widow of Erik Soop of
Bjurum and Sjöheras, knight, who died on 15 March 1632. Soop was a
celebrated army commander in the Thirty Years’ War whose greatest
feat of arms was to save the life of King Gustav II Adolf on the field of
battle in 1629.\textsuperscript{109} This high point of his military career is depicted in
a relief on the rear wall of the tomb. Anna Posse became the richest
woman in Sweden after her husband’s death, and was on a very close
footing with the mightiest in the land.\textsuperscript{110} The commission for the tomb,
which was to be one of the most important and modern in the country,
was fully in accord with the couple’s status, and reflected Anna’s
prominent position in Sweden. She also had herself portrayed on the
tomb, lying behind her husband (fig. 95). Pieter de Keyser signed it in
full: \textit{OPERA PETRI KEISER [...] ODIER [...] AMSTERDAM PIETAS [...]}
\textit{LOD [...]} – a signature which was difficult enough to read back in 1915
and has now largely disappeared.\textsuperscript{111} The reason for this rather unusual
display of artistic self-awareness was undoubtedly that it was a
commission from abroad, which would account for Pieter de Keyser
adding the name of Amsterdam to his signature.\textsuperscript{112} It is impossible to
say for certain how he came by this foreign commission. The
international outlook and reputation of the De Keyser workshop would
surely have played a part, but the commission should also be viewed in
the context of the close cultural and trading ties that existed between
the Dutch Republic and the Baltic countries in this period.\textsuperscript{13}

It was just one of a series of deliveries and work by Amsterdam sculptors for Scandinavian and north German patrons around this time. Around 1619 Hendrick de Keyser had worked for the Frederiksborg palace of Denmark’s King Christian IV, together with the royal architect, the Dutchman Laurens van Steenwinckel.\textsuperscript{14} The Van Steenwinckels were linked to the Amsterdam mason’s yard in various ways. Laurens’s brother Hans was active in Hendrick de Keyser’s shop in 1619, and ten years later Pieter de Keyser delivered several statues to him after he had succeeded his brother as court architect in Copenhagen.\textsuperscript{15} Two Van Steenwinckel girls had married into the Van Delft family, who were also prominent Amsterdam masons and stone-merchants. In 1629, Hans van Steenwinckel was dealing in stone in Copenhagen and Kalmar together with his brother-
in-law Dirck van Delft. In 1633, Pieter van Delft and Aris Claesz of Haarlem supplied the memorial for the Lübeck councilor Johan Füchting and his wife (fig. 34). Four years previously the same Aris Claesz had executed the sandstone tomb of the Swede Gustav Banér in Uppsala Cathedral (fig. 96). He had also been involved in the building of Stockholm Castle and the execution of other Swedish tombs since 1622. It is unlikely, incidentally, that Aris Claesz was a son of Claes Adriaensz van Delft, who had been a “mason and assistant” of Hendrick de Keyser’s in 1612. In a sense, the activities of Aris Claesz and Pieter de Keyser in Sweden brought to a close the long period during which the Dutch completely dominated Swedish architecture and sculpture. The names are known of at least 20 Dutch masons and sculptors who worked in Sweden during that time.

There is no indication that there was any direct contact between Erik Soop or his wife and the Dutch Republic. When the order was placed, around 1635, cultural relations between Sweden and the Netherlands were very close indeed. In 1635, for instance, the Delft tapestry weaver Frans Spiering was appointed ambassador for the Swedish crown in the Republic, after acting as art agent and dealer for King Gustav II Adolf and Queen Christina for many years. In May that year the Swedish chancellor Axel Oxenstierna was staying in Amsterdam and The Hague. It is not impossible that during that visit the chancellor himself or someone in his retinue got in touch with Pieter de Keyser on behalf of Soop’s widow, for Anna Posse knew Oxenstierna personally. Moreover, the Soop and Posse families were well represented in the highest circles in Sweden. Oxenstierna was also in touch with the Dutch merchant Lodewijk de Geer, who had major interests in Sweden’s copper and iron mines and its armaments industry. Since there were also connections between the De Geers and the De Keyser workshop, Lodewijk de Geer may have been the trait d’union between the Swedes and the Amsterdam shop.

Pieter de Keyser dusted off the ambitious, unexecuted design he had made 12 years earlier for Leeuwarden, which is known only from the drawing discussed above (fig. 93). The similarities between it and the tomb in Skara are striking. Both are wall tombs in white and black marble with a canopy supported by Doric columns and pilasters. The drawing was for a structure 22 Amsterdam feet high, which corresponds to the height of 7.2 meters of the Soop tomb. There are, of course, differences, chiefly in the figurative decoration and the iconographic programme. The seated figure was omitted, and the three personifications of virtues beside and on top of the first Leeuwarden
design were moved to the pediment. This made room for two standing, polychromed statues of Mars and Minerva, which today stand in front of the tomb on separate pedestals (figs. 97, 98). At one stage they were regarded as later additions, probably because of their rather awkward position half in front of the tomb.  

It is evident from the style of the statues, however, that there is every reason to attribute them to Pieter de Keyser. Moreover, the shape of their pedestals is identical to the baluster-shaped one in the drawing. In the original arrangement of the tomb in the chancel of Skara Cathedral the statues were probably better integrated in the architecture of the tomb, along the lines of Prudentia in the design. There was not enough room in the narrow side chapel in which the tomb stood until its most recent restoration, so Mars and Minerva had to be moved closer together, disturbing the view of the tomb.

Pieter de Keyser followed the traditional Roman Catholic and
Lutheran laid-out *gisant* form for the portrayal of the bodies of Erik Soop and Anna Posse, with the arms crossed on the breast and the eyes open. The modern iconography of the informal *gisant* developed by his father in Delft, dressed for bed with closed eyes and the arms by the sides, was evidently considered unbecoming in Sweden. There is a very close correspondence between the *gisant* of Anna Posse and that of her namesake in Stockholm’s Storkyrkan (Church of St Nicholas) on the 1631 tomb of Lars Skytte.\(^{128}\) Both women are lying in long shrouds and wear the same fashion. It is possible that Pieter de Keyser received instructions in the form of drawings of that tomb when he was awarded the contract for Skara, just as he was doubtless given drawn or painted portraits of Erik Soop and his widow so that he could make the *gisants* a good likeness.

The Swedish commission demonstrates that the De Keyser shop still had a great reputation after 1625. Pieter was undoubtedly chosen for
the Skara tomb because of the success of those in Delft and Leeuwarden, so it is a little disappointing that despite the modern, Classicist nature of the Soop tomb, it had no clear influence on works elsewhere in Sweden. Pieter de Keyser did not receive any more commissions from Scandinavia, nor was there any imitation by local sculptors. Back in the Dutch Republic, though, his shop remained the market leader until around 1640 for high-quality tomb sculpture. However, there are doubts about Pieter de Keyser’s share in the execution of the sculptures that left his shop. There is a great deal of evidence that he occupied himself mainly with the organisation of the shop and making designs. Various of his employees were responsible for making the actual sculptures, and it is possible that work was farmed out to colleagues. The close ties within the Amsterdam masons’ community certainly offered every opportunity to do so.

Some such state of affairs would explain why De Keyser is increasingly mentioned in documents after 1635 as a merchant in ashlar and bluestone instead of as a sculptor or stonemason. It would explain the existence of several tombs from the second quarter of the seventeenth century whose iconography, form and use of materials appear to have common roots in the De Keyser workshop, although their style and workmanship differ markedly. This organisation of labour by putting work out to contract was already being used for the Leeuwarden tomb, and was repeated in 1636, for example, for the commission for a pulpit for the Lutheran church in Hamburg. On the other hand, De Keyser’s shop was only involved in the execution of the tomb of the naval hero Piet Hein in the Oude Kerk in Delft. The design for that extremely austere, Classicist monument, with the possible exception of the gisant (fig. 99) is attributed to a Hague architect, perhaps Bartholomeus van Bassen or Arent van

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99 Pieter de Keyser, *Effigy of Piet Hein on his monument*, 1638, white Carrara marble, Oude Kerk, Delft
Hendrick or Pieter de Keyser (?), Epitaph of Adriaen Teding van Berkhout, after 1620, white Carrara marble, red Belgian marble, portoro and touchstone, Nieuwe Kerk, Delft

Pieter de Keyser (?), Epitaph of Paulus van Beresteyn, after 1625, white Carrara marble, red Belgian marble, portoro and touchstone, Nieuwe Kerk, Delft

's-Gravensande. The memorials for Adriaen Teding van Berkhout (1620) and Paulus van Beresteyn (1625), both in the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft, may have been influenced by the tomb of William the Silent, for they share its combination of Italian portoro and white marble from Carrara, which was used nowhere else in the Netherlands (figs. 100, 101). Their design and the squat children's figures clearly accord with the style of Hendrick de Keyser and his son. Their position close to William's tomb underlines the importance of these Delft regent families, which were related by marriage. Something similar applies to the memorial for the Frisian nobleman Snelliger Meckama in the church at Ee (fig. 102). Dating from 1627, it is another early example of the use of Carrara marble in the Republic, which appears to have been restricted to De Keyser's shop in this period. In addition, there is a quite obvious correspondence in design with the oeuvres of Pieter and his father. This Frisian memorial was executed two years after the tomb of Count Willem Lodewijk, and Pieter de Keyser's work in Leeuwarden was clearly the reason why he was asked to make the
The combination of a classical design, sober materials and an epitaph inspired by the ancients make this hitherto almost unnoticed memorial one of the first Classicist funerary monuments in the Dutch Republic.  

The statues from two badly damaged tombs are in sufficiently good condition to justify an attribution to the shop of Pieter de Keyser. Both the marble effigy of the recumbent Wilhelmina van Arkel in Gorinchem (after 1628) and the alabaster Reinout van Brederode in Veenhuizen (begun in 1633) follow the type of William the Silent in Delft. Going by an old description of the Gorinchem tomb, it could be related to the one in Skara Cathedral (figs. 103, 104). The original form of Reinout van Brederode’s tomb is not known, but his statue has a remarkably original iconography (fig. 105). Running counter to the conventions for members of the knighthood, he is not wearing armour but a toga, and his right hand rests on a book. He is thus portrayed as a scholar, making his resting-place the earliest example of a humanist’s tomb in the Republic. This unusual iconography, the position of the gisant with its arms by its sides, and the ornately decorated cushion beneath the head point to the influence of the tomb in Delft. Although

102 Pieter de Keyser (?), Epitaph of Snelliger Meckama, 1627, white Carrara marble, N.H. Kerk, Ee

103 Monument of Wilhelmina van Arkel at Gorinchem (c. 1630, now demolished), drawing in pen and ink with wash from the ms Van der Lelij, c. 1760, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague
these motifs are strong indications of an invention by Pieter de Keyser, the rather coarse and stiff execution, particularly in the folds of the garment, suggest that the work was not carried out by a sculptor from his workshop.\textsuperscript{37}

The position of the De Keyser shop as a leading purveyor of sculpture declined rapidly after 1640. Pieter was incapable of producing sufficiently innovative work, and his attention shifted from sculpture to stonemasonry and dealing in stone. Nor were Hendrick de Keyser’s other sons able to cope with the growing competition. It was above all due to the arrival on the scene of sculptors with a more international style, like François Dieussart in The Hague and Artus Quellinus and Rombout Verhulst in Amsterdam, that the De Keyser family lost its dominant position before the middle of the century. The fact that Pieter’s brother Willem was only allowed to carve the relief of a sea battle on Verhulst’s tomb of Maarten Tromp is perhaps the clearest sign of the position to which De Keyser’s firm had been reduced.\textsuperscript{33}

104
Pieter de Keyser (?), Effigy of the monument of Wilhelmina van Arkel, c. 1630, white Carrara marble, Gorkums Museum, Gorinchem

105
Pieter de Keyser (?), Monument of Reinout van Brederode, 1633-34, alabaster and black marble, N.H. Kerk, Veenhuizen