

## Rumours of Revolt

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# Rumours of Revolt

*Civil War and the Emergence of  
a Transnational News Culture in France  
and the Netherlands, 1561–1598*

*By*

Rosanne M. Baars



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*For my parents*





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Amsterdam, June 2020

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# Introduction

On 7 October 1567, the Catholic patrician Marcus van Vaernewijck noted in his chronicle some ‘bad tidings’ from France that had reached his hometown Ghent. He described heavy fighting between troops of King Charles IX and the rebellious Huguenot Prince of Condé in the vicinity of Paris, which had resulted in severe losses for the French Catholics. ‘Some said’, Van Vaernewijck wrote, ‘that no less than 400 noblemen from the Netherlands have joined the Prince of Condé to assist him’. ‘However’, he added, ‘so many lies circulate that it is not possible to write this news down with certainty’. The uncertain nature of this report did not prevent him from recording it in his chronicle.<sup>1</sup>

While Marcus van Vaernewijck’s note-keeping was exceptional for its comprehensiveness, he was certainly not unique in noting down the events of his age. Many of his contemporaries kept accounts of their lives and times. These chronicles reveal the prominence of the exchange of news in sixteenth-century daily life. Chroniclers recorded what news they received and how they got it—through word on the streets, from their neighbours, in letters from friends and family members. They reflected on the content and credibility of news reports while writing them down in their diaries. In the past, historians have mainly used chronicles as sources for local history.<sup>2</sup> In this book, I will use local chronicles counterintuitively: to study the reception of foreign news in the Netherlands and France during the simultaneous troubles of the Dutch Revolt and the French Wars of Religion. More specifically, this book explores how the French and Dutch made sense of news about the conflict in the other country. What news did inhabitants of France and the Netherlands hear and read about the wars across their common border? What did they deem important enough to record in their chronicles? How did they interpret this news? Answering these questions will enable us to assess how sixteenth-century people used news reports to make sense of their times and explain the emergence of a transnational news culture in France and the Netherlands.

- 
- 1 ‘Sommighe zijden, datter in Vrancrijck bij den prince van Condée ghevlucht zijn wel iiijc edelmannen uut dese Nederlanden, om hem assistencie ende bijstandicheijt te doene, maer daer wart vele toe gheloghen, zoo dat men niet wel zekerlic daer af scrijven en can’. Ferdinand Vanderhaeghen (ed.), *Van die beroerlicke tijden in die Nederlanden en voornamelick in Ghendt, 1566–1568* (5 vols., Ghent: C. Annoot-Braeckman, 1872–1881), III. 86.
  - 2 Judith Pollmann, ‘Archiving the Present and Chronicling for the Future’, *Past & Present Supplement*, 11 (2016), pp. 231–252 (232).

Historians of the Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt have long observed the ‘interconnected nature of these two parallel crises’ and have pointed at a ‘mutual hunger for news’ among the French and the Dutch.<sup>3</sup> They have stressed that contemporaries were well aware of the interdependency of the two conflicts. Yet these assumptions are primarily based on research into pamphlet production and diplomatic exchange. Through the study of a great number of diaries and chronicles from the Netherlands and France, complemented with other sources such as letters, pamphlets, songs and prints, I aim to contribute to our knowledge of the perception of these two wars among contemporaries.<sup>4</sup> By examining the reception of news in two countries over a period of four decades, this book will also further our understanding of matters such as transnational religious solidarity, the international culture of fame, and the credibility of news in an increasingly polarized climate.

In so doing, I will engage with three areas of scholarship. First, I aim to offer a new perspective on the transnational history of the French Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt by analysing what news the inhabitants of France and the Netherlands received and recorded. Second, the book aspires to add to the burgeoning field of early modern news scholarship with a case study on the reception of international news. And third, it does so through the study of early modern diary and chronicle practices, which recently have received attention as one of the topics within the current scholarly fascination for methods of archiving and information management in the early modern era.<sup>5</sup>

3 Andrew Pettegree, ‘France and the Netherlands: The Interlocking of Two Religious Cultures in Print during the Era of the Religious Wars’, *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, 84 (2004), pp. 318–337 (319); Henk van Nierop, ‘Similar Problems, Different Outcomes’, in Karel Davids and Jan Lucassen (eds.), *A Miracle Mirrored: The Dutch Republic in European Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 26–56 (27–30); Monique Weis, ‘De l’interdépendance des conflits confessionnels: Philippe de Marnix et les guerres de Religion françaises’, in Jérémie Foa and Paul-Alexis Mellet (eds.), *Le bruit des armes: mises en formes et désinformations en Europe pendant les guerres de religion (1560–1610)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2012), pp. 147–158.

4 Pollmann, ‘Archiving the Present’, p. 251.

5 See Liesbeth Corens, Kate Peters and Alexandra Walsham (eds.), *The Social History of the Archive: Record-Keeping in Early Modern Europe. Past & Present Supplement*, 11 (2016). On information management see: Ann Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Marc Greengrass, ‘Outspoken Opinions as Collectable Items? Engagement and Divertissement in the French Civil Wars’, *Renaissance Studies*, 30:1 (2016), pp. 57–72.

## 1 The French Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt

On 17 November 1568, Pope Pius v proclaimed a public procession through Rome, begging God to relieve the troubles that plagued France and the Netherlands.<sup>6</sup> Regrettably, wars would continue to afflict these countries in the decades to come, and the French Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt would turn out to be the most violent conflicts of Western Europe in the second half of the sixteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Historical scholarship of the French Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt has developed for the most part in two separate strands. Yet some historians have found it enlightening to draw comparisons between the two conflicts. As early as 1930 H.A. Enno van Gelder interpreted both the French Wars of Religion and—more originally—the Revolt of the Netherlands as fundamentally civil wars. Henk van Nierop has subsequently compared the two conflicts according to certain parameters such as the power of the cities and the strategies of the opposition. Juliaan Woltjer and more recently Judith Pollmann have explored the differences in the scale and level of religious violence in both countries. At an international conference in 1997, specialists of the Dutch Revolt and the French Wars of Religion shared and compared their views on a number of themes relating to the two conflicts.<sup>8</sup>

Modern historians were not the only ones to notice the remarkable analogies between the two conflicts. As Pope Pius' initiative of 1568 already revealed, contemporaries showed themselves well aware of the parallels between the troubles in the two countries. As early as July 1566, the Tournai chronicler Pasquier de le Barre compared the Reformation troubles in his city with the religious quarrels in France.<sup>9</sup> In the same year, armed Calvinists in Bruges

6 Gisbert Brom and A.H.L. Hensen (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen voor den kerkelijk-staatkundigen toestand der Nederlanden in de 16de eeuw* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1922), 1, p. 477.

7 In this study, I use the terms 'Dutch Revolt' and 'Revolt of the Netherlands' interchangeably, for the sake of variety. The same goes for the terms 'Dutch' and 'Netherlandish', which both refer to the inhabitants of the sixteenth-century Low Countries.

8 H.A. Enno van Gelder, 'Een historische vergelijking: de Nederlandse Opstand en de Franse godsdienstoorlogen', *Verslag van de algemeene vergadering der leden van het Historisch Genootschap gehouden te Utrecht op 26 April 1930* (Utrecht, 1930), pp. 21–42; Van Nierop, 'Similar Problems, Different Outcomes'; J.J. Woltjer, 'Violence during the Wars of Religion in France and the Netherlands: A Comparison', *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis*, 76 (1996), pp. 26–45; Judith Pollmann, 'Countering the Reformation in France and the Netherlands: Clerical Leadership and Catholic Violence, 1560–1585', *Past & Present*, 190 (2006), pp. 83–120; Philip Benedict, et al. (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555–1585* (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 1999).

9 Judith Pollmann, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520–1635* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 105.

justified themselves to the Count of Egmont, stating: 'We take France as an example; we refuse to be murdered like sheep'.<sup>10</sup> In a preface to a Dutch translation of a French pamphlet written by the Huguenot Prince of Condé, the Emden-based translator stressed the urgency of the publication, 'as we are sure that everything that has taken place in France, and even worse, will happen in the Netherlands'.<sup>11</sup> All these examples suggest a lively exchange of news between these neighbouring countries.

So far, research into the mutual impact of the two conflicts has focused on diplomatic and religious exchange, and specifically on international Calvinism.<sup>12</sup> Historians have studied the international networks of prominent Huguenots and Netherlandish Protestants such as Philippe Duplessis-Mornay and Philip Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde. They have likewise highlighted the international orientation of the high nobility. Louis of Nassau, for example, William of Orange's brother, was the commander of a Huguenot army in France in the late 1560s, while Anjou, the French king's brother, was well on his way to becoming sovereign of the Netherlands in the 1580s. Catholic exchange between France and the Netherlands has received less attention from scholars, although some historians have pointed to the European dimensions of the Counter-Reformation that became visible in the 1580s, connecting English, French and Netherlandish Catholics.<sup>13</sup> Others have analysed the

10 'Wy nemen exempel aen Vranckeryck, niet van sin ons te laten als scapen vermooren'. Rob Van Roosbroeck (ed.), *De kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht over de troebelen van 1565 tot 1574 te Antwerpen en elders* (2 vols., Antwerp: De Sikkell, 1929–1930), I, 95.

11 'Temeer alsoo wy wel seecker zijn, dat alle hetghene dat in Vranckerijck voorghespeelt is, dat dat selve ende noch argher in de Nederlanden soude ghebeuren'. *Cort verhael op de middelen die de cardinael van Lorainen heeft ghehouden ende gebruyct* (Emden: [Willem Gailliarth], 1568), USTC 411386.

12 Yves Krumenacker (ed.), *Entre Calvinistes et Catholiques: les relations religieuses entre la France et les Pays-Bas du Nord (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010); Weis, *De l'interdépendance des conflits confessionnels*; See the classical study by J.M.B.C. Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Les Huguenots et les Gueux: étude historique sur vingt-cinq années du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle (1560–1585)*, 6 vols. (Bruges: Beyaert-Storie, 1883–1885); Monique Weis, "Les Huguenots et les Gueux": Des relations entre les calvinistes français et leurs coreligionnaires des Pays-Bas pendant la deuxième moitié du xvie siècle', in Yves Krumenacker (ed.), *Entre Calvinistes et Catholiques: les relations religieuses entre la France et les Pays-Bas du Nord (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010), pp. 17–29; Hugues Daussy, *Le parti huguenot: chronique d'une désillusion (1557–1572)* (Geneva: Droz, 2014); Hugues Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le roi: le combat politique de Philippe Duplessis-Mornay (1572–1600)* (Geneva: Droz, 2002). See on European Protestant movements: Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

13 Geert H. Janssen, *The Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), esp. chapter 5; Katy Gibbons, *English Catholic Exiles*

impact of the Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt on the development of political thought among philosophers such as Jean Bodin and Justus Lipsius.<sup>14</sup> Connections between France and the Netherlands also feature in studies of the Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt that have taken a broader, European view. Geoffrey Parker, for instance, was one of the first to cast the Dutch Revolt in the wider context of the vast Spanish Habsburg Empire and has regularly pointed to links between the Dutch Revolt and the French Wars of Religion. Nicola Sutherland has studied the Wars of Religion in the context of French international relations, stressing the European scope of the conflict and its ties with the Netherlands. Current historical scholarship into the Wars of Religion or the Dutch Revolt increasingly takes wider international dimensions into account.<sup>15</sup>

The recent interest in transnational research may also explain the latest wave of studies that map the exchange of news across borders. Hugh Dunthorne has examined news on the Dutch Revolt that was spread in Britain; Nina Lamal has done the same for Italy.<sup>16</sup> Other historians have explored the exchange of

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in *Late Sixteenth-Century Paris* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2011); Robert Descimon and José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez, *Les Ligueurs de l'exil: le refuge catholique français après 1594* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2005).

- 14 Jan Machielsen, 'Bodin in the Netherlands', in Howell A. Lloyd (ed.), *The Reception of Bodin* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 157–192; Jan H. Waszink, 'Virtuous Deception: The *Politica* and the Wars in the Low Countries and France, 1559–1589', in G. Tournoy, J. De Landtsheer and J. Papy (eds.), *Justus Lipsius Europae lumen et columen: Proceedings of the International Colloquium, Leuven, 17–19 September 1997* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), pp. 248–267; Anton van der Lem, 'Echos de la révolte: Montaigne et les Pays-Bas du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in Paul J. Smith and Karl A.E. Enenkel (eds.), *Montaigne and the Low Countries (1580–1700)* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 47–62.
- 15 Judith Pollmann, 'Internationalisering en de Nederlandse Opstand', *BMGN—Low Countries Historical Review*, 124:4 (2009), pp. 515–536; Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567–1659* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972); Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt* (London: Allen Lane, 1977); Geoffrey Parker, *Spain and the Netherlands, 1559–1659: Ten Studies* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1979); Geoffrey Parker, 'The Dutch Revolt and the Polarization of International Politics', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 89:3 (1976), pp. 429–443; Nicola M. Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle for Recognition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); Nicola M. Sutherland, *The Massacre of St Bartholomew and the European Conflict, 1559–1572* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1973); Stuart Carroll, *Martyrs and Murderers: The Guise Family and the Making of Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- 16 Hugh Dunthorne, *Britain and the Dutch Revolt, 1560–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Nina Lamal, *News from Antwerp: Italian Communication on the Dutch Revolt* (Leiden: Brill, [forthcoming]); Catherine Buchanan, *The Massacre of St Bartholomew's (24–27 August 1572) and the Sack of Antwerp (4–7 November 1576): Print and Political Responses in Elizabethan England*, PhD thesis (London School of Economics, 2011).

news between France and the German Empire.<sup>17</sup> Yet the French-Netherlandish news connection still largely remains to be explored. In a pioneering article, Andrew Pettegree has examined the wealth of news pamphlets on the troubles in France that were printed in the Netherlands, and vice versa.<sup>18</sup> This abundance of pamphlet material proves the existence of a rich transnational news culture in print. In both countries numerous events took place with a high international 'news value'.<sup>19</sup>

## 2 News and News Scholarship

Over the last fifteen years, early modern news scholarship has developed into a flourishing field of historical scholarship. In the introduction to a recent conference volume on early modern news networks, Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham have elaborated on the challenge they faced coming up with a definition of news, because news, as 'essentially connective and dynamic, resists this kind of compartmentalization'.<sup>20</sup> Others have characterized news principally as information about matters of public interest. David Randall, for instance, has distinguished between news that simply concerned local audiences, 'new information of recent events', and 'news [as] the communication of new information about matters of public concern'.<sup>21</sup> In this book, I follow Mitchell Stephens' definition of news as 'new information about a subject of public

17 Monique Weis, *Légitimer la repression des troubles: les correspondances du pouvoir espagnol avec les princes allemands au début de la Révolte des Pays-Bas (1566–1568)* (Brussels: Archives générales du Royaume, 2003); Cornel Zwielerlein, 'Une propagande huguenote internationale: le début des guerres de Religion en France perçues en Allemagne, 1560–1563', in Jérémie Foa and Paul-Alexis Mellet (eds.), *Le bruit des armes: mises en formes et désinformations en Europe pendant les guerres de Religion (1560–1610)* (Paris: H. Champion, 2012), pp. 397–415; Alexandra Schäfer-Griebel, *Die Medialität der Französischen Religionskriege: Frankreich und das Heilige Römische Reich 1589* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2018); Jonas van Tol, *Germany and the French Wars of Religion, 1560–1572* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

18 Andrew Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands'.

19 On events with international news value in Early Modern Europe, see also Joop W. Koopmans (ed.), *News and Politics in Early Modern Europe (1500–1800)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 'Introduction'.

20 Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham, 'News Networks in Early Modern Europe', in Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (eds.), *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), pp. 1–18 (3).

21 David Randall, *Credibility in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Military News* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008), p. 4.

interest that is shared with some portion of the public'.<sup>22</sup> Ideally, chroniclers noted down a date on which they received certain news, but I have sometimes had to content myself with the mere mentioning of the month or year when they received a report. The same goes for the divide between political and sensational news or between news and gossip: I have focused on chroniclers recording news concerning the wars in both countries, largely omitting their recordings of non-political items such as monstrous births, violent crimes or spectacular natural disasters. Yet on some occasions, for instance the case of the suspicious death of Philip II's son Don Carlos in 1568, the political and sensational became one.

In the young and vibrant field of early modern news publications rapidly succeed each other, and pioneering works have quickly become established knowledge.<sup>23</sup> One of the most conspicuous developments of recent years concerns the 'Europeanization' of news research. Large teams of historians from various countries have compiled conference volumes covering substantial areas in Europe over many centuries. In the conference volume *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, some articles have been co-authored by as many as eight historians, who have brought together their expertise on various countries.<sup>24</sup> Other historians have taken a European approach in their monographs: Andrew Pettegree's *The Invention of News* has given an overview of the development of the European news market from 1400 to 1800.<sup>25</sup> These studies have greatly added to our knowledge of the production and dissemination of news, as news, by its nature, was almost never restricted to a single country and commonly crossed borders. Another significant feature of recent news research concerns the multimediality of news. While twenty years ago many

22 Mitchell Stephens, *A History of News* (New York, etc.: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 4.

23 For an excellent overview of scholarship on early modern news see: Joad Raymond, 'News Networks: Putting the 'News' and 'Networks' Back in', in Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (eds.), *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), pp. 102–129.

24 Raymond and Moxham (eds.), *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016); Koopmans (ed.), *News and Politics*; Jérémie Foa and Paul-Alexis Mellet (eds.), *Le bruit des armes: mises en formes et désinformations en Europe pendant les guerres de religion (1560–1610)* (Paris: H. Champion, 2012); Joad Raymond (ed.), *News Networks in Seventeenth-Century Britain and Europe* (London: Routledge, 2006); Brendan Dooley (ed.), *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); Simon F. Davies and Puck Fletcher (eds.), *News in Early Modern Europe: Currents and Connections* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014).

25 Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know about Itself* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014); Paul Arblaster, *From Ghent to Aix: How they brought the News in the Habsburg Netherlands, 1550–1700* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014).

news historians stuck to pamphlets and newspapers, the study of other media such as letters, ritual, song, plays and sermons has now become established practice.<sup>26</sup> News reception still remains the most elusive branch within news research. Most work that has been done on this topic involves either small case-studies or studies connected to the history of reading.<sup>27</sup> With historians stressing the pertinence of early modern news dissemination by word of mouth, they have found it particularly hard to study its reception. As Hugh Dunthorne remarked, 'we cannot eavesdrop on the talk of our ancestors'.<sup>28</sup> The study of diaries and chronicles is one way partly to fill this gap. What did an inhabitant of a small town in, say, the Poitou hear and record about the wars in the Netherlands? And why did it matter to him?

The situation of war charged news with a special urgency.<sup>29</sup> In times of troubles rumours travelled fast. False news or disinformation was deliberately used as a weapon to discredit the enemy. Anxious chroniclers in both France and the Netherlands frequently worried over news about soldiers coming their way. Refugees fleeing violence, such as the Parisian Huguenots who fled to Geneva or England after the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre, brought disturbing reports about sieges, battles and massacres.<sup>30</sup> Trustworthiness became even more essential than in peace time, and contemporaries learned to assess the veracity of news and the authority of its sources. War also had an impact on the dissemination of news. Roads in war zones would become too unsafe for passage, seriously hindering the postal couriers travelling over land. City governments would impose strict censorship on the spreading of news.<sup>31</sup> And political decentralization would lead to city councils corresponding with foreign rulers on their own accord, employing their own news services and agents

26 In 2003, Robert Darnton innovatively stressed that 'news circulated through several media and by different modes—oral, manuscript, and print'. Robert Darnton, 'The News in Paris: An Early Information Society', in: Robert Darnton, *George Washington's False Teeth: An Unconventional Guide to the Eighteenth Century* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003), pp. 25–75.

27 Michiel van Groesen, 'Reading Newspapers in the Dutch Golden Age', *Media History*, 22:3–4 (2016), pp. 334–352 (334–335).

28 Dunthorne, *Britain and the Dutch Revolt*, p. 4.

29 On news in times of war see Peter H. Wilson, *The Thirty Years War: Europe's Tragedy* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), pp. 824–827; Foa and Mellet (eds.), *Bruit des armes*; Randall, *Credibility*; Donald Haks, *Vaderland en vrede, 1672–1713: publiciteit over de Nederlandse Republiek in oorlog* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2013).

30 See chapter 3.

31 Nikolaus Schobesberger, *et al.*, 'European Postal Networks', in Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (eds.), *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), pp. 19–63.



instead of the services of the crown. Yet at the same time the exchange of news surprisingly often continued unhindered. Even the inhabitants of besieged cities managed to maintain correspondence with friends and family members in other parts of the country or abroad, while merchants sustained contacts with their foreign *comptoirs* in regions affected by war.<sup>32</sup>

In this book a clear asymmetry in the exchange of news between France and the Netherlands comes to the fore. Netherlandish chroniclers generally recorded more news about France and showed a better and more detailed knowledge of French affairs than the other way round. Why was this the case? One explanation might be found in the two countries' different social and economic infrastructures: the highly urbanized, literate and mercantile Low Countries were well connected to major news channels and trade routes in Europe, and thus geared towards the exchange of international news.<sup>33</sup> Merchants in Holland and Zeeland imported wine and salt from Western France, while traders from all over the Netherlands had branches in cities throughout France.<sup>34</sup> Members of the young Netherlandish elite visited French universities in Orléans and Paris, or went to France during their *grand tour* or apprenticeships.<sup>35</sup> The Antwerp chronicler Godevaert van Haecht, for instance, stayed in Paris for seventeen months in the early 1570s. France, by contrast, was a predominantly agrarian society and fell outside the urban commercial Low Countries—Southern Germany—Northern Italy axis.

Yet it was also a matter of dissimilar mutual expectations. From the first troubles, inhabitants of the Netherlands frequently expected the French to intervene in their conflict. Indeed, Huguenot nobles such as Gaspard de Coligny and Louis de Bourbon Condé in the 1560s and 70s lobbied in vain at the French court for aid to be sent to the rebels in the Netherlands.<sup>36</sup> Envoys of the States-General repeatedly approached Henry III for military support against Philip, again to no avail. Finally, Anjou, the brother of the French king,

32 See for instance the correspondence of Daniel van der Meulen with his brother Andries in Antwerp in 1585, in: G.A.M. Jongbloet-van Houtte (ed.), *Brieven en andere bescheiden betreffende Daniël van der Meulen, 1584–1600* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1986).

33 Jan de Vries, *European Urbanization, 1500–1800* (London: Methuen and Co, 1984); Pettegree, *Invention of News*, pp. 42–46; Schobesberger, *et al.*, 'European Postal Networks'.

34 M.A. Drost, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire du commerce des Pays-Bas avec la France jusqu'à 1585. Tome I: Actes notariés de La Rochelle 1423–1585* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1984).

35 J. van Kuyk, 'Lijst van Nederlanders, studenten te Orléans (1441–1602)', *BMGN*, 34 (1913), pp. 293–349; Hilde De Ridder-Symoens, Cornelia M. Ridderikhoff en Chris L. Heesakkers (eds.), *Troisième livre des procureurs de la nation germanique de l'ancienne université d'Orléans, 1567–1587: texte des rapports des procureurs* (Leiden: Brill, 2013). I am grateful to Guido Marnef for sending me these references.

36 Sutherland, *Huguenot Struggle*; Daussy, *Parti Huguenot*.

went to the Netherlands after having been offered sovereignty. At that time, in the beginning of the 1580s, inhabitants of the Netherlands could even expect their country to become part of the French realm. The high expectations many inhabitants of the Netherlands formed of French intervention become clear from Beggars' Songs.<sup>37</sup> These anticipations gave the Dutch a particularly strong motive for staying abreast of the political situation in France.

The most common way to receive news in sixteenth-century Europe was by word of mouth. All sources testify to the predominance of oral communication in this age. Messengers would deliver important news in person to noble courts and to city magistrates. Trumpets would announce the issuance of official edicts at town squares and at crossroads. Friends read letters they had received aloud to each other. Acquaintances told each other the latest news on the streets and on the market square. And pedlars would cry or sing the content of news pamphlets and news-songs they sold on the streets.<sup>38</sup> Historians have previously studied oral news mainly through criminal records and police archives.<sup>39</sup> Henk van Nierop has shown how the street features prominently in sixteenth-century chronicles as well. They abound with phrases such as 'it was told', 'word went that' or 'from France we heard'.<sup>40</sup> Many diarists and chroniclers roamed the streets of their town to gather the latest news. Marc Venard, the editor of the diary of the Parisian cleric Jehan de la Fosse, has called him a 'témoin des événements de la rue'.<sup>41</sup> Thus, chronicles, through their mention of conversations, songs, rhymes, and other oral accounts, are key witnesses to the sixteenth-century oral news world.

37 E.T. Kuiper (ed.), *Het Geuzenliedboek*, (2 vols., Zutphen: Thieme, 1924–1925).

38 Rosa Salzberg, 'Print Peddling and Urban Culture in Renaissance Italy', in Roeland Harms, Joad Raymond and Jeroen Salman (eds.), *Not Dead Things: The Dissemination of Popular Print in England and Wales, Italy, and the Low Countries, 1500–1820* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 33–54; Una McLivenna, 'When the News was Sung', *Media History*, 22:3–4 (2016), pp. 317–333.

39 Femke Deen, *Publiek debat en propaganda in Amsterdam tijdens de Nederlandse Opstand: Amsterdam 'Moorddam' 1566–1578* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015); Darnton, 'The News in Paris'.

40 Henk van Nierop, '“And Ye Shall Hear of Wars and Rumours of Wars”. Rumour and the Revolt of the Netherlands', in Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (eds.), *Public Opinion and Changing Identities in the Early Modern Netherlands: Essays in Honour of Alastair Duke* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 69–86.

41 Marc Venard (ed.), *Les « Mémoires » d'un curé de Paris au temps des guerres de religion (1557–1590)* (Geneva: Droz, 2004), p. 18.

### 3      **Chronicling and Chroniclers**

It is no coincidence that France and the Netherlands witnessed a boom in diaries and chronicles in the 1560s. Chroniclers wished to record for posterity the troubles and wars they went through.<sup>42</sup> Marcus van Vaernewijck, for instance, first began his diary when spurred by the shock of witnessing iconoclasm. As the wars continued, new phases in the conflicts prompted new generations of chroniclers to start keeping records. The battles between Henry III and the Catholic League in the 1580s, for instance, would stimulate a surge of ultra-Catholic 'League-chronicles' denouncing the king's actions.<sup>43</sup>

Early modern diaries, chronicles and memoirs have been used by historians interested in (religious) identity and mentality. Still, the very act of chronicling has only recently become a focus of historical attention. Judith Pollmann has methodically reflected on the practice of diary-writing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She has also played a pioneering role in using a large number of diaries to study the identity and opinions of individual Catholics in the early modern Netherlands. She has connected the practice of record-keeping to scholarship on archiving, showing that chronicling was not done just to reflect on the present, but also with the aim to keep records for posterity.<sup>44</sup> Monica Stensland has used diaries to investigate how the public responded to the communication strategy of the Habsburgs. Michel de Waele has looked at reactions of diarists to peace edicts in France. And Margit Thøfner has utilized diaries to gauge reactions to civic ceremony in the Netherlands.<sup>45</sup> At the same

42 Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', pp. 241–242. See also Pollmann: 'for many, however, it was the growing political and religious tensions that triggered their record keeping'. *Catholic Identity*, pp. 9–10. Henri Hauser found hardly any French chronicles dating from before 1560: Henri Hauser, *Les sources de l'histoire de France, XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle (1494–1610) III. Les guerres de religion (1559–1589)* (Paris: Picard, 1912), p. 7; Pollmann has pointed at the Brussels chronicler Jan de Pottre, who began his diary as early as 1549. Jules L.D. de Saint-Genois (ed.), *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre, 1549–1602* (Ghent: Annoot-Braeckman, 1861).

43 See for instance the League-chronicler Sébastien le Pelletier: Xavier Le Person (ed.), *Histoire de Sébastien Le Pelletier. Prêtre ligueur et maître de grammaire des enfants de chœur de la cathédrale de Chartres pendant les guerres de la Ligue (1579–1592)* (Geneva: Droz, 2006). Compare also: Xavier Le Person (ed.), *Journal d'un ligueur parisien des baricades à la levée du Siège de Paris par Henri IV (1588–1590)* (Geneva: Droz, 1999).

44 For Pollmann on record-keeping, see: Judith Pollmann, *Religious Choice in the Dutch Republic: The Reformation of Arnoldus Buchelius (1565–1641)* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Pollmann, *Catholic identity*; Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present'.

45 Monica Stensland, *Habsburg Communication in the Dutch Revolt* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012); Michel De Waele, *Réconcilier les Français: Henri IV et la fin des troubles de religion (1589–1598)* (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2010); Margit Thøfner, *A Common Art: Urban Ceremonial in Antwerp and Brussels during and after the*

time, chronicles have become easier to access: Alastair Duke has compiled a highly useful list of chronicles written during the Dutch Revolt. James Amelang has listed early modern artisan autobiographies from all over Europe.<sup>46</sup> Over the last two decades, various French historians have published modern editions of sixteenth-century chronicles with excellent methodological introductions on the subject of chronicling.<sup>47</sup> Some historians have pointed specifically to the connection between chronicling and news research, characterizing chronicling as 'news management'.<sup>48</sup>

Scholars have struggled to distinguish between the genres of diaries, chronicles, journals, memoirs and histories.<sup>49</sup> It is telling that contemporaries used various and interchangeable terms for chronicling. The Parisian canon Nicolas Brûlart, for instance, called the collection of daily notes he had kept for three years an '*histoire*', while we would now rather call it a diary or journal.<sup>50</sup> Judith Pollmann has argued that the distinction between the various terms is not that

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*Dutch Revolt* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2007); Peter Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots: The Political Culture of the Dutch Revolt* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008).

46 See the list of chronicles on the website 'Dutch Revolt' of Leiden University, compiled by Alastair Duke and supplemented by Judith Pollmann, Anton van der Lem and Lex van Tilborg: <http://dutchrevolt.leiden.edu>; See also 'Des diverses catégories de sources narratives', in Hauser, *Sources*, 111, pp. 7–16; James S. Amelang, *The Flight of Icarus: Artisan Autobiography in Early Modern Europe* (Stanford: CA Stanford University Press, 1998). See also: Adam Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Matthew Lundin, *Paper Memory: A Sixteenth-Century Townsman Writes His World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Tom Hamilton, 'Recording the Wars of Religion: The 'Drolleries of the League' from Ephemeral Print to Scrapbook History', *Past & Present Supplement*, 11 (2016), pp. 288–310; and his recent book: Tom Hamilton, *Pierre de L'Estoile and his World in the Wars of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

47 See for example Venard on Jehan de la Fosse: *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 7–26; Le Person on Sébastien le Pelletier: *Histoire de Sébastien Le Pelletier*, 7–56; and Simiz and Buridant on Jean Pussot: Stefano Simiz and Jérôme Buridant (ed.), *Journalier de Jean Pussot: maître-charpentier à Reims, 1568–1626* (Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2008), pp. 15–75.

48 Michiel van Groesen and Helmer Helmers, 'Managing the News in Early Modern Europe, 1550–1800', *Media History*, 22:3–4 (2016), pp. 261–266 (263).

49 Venard: 'Journal? Histoire? Mémoires?', in: *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 15; Simiz and Buridant, 'Livre de raison, journalier ou mémoires?', *Journalier de Jean Pussot*, 21–24. Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', pp. 234–235.

50 *Journal d'un ligueur parisien*, p. 53. The editor, Xavier Le Person, argues that Brûlart might have intended to write a history of his times, although nothing confirms this assumption except for the title of the document. See also: Geert H. Janssen, *Princely Power in the Dutch Republic: Patronage and William Frederick of Nassau (1613–64)* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2008), pp. 10–11.

useful for early modern historians, and has called for using the generic term 'chroniclers'. She defines a chronicle as follows: 'A chronicle is a text resulting from an act of literacy by someone who decides that he is well suited to keep a record of events in his surroundings, who believes that these events are worth recording, and that the best way to structure this information is to do so chronically'.<sup>51</sup> I have adopted this use of the term 'chronicle', and I use it interchangeably with 'diary'. One could argue that the difference between a diary and a chronicle lies in the intention of its author. While chroniclers tended to write their record with a certain public in mind most often their family members or 'posterity', diarists sometimes wrote solely for their own sake, without any intention of sharing their notes with others. Yet even this line of demarcation is misleading, as diarists' purposes could change in the process of writing their records. Thus, this book will use the generic term 'chronicler' along with 'diarist' and alternate between the two for the sake of variety.

Another important aspect of early modern chronicles is their local, generally urban, focus. They mainly describe local events, to which the authors had often been witness, thus contributing to the historiography of their community.<sup>52</sup> For this reason chroniclers and diarists make fascinating cases for international news research: because of their local concentration, they were not primarily focused on news from abroad. For other contemporaries, such as royals, diplomats, or international merchants, it was self-evident to exchange Franco-Netherlandish news on a daily basis. International news was a political or economic necessity for them.

First, there was the European political elite, consisting of major international news consumers such as William of Orange, governors-general in the Netherlands such as Margaret of Parma and the Duke of Alva, the French kings, or the French queen-mother Catherine de' Medici. They maintained international correspondence networks and exchanged news on the European political situation as a matter of course. In their world, news exchange was closely connected to matters of patronage: it was a currency used to tie bonds. The extensive European-wide correspondence of Antoine Perrenot, Cardinal of Granvelle, for example, offers wonderful insight into news being used in patronage relations.<sup>53</sup>

51 Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', p. 235.

52 Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', p. 236.

53 See the database of William of Orange's correspondence at [http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/wvo;J.S.Theissen, et al. \(eds\), \*Correspondance française de Marguerite d'Autriche, duchesse de Parme, avec Philippe II\*, 3 vols. \(Utrecht: Kemink, 1925–1942\); L.P. Gachard, \*La Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris. Notices et extraits qui concernent l'histoire de Belgique. Tome II\* \(Brussels: Commission Royale d'Histoire, 1877\); Jacobo María del Pilar Carlos Manuel](http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/wvo;J.S.Theissen, et al. (eds), Correspondance française de Marguerite d'Autriche, duchesse de Parme, avec Philippe II, 3 vols. (Utrecht: Kemink, 1925–1942); L.P. Gachard, La Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris. Notices et extraits qui concernent l'histoire de Belgique. Tome II (Brussels: Commission Royale d'Histoire, 1877); Jacobo María del Pilar Carlos Manuel)

Another group that was professionally bound to stay informed were ambassadors and diplomats. Envoys travelled between the various courts in Europe, collecting and spreading international news.<sup>54</sup> Merchants and scholars were also generally connected to extensive international news networks. Some exchanged newsletters with friends and colleagues abroad, others subscribed to commercial news services such as the *Fuggerzeitungen*.<sup>55</sup> Finally, confessional parties often shared an international outlook: members of the Catholic clergy ran extensive European and worldwide networks; Protestants corresponded (secretly) with their fellows in various countries.<sup>56</sup> Although this book primarily focuses on urban chroniclers, these major news consumers feature here as well. Some chroniclers were also members of these correspondence networks. Moreover, as I will demonstrate, news that members of this 'information elite' such as William of Orange received often trickled down to the urban chroniclers.

Who are these chroniclers? Chronicling was mainly a pursuit of the male urban elite. The French historian Henri Hauser was one of the first to typify

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Stuart Fitz-James de Alba (ed.), *Epistolario del III duque de Alba, don Fernando Álvarez de Toledo* (Madrid: Diana, 1952); Edmond Pouillet and M.C. Piot (eds.), *Correspondance du Cardinal de Granvelle, 1565–1586*, 12 vols. (Brussels: Commission Royale d'Histoire, 1877–1896). On news in patronage relations, see for instance Geert H. Janssen, 'Dutch Clientelism and News Networks in Public and Private Spheres', in: Joop W. Koopmans (ed.), *News and Politics in early modern Europe (1500–1800)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), pp. 151–165.

54 See for edited correspondences on Franco-Netherlandish relations: Aloïs Gerlo and Rudolf De Smet (eds.), *Marnixi Epistulae: de briefwisseling van Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde: een kritische uitgave*, 4 vols. (Brussels: University Press, 1990–2006); or the letters of French ambassador Claude de Mondoucet: Gachard, *Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris*.

55 See the *Fuggerzeitungen* database at <http://fuggerzeitungen.univie.ac.at/en/>; cf. the correspondences of the scholars Lipsius and Clusius and the merchants Plantin and Van der Meulen, who often refer to news from France. On merchant letters see: Clé Lesger, *The Rise of the Amsterdam Market and Information Exchange: Merchants, Commercial Expansion and Change in the Spatial Economy of the Low Countries, c.1550–1630* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 214–257; Jesse Sadler, 'News as a Path to Independence: Merchant Correspondence and the Exchange of News during the Dutch Revolt', in Margaret C. Jacob and Catherine Secretan (eds.), *In Praise of Ordinary People: Early Modern Britain and the Dutch Republic* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 65–92; Francesca Trivellato, 'Merchant Letters across Geographical and Social Boundaries', in Francisco Bethencourt and Florike Egmond (eds.), *Correspondence and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 80–103.

56 Mark Greengrass, 'Two Sixteenth-Century Religious Minorities and their Scribal Networks', in Heinz Schilling and István György Tóth (eds.), *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe: Religion and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 317–337; Ole Peter Grell, *Brethren in Christ: A Calvinist Network in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

the sixteenth-century chronicler. It was 'sometimes a clergyman, but as often a layman or a magistrate, whose municipal or judicial functions allowed him to collect the rumours that circulated and who enjoyed noting them down'.<sup>57</sup> I have used about fifty chronicles, written by the male elites of cities and villages across France and the Netherlands. Only one of them is written by a woman, a nun from 's-Hertogenbosch. Most of the chroniclers had a background in law and held a position in their city's government. The majority lived in the largest cities of France and the Netherlands, notably Antwerp, Paris, Brussels, Ghent, Rouen and Amsterdam, but I have also used chronicles from Southern France or the Northern provinces in the Netherlands, including Groningen.<sup>58</sup> Their religious backgrounds vary as well. Some were passionate and committed Calvinists, Catholics, or Lutherans; others perceived the religious troubles with greater reservation. Some of the chronicles, such as that of the Parisian diarist Pierre de L'Estoile are famous and frequently used sources. While his diaries have been primarily employed for their anecdotes on life in late-sixteenth-century France, L'Estoile's chronicling itself has also become a subject of recent study.<sup>59</sup>

In order to be appropriate for news research, chronicles must ideally mention a date on which the author received a certain report. The more specific the chronicler is with dates, the more likely it is that he made daily or weekly notes of current affairs, although many re-edited their writings later in their lives.<sup>60</sup> I have therefore refrained generally from using 'memoirs' that were written in the seventeenth century. By then, events had become part of public memory and might have been considered of more importance in hindsight than they had been at the time.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, the line between news scholarship and memory studies is thin. For pragmatic reasons, I have mainly used printed editions of chronicles and have only occasionally turned to manuscript copies. Nineteenth-century publications sometimes suffer from their editor's choices—such as leaving out all 'gossip from the French court that is not of

57 'Tantôt c'est un curé qui inscrit ...' ... 'mais souvent aussi c'est un bourgeois ou un homme de robe à qui ses fonctions municipales ou judiciaires permettent de recueillir les bruits qui courent et qui met son plaisir à les noter'. Hauser, *Sources*, III, 8.

58 For the number of inhabitants of large cities in France and the Netherlands in these years see Van Nierop, 'Similar Problems, Different Outcomes', pp. 35–36.

59 Hamilton, 'Recording the Wars of Religion'; Greengrass, 'Outspoken Opinions'.

60 See for instance the chronicle of Godevaert van Haecht, who edited his notes in 1574. See my appendix 'Consulted Chronicles'.

61 The memoirs of Michel de Huguerye are an exception. He probably wrote his memoirs in 1604, but they are so full of detail that they must be based on notes he made shortly after the events he described. A. de Ruble (ed.), *Mémoires inédits de Michel de La Huguerye (1570–1602)* (4 vols., Paris: Renouard, 1877–1880), I. pp. xxiii–xxvi.

interest to the modern reader'.<sup>62</sup> However, I have mostly relied on more recent twentieth- and twenty-first-century editions of chronicles that meet all modern edition criteria—some have even incorporated fragments that the chroniclers had crossed out.<sup>63</sup>

Why did chroniclers, who usually focused on local events, record foreign news? Some of them were in the habit of jotting down all the news that reached their ears, be it from a town nearby or a far-away country. Others believed that international events were a general matter of concern. They wrote down news that they supposed had or would have an impact on their own situation. Some used foreign news as a mirror or as reference material to their own situation. Chroniclers could have a partisan agenda, such as exposing abuses from the other party in the religious wars by noting down excesses of their religious adversaries abroad. A case in point is the *Relation des troubles excités par les calvinistes dans la ville de Rouen*, in which an angry Catholic chronicler recorded evils perpetrated by Protestants not only in his city but from all over Europe.<sup>64</sup> Many chroniclers aimed to record what they considered to be the major events of their times for posterity. And there were chroniclers who simply noted down foreign news that was spectacular or who had fun in recording amusing anecdotes.

#### 4 The Media World of the Sixteenth-Century Chronicler

In recent years, historians have stressed that sixteenth-century people lived in a multimedia world. Oral news, newsletters, pamphlets, songs, poems, ceremonial, plays and sermons together made up their daily news consumption. This focus on the interplay between oral, manuscript and print media has greatly improved our understanding of early modern news and information cultures. Monica Stensland, for one, has convincingly shown how the Habsburg government made use of all kinds of media to communicate their cause to their subjects. Femke Deen has demonstrated how the Dutch rebels, commonly

62 See for instance the editing of Anjou's documents by Muller and Diegerick, who left out all news that did not concern (hard) politics and military affairs, such as gossip from the French court: P.L. Muller, and A. Diegerick (eds.), *Documents concernant les relations entre le duc d'Anjou et les Pays-Bas (1576–1584)*, 5 vols. 1889–1899, (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1891) III, pp. 121–122.

63 See for the erasing of sensitive passages *Journalier de Jean Pussot*.

64 André Pottier (ed.), *Relation des troubles excités par les calvinistes dans la ville de Rouen, depuis l'an 1537 jusqu'en l'an 1582. Écrite par un témoin oculaire* (Rouen: E. Le Grand, 1837).



associated with print pamphleteering, made great use of handwritten letters to spread their propaganda message.<sup>65</sup>

Chronicles reflect this varied sixteenth-century media consumption.<sup>66</sup> French and Dutch chroniclers recorded how they attended plays, sermons, and ceremonies, received newsletters, and questioned travelers about the latest news. They copied songs, poems and sometimes entire pamphlets in their chronicles. This study follows the chroniclers in their media consumption: it therefore focuses particularly on the media that chroniclers were most keen to record in their chronicles: oral reports, poems, songs and pasquils.<sup>67</sup> In contrast, the reception of visual material is a topic chroniclers rarely mention: consequently, news prints feature less often in this book.<sup>68</sup> Pamphlets constitute a tricky category among the various news media. Traditionally, historians have devoted most of their attention to pamphlets. They have frequently assumed that high pamphlet numbers proved the existence of interest in a certain topic among audiences, making a direct connection between print output

65 Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*; Femke Deen, 'Handwritten Propaganda: Letters and Pamphlets in Amsterdam during the Dutch Revolt (1572–1578)', in Femke Deen, David Onnekink, and Michel Reinders, *Pamphlets and Politics in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden etc.: Brill, 2011), pp. 207–226; See also the chapter 'The Print Revolution in Context', in Asa Briggs and Peter Burke, *A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet* (Oxford: Polity, 2002), pp. 15–73; Luc Racaut uses McLuhan's concept 'hybridization of media' and states that 'printing was an addition to oral communication', Luc Racaut, *Hatred in Print: Catholic Propaganda and Protestant Identity during the French Wars of Religion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 41; Philip Benedict has stated that 'print, manuscript and speech at once competed with and stimulated one another in a growing echo chamber of rumor and news', Philip Benedict, *Graphic History: The "Wars, Massacres and Troubles" of Tortorel and Perrissin* (Geneva: Droz, 2007), pp. 3–4.

66 Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', p. 251.

67 Recently, there have been many studies on news-songs in the early modern age. See, for instance, Angela J. McShane, *Political Broadside Ballads of Seventeenth-Century England: A Critical Bibliography* (London: Routledge, 2011); McIlvenna, 'When the News Was Sung'; See also the work of Kate van Orden who has published extensively on sixteenth-century music. On the reception of sermons see: Joris van Eijnatten, 'Getting the Message: Towards a Cultural History of the Sermon', in Joris van Eijnatten (ed.), *Preaching, Sermon and Cultural Change in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 343–388. On epigrams and pasquils see Robert Darnton, *The Devil in the Holy Water, or The Art of Slander from Louis XIV to Napoleon* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

68 There are some notable exceptions: Marcus van Vaernewijck included drawings in his chronicle; Godevaert van Haecht referred to prints; Pierre de L'Estoile collected drawings, newsprints and paintings. See on news prints Ramon Voges, *Das Auge der Geschichte. Der Aufstand der Niederlande und die Französischen Religionskriege im Spiegel der Bildberichte Franz Hogenbergs (ca. 1560–1610)* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

and demand.<sup>69</sup> Yet, as others have noted, the connection between production and reception is much less straightforward. Helmer Helmers, for instance, has pointed to the existence of international diplomatic pamphleteering. Here, foreign diplomats would disseminate large numbers of propaganda pamphlets among sometimes completely indifferent international audiences.<sup>70</sup>

While digesting the news they received, chroniclers related it to and fitted it in with their views and ideas about the world as they knew it. As members of the elite, many were familiar with humanist scholarship and classical theological works. The Groningen diarist Johan Julsing wrote his chronicle in Latin, punctuated with Greek citations and words in Hebrew. He often referred to his own situation with appropriate passages from Aeschylus, Euripides, Ovid or Virgil, and compared some of his acquaintances with Hercules or Achilles.<sup>71</sup> Others connected the news they heard with passages from the Bible or St Augustine.<sup>72</sup> Yet a familiarity with scholarly culture did not necessarily entail that chroniclers wrote like Tacitus: the bulk of early modern autobiographical writing and chronicling rather resembled account-keeping.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, chronicles were often influenced by other genres such as almanacs, histories and newsletters. From commercial newsletters diarists adopted ways to express uncertainty about oral reports: 'it is said that', 'rumour goes that'.<sup>74</sup> Printed

69 See for example Christophe Schellekens, 'Antwerpen en de ontwikkelingen in de pamfletproductie tijdens de Opstand (1576–1585): Een kwantitatief-typologische analyse', *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Zuid-Nederlandse Maatschappij voor Taal- en Letterkunde en de Geschiedenis*, LXVI (2012), pp. 79–95.

70 Helmer J. Helmers, *The Royalist Republic: Literature, Politics and Religion in the Anglo-Dutch Public Sphere, 1639–1660* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 27–61; Helmer J. Helmers, 'Public Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe', *Media History*, 22:3–4 (2016), pp. 401–420. On pamphlets see: Craig E. Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture in the Early Dutch Republic* (Dordrecht etc.: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987).

71 For instance Jan van der Broek (ed.), *Het geheime dagboek van de Groninger stadssecretaris Johan Julsing* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2006), p. 140.

72 Many examples of this can be found in the diary of the Catholic canon Wouter Jacobsz: I.H. van Eeghen (ed.), *Dagboek van broeder Wouter Jacobsz (Gualtherus Jacobi Masius) prior van Stein, Amsterdam 1572–1578 en Montfoort 1578–1579* (2 vols., Groningen: Wolters, 1959–1960).

73 Pollmann states: 'the number of instances where sixteenth-century autobiographical writers refer to such ancient texts is limited, and even when reference is made, the extent to which they were and could be imitated should not be exaggerated'. For many these texts were 'way beyond their intellectual horizon'. Judith Pollmann, *Religious Choice in the Dutch Republic: the Reformation of Arnoldus Buchelius (1565–1641)* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 20, pp. 22–23; see also Janssen, *Princeley Power*, p. 12.

74 Brendan Dooley, *The Social History of Skepticism: Experience and Doubt in Early Modern Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 15.

almanacs provided the model of what topics one should record for posterity, such as 'great public events' like the births of princes.<sup>75</sup> The popular histories of Alonso de Ulloa, Gabriel Chappuys, Henri Lancelot-Voisin de la Popelinière or Pedro Cornejo taught chroniclers to include historical overviews of a country when discussing a news report they had received. They evidently used historians to provide historical context to their news facts.<sup>76</sup>

Perhaps not surprisingly, among all references to the classical world, the Roman Civil Wars featured prominently. Michel de Waele has argued that sixteenth-century Frenchmen generally used the term 'civil wars' instead of 'wars of religion', basing themselves on the narrative model of the Roman Republic. Etienne Pasquier, for example, was keen to compare the clashing Catholic and Protestant nobles with that of Caesar and Pompey.<sup>77</sup> These sixteenth-century worldviews also contained elements from medieval chivalric romances and courtly literature.<sup>78</sup> In their distrust of news media and their disgust with false news, chroniclers often come across as surprisingly modern. Yet the same chroniclers that were so critical of unverified news also wrote down reports about sightings of fire dragons, or how a boy impregnated a cow that then gave birth to a creature half calf-half human.<sup>79</sup>

Another topic of interest is the connection between news and public debate or public opinion. In the past decade, various scholars have argued for the existence of an early modern public sphere, in which the increasing exchange of (foreign) news resulted in engaged audiences all over Europe. They have demonstrated how lobby groups and political actors used news to influence political decision-making. Scholars have demonstrated the workings of these processes and the interaction between authorities and publics for both France

75 Arblaster, *Ghent to Aix*, pp. 71–73. On autobiography and almanacs see also Smyth, *Autobiography*, pp. 15–56.

76 On histories see Yolanda Rodríguez Pérez, *De Tachtigjarige Oorlog in Spaanse ogen: De Nederlanden in Spaanse historische en literaire teksten (circa 1548–1673)* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2003), pp. 55–80; Dunthorne, *Britain and the Dutch Revolt*, pp. 30–60.

77 De Waele, *Reconcilier les Français*, pp. 13–33. On the Dutch Revolt as a civil war see: Van Gelder, 'Een historische vergelijking'; Henk van Nierop, *Treason in the Northern Quarter: War, Terror, and the Rule of Law in the Dutch Revolt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 51–52.

78 This I will argue in chapter 2. See on medieval literature in early modern Europe: Alicia Montoya, *Medievalist Enlightenment: From Charles Perrault to Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2013).

79 Laurent Bourquin and Jean-Pierre Andry (eds.), *Mémoires de Claude Haton: édition intégrale* (4 vols., Paris: Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques, 2001), IV, 512; Xavier Le Person (ed.), *Registre-journal du règne de Henri IV. Volume 2 (1592–1594)* (Geneva: Droz, 2014), II, p. 39.

and the Netherlands.<sup>80</sup> This book does not seek to make bold statements about French or Netherlandish public opinion or public spheres. Rather, it aims to demonstrate some striking similarities in the ways contemporaries digested news on both sides of the border. By conveying the news reception in France and the Netherlands, it offers many evocative cases that will contribute to our larger understanding of the dynamics of public opinion in early modern Europe.

This book explores the reception of news in times of major religious troubles. From the start the Reformation had spurred the publication of a flood of religious propagandistic print material.<sup>81</sup> This propaganda transformed the way contemporaries responded to news. Therefore, I will not only map the content of news reports, but also investigate how the use of media changed during this period of increasing religious polarization and explain the emergence of a transnational news culture. Some chapters consequently deal with topics such as trustworthiness, authority and solidarity in relation to religious conflict. Generally, chroniclers from the Netherlands reflected more often on the credibility of news reports than did their colleagues in France. They habitually recorded their suspicion that religious opponents had 'planted rumours' or that they spread only news that was favourable to their co-religionists. An

80 Pollmann and Spicer, 'Introduction', in: Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (eds.), *Public Opinion and Changing Identities in the Early Modern Netherlands: Essays in Honour of Alastair Duke* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 1–9; Andrew Pettegree, 'A Provincial News Community in Sixteenth-Century Europe', in Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (eds.), *Public Opinion and Changing Identities in the Early Modern Netherlands: Essays in Honour of Alastair Duke* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 33–48; Deen, *Publiek debat en Propaganda*; Alexander Wilkinson, *Mary Queen of Scots and French Public Opinion, 1542–1600* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Racaut, *Hatred in Print*; Arjan van Dixhoorn, 'The Making of a Public Issue in Early Modern Europe: The Spanish Inquisition and Public Opinion in the Netherlands', in Massimo Rospocher (ed.), *Beyond the Public Sphere: Opinions, Publics, Spaces in Early Modern Europe* (Bologna and Berlin: Il Mulino and Duncker & Humbolt, 2012), pp. 249–269. Helmer Helmers discerned multiple public spheres in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic: Helmers, *Royalist Republic*. See also on early modern news and public opinion: Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Michiel van Groesen, *Amsterdam's Atlantic: Print Culture and the Making of Dutch Brazil* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017).

81 The traditional connection between the rise of Protestantism and print culture, made by Elizabeth Eisenstein and Robert Scribner, among others, still holds. See for recent contributions to this debate for instance Andrew Pettegree, *Brand Luther: 1517, Printing, and the Making of the Reformation* (New York: Penguin Press, 2015). Recently, historians have also focused on Catholic pamphleteering. See for instance, Alexandra Walsham, 'Domme Preachers'? Post-Reformation English Catholicism and the Culture of Print', *Past & Present*, 168 (2000), pp. 72–123.

explanation for this abundance of critical media reflections in Netherlandish chronicles might be that chroniclers in urban metropolises in the Netherlands simply received more varied news reports. This allowed them to compare sources and contemplate matters of trustworthiness.<sup>82</sup> In France, by contrast, with exception of those diarists who lived in the capital, chroniclers often had to be satisfied with whatever news they received. Magistrate Michel le Riche, living in the small community of Saint-Maixent, marked in his chronicle the rare occasions on which he received newsletters or welcomed visitors in his village. Each time he eagerly grasped the opportunity to inquire after the latest news. French chroniclers, then, often had fewer chances to check the veracity of news.

## 5 Scope and Structure

In 1559, after decades of warfare between the Habsburg and Valois monarchies, the borders between France and the Netherlands were finally reopened. The first French War of Religion broke out in 1562, barely three years later. In the Netherlands, rioting and revolt erupted in 1566. During the following years, wars raged almost incessantly in both countries. In 1598, the Edict of Nantes provisionally ended the Wars of Religion in France. Moreover, in May 1598, the Peace of Vervins ended the war between Henry IV and Philip II. In the Southern Netherlands, the Archdukes Albert and Isabella started overtures for negotiations with the rebellious provinces in the North. After forty years of uncertainty and strife, both France and the Netherlands in 1598 seemed to return to calmer waters.

This study focuses primarily on news in the Netherlands and France. However, I am aware that news exchange was never confined to these two countries. News also originated from and spread to other countries, notably England, the Holy Roman Empire, Spain, Rome, and Geneva. I therefore sometimes cross the borders of France and the Netherlands to cities such as Emden, Cologne and London, where large communities of French and Netherlandish refugees could be found. However, the French Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt, as the most violent conflicts in Western Europe, did provide the bulk of news items that were followed with interest by the inhabitants of Western Europe.<sup>83</sup> Among all mentions of foreign news in Netherlandish chronicles,

82 Van Nierop, 'And Ye Shall Hear'; Parker, 'Dutch Revolt and the Polarization'.

83 The recent *Fuggerzeitungen*-database is a great tool for mapping topics that were of interest to early modern Europeans. The names that featured most often in the news letters

French news often predominated. The same went for Netherlandish news in France: while French chronicles also recorded news from Spain, the Empire, and England, reports from the Netherlands featured prominently in these records.

Furthermore, this book centers on the reception of news at critical moments in both conflicts: times when major events took place, years when the situation in each country clearly mirrored that in the other, and periods when political affairs in France and the Netherlands interlocked, such as during Anjou's intervention in the Netherlands. This means that I also had to deal with a number of occasions when chroniclers, contrarily to all expectations, recorded hardly any news exchange at all. Chapter 1 immediately provides an example. This chapter on the first troubles in France and the Netherlands (1561–1566) explores why chroniclers in France and the Netherlands recorded hardly any news about the iconoclasm taking place across their common border. Chapter 2 studies the reception of news during the wars in France and the Netherlands in the years 1567–1571. It shows how French and Netherlandish chroniclers, in an attempt to make sense of the foreign conflicts, primarily focused on the actions of aristocratic leaders. Chapter 3 analyzes Netherlandish reactions to the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre (1572) and uses this news event to consider how contemporaries dealt with problems of news credibility. Chapter 4 assesses the exchange of news about peace negotiations in both countries (1576–1579). It specifically studies the discrepancy between the number of news pamphlets that were published on this topic and the mentions of news about peace in chronicles. Chapter 5 turns the attention to the exchange of news during the mission of the Duke of Anjou, the younger brother of the French king, in the Netherlands (1578–1583). During this period, political affairs in France and the Netherlands were more closely entwined than before. However, this prompted little mutual solidarity among French and Netherlandish chroniclers. Chapter 6 surveys the period 1584–1598, when many chroniclers developed a more international outlook and recorded expressions of transnational solidarity. It also shows how the increase in international religious polarization went together with an increase in media-savviness among chroniclers, who became ever more aware of false news and religious bias in international news reports.

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between 1568 and 1605 were those of the French and Spanish King Henry IV and Philip II. General Alexander Farnese also featured among the most often mentioned persons. The cities of Antwerp and Paris were among the places most often mentioned in the Fugger newsletters. See the website <http://fuggerzeitungen.univie.ac.at/en>.

# The First Troubles (1561–1566): Iconoclasm

## 1 The Sound of the Flute from France

In 1562, at an inn in the southern Netherlandish town of Valenciennes, a servant of the French Duke of Vendôme was overheard declaring to his drinking companions: ‘Messieurs, listen well to what happens in France between the Catholics and the Huguenots, because here, too, you will have to dance to the sound of the flute from France’.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, throughout the 1560s, events in the Netherlands would mirror events in France. Historians have noticed the similarities between the Protestant movements in France, England, Switzerland and the Netherlands: the formation of synods, open-air preaching, and violence and iconoclasm.<sup>2</sup> In the beginning of the 1560s, contemporaries, too, were well aware of the parallels between the movements in various countries. Correspondence between European heads of state shows their concern about international ties between Protestants. City-dwellers in the Netherlands noted their fear of French troubles. The Ghent chronicler Marcus van Vaernewijck dreaded having to ‘enjoy the game that recently has been played in France’.<sup>3</sup> In December 1565, the Antwerp chronicler Godevaert van Haecht wrote that ‘in France, since 1561, there has been a great deal of trouble in many cities regarding matters of religion’. And he added: ‘Here too we fear such misery’.<sup>4</sup>

In the Netherlands, increasing tensions exploded in the Iconoclastic Fury during the summer of 1566. Iconoclasm had also been an issue in France. From 1560 onwards, French Huguenots stripped churches in the areas where they came to power. This chapter seeks to examine the exchange of news between France and the Netherlands in these first stages of the Religious Wars, with a particular focus on practices of iconoclasm. In contrast to what we might

1 ‘Messieurs, acoustez bien ce qui adviendra en Franche entre les catholiques et les Huguenots, car, au son du flageolet de Franche, il vous faudra danser par dechà’. Cited in Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, 1, 11, n.1.

2 Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed*; Benedict, et al., *Reformation, Revolt, and Civil War*; Olivier Christin, *Une révolution symbolique: L'iconoclisme huguenot et la reconstruction catholique* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1991).

3 ‘Vresende tspel te moeten ghenieten dat curts in Vrancrijck ghebeurt was’. *Beroerlicke tijden*, 1. 89.

4 ‘In Vrankeryck sendt den jaere 1561 was groote beroerte in vuel steden binnens landts om saecken der religien aengaende’; ‘Voor sulcken allende was men hier oock vreesende’. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, 1. 16–17.

expect, I will show and explain why chroniclers in both France and the Netherlands devoted a lot of space to domestic iconoclasm, but rarely bothered to mention the destruction of images that occurred across the border.

The Iconoclastic Fury of 1566 is a major topic in the historiography of the Dutch Revolt. Over the years, it has become one of its 'icon events'.<sup>5</sup> Historians have reconstructed the course of the image-breaking and discussed its causes and the ferocity of its movement.<sup>6</sup> In the summer of 1566, chroniclers recorded the stunned reactions of contemporaries, who were shocked by the fast-spreading violence. Few historians, however, have made the connection with France. Were Dutch chroniclers not already familiar with the phenomenon of iconoclasm from news reports from France? How widespread was French news in the Netherlands in these years?

Studying the Iconoclastic Fury as a news event also helps to sketch the context in which news circulated in the early 1560s. Authorities in both France and the Netherlands sought to delimit the public domain, prescribing what news was to be disseminated and celebrated and what was to be suppressed. Some international news was considered suitable for publication in pamphlets while other news was clearly not. In the Netherlands, Habsburg censorship was in force during the major part of the 1560s. Nevertheless, the authorities were never able to control the presses completely.<sup>7</sup>

## 2 Open Borders and Transnational News Networks after Cateau-Cambrésis (1559)

On Thursday 15 June 1559 the Parisian priest Jehan de la Fosse wrote in his diary how he had spotted a group of foreign noblemen in Paris. The Duke of Alva, the Prince of Orange and the Count of Egmont were in town as ambassadors of Philip II to sign the peace agreement after decades of war between the Habsburgs and Valois.<sup>8</sup> After years of hostilities, the border between France

5 The expression 'icon event' is used by Alexandra Walsham to describe an event that stuck in collective memory. Alexandra Walsham, "'The Fatall Vesper': Providentialism and Anti-Popery in Late Jacobean London', *Past & Present*, 144 (1994), pp. 36–87 (45).

6 See the section 'Iconoclasm in France and the Netherlands' for an overview of recent literature.

7 Alastair Duke, 'Posters, Pamphlets and Prints: The Ways and Means of Disseminating Dissident Opinions on the Eve of the Dutch Revolt', in Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (eds.), *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 157–177. For (more literature on) censorship see my chapters 2 and 6.

8 'En ung jeudi 15e de juing, le duc d'Albe avec le prince d'Orenge et le duc d'Egremon arriverent à Paris ...'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 33.



and the Netherlands was open again. In the years immediately after 1559, trade between the two countries increased. With people and goods crossing the border, news spread more easily as well.

In the fifteenth century, the German Taxis family had developed an advanced European postal system. The main post road connected the urbanized regions of the Netherlands to cities in the German Empire and Italy. The Taxis international headquarters was based in Brussels, which was linked by a daily post service to Antwerp, from which post couriers left for London and the Netherlands. France was less well connected to the main European routes, although Paris was linked to Antwerp and Brussels in a weekly post service.<sup>9</sup> The French kings held the monopoly on the postal service. Francis I had issued a stricture on the use of the postal network for private means, and he had prohibited the construction of any rival network in his country. Royal messengers were forbidden to carry private mail, but they occasionally moonlighted, as it was hard to control what mail they were carrying. The hiring of horses was also kept under strict control. A horse hired for the day had to be returned to the owner by the hirer himself. Only in 1597, during the rule of Henry IV, was the system somewhat liberalized.<sup>10</sup>

Both in France and the Netherlands some institutions, such as monasteries and universities, maintained their own couriers, who had a special privilege to carry mail. Others used special couriers, ship's captains, or travelling friends to deliver their mail. Besides the Taxis family, many cities also provided regular and public mail services as they licensed carriers for civic and mercantile purposes. The almost continual state of war that plagued France and parts of the Netherlands from the 1560s onwards seriously impeded the safe and quick delivery of mail. As the Wars of Religion continued, French roads became notoriously dangerous for couriers and travellers.<sup>11</sup> Couriers were often shot from their horses and their bags ransacked. Yet sending a letter by courier on horse was usually faster than sending a letter by ship.<sup>12</sup> The wars in France also hindered the communication between Philip II in Madrid and his correspondents in the Netherlands. The king regularly complained about the insecure French

9 Arblaster, *From Ghent to Aix*, p. 46.

10 See for a good overview of European postal networks: Schobesberger, *et al.*, 'European News Networks'.

11 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, pp. 170–171.

12 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, pp. 167–181; Paul Arblaster, 'Antwerp and Brussels as Inter-European Spaces', in Brendan Dooley (ed.), *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 193–205.

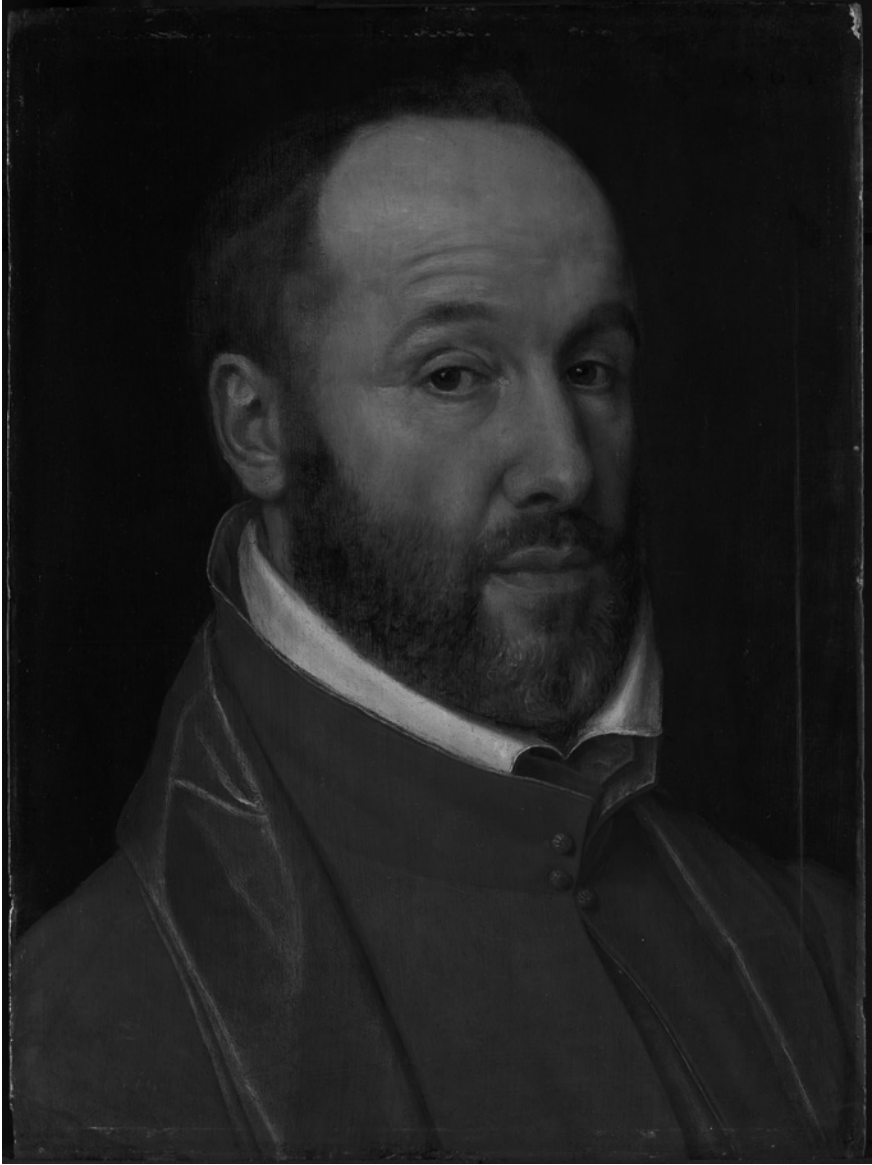


FIGURE 1 Anonymous, 'Portrait of Antoine Perrenot (1517–1586)' Cardinal de Granvelle, Minister to Charles v and Philip II, Southern Netherlands, oil on panel, 1565. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (SK-A-4071)

roads and the ensuing lack of news from the Low Countries.<sup>13</sup> The European governing elites had their own advanced international correspondence networks.<sup>14</sup> Cardinal Granvelle maintained one of the most advanced private news networks of his time, which kept him in touch with correspondents from all over Europe.<sup>15</sup>

When in March 1562 the First War of Religion broke out in France, letters of European leaders abounded with French news. The conflict especially bothered those involved in the politics of the Netherlands. Indeed, news from France was a recurring source of concern in the correspondence between governor-general Margaret of Parma and King Philip II.<sup>16</sup> Christoffel d'Assonleville, member of the Council of State, complained in a letter to Cardinal Granvelle in December 1565 about the 'deplorable influence of French affairs on the situation in the Low Countries'.<sup>17</sup> In March 1566, Cardinal Granvelle, in a letter to the president of the Privy Council Viglius van Aytta, admitted to his fear of 'sacks and mutinies' in the Netherlands, as he was familiar with the situation in the French kingdom.<sup>18</sup>

The correspondence of Louis of Nassau, William of Orange's younger brother, shows his preoccupation with the situation in France. His comments on French affairs nearly surpass in number his remarks on his hatred

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- 13 See for instance Philip II to Granvelle, 28 November 1567: 'Muy bien me paresce, lo que me advertis, que convenia mucho entender de rayz la que han tenido las cosas de Flándes, y así se procurará como conviene, aunque, por las nuevas revueltas de Francia, y no poder por ellas venir correos seguramente por tierra, no he tenido muchos dias ha relacion del duque de las cosas de aquellos estados despues de la prision de los condes d'Aygmond y Hornes y los demas ...'. Poulet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, III, pp. 119–120.
  - 14 Liesbeth Geevers, 'Hoe toegankelijk was de 'Papieren Koning'? Een informeel informatiekanal tussen Lamoraal van Egmont en Willem van Oranje en de Spaanse centrale besluitvorming in de jaren 1559–1564', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis*, 4:1 (2007), pp. 39–60.
  - 15 See Granvelle's correspondence: Poulet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*.
  - 16 Theissen, *et al.*, *Correspondance Marguerite d'Autriche* and L.P. Gachard (ed.), *Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas; publiée d'après les originaux conservés dans les archives royales de Simancas. Tome I* (Brussels: C. Muquardt, 1848). See also Margaret's correspondence with other noblemen, for instance Charles de Brimeu, count of Meegen, 31 March 1563: 'Mon cousin (...) comme par les advertissements que j'ay, il semble que le roy de France et les rebelles soyent d'accord.' Theissen, *et al.*, *Correspondance Marguerite d'Autriche*, I, p. 95.
  - 17 Assonleville to Granvelle, 20 November 1565. Poulet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, I, p. 11.
  - 18 Granvelle to Viglius, 2 March 1566: 'procurer le soubstement de la Religion, l'autorité du Prince, égale administration de la justice, bien et repos du pays, que sont les pointns nécessaires pour éviter les saccagementz et mutinerie que l'on peult probablement craindre'. Poulet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, I, p. 144.

for Cardinal Granvelle, the 'red bloodhound'. Sometimes he combined these two topics, for instance in a letter to Wilhelm von Hessen in June 1563: 'The affairs are like this: that this land, if God will not prevent it, will be in the same revolt as France, and all because of this red hat'.<sup>19</sup> Occasionally he mentioned to Wilhelm that the Prince of Orange had not received news from France for a while.<sup>20</sup> A letter from William of Orange to Augustus, Elector of Saxony, the uncle of his future wife, shows his meticulous knowledge of French news.<sup>21</sup> Augustus greatly appreciated Orange's knowledge of French affairs; one of Augustus' counsellors actively encouraged Orange to write the Elector more often with news from France.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, Walloon nobles sympathetic to Calvinism kept a steady eye on the situation in France. In Lille, the seigneur d'Escobecques, a colourful figure who was described by contemporaries as 'the merry Calvinist' or 'Pantagruel', expressed his fear that, due to escalating tensions and iconoclasm, the Reformed in the Netherlands would be treated in the same way as the French Huguenots.<sup>23</sup>

The Reformed congregations in the Netherlands and those in exile had their eyes on France as well. Yet the extent to which they were focused on France remains a source of debate. Andrew Pettegree has emphasized the strong sense of independence of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, especially of

19 Louis of Nassau to Willem von Hessen, 7 June 1563: 'Inn summa, die sachen lassen sich dermassen ahn, das dise landt, wo es Gott nit verhut, Franckreich gleich inn eine ufruhr gerathen müssen unndt alles durch dissent rother hut'. P.J. Blok (ed.), *Correspondentie van en betreffende Lodewijk van Nassau en andere onuitgegeven documenten* (Utrecht: Kemink, 1887), pp. 4–5. And on 26 July 1563, 'Sunst stehen die sachen unnder dem gemeinen mann, das zu bezorgen (wo nit bey zeiten dartzu gethan), es werde erger dann in Franckreich', Blok, *Correspondentie Lodewijk van Nassau*, pp. 10–11.

20 Louis of Nassau to Willem von Hessen, 7 June 1563. 'Es schreibet mir auch mein herr der Printz, das ehr nuhn eine gute Zeit gar keine gewisse zeitung auss Frankreich gehapt, unnd dweil mein herr nit gern etwas uhngewisses schreibt, so scheut er sich viel zu schreiben'. Blok, *Correspondentie Lodewijk van Nassau*, p. 6.

21 William of Orange to Augustus of Saxony, 14 April 1561. Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, 10024 (Geheimer Rat [Geheimes Archiv]), loc. 9941/3, f. 180–182. I would like to thank Femke Deen for pointing this out to me. See also on the correspondence of William of Orange, Henk van Nierop, 'Een brief per dag. De nieuwsvoorziening van Willem van Oranje', in D. Haks, *De correspondentie van Willem van Oranje: presentatie van de data- en beeldbank in Stedelijk Museum Het Prinsenhof te Delft, 12 april 2005* (Den Haag: Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, 2005), pp. 21–28.

22 This was Balthasar Worm, counselor of Augustus of Saxony.

23 Alain Lottin, 'Nobles, calvinistes et Gueux en 1566: trois figures de la révolte, Escobecques, Longastre, Hannescamps', *Revue du Nord: histoire & archéologie: Nord de la France, Belgique, Pays Bas*, 94 (2012), pp. 307–325 (313), (315).

the Church in Antwerp.<sup>24</sup> Theodore de Bèze repeatedly expressed his dissatisfaction with the proceedings of the Calvinist Church in the Netherlands. Still, a substantial number of Protestant ministers visiting the Netherlands originated from France or had at least passed through that country on their way from Geneva. Reformed preachers (clandestinely) came and went, especially in Antwerp. Alastair Duke has pointed to the circulation of French Protestant pamphlets in the Flemish Westkwartier.<sup>25</sup> There is also other evidence that the Reformed Churches knew what was going on in other countries and that a sense of international solidarity existed. In September 1562, the consistory in Emden decreed a day of fasting and prayer to commemorate the events in the kingdom of France 'because the community of God there is in great peril'.<sup>26</sup>

### 3 Iconoclasm in France and the Netherlands

On 22 August 1566, Jean Ferey, seigneur de Durescu, the French ambassador in Brussels, wrote a letter to Queen Catherine de' Medici, in which he reported that his often-repeated predictions had finally come true: after months of unrest, inhabitants of the Netherlands had begun attacking churches and breaking images.<sup>27</sup> Beginning on 10 August in Steenvoorde in South-West Flanders near the French border, iconoclasm quickly spread to Antwerp and from there to other towns in Brabant, Flanders, Zeeland and Holland, and in September to the Northeastern provinces.

The Iconoclastic Fury of 1566 is one of the most hotly debated subjects in the historiography of the Dutch Revolt. Alastair Duke and Peter Arnade have published on the political culture in the Netherlands in which the Iconoclastic Fury could arise.<sup>28</sup> Solange Deyon and Alain Lottin have paid attention to the

24 Andrew Pettegree, *Emden and the Dutch Revolt: Exile and the Development of Reformed Protestantism* (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 241.

25 Duke, 'Posters, Pamphlets and Prints', p. 164.

26 Pettegree, *Emden and the Dutch Revolt*, p. 228.

27 'Madame, ainsi que j'ay souvent escript à Vos Majestez, je prévois bien que le peuple ne se contiendrait longuement sans mettre la main aux temples et monastères'. Jean Ferey, seigneur de Durescu to the Queen of France, 22 August 1566. Gachard, *La Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris*, p. 458. See also Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS Français 16123. Dépêches originales de plusieurs ambassadeurs français auprès des Archiducs, à Bruxelles. I. Années 1566–1569.

28 Alastair Duke, 'Calvinists and 'Papist Idolatry': The Mentality of the Image-breakers in 1566', in Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (eds.), *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 179–197; Duke, 'Posters, Pamphlets and Prints'; Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts and Civic Patriots*; Martin van Gelderen, *The*

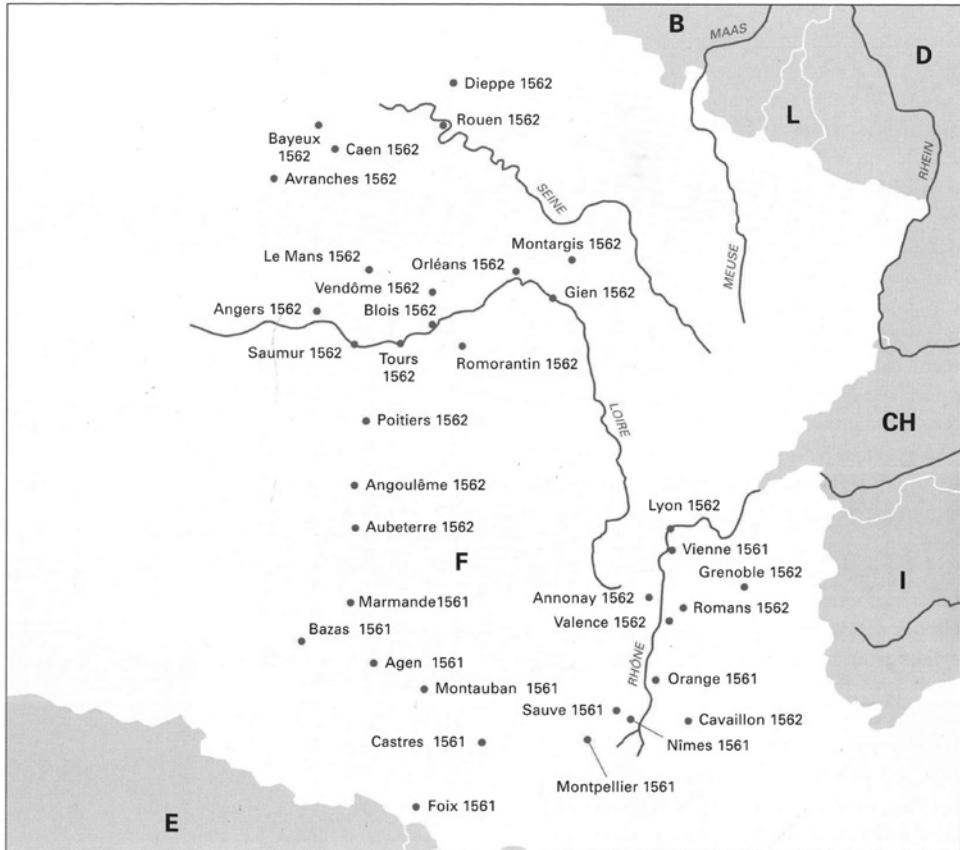


FIGURE 2 Iconoclasm in France, 1561–1562. Olivier Christin, 'France et les Pays-Bas—Le second iconoclisme', in Cécile Dupeux, *et al.* (eds.), *Iconoclisme, vie et mort de l'image médiévale* (Paris: Somogy, 2001)

question as to whether iconoclasm in the great southern Netherlandish cities was a spontaneous movement or a premediated affair.<sup>29</sup> In a recent article on iconoclasm in Cateau-Cambrésis, Andrew Spicer has explored image-breaking in the border regions between the Netherlands and France, while

*Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt, 1555–1590* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Phyllis Mack Crew, *Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm in the Netherlands (1544–1569)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). See also the works of J. Scheerder and Henk van Nierop. Scheerder reconstructed the course of the image-breaking, while Van Nierop explored the social background of the iconoclasts in Amsterdam. J. Scheerder, *De Beeldenstorm* (Bussum: De Haan, 1974); Henk van Nierop, *Beeldenstorm en burgerlijk verzet in Amsterdam* (Nijmegen: Socialistische Uitgeverij Nijmegen, 1978).

29 Solange Deyon and Alain Lottin, *Les casseurs de l'été 1566: L'iconoclisme dans le Nord* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2013 (1st edition 1986)).



FIGURE 3 Iconoclasm in the Netherlands, 1566. Olivier Christin, 'France et les Pays-Bas—Le second iconoclisme, in Cécile Dupeux, et al. (eds.), *Iconoclisme, vie et mort de l'image médiévale* (Paris: Somogy, 2001)

taking into account, more than other historians, the international context.<sup>30</sup> Judith Pollmann and Geert Janssen have studied the Catholic reaction to the

<sup>30</sup> Andrew Spicer, 'Iconoclasm on the Frontier: Le Cateau-Cambrésis, 1566', in Kristine Kolrud and Marina Prusac (eds.), *Iconoclasm from Antiquity to Modernity* (Burlington, VT: Aldershot, 2014). See also Andrew Spicer, 'After Iconoclasm: Reconciliation and

Iconoclastic Fury, while Koenraad Jonckheere has explored the topic from an art-historical perspective.<sup>31</sup> In 2016, 450 years after the event, the journal *BMGN* dedicated a special issue to the Iconoclastic Fury.<sup>32</sup>

Iconoclasm in France has also received ample attention, although it has not acquired the same canonical status as the *Beeldenstorm* in the Netherlands. A great deal has been written on the subject by Olivier Christin, who has also made one of the few comparisons between French and Netherlandish image-breaking.<sup>33</sup> Denis Crouzet has dealt with the topic within his larger narrative on religious violence and apocalyptic popular thought in the sixteenth century. Many historians, Crouzet among them, have asked *why* the image-breaking could occur. According to him, we have to see the image-breaking within the context of contemporary views on the ‘renewal of the times’. The violence was a way to turn back to the ‘tabula rasa of the past’.<sup>34</sup>

While Ambassador Durescu in his letters to Paris claimed to have foreseen the advent of the Iconoclastic Fury, the general response in the Netherlands was one of shock. Maximilien de Berghes, archbishop of the southern diocese of Cambrai, wrote in a letter to Cardinal Granvelle that the ‘perplexity in which are all the good Catholics and people that are well disposed towards this country is so great, that it is impossible to say’.<sup>35</sup> Various chronicles registered

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Resacralization in the Southern Netherlands, ca. 1566–1585’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 44:2 (2013), pp. 411–433.

- 31 Pollmann, ‘Countering the Reformation’; Pollmann, *Catholic Identity*; Janssen, *The Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*; Koenraad Jonckheere, *Antwerp Art after Iconoclasm: Experiments in Decorum, 1566–1585* (Brussels: Mercatorfonds, 2012). See also David Freedberg, *Iconoclasts and Their Motives* (Maarsse: Schwartz, 1985). For the build-up to Dutch iconoclasm see: Keith P.F. Moxey, ‘Image Criticism in the Netherlands before the Iconoclasm of 1566’, *Nederlandsch archief voor kerkgeschiedenis*, 57:2 (1977), pp. 148–162.
- 32 Anne-Laure van Bruaene, Koenraad Jonckheere and Ruben Suykerbuyk (eds.), ‘“Beeldenstorm”: Iconoclasm in the Low Countries’, *Special Issue of BMGN—Low Countries Historical Review*, 131:1 (2016).
- 33 Christin, *Une révolution symbolique*; Olivier Christin, ‘France et Pays-Bas—le second iconoclasm’, in Cécile Dupeux, et al. (eds.), *Iconoclasm: Vie et mort de l’image médiévale* (Paris: Somogy, 2001), pp. 57–66.
- 34 Crouzet characterizes it as ‘un certain nihilisme social’, Denis Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu: la violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525–vers 1610)*, 2 vols. (Seyssel: Champs Vallon, 1990), 1, p. 513 and briefly discusses Netherlandish iconoclasm, *ibid.*, 1, p. 549.
- 35 ‘La perplexité en laquelle sont tous bons catholiques et tous ceulx qui en ce pays se portent bien, est si grande que l’on ne sçaurait dire’. Maximilien de Berghes, Archbishop of Cambrai to Cardinal de Granvelle, 20 August 1566. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, 1, p. 427.



the feelings of devastation contemporaries experienced. Some people wept, became ill, or stayed in bed for days, crying, with their hands folded.<sup>36</sup>

Those who had heard about the Huguenot wars in France could already have known what iconoclasm entailed. Only five years before, large parts of France had been confronted with waves of Protestant iconoclasm similar to those the Netherlands experienced in the summer of 1566. Denis Crouzet distinguishes between two periods of iconoclastic waves: those that took place before the massacre of Vassy (1 March 1562) and those that occurred after it. The first wave of image-breaking took place in Protestant areas in the South-West; the second one, the 'explosion générale' of 1562, in the North.<sup>37</sup> While there were many similarities between French and Netherlandish iconoclasm, the contexts were different. In France, much of the image-breaking happened within the chaos of the First War of Religion, as armies marched and laid siege to cities. The attacks on churches were partly aimed at purifying them from idols, partly at impounding church treasure for financing the Protestant war effort.<sup>38</sup>

In the Netherlands, despite the unrest of the 'Wonder Year' 1566, there was no open warfare yet. Still, the situation of wars in France did not make the image-breaking less controversial. Huguenots were cautious not to reject the authority of the king completely: many of them emphasized that they were attempting to free him from the influence of his evil counsellors, the Guises.<sup>39</sup> The French synods, too, predominantly condemned unlicensed iconoclasm, fearing that they would be accused of instigating revolt.<sup>40</sup> Following the iconoclastic riots at Rouen, the Reformed leadership was eager to stress that the image-breaking crowd had consisted of youths who had begun the destruction spontaneously, without permission from ministers and elders.<sup>41</sup>

36 Pollmann, 'Countering the Reformation', p. 94; Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, pp. 23–24.

37 Crouzet, *Guerriers de Dieu*, 'Chapitre VII: L'Evangile, *hic et nunc*? Problématique de l'iconoclasme', I, pp. 495–563.

38 R.J. Knecht, *The French Civil Wars, 1562–1598* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 74; Christin, 'France et Pays-Bas—le second iconoclasme', p. 58.

39 For the role of the Guises at the French court see: Carroll, *Martyrs and Murderers*.

40 Philip Benedict and Nicolas Fornerod, 'Faut-il excommunier sur-le-champ les iconoclastes et ceux qui refusent de payer les dîmes? Un 'brevet' synodal inconnu de 1561', *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, 159:2 (2013), pp. 297–312.

41 Philip Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 98. We see the same blaming of young people and 'rabble' in the Netherlands: Van Nierop, *Beeldenstorm en burgerlijk verzet*, pp. 38–39.

#### 4 News about the First War of Religion and French Iconoclasm

In the Netherlands, in the 1560s, several pamphlets were printed that contained news from France. These pamphlets were subjected to censorship and clearly expressed a Catholic opinion on French politics. The topics deemed suitable for print included the Joyous Entry of Charles IX in Reims (14 May 1561)—which took place on the day before he would be inaugurated as the new king of France; the Colloquy of Poissy (1561)—an attempt to reconcile French Catholics and Huguenots; the Massacre of Vassy (1562)—the murder of a congregation of Huguenots by the Catholic Francis, Duke of Guise; the siege and capture of Rouen by the French crown in 1562; and the murder of the Duke of Guise by Jean Poltrot de Méré in 1563.<sup>42</sup> Several printers provided their audience with in-depth reading: Christophe Plantin published the whole speech delivered by the Cardinal of Lorraine at the Colloquy of Poissy.<sup>43</sup>

In the German Empire, by contrast, pamphlets defending the Protestant side of the conflict were quickly translated into German, for example Condé's narrative of the First War of Religion. These pamphlets were partly printed by French-speaking Protestant (Huguenot and Walloon) printers who had immigrated to South-West Germany. Most pamphlets were printed in Heidelberg, where Prince Frederick III had recently converted from Lutheranism to Calvinism. Several of these pamphlets were published without the noting of the place of printing on the front page. This absence might be explained by the sensitive nature of Frederick's conversion among the other rulers of the Empire, which caused Frederick to be cautious when having Huguenot pamphlets printed. In England, translations of Condé's history could be published

42 Karel van Guise, *L'oraison de ... cardinal de Lorraine, faite en l'assemblée de Poyssi ... le xvi jour de septembre. M.D.LXI.* (Antwerp: Plantin, 1561–1562), USTC 60020; Claude de Saintes, *Reformation de la confession de la foy que les ministres de Genève présentèrent au Roy en l'assemblée de Poissy* (Antwerpen: Plantin, 1562), USTC 13046; *Warachtich verhael, int corte, van tghene datter ... gebeurt is, te Vassy, als ... de hertoch van Guise daer deur passeerde* (Antwerp: J. Mollijs, [1562]), USTC 409392; *Beleg ende innemen, der vermaerder coopstadt van Rowanen door Francois van Loiraine hertoch van Guise, 26.11.1562* (Antwerp: Jan Mollyns, 1562), USTC 40117; Frans van Lorrainen and Jan Mollijs, *Dit Zijn Die Leste Woorden, Des ... Prince, Francoys Van Loraine, ... Ghesproken Ende Volbracht, Een Weynich Tijts Voor Zijn Doot Teghen Die Hertoghinne Zijn Huysvrouw, Zijn Sone, Die Cardinaels Zijn Broeders, Ende Meer Ander Teghenwoordich Zijnde* (Antwerp: J. Mollijs, [1563]), USTC 403232; *Deploration de la France sur la mort de monsieur de Guise* (Louvain: J. Bogard, 1563), USTC 13539. I have consulted the online pamphlet collections of Knuttel (TEMPO); Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC) and Short Title Catalogue Netherlands (STCN) for the years 1561–1563.

43 Charles de Guise, *Die oratie van den cardinael van Lorreyne. Ghedaen in de vergaderinghe van Poyssi* ([Antwerp:] Plantin, 1562), USTC 404376.

and distributed freely. Thus, inhabitants of the Netherlands who could read German, French, or somewhat less likely, English, could have laid their hands on a German, English or French Protestant pamphlet on the troubles in France.<sup>44</sup>

While some commentaries on French iconoclasm appeared in 1563, by the French Catholic author Claude de Saintes among others, no evidence remains that these pamphlets were translated into Dutch.<sup>45</sup> Yet in 1564 the Antwerp printer Antonius Thielens published a Dutch translation of an ultra-Catholic French account of the events during the First War of Religion in Provence and the Comtat Venaissin authored by Louis de Pérussis.<sup>46</sup> It dealt extensively with the events in the principality of Orange. This booklet was a history rather than a news pamphlet, focusing primarily on the Catholic military commanders and their heroic deeds. It reported for example how, during the siege of the city of Orange, the Catholic general Fabrice Serbelloni, while leaning on a siege instrument, received a shot in his upper lip that singed his beard and moustache. The lord of Carces took him in his arms and said, 'O my lord, are you hurt?', at which Serbelloni laconically answered, 'No, no, it's just a lucky sign'. He proceeded with the siege and eventually massacred the inhabitants of Orange on 6 June 1562.<sup>47</sup>

The book chiefly recounted the 'inhuman cruel deeds' of the Huguenots and especially iconoclasm. The author described how the Protestants in Provence 'knocked over crosses, violated the graves of the king's ancestors and desecrated holy relics'.<sup>48</sup> In Orange, the Protestants had even tied a cross to a donkey and whipped the animal while leading it through the city.<sup>49</sup> The author stressed that the Prince had been informed about this scandal. In William of Orange's correspondence, we do indeed find letters discussing the troubles in Orange.<sup>50</sup> Pérussis also discussed the motives for iconoclasm and criticized

44 Zwielerin, 'Une propaganda huguenote internationale', pp. 403–405.

45 In those years at least, see the last section of this chapter.

46 Louis de Pérussis, *Die hystorie van der orloghen gheschiedt in Vranckrijck in Provençen ende tgraefschap van Venayscin, tusschen de catholycke ende diemen noemt Hughenoyzen, int jaer M.D.LXII* (Antwerp: Antonius Thielens, 1564), USTC 402992.

47 Pérussis, *Die hystorie van der orloghen*, 68 (USTC 402992).

48 Ibidem.

49 This of course immediately brings to mind Natalie Davis's famous article on ritual violence: Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-Century France', *Past & Present*, 59 (1973), pp. 51–91.

50 The lord of Causans to William of Orange, 5-2-1562, letter containing reports on devastation in Orange; see also William of Orange to François Fabrice Serbelloni, Brussels, 25-8-1563, in which William expresses his concerns on the situation in Orange. See the database of William of Orange's correspondence: <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/wvo>.

the image-breakers, asking them why they so fiercely opposed images, as even Calvin liked to have himself depicted; according to the author, there existed in Geneva 'a very fine image of Calvin, with beautiful deep-set eyes'. He deplored the troubles caused by the religious differences because trade had ground to a standstill, while the peasants were no longer able to work the fields, all because of the useless nagging about images.

Contemporary chronicles enable us to trace other news from France that reached the Netherlands. Unfortunately, sources of the early 1560s are not abundant, as most Netherlandish chroniclers took up keeping notes only in 1566, impressed by the events of the 'Wonder Year'.<sup>51</sup> Pasquier de le Barre, procurator-general in Tournai, mentioned the situation in France in 1565, but commented only on the prices of grain, which had become much higher than usual.<sup>52</sup> Augustijn van Hernighem, a corn inspector in Ypres, also remained quiet on the situation in France.<sup>53</sup> The 'Antwerps Chronykje' mentioned the execution of the murderer of Francis, the Duke of Guise, Poltrot de Méré, who in the chronicle is mistakenly called 'Lolkot'. He was drawn and quartered by four horses on the Place de Grève in Paris. The execution was particularly gruesome, since the four horses were not able to pull Poltrot's limbs apart, and the executioner had to help them with his sword.<sup>54</sup> Poltrot's agonizing death must have appealed to the contemporaries' imaginations, as it was the only news fact from France mentioned in the 'Antwerps Chronykje'. According to Philip Benedict, no account of the execution was published before 1570. This suggests that the news came to the Netherlands by way of word of mouth or through international correspondence.<sup>55</sup>

The Lutheran chronicler Godevaert van Haecht in August 1566 denounced in a chronicle entry the violence of Calvinists: 'I do not believe that the violence they have used, in France and elsewhere, when they were strong, and

51 Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', p. 238.

52 Alexandre Pinchart (ed.), *Mémoires de Pasquier de le Barre et de Nicolas Soldoyer pour servir à l'histoire de Tournai, 1565–1570* (2 vols., Brussels and The Hague: Heussner, 1859–1865), I. 3.

53 A.L.E. Verheyden (ed.), *Eerste bouck van beschryfvinghe van alle gheschiedenisse (1562–1572)* (Brussels: Société d'Histoire du Protestantisme Belge, 1978).

54 'In 't selve jaer den 28 Meert, is Lolkot, die den Hertoch van Guise synen Heer voor Orlens hadde doot geschoten, te Parys met vier Peerden levendich van een getrocken', *Antwerpsch chronykje, in het welk zeer veele en elders te vergeefs gezogte geschiedenissen, sedert ... 1500 tot ... 1574, zoo in die toen zoo zeer vermaarde koopstad, als de andere steden van Nederland ... omstandig zyn beschreeven* (Leiden: Pieter vander Eyk, 1743), p. 61.

55 This is noted by Lex van Tilborg, *Alzoo sprack elck alzoo hij ghesint was: Nieuws uit Frankrijk in de Nederlanden, ca. 1562–ca. 1572*, MA thesis (Universiteit Leiden, 2010), p. 24; Benedict, *Graphic History*, p. 324; See also *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, I. 16–17.

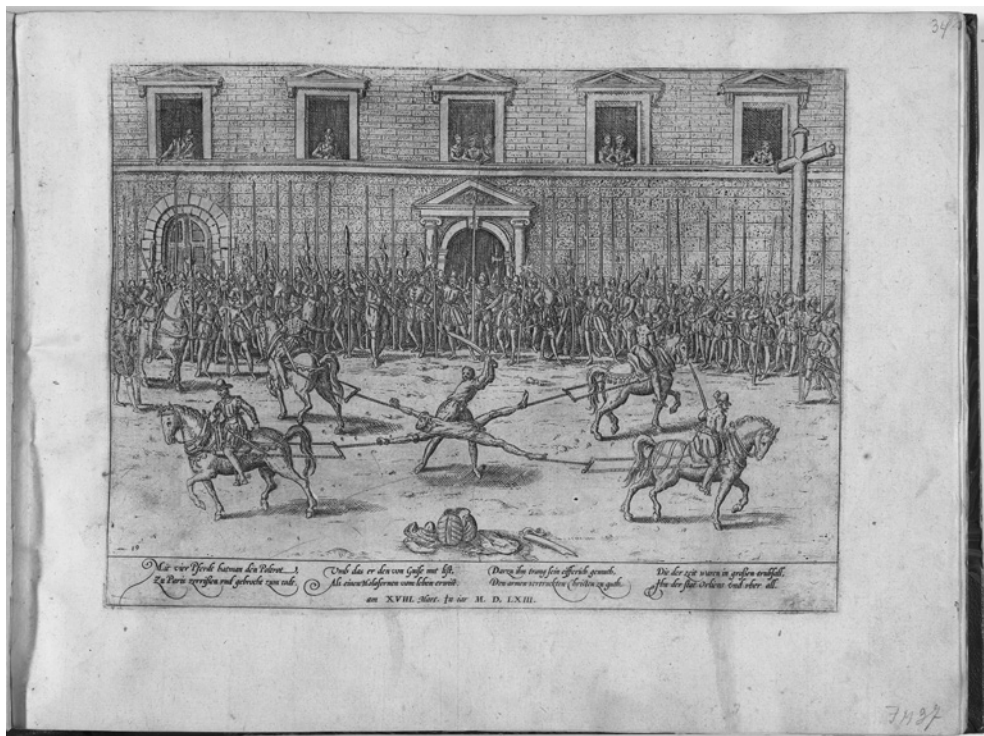


FIGURE 4 Frans Hogenberg after Jean Perrissin, 1565–1573, 'Jean de Poltrot drawn and quartered by four horses in Paris. 18 March 1563'. In: *Franse Godsdienstoorlogen, 1559–1573*. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (RP-P-OB-78.784-34)

which they now also commit in this country, agrees with the Gospel'.<sup>56</sup> The memoirs of the Arras chronicler Pontus Payen also demonstrate that the Dutch were aware of the situation in France. It describes how in the summer of 1566 Margaret of Parma convened the members of the three Estates. Some pleaded for the abolition of the heresy placards issued by Charles V. Opponents of this plan, especially members of the clergy used the state of affairs in France as a deterrent, saying:

If now this point is granted to them [the Protestants, RB], they will shortly ask for the public exercise of their religion, and eventually abolish the Catholic Religion, and start massacres, pillories and impieties,

<sup>56</sup> 'maer het geweld, dat sy oock oyt gedaen hebben, so in Vranckeryck en elders, als sy sterck waeren, en dat sy nou oock in 't landt doen en kan ick niet bevinden, dat het met het Evangelium ackordeert'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, 1. 259.



FIGURE 5 Frans Hogenberg, 1567–1590, 'Governor-general Margaret of Parma'. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (RP-P-1908-687)

which they have carried out in Geneva, Orléans, Rouen, Lyon and other cities in the kingdom of France, everywhere where they have had the upper hand.<sup>57</sup>

57 'Car, si aujourd'huy ce point leur est permis, ils demanderont, endéans peu de jours, l'exercice publicque de leur religion, et finalement aboliront la Religion Catholique, et feront les massacres, pilleries et impiétez qu'ils ont fait à Genève, Orléans, Rouan, Lion, et aultres villes du royaume de France, où ils ont esté les plus forts'. Alexandre Henne (ed.), *Mémoires de Pontus Payen, 1559–1578* (2 vols., Brussels and The Hague: Muquardt, 1861), I. 145–146.

Another insightful, if complicated source, is a (pseudo)account of the sermons that the Franciscan brother Cornelis delivered in Bruges during the years 1566–1569. The vehement preacher relentlessly warned his audience of the dangers of Protestantism, often referring to disturbing news from France. In July 1566 he mentioned the horrific actions of the Huguenots in France, even claiming that he had read a booklet on the destruction of churches by French Protestants.<sup>58</sup>

In the early 1560s, then, the inhabitants of the Netherlands were able to gather some reports on iconoclasm in France. Even when chroniclers commented only sparsely on the situation in France, their writings sometimes suggest that they knew more than they jotted down. Pasquier de le Barre, for example, compared the open-air sermons in the Netherlands in the summer of 1566 with those in France, thus implying that he was well aware of what had happened across the border.<sup>59</sup>

## 5 Foreign Influences

Don Francés de Álava, the Spanish ambassador in Paris, blamed other countries for stirring up the troubles in the Netherlands in 1566. In a letter to Philip II, he explained the Iconoclastic Fury as an international conspiracy: 'The religious quarrels that estrange the Netherlandish people from the service of God and Your Majesty are being fanned by France, the German princes, and England'.<sup>60</sup> From the beginning of the troubles in France, the Habsburg government feared that the French troubles would spread to the Netherlands. The

58 Van Tilborg, *Alzoo sprak elck*, pp. 29–30. Van Tilborg is almost certain that the booklet mentioned is the pamphlet *Discours sur le saccagement des Eglises Catholiques* by Claude de Saintes (Paris: Claude Frémy, 1562), USTC 847. On the complexity of the *Historie van B. Cornelis* as historical source see Van Tilborg, *Alzoo sprak elck*, pp. 19–22; Hubert Goltzius and Stephanus Lindius, *Historie van B. Cornelis Adriaensen van Dordrecht, Minrebroeder binnen die Stadt van Brugghe* ([Brugge]: [Pieter de Clercq], 1569), USTC 421589, fol. 49v–49r.

59 Pollmann, 'Countering the Reformation', pp. 83–84, p. 105; *Mémoires de Pasquier de le Barre*, I, 96–97.

60 'Les querelles religieuses qui éloignent le peuple du service de Dieu et de Votre Majesté sons attissées par la France, les Princes de l'Empire et de l'Angleterre'. Cited by P.A.M. Geurts, *De Nederlandse Opstand in pamfletten, 1566–1584* (Nijmegen and Utrecht: Dekker & Van de Vegt, 1956), p. 20. See for the correspondence between Philip II and his ambassador in Paris also Pedro Rodríguez and Justina Rodríguez García (eds.), *Don Francés de Álava y Beamonte: correspondencia inédita de Felipe II con su embajador en París (1564–1570)* (San-Sebastián: Grupo Dr. Camino de Historia Donostiarra, 1991).

French Huguenots, both nobles and ministers, indeed sought to strengthen the bonds with coreligionists in the Netherlands. In the early 1560s Margaret of Parma and Cardinal Granvelle kept a close eye on the presence of the French in the Netherlands, in an attempt to prevent the French conflict from spreading to the Netherlands. They were particularly worried about the Duke of Condé and the Vidame of Chartres, two French nobles with Protestant sympathies, who possessed lands in the Southern Netherlands and who used this as a pretext to send men to reconnoitre.<sup>61</sup> When stopped and asked, some agents posed as lawyers and claimed they were on their way to dissolve a dispute over land. Others 'were disguised as falconers, who said they were hunting with the Duke of Condé in the vicinity of Paris, and one of their "vultures" had escaped, and that they had come to Flanders, pursuing it from one forest to the next'.<sup>62</sup>

Provost Morillon, Cardinal Granvelle's faithful correspondent in the Netherlands, constantly informed his patron, who had been living in Rome since 1564, of the French presence in the Southern Netherlands. At some point in December 1565, his spies had discovered six or seven French Huguenot captains staying at an inn in Arras; some time later, he complained about French ministers who were conducting *prêches* in Dorne and Berchem.<sup>63</sup> According to Morillon, they 'want to accomplish what they have tried to achieve for a long time, to ruin this city to make us the nerve of the war, which the people here fail to understand'.<sup>64</sup> In July 1566, Morillon claimed that more Frenchmen could be found in Antwerp than in Orléans.<sup>65</sup> Philip and Margaret of Parma, too, were eager to discover the plans of the numerous Frenchmen staying in

61 Margaret of Parma to Philip II, 11 January 1566: 'Je n'ay aussi depuis plus riens oy des preches que menassoient de faire la dame de Vendosme et prince de Condé aux villages de Cambresis'. Theissen, *et al.*, *Correspondance française de Marguerite d'Autriche*, I, p. 114.

62 'Ce sont des gentilshommes déguisés en fauconniers qui racontent qu'étant avec le prince de Condé à la chasse, dans les environs de Paris, un de leurs vautours s'était échappé et qu'ils étaient venus jusqu'en Flandre en le poursuivant de bois en bois'. C. Rahlenbeck, 'Les chanteries de Valenciennes', *Bulletin de la Commission de l'Histoire des Eglises Wallonnes*, 3 (1887), pp. 121–159 (137–138).

63 'Il n'y a pas trois semaines que se trouvèrent en ung logis à Arras six ou sept des capitaines François hugonois'. Morillon to Granvelle, 9 December 1565. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, I, p. 51.

64 'Et si le desseing at lieu, cejourd'huy se doibt faire le mesme dedans la ville, par la conduite des François qui sont par là et que semblent vouloir achever ce qu'ilz ont si longtemps désiré, qu'est de ruiner icelle ville pour noz hoster le nerf de la guerre, dont le peuple et la pluspart de ceulx qui ont à perdre ne se donnent garde'. Morillon to Granvelle, 30 June 1566. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, I, pp. 334–335.

65 Morillon to Granvelle, Louvain, 28 July 1566: 'car l'on dict qu'il y at plus de François qu'il n'y at pour le présent en la ville d'Orléans'. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, I, p. 388.



the Netherlands. They had a French nobleman from Avignon, the seigneur de Villorgues, infiltrated among the French Huguenots in Antwerp. Villorgues, however, failed to report to Margaret, and Philip kept inquiring in vain after news from their spy for many months.<sup>66</sup> King Charles IX eventually issued an edict, forbidding his subjects to meddle with the troubles in the Netherlands.<sup>67</sup>

Yet ties with France were also controversial among Netherlandish Protestant nobles. In his chronicle, Pasquier de le Barre cited at length a speech made by Henry, lord of Brederode, to Margaret of Parma on 5 April 1566. Brederode first defended himself from charges of causing rebellion and uprising. After that he claimed that he sought to defend himself against an accusation that was even worse: 'that we have been accused of wishing to change princes, of being in leagues and conspiracies with foreign princes and captains, be it French, German or others, which has never even crossed our minds, and which is absolutely contrary to our faculties'.<sup>68</sup> At this moment in the conflict, it was important for the rebellious Netherlandish nobles to stress their loyalty and deny links with Protestants in France.

Foreigners were easy to blame after the image-breaking. Following the iconoclasm in Antwerp, William of Orange claimed to have apprehended three of the main pillagers, among them a Frenchman and an Englishman. He wrote to Margaret of Parma that he had them hanged almost immediately.<sup>69</sup> The same held true in France. Charles de Bourgeville, who in the 1580s wrote a history of

66 Margaret of Parma to Philip II, 29 February 1565. There are two ways in which he can make himself useful: 'l'une de faire appréhender les principaulx ministres huguenotz de par deçà, qui de brief devoient venir en Anvers pour leur cène, et l'autre descouvrir les desseignz des Huguenotz français sur le pays de par deçà'. Theissen, *et al.*, *Correspondance française de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 1, p. 5. On the French spy also see the letters dated 12 April 1565, 22 July 1565, and 17 October 1565.

67 Charles IX, *Lettres patentes par lesquelles il defend a tous ses subjects, à peine de la vie et de confiscation de biens, de porter les armes ny aider et secourir ceux du Pays Bas contre le roy d'Espagne* (Paris: Robert Estienne, 1566), USTC 4042; Charles IX, *Lettres patentes contenant inhibitions et deffenses a toutes personnes, de n'aller au service de qui que ce soit sans expres congé et permission* (Lyon: Benoît Rigaud, 1566), USTC 23722.

68 'En oultre, Madame, nous sommes advertis d'avoir esté chargez devant Vostre Altèze, devant les seigneurs du conseil et aultres, que ceste nostre délibération a esté principalement mise en avant pour exercer tumultes, révoltes et séditions, et, qui est le plus abominable, nous ont chargez de vouloir changer de prince, ayans practiqué ligues et conspirations avecq princes et capitaines estrangers, tant François, Allemans que aultres, ce que jamais n'est tombé en nostre pensée et est entièrement contraire à nostre faculté'. *Mémoires de Pasquier de le Barre*, 1. 24–25.

69 'Madame, ce devant-disner, en ma présence, l'on a fait pendre et estrangler, sur le marchié de ceste ville, ung Anglois, Franchois ou Liégeois, et aultre de Bois-le-ducq'. William of Orange to Margaret of Parma, 28 August 1566. Gachard, L.P. (ed.), *Correspondance de Guillaume le Taciturne prince d'Orange. Tome II* (Brussels: C. Muquardt, 1848), pp. 197–198.

the iconoclasm in Caen, put stress on the fact that one of the principal instigators of the image-breaking in the Norman city was a 'flamand' called Cousin. According to the French historian Jean Timotei, it was convenient to blame outsiders, even decades after the fact. While there had been town dignitaries and other high-ranking citizens among the image-breakers, it was essential not to violate the *omertà urbaine*, as Timotei called it.<sup>70</sup> Judith Pollmann has emphasized that 'in societies where Protestantism emerged from below, Catholics knew many of the dissenters as respectable members of their communities'.<sup>71</sup> Apart from the fact that on both sides many foreigners were indeed involved in image-breaking, the implication of citizens in the image-breaking was hushed-up, in an attempt to keep the community united and restore a sense of *concordia*.<sup>72</sup>

## 6 The Iconoclastic Fury as a News Event

News about the Iconoclastic Fury dominated life in the Low Countries throughout August and September 1566. Provost Morillon wrote anxious letters to his patron every three days, in which he summed up the horror of the destruction in towns.<sup>73</sup> Ambassadors and foreign merchants wrote home, describing the plundering of churches.<sup>74</sup> Jesuits in their letters to Rome called Antwerp the new Babylon.<sup>75</sup>

Did the news also cause a stir in France, where the political situation resembled the troubles in the Netherlands in so many ways? Many French diaries and chronicles do in fact reveal traces of the dissemination of news by way of oral reports and correspondence. In Millau (Midi-Pyrénées), an anonymous Calvinist followed internal and foreign political events with a great deal

70 Jean Timotei, 'L'iconoclisme Caennais de 1562 sous le regard de Charles de Bourgeville', in Jacques Berchtold and Marie-Madeleine Fragonard (eds.), *La mémoire des guerres de religion: la concurrence des genres historiques (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles)* (Geneva: Droz, 2007), pp. 107–131 (112–113).

71 Pollmann, 'Countering the Reformation', p. 119; Judith Pollmann, 'Iconoclasts Anonymous: why did it take historians so long to identify the image-breakers of 1566?', *BMGN—Low Countries Historical Review*, 131.1 (2016), pp. 155–176.

72 On the vulnerability of strangers and the risk of them becoming scapegoats, see Van Nierop, *Treason in the Northern Quarter*, pp. 126–127.

73 Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, 1, pp. 425–509.

74 See for instance the observations of Richard Clough, English factor in Antwerp, cited in Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts & Civic Patriots*, pp. 142–146.

75 J. Andriessen, *De Jezuïeten en het samenhorighheidsbesef der Nederlanden 1585–1648* (Antwerp: De Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1957), pp. 4–5.

of interest. He was familiar with the phenomenon of iconoclasm, as he had experienced the breaking of images in his hometown in the autumn of 1561. Nevertheless, he refrained from writing anything on the subject of iconoclasm in the Netherlands in 1566. But he did mention the Netherlands several months later, when the arrival of troops of the Duke of Alva in Marseilles received his attention. He knew that they were headed for the Low Countries, and he expressed his hope that ‘every church in Flanders will save themselves as best as they can’.<sup>76</sup>

Other French contemporaries were also silent on the subject. The Parisian humanist Étienne Pasquier, in his essay on the Netherlands of 1566, jumps from the Compromise of the Nobles and the open-air preaching to the arrival of the Duke of Alva without mentioning the iconoclasm.<sup>77</sup> The diary of the Parisian priest Jehan de la Fosse proves that news about the events in the Netherlands did reach Paris. He recorded the Iconoclastic Fury, albeit not in August but in June 1566. ‘Around this time’, he wrote, ‘in Flanders a sect emerged called “les gueux”, who did great damage to the churches in Flanders, and they revolted with such a multitude, that King Philip was forced to publish an Interim’.<sup>78</sup> Was the priest confusing this action with the Augsburg Interim of Charles V in 1548? Perhaps it refers to the agreement concluded by Margaret of Parma and the nobles on 23 August about public Protestant services.

During the early 1560s, the market for news pamphlets was thriving. Europeans had become used to buying and reading pamphlets that conveyed and discussed the latest news.<sup>79</sup> Yet I have not come across a single news pamphlet on Netherlandish iconoclasm printed in France. Antwerp presses published a French narrative of the recent events, *Recueil des choses advenue en Anvers*, which may have been disseminated in France, but which may equally well have targeted the Southern, francophone areas of the Netherlands.<sup>80</sup> What about England and the Holy Roman Empire? I have found only a few German news pamphlets and no English pamphlets at all.<sup>81</sup> One of the few

76 J.L. Rigal, (ed.), *Mémoires d'un calviniste de Millau* (Rodez: Imprimerie Carrère, 1911), p. 147.

77 Pasquier, ‘Les affaires des Pays-Bas vers 1567’, in: D. Thickett, (ed.), *Lettres historiques pour les années 1556–1594* (Geneva: Droz, 1966), pp. 163–166.

78 ‘Environ ce temps il se leva en Flandre une secte nommée les gueux, lesquelz feirent grand damage aux esglises de Flandre, et se leverent en si grande multitude que le Roy Philippe fut contrainct de faire publier un Interim’. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 65–66.

79 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, pp. 72–75.

80 *Recueil des choses advenues en Anvers, touchant le fait de la Religion, en l'an M.D.LXVI* ([Antwerp]: s.n., [1566]), USTC 4039. I have consulted the USTC, searching on pamphlets published in France in 1566 and 1567.

81 I have consulted the databases USTC and TEMPO. *Neüwe zeitung. In welcher Kürztlich, ordentlich vnd warhafftiglich, nach aller vmstendigkeit erzelet wird, was sich in der*

news pamphlets on the Iconoclastic Fury, printed in Germany, was simply called 'New tidings, in which will be told concisely, orderly and honestly and in all details, what has happened in the famous city of Antwerp between 18 and 28 August 1566, in matters of religion and other important affairs'.<sup>82</sup> This pamphlet, however, after a few pages turned into a Calvinist argument against the use of images. A pamphlet like this could not easily have been published in the Netherlands, where the authorities monitored the print industry, although they were never able to control the print output entirely.<sup>83</sup> The inhabitants of Cologne, however, were well informed about Netherlandish iconoclasm. The prolific Cologne chronicler Hermann Weinsberg describes how, in August, news reached his town about the smashing of images in Amsterdam, Deventer and many other cities.<sup>84</sup>

In his diary entry of August 1566, Hermann Weinsberg also noted how Cologne citizens stood watch to prevent the image-breaking from spreading to their city. Oral news reports played a decisive role, working as a catalyst in the spreading of iconoclasm. The image-breaking in Amsterdam, for example, started only after merchants had shown pieces of marble from broken statues and recounted the news about the violence in Antwerp.<sup>85</sup> However, the iconoclastic waves in France in the early 1560s and the Fury of 1566 in the Netherlands took place in isolation, without spreading to their neighbours. Normandy experienced weeks of severe image-breaking in 1562. Cities such as Middelburg and Arnemuiden that traded extensively with Northern France must have received news about the iconoclasm. Yet these reports did not spark any copycat image-breaking in Zeeland.

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*berhümbten Kauffstadt Antorff zwischen den 18. vnd 28. Augusti dieses 1566. Jars in Religi ...* ([Strasbourg]: [Thiebold Berger], 1566), USTC 676989; *Neue Zeittung aus Antdorff wie es den zwoelfften Augusti dar gestanden und zugetragen hatt* (Wittenberg: [s.n.], 1566), USTC 677332.

82 *Neüwe zeittung: In welcher Kürztlich, ordentlich vnd warhafftiglich* (USTC 676989).

83 Duke, 'Posters, Pamphlets and Prints'. On censorship, patents, and the dissemination of news under the Habsburgs see also K. van Damme and J. Deploige, 'Slecht nieuws, geen nieuws': Abraham Verhoeven (1575–1652) en de 'Nieuwe Tijdinghen': periodieke pers en propaganda in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden tijdens de vroege zeventiende eeuw', *BMGN—Low Countries Historical Review*, 113:1 (1998), pp. 1–22 (4–5).

84 'Zu Amsterdam, zu Deventer, zu Remunde und allenthalben in Flandern, Selant, Brabant, Hollant, Utricht, Freischlant ist diss uffroir untstanden, das sei die kirchen verwoist und die religion verendert haben.... Zu Coln ist man dissmail seir erschreckt gewest, man hat gar flislich gut hut und wacht gehalten'. *Autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen Hermann Weinsbergs*, August 1566.

85 Henk van Nierop, 'Van Wonderjaar tot Alteratie, 1566–1578', in Marijke Carasso-Kok (ed.), *Geschiedenis van Amsterdam vol. 1: Een stad uit het niets: tot 1578* (Amsterdam: SUN, 2004), pp. 451–481 (455).

Neither did the Iconoclastic Fury of 1566 leap over to France. It did, however, as Andrew Spicer has pointed out, affect Le Cateau, a city in the Cambrésis, which was an independent region on the frontier between France and the Netherlands. News of the image-breaking in Valenciennes incited the iconoclasm in the Cambrésis. When Calvinists in Le Cateau started destroying images in late August 1566, however, Archbishop Maximilien de Berghes blamed it on the presence of ‘the good number of Frenchmen’, who according to him carried out the iconoclasm.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, the image-breaking then did not travel further south into France. This might be explained by the fact that many of these lands in Northern France belonged to the Catholic Duke of Guise. He had taken measures to root out Protestantism in his domains from the early 1560s onwards. Ruben Suykerbuyk has recently shed light on the question why some cities in the Netherlands were subject to iconoclasm while others were spared from the violence. He has shown to what extent local circumstances determined the course of the events.<sup>87</sup> The same must have held true for France. Numerous French cities must have received the news about Netherlandish iconoclasm in 1566, but local circumstances prohibited image-breaking. Apart from various small incidents between Catholics and Huguenots, France experienced a relatively quiet summer. Charles IX had completed his grand *tour de France*, set up by his mother Catherine de’ Medici, on the first of May.<sup>88</sup> War was to break out only a year later.

## 7 A More Suitable Topic for News Pamphlets: The Ottomans

During the summer of 1566, a wholly different issue did in effect occupy the minds of the French and indeed of many Europeans: the war in Hungary between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans. This topic dominated pamphlet production across Christian Europe, from England and the German Empire to France and the Netherlands.<sup>89</sup> It seems strange in retrospect that many

86 Spicer, ‘Iconoclasm on the Frontier’, p. 121, p. 130.

87 Ruben Suykerbuyk, ‘De sacra militia contra iconomachos: Civic Strategies to Counter Iconoclasm in the Low Countries (1566)’, *BMGN—Low Countries Historical Review*, 131:1 (2016), pp. 15–35.

88 Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562–1629* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 62–64.

89 See for example a news pamphlet by a London printer: *Newes from Vienna the 5. day of August. 1566. of the strong towne and castell of Tula in Hungary xi. myles beyond the river Danubius, which was cruelly assaulted by the great Turke, but nowe by Gods mighty working relieved, the sayd Turks marveilouslye discomfited and overthrowen* (London: John Awdely, 1566), USTC 506449; *Neue Zeitung von eroberung und verlust der beder vestungen Guila und*

were occupied with a conflict so far away, when at the same time the domestic situation in France and the Netherlands was becoming so tense. Chronicler François Grin, a member of the order of Saint-Victor, an abbey near Paris, relates how the clerics prayed to God to annihilate the forces of the “great and inhuman” Turk, ‘and’, as an afterthought, ‘also for the abolition of heresies’.<sup>90</sup> Provost Morillon also revealed his priorities, beginning a letter to Granvelle during the summer of 1566 with the remark: ‘I thank God that *Votre Seigneurie Illustrissime* is well, which is the most important, and that the Turk will not do us great harm, which is great news’. Only then did he continue with news from the Netherlands.<sup>91</sup> In Antwerp, Godevaert van Haecht made the connection between news about the Turks in Hungary and the little attention given to the troubles in the Netherlands: ‘if [there had not been a war], the Catholic kings would have interfered with the affairs in the Low Countries, but now they are otherwise engaged’.<sup>92</sup>

The preponderance of news about the Turks in contemporary chronicles revealed the control the Catholic authorities exercised on news in the public sphere. Rituals such as processions, joyous entries, and the tolling of church bells highlighted events of importance.<sup>93</sup> They constituted to the government the most direct way of communicating news to their subjects.<sup>94</sup> Even if one failed to notice the publication of an edict, no one would miss the church bells ringing for days in succession or the clergy marching in procession through the streets. These years saw a succession of days of prayer for victories against the Turks. In November 1565, both Pasquier de le Barre in Tournai and the author of the ‘Antwerps Chronykje’ mentioned the celebration of the retreat of the

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*Ziget in Ungern 1566* (Nürnberg: Valentin Geißler, [1566]), USTC 677522; Andrew Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 141–146.

90 Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, 1, p. 498; Baron Alphonse de Ruble, (ed.), ‘Journal de François Grin, religieux de Saint-Victor (1554–1570)’, *Mémoires de la Société de l’histoire de Paris et de l’Ile-de-France*, 21 (1894), pp. 1–51 (36–37).

91 ‘Je louhe Dieu que Vtre Illme Srie se porte bien, qu’est le principal de la besoigne, et que le Turcq n’est apparent noz faire grand mal, que sont grandez nouvelles ...’ Morillon to Granvelle, 30 June 1566, Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, 1, p. 334.

92 ‘omdat de vorsten des ryx den keyser souden moeten bystaen, vreesende dat sy anders haer seer gemoeyt souden hebben met de saecken in Nederlant’. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, 1. iii.

93 See for example *Antwerpsch chronykje*, p. 57: ‘Op den 22. November [1555], heeft men tot Antwerpen 23 daghen geluyt over den Keyser Carolus, en de vutvaert seer triumphantlyck gehouden op den 24. December’. On the importance of rituals for the Habsburg government see Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, p. 21; Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

94 It also worked the other way around, as Joyous Entries were commonly used by the King’s subjects to give their opinion through pageants and tableaux vivants.

Ottomans from Malta.<sup>95</sup> Throughout the Netherlands and France processions and sermons were held inciting the faithful to pray to ward off the danger of the Turks. Augustijn van Hernighem, for instance, recorded how Margaret of Parma ordered a general procession on 18 October 1566, ‘for the Emperor’s army successes on the Turks, and rest and peace in this country’.<sup>96</sup> In Paris, the Rector of the University prayed to God to ‘annihilate the forces of the Grand Turk, this “*méchant chien*”’, after a procession that made a great impression on diarist François Grin.<sup>97</sup> In a recent work on news and public debate in Amsterdam during the Revolt, Femke Deen has argued that rituals revealed conflicts in society: because of their public character, it was easy to notice who refused to join.<sup>98</sup> News about the Turks was safe to celebrate publicly. It was so uncontroversial that members of all confessions—Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists—were able to participate.<sup>99</sup>

## 8 An Awkward Event

Why did such a spectacular occurrence as the massive breaking of valuable artworks fail to become a large international news event? It was a topic that troubled many inhabitants of France and the Low Countries, and many of them wrote about local iconoclasm in their chronicles or in letters to friends and relatives.<sup>100</sup> However, as we have seen, it never became a topic that instigated a large-scale production of news pamphlets, poems, and songs. An event such as the destruction of the Spanish Armada in 1588 spurred the publication of triumphal songs and poems among the Protestant nations of Europe. Iconoclasm did not prompt any of these responses; no one, not even the radical Calvinists, took pride in these actions. Therefore, few inhabitants in the Netherlands and France had an interest in publishing the news.<sup>101</sup>

95 *Mémoires de Pasquier de le Barre*, I, p. 10; *Antwerpsch chronykje*, pp. 61–64; Also see on the celebrations of the Maltese victory: Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 141.

96 *Eerste bouck van beschryfvinghe*, p. 33.

97 ‘Pour prier Dieu qu’il luy pleust anéantir la force du meschant chien, le grand Turc.’ *Journal de François Grin*, p. 36.

98 Deen, *Publiek debat en propaganda*, pp. 75–101.

99 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, pp. 142–144.

100 Christophe Plantin, for example, expressed his worries to his friend Andreas Masius in the summer of 1566. Sandra Langereis, *De woordenaar: Christoffel Plantijn, ‘s werelds grootste drukker en uitgever, 1520–1589* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Balans, 2014), pp. 215–216.

101 Were there Netherlandish printers who considered printing the news? There is nothing on iconoclasm on Christophe Plantin’s publisher’s list, but he aimed at the higher segment of the market in those years, and had no interest in printing news pamphlets.

According to Alastair Duke, the Iconoclastic Fury has always been an awkward topic. Many Protestant contemporaries were quick to distance themselves from the iconoclasts and blame ‘the unruly mob’. Even in the twentieth century, Protestant historians continued to feel the need to condemn image-breaking.<sup>102</sup> Catholic contemporaries were often silent on the subject, too, not wanting to underscore the failures of the government to take measures against the iconoclasm.<sup>103</sup> In France, during the First War of Religion entire regions had fallen effectively under Protestant control. One might argue that iconoclasm lacked transnational scope and newsworthiness, particularly in France, where it had been common during the First War of Religion: it merely constituted a part of European Reformation troubles in general.<sup>104</sup>

The gradual course of iconoclasm may provide an additional explanation for the absence of news pamphlets on the phenomenon. Pamphlets usually consisted of a narrative, with a beginning, middle, and an end.<sup>105</sup> In the seventeenth century, by contrast, publishers of newspapers articles would begin to put out articles when there was no news at all.<sup>106</sup> Since the iconoclasm kept going on for weeks, and even months, printers could have had trouble deciding the right time to publish the news. Nevertheless, events on the Armada two decades later also took months to develop and that did not prevent printers in the summer of 1588 from publishing ‘interim reports’ or updates. Andrew Pettegree has used the term ‘rolling news event’ to characterize this phenomenon.<sup>107</sup>

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Leon Voet, *The Plantin Press (1555–1589): A Bibliography of the Works Printed and Published by Christopher Plantin at Antwerp and Leiden. Volume VI. Indices* (Amsterdam: Van Hoeve, 1982).

102 Duke, ‘Calvinists and “Papist Idolatry”’, pp. 179–180.

103 Pollmann, ‘Iconoclasts Anonymous’. See also Erika Kuijpers and Judith Pollmann, ‘Turning Sacrilege into Victory: Catholic Memories of Calvinist Iconoclasm, in the Low Countries, 1566–1700’, E. Guillourel, D. Hopkin and W.G. Pooley (eds.), *Rhythms of Revolt. European Traditions and Memories of Social Conflict in Oral Culture* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2018), pp. 151–170.

104 Iconoclasm failed to become a phenomenon of the past, as it again broke out in France in 1567, and occurred in the Netherlands even as late as the 1570s and 1580s. See for example: Olivier Cammaert, ‘L’iconoclisme sous la République Calviniste à Bruxelles’, in Monique Weis (ed.), *Des villes en révolte: Les Républiques urbaines aux Pays-Bas et en France pendant la deuxième moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), pp. 47–52.

105 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 9.

106 This is demonstrated by Michiel van Groesen, ‘(No) News from the Western Front: the Weekly Press of the Low Countries and the Making of Atlantic News’, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 44: (3) (2013), pp. 739–760.

107 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 153.



There might be another explanation for the absence of news in both France and the Netherlands in those years. Charles IX hesitated between toleration and persecution of Huguenots. In the Netherlands in 1566, too, many people expected from Philip II certain measures of religious tolerance. Many strove to counter polarization and hoped to keep their communities together. In France, alongside numerous violent incidents between Catholics and Huguenots, the spirit of the Colloquy of Poissy, in which an attempt had been made to reconcile the religions, stuck for many years.<sup>108</sup> In the Netherlands, the civic militias refused to take action against fellow citizens during the iconoclasm in an attempt to keep the community together.<sup>109</sup> News about iconoclasm, then, was probably for many either too common to note down or too controversial to spread or publish.

## 9 Borrowing Responses from France

It took a while before the iconoclasm of 1566 was discussed in printed media. The first months of 1567 witnessed a small outburst of publications reflecting on iconoclasm as well as some general overviews on the uses of images in the Netherlands. These responses came for the most part from Catholic authors, although some leading Protestants felt the need to justify the iconoclasm or deny their involvement. Philip Marnix of Sint-Aldegonde, for one, wrote a defence of the image-breaking from a safe haven in Germany.<sup>110</sup> The Calvinist preacher Herman Moded also had an extensive apology printed in Emden, in which he refuted accusations of being present in Antwerp during the Iconoclastic Fury. According to Moded, he 'knew no more from the iconoclasm than he knew about the hour of his death'. He provided his audience with a

108 Mark Greengrass, *Governing Passions: Peace and Reform in the French Kingdom, 1576–1585* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Mario Turchetti, 'Middle Parties in France during the Wars of Religion', in Philip Benedict, Guido Marnef, Henk van Nierop, and Marc Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt, and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555–1585* (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999), pp. 165–184. See also Juliaan Woltjer, 'Political Moderates and Religious Moderates in the Revolt of the Netherlands', in Philip Benedict, Guido Marnef, Henk van Nierop, and Marc Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt, and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555–1585* (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999), pp. 185–200.

109 Paul Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer: de schutterijen in Holland, 1550–1700* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1994), pp. 68–70.

110 Philips van Marnix van Sint Aldegonde, *Vraye narration et apologie des choses passées au Pays Bas, touchant le fait de la religion, en l'an M.D.LXVI. Par ceus qui font profession de la religion reformee* ([Vianen]: [Augustin van Hasselt], 1567), USTC 4046.

detailed alibi, designed to prove his innocence. He also distanced himself from the image-breaking legally, albeit not theologically. He did call the Catholic images 'idols', but thought that Protestants did not have the right to destroy them. He thought it 'far from him to take the place of the government'.<sup>111</sup>

In recent years, much has been written on the Catholic response to Protestant preaching and image-breaking in 1566. Historians have sought to explain the passivity of the Catholics in the Netherlands, who reacted so differently from their aggressive coreligionists in France.<sup>112</sup> Apart from some violent incidents, Catholic resistance was relatively low-key in the Netherlands as compared to France.<sup>113</sup> Judith Pollmann saw the main explanation in the role of the clergy. Many of them had objections against teaching and mobilizing the laity to enter into debate with the Protestants.<sup>114</sup> However, as Pollmann has also stated, after the iconoclasm, some of the clergy began to publish reactions to the events. Several of these pamphlets were Dutch translations of older French reactions to iconoclasm, dating from 1562 and 1564. Andrew Pettegree blamed the 'relative lack of success of the Netherlandish Catholic church in finding its own eloquent defenders during these years'.<sup>115</sup> But this was not really the case, as many Netherlandish authors, such as the priest Maarten Donk, were quick to publish their own comments on the use of images.<sup>116</sup> The style of these French translations differed greatly from the pamphlets written in the Netherlands. Historians have put great emphasis on the fact that French pamphlets were more polemical than those from the Netherlands, but there existed also remarkable differences in the choice of content and narrative. French pamphlets about iconoclasm described the events that had happened

111 Hermannus Moded, *Apologie ofte verantwoordinghe teghens de calumnien ende valsche beschuldighen ghestroeyet tot lasteringhe des h. evangelii door de vianden der christelijker religie* (Emden: [Coornhert-drukkerij], 1567) USTC 408110, p. 36, pp. 61–63.

112 Pollmann, 'Countering the Reformation'; Pollmann, *Catholic Identity*, pp. 78–80; Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, pp. 23–29; Woltjer, 'Violence during the Wars of Religion', pp. 29–32. For an analysis of Catholic reactions to Iconoclasm see also David de Boer, 'Picking up the Pieces: Catholic Material Culture and Iconoclasm in the Low Countries', *BMGN—Low Countries Historical Review* 131:1 (2016), pp. 59–80.

113 Pollmann, 'Countering the Reformation', p. 95.

114 *Ibid.*, pp. 107–108.

115 Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands', p. 326.

116 See for a useful overview of Catholic printed responses: Jonckheere, *Antwerp Art after Iconoclasm*, pp. 35–42; Martinus Duncanus (Maarten Donk), *Een cort onderscheyt tusschen godlijcke ende afgodische beelden. Het tweede boecxken vande heyligen in den hemel* (Antwerp: Peeter van Keerberghen, 1567), USTC 409836; See for more information on Martinus Duncanus: P. Noordeloos, *Pastoor Maarten Donk 1567–1590* (Utrecht etc.: Het Spectrum, 1948).

in France in the beginning of the 1560s in detail, recounting at great length particulars of the image-breaking in various towns all over the country.

Many Netherlandish Catholic authors, however, were skittish about mentioning the recent events in the Netherlands. Bishop François Richardot of Arras wrote a sermon on the uses of images in churches, published by Jan Bogaerts in Leuven in 1567. While Richardot provided an extensive overview of the history of iconoclasm throughout the first centuries of Christendom, nowhere did he state the immediate occasion for this sermon, not even hinting at the events of the year before.<sup>117</sup> The Delft priest Maarten Donk, whose booklet on iconoclasm was published in Antwerp in January 1567, pursued the question of the uses of images in the Catholic Church.<sup>118</sup> Yet he too remained silent on the events of 1566. Only in one passage did he allude to the Iconoclastic Fury, but merely in very general terms:

Some people think that images are forbidden, being idols and that one is not allowed to use images. Therefore they go and destroy images in all churches, without permission of the lawful government, thinking they render God a service. But they do not realize that, as they used the images themselves daily, they condemn themselves and their ancestors, and the whole world. At whom we should say, as Christ said: “Thou hypocrite and pretender, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye”.<sup>119</sup>

In the Dutch foreword, Donk alluded to the cause that made him write his book on the use of images, ‘because nowadays there is question and revolt about this [topic]’. In another introduction in Latin, he also made a small reference to these times of the *πανωλεσθρία iconoclastica*, the ‘iconoclastic debacle’.<sup>120</sup>

117 François Richardot, *Het sermoon vande beelden teghen die beeldtschenders, ghedaante Armentiers* (Leuven: Jan Boogaerts, 1567), USTC 407656; see also the French version: François Richardot, *Quatre sermons du sacrement de l'autel. Ung sermon des images faict a Armentiere* (Louvain: Jean Bogard, 1567), USTC 1472.

118 Duncanus, *Een cort onderscheyt*, USTC 409836.

119 ‘Wt dese woorden meynen sommige menschen, dat alle beelden gantsch verboden zijn als Afgoden, ende datmen gheen beelden hebben noch eenichsins gebruycken en mach, ende gaen daerom stoutelick, sonder bevel van wettelyke overheyte, alle beelden in alle kercken vernielen, meynende daer mede God eenen behagelyken dienst te doen, net aenmerckende datse doer haer eyghen daghelicx ghebruyck van beelden, haer selven veroordeele, ende alle haer voerouders, ende alle die gantsche werelt: tot wien men soude mogen segghen, als Christus seyt: Ghy hypocrijt ende gheveysde mensch, worpt eersten den balck wt uwe ooghe.’ Ibid.

120 ‘want hier huyden questie ende oproer op valt.’ Ibid.

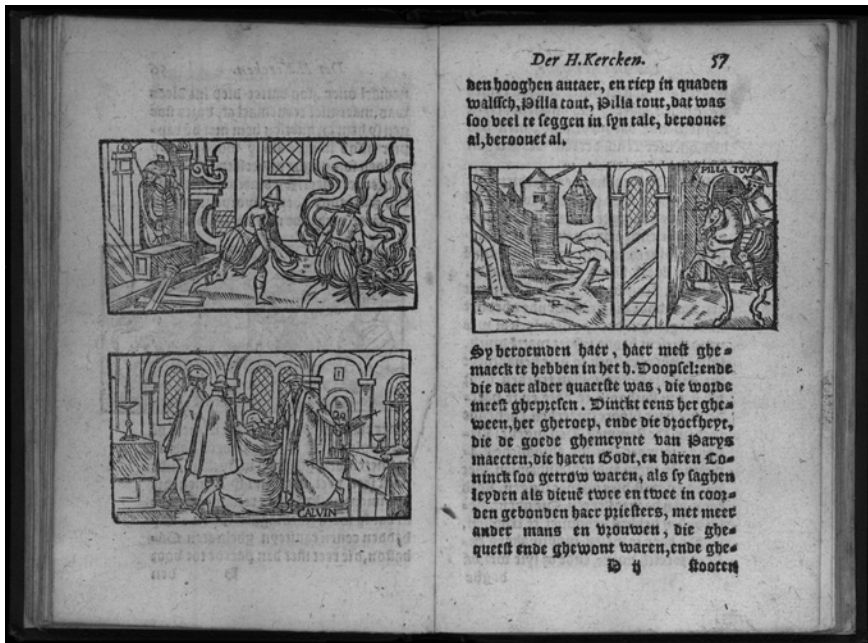


FIGURE 6 'Image-breakers' in: Claude de Saintes, *Discours oft corte enarratie, op die beroovinghe der catholycker kercken gheschiet door die oude ketteren, ende nieuwe Calvinisten van onsen tyden. Met vele schoone figuren verciert wort* (Louvain: Rutgerus Velpius, 1567), USTC 403103

When we take a closer look at the Dutch translation of a pamphlet by the French author Claude de Saintes, and compare it with the original, it becomes clear that the pamphlet is a faithful and literal translation.<sup>121</sup> Translators or publishers often added a foreword, explaining the urgency of translating a pamphlet from a foreign language. Yet here we see no such thing, not even a mention of the local troubles. Some of the Dutch pamphlets were illustrated with woodcuts about iconoclasm, whereas this had not been the case with the French originals. Hence, Netherlandish readers could not only get acquainted with the events that had happened in France in the years 1561–1562, but they could also see images representing it. However, these images were not made

121 De Saintes, *Discours sur le saccagement*, USTC 847; Claude de Saintes, *Discours oft corte enarratie, op die beroovinghe der catholycker kercken gheschiet door die oude ketteren, ende nieuwe Calvinisten van onsen tyden. Met vele schoone figuren verciert wort* (Louvain: Rutgerus Velpius, 1567), USTC 403103.

for the purpose of this pamphlet, but recycled from an English Catholic pamphlet printed in Antwerp about the dangers of Protestantism.<sup>122</sup>

Initially, we find no records of French image-breaking in Netherlandish chronicles from the early 1560s. Yet Netherlandish chroniclers who in 1566, spurred by the troubles of their times, started to keep a record felt the need to give an overview of the events in France of the past six years.<sup>123</sup>

Parisian chroniclers at the same time were aware of the troubles in the Low Countries, but news items such as the Request of the Nobility in April 1566 and Alva's campaign to the Netherlands concerned them more than did image-breaking. Moreover, French chroniclers, and the whole of Europe for that matter, were preoccupied with the Habsburg wars against the Ottomans during the summer of 1566. Another explanation for the silence on iconoclasm lies in the fact that neither the Catholic authorities nor the Protestant rebels in the two countries had an interest in disseminating (international) news on the image-breaking. Iconoclasm in France before and during the First War of Religion was certainly no topic for celebrations or news pamphlets, and neither was Netherlandish image-breaking. In 1567, the surprise of Meaux, where the Protestant Prince of Condé attempted to kidnap King Charles IX, precipitated the beginning of the Second War of Religion in France. Meanwhile, the Duke of Alva marched an army along the French borders northwards. From this time onwards, inhabitants in France and the Netherlands were to be flooded with news about the wars and their principal actors, the nobles, which they eagerly consumed.

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122 Petrus Frarinus, and John Fowler, *An oration against the unlawfull insurrections of the Protestantes of our time, under pretence to refourme religion* (Antwerp: Joannes Foulerus, 1566), USTC 409686. I would like to thank Alex Walsham for pointing this out to me.

123 This is observed by Lex van Tilborg: Van Tilborg, *Alzoo sprack elck*, p. 23.

## War, Fame, and Noble Leadership, 1567–1571

Count Louis has received the faith,  
with the Prince of Condé without fear  
and our pious Admiral.

*Beggars' Song, April 1567<sup>1</sup>*



In 1567, Netherlandish chronicles abounded with news from France. In cities such as Antwerp, Brussels, and Ghent, reports on the French troubles appeared on an almost weekly basis. On 28 September 1567, Protestant nobles had plotted to kidnap King Charles IX and remove him from the influence of his Guise advisors. The coup, known as the *Surprise de Meaux*, failed and led to a renewal of the wars in France. In the following three years, France went through two religious wars. Netherlandish chroniclers noted down French news in often astonishing detail, showing how well informed they were about French politics.

In the same year, troubles in the Netherlands flared up as well. In the summer of 1567, the Duke of Alva marched an army to the Netherlands. Upon his arrival, he embarked on a punitive campaign against a number of rebellious cities and started persecuting individuals who had been involved in the troubles of 1566. His politics of repression sparked a massive emigration of Protestants and caused the outbreak of war, in which Orange and his brothers organized an armed invasion of the Netherlands. This did not go unnoticed in France, where chroniclers recorded news about the troubles in the Netherlands. The attention devoted by French and Netherlandish diarists to the situation in their neighbouring country, however, was uneven: the latter recorded a great deal more French news than vice versa. Yet in both countries, news reports spent a great deal of attention on aristocratic leaders. The French, even more so than the Dutch, saw the events primarily as private conflicts among the high nobility.

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1 'Graef Lodewijck heeft het gheloof ontfanen. Met den Prince van Conde sonder schromen / en den ammirael tonser vromen'. Kuiper, *Geuzenliedboek*, p. 47.

Nobles were believed to have their own special motives for acting the way they did, carrying out longstanding feuds with their peers. According to this view, aristocratic faction politics provoked major events such as the execution of the counts of Egmont and Hornes in 1568, and determined the course of battles and sieges. Influenced by classical Roman literature, contemporaries generally used the term ‘civil wars’ and spoke of ‘nostra bella civilia’ or our ‘guerres civiles’.<sup>2</sup> Lucan’s epic *De Bello Civili* about the wars between Pompey and Caesar in the first century BC, was frequently reprinted throughout the sixteenth century, in many European countries.<sup>3</sup> Chroniclers, having often received a humanist education, sometimes explicitly compared the troubles of their times with events from classical antiquity. Marcus van Vaernewijck paralleled a battle of Alva’s troops against those of Orange in October 1568 with the battles of the Romans against the Germanic tribe of the Cimbri, about which he had read in Cicero’s *De Officiis*.<sup>4</sup>

In this chapter, I will focus on chroniclers and their ways of identifying the main figures of the wars. How did they describe the key characters of the conflicts? Did they know who these foreign nobles were? I will argue that international news resonated in cultures imbued with ideas about noble honour and fame. Having grown up with stories about the Roman civil wars, the tales from *Amadis de Gaule*, and the *Chanson de Roland*, many chroniclers eagerly recounted tales of honour, friendship, and revenge. Yet while contemporaries initially shied away from labelling the conflicts as religious wars, chroniclers nevertheless did express a great deal of religious solidarity with their coreligionists across the border.

## 1 Fame

In a 1993 review article of recent literature on the French Wars of Religion, Mack Holt recalled how in the 1960s students were taught that military conflicts of the sixteenth century were not about religion at all: ‘because politics and the personal abilities of great leaders served as the driving forces of the

2 See for instance Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde to M. de Bay, 1582, who writes about ‘nostra bella civilia’. Gerlo and De Smet, *Marnixi Epistulae*, IV, p. 76.

3 The USTC mentions many editions of Lucan’s *De Bello Civili* printed in several countries throughout Europe. See on Lucan for instance Nicola Hömke and Christiane Reitz (eds.), *Lucan’s Bellum Civile: Between Epic Tradition and Aesthetic Innovation* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010).

4 *Beroerlicke tijden*, IV, 283–284.

civil wars'.<sup>5</sup> Following the publication of works by Natalie Davis, John Bossy, and more recently Denis Crouzet and Barbara Diefendorf, Holt concluded that religion 'had been put back into the wars of religion'.<sup>6</sup> Yet it is understandable that generations of historians have focused on faction politics and leaders, as many chroniclers did so themselves. In his report about an alliance between Sea Beggars and Huguenots in 1572, the Parisian cleric Jehan de la Fosse claimed that the men had rallied against the King of Spain and the Duke of Alva, 'not so much for religion's sake, but to avenge the death of the Count of Egmont, who was beheaded in Antwerp [sic] at the Duke of Alva's command'.<sup>7</sup> It was not only Catholics who sometimes denied religion as a factor. English anti-Guise pamphlets, for instance, attributed the conflicts in France to the personal ambition of fanatical Catholic nobles.<sup>8</sup>

News about faction politics was closely connected to a culture of celebrity and fame. Reports about war activities and fights were mixed with laudatory poems, announcements of noble marriages or births, and amusing anecdotes about rulers from their own country and abroad. Already in the fourteenth century, Geoffrey Chaucer had made the connection between fame and 'tidings'. In his *House of Fame* he wrote about the circulation of news and opinion: 'All reports, good and bad, deserved and undeserved alike, take their origin in common talk and gossip, "tidings", in the wicker house of Rumour, and from there they are transmitted to Fame's castle, to be blown abroad as either praise or blame by the trumpets of Aeolus'.<sup>9</sup> Many chroniclers enjoyed recording news about famous men and women in their diaries. The Brussels Catholic merchant Jan de Pottre, for instance, integrated important events in the life of Emperor Charles V in the narrative of his own domestic affairs. As a result, Charles almost seemed a member of De Pottre's family. His French counterpart

5 Mack P. Holt, 'Putting Religion Back into the Wars of Religion', *French Historical Studies* 18:2 (1993), pp. 524–551, (525).

6 Davis, 'The Rites of Violence'; John Bossy, 'The Counter-Reformation and the People of Catholic Europe', *Past & Present* 47:1 (1970), pp. 51–70; Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*; Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (New York etc.: Oxford University Press, 1991).

7 *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 109.

8 Buchanan, *Massacre of St Bartholomew's*, p. 59: 'Of over twenty English language pamphlets of an explicitly anti-Triumvirate or anti-Guisian nature, blaming the violence in France on the personal ambition of zealously Catholic noblemen'.

9 John A. Burrow, *The Poetry of Praise* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 115; Peter Arnade and Walter Prevenier, *Honor, Vengeance, and Social Trouble: Pardon Letters in the Burgundian Low Countries* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).



was Joseph Guillaudeau from La Rochelle, who also mixed events in the lives of the great with his own family stories.<sup>10</sup>

The Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt affected the aristocracies in France and the Netherlands because almost all *grands seigneurs* took sides and raised armies. Participating in battle was fitting with age-old ideas about military heroism. In the first half of the sixteenth century, Renaissance rulers such as Charles V and Henry II had enjoyed the prestige of being warrior kings. Count Lamoral of Egmont was a prime representative of this cult: a famous international war hero, whose valiant behaviour in the French-Habsburg wars of the 1550s received praise even among the French.<sup>11</sup> Yet it is not a foregone conclusion that the middle-class authors of chronicles shared this predilection for honour and military prowess. How did they know about these nobles whose doings they recorded?

Some helpful answers may be found in celebrity studies, a historiographical genre that has expanded in recent years. A number of scholars have sought to historicize the concept of celebrity, and some of them have traced back the origins of the concept of ‘celebrity’ in the sixteenth century.<sup>12</sup> The term itself

10 *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*; Louis Meschinot de Richemont (ed.), ‘Diaire de Joseph de Guillaudeau, sieur de Beaupréau (1584–1643)’, *Archives Historiques de la Saintonge et de l’Aunis*, 38 (1908). See also Jean Pussot, master-carpenter, who lists as important events of 1570 the birth of his daughter Perette, the decease of his father Pierre, and the marriage of King Charles with Elizabeth of Austria. *Journalier de Jean Pussot*, 81.

11 ‘... le Comte d’Aiguemont, par la sage conduit duquel le Roy son maistre avoit faict de si braves exploits contre nous.’ Thickett, *Lettre historiques*, p. 164.

12 See for example the journal *Celebrity Studies*. However, few articles deal with celebrity before the nineteenth century. Arnoud Visser, *In de Gloria: Literaire roem in de Renaissance* (The Hague: Algemeen-Nederlands Verbond, 2013); Georges Minois, *Histoire de la célébrité: Les trompettes de la renommée* (Paris: Perrin, 2012), esp. chapter 5, ‘La siècle de la Renommée. Humanisme, Renaissance et culte du génie’; Chris Rojek has attempted to revise the boundaries of celebrity studies, tracing the origins of the phenomenon of celebrity in the works of Machiavelli: Chris Rojek, ‘Niccolo Machiavelli, cultural intermediaries and the category of achieved celebrity’, *Celebrity Studies*, 4 (2014), pp. 455–468; Robert van Krieken, *Celebrity Society* (London: Routledge, 2012), see esp. chapter 1, ‘From Fame to Celebrity’; Glen Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchy: The Reigns of Henry VIII, Francis I and Charles V* (London and New York: Edward Arnold, 2002), esp. chapter 2, ‘Warriors: Honour and Magnificence in War and Peace’; See also Joris van Eijnatten, Fred van Lieburg and Hans de Waardt (eds.), *Heiligen of helden: Opstellen voor Willem Frijhoff* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2007); Frances A. Yates, *Ideas and Ideals in the North European Renaissance* (London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984); Arblaster also points to the importance of reputation among Catholic political thinkers at the end of the sixteenth century. Arblaster, *Ghent to Aix*, pp. 13–20; compare Dooley, *Social History of Skepticism*. For a good historiographical overview of both French and English literature on the subject see: Nathalie Heinich, ‘La culture de la célébrité en France et dans les

was already in use in the English language in the 1560s.<sup>13</sup> During the Wars of Religion and the Revolt in the Netherlands, nobles were the celebrities of their age. It is typical that contemporaries were keen to know where a particular nobleman travelled and was located.<sup>14</sup> In the context of war, it was of vital importance to know where the major armies were heading. However, many accounts also reported when nobles entered a city with only a small retinue. This often had political implications as well, particularly when a nobleman was the governor of a province and had the right of jurisdiction. During their stay, noblemen or noblewomen often presided over law courts and witnessed executions. But spotting noblemen was also just a form of entertainment, as chroniclers recorded where famous nobles had slept, what they had worn and how they had behaved.

An important feature of modern celebrity culture is the experience of ‘imagined intimacy’ between public and celebrity.<sup>15</sup> A similar interest can be observed among sixteenth-century chroniclers, who wrote affectionately about (foreign) aristocratic individuals they had never met. Godevaert van Haecht in Antwerp, for instance, tenderly called the French constable Anne de Montmorency ‘this good old Lord’. Nevertheless, the intimacy was not always fictitious, as nobles were relatively approachable. As a rule, French kings accepted petitions, and citizens often accosted noblemen passing in the street to beg them for favours. In 1574, for instance, French chronicler Denis G  n  roux, a notary in Parthenay, visited the French court in Lyon to present a petition to Henry III, asking him to remove the garrisons from his town. His chronicle shows his pride in having met the royal family.<sup>16</sup> In her study of honour in sixteenth-century France, Kristen Neuschel has argued how physical proximity to the great added to the

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pays anglophones: une approche comparative’, *Revue fran  aise de sociologie*, 52:2 (2011), pp. 353–372.

13 Van Krieken, *Celebrity Society*, p. 15.

14 For example: ‘Item int jaer XVC en LXX in deser selve maent van Augustus doen reet die hertoch van Brabant Duck d’Alve hier doer de stat na Nimmegen’. H. van Alfen, (ed.), *Kroniek eener kloosterzuster van het voormalig Bossche klooster “Mari  nburg” over de troebelen te ’s-Hertogenbosch e.e. in de jaren 1566–1575* (’s-Hertogenbosch: Provinciaal Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen in Noord-Brabant, 1931), 26; Augustijn van Hernighem expressed a great interest in the travels of the count of Egmont: *Eerste bouck van beschryfvinghe*, 14–31; Compare Payen: *M  moires de Pontus Payen*, 245, who gives a list of members of the high nobility and their destinations, or De la Fosse: ‘Durant ce mois le prince d’Orange se retira aupr  s de Noion’, *M  moires d’un cur   de Paris*, 81.

15 Simon Morgan, ‘Celebrity: Academic “Pseudo-event” or a Useful Concept for Historians?’, *Cultural and Social History*, 8:1 (2001), pp. 95–114 (99).

16 B  laisaire Ledain (ed.), *Journal historique de Denis G  n  roux, notaire    Parthenay 1567–1576* (Niort: Clouzot, 1865), 127–129.

personal honour of lesser nobles.<sup>17</sup> Chronicler Michel le Riche, a magistrate of the king who lived in the village of Saint-Maixent, accommodated many famous visitors throughout the years. In 1582, he even had Henry of Navarre attending one of his dinners. News reports were often garnished with peculiar details, to show the proximity of the source to the 'grands seigneurs'.<sup>18</sup> When the Parisian priest Jehan de la Fosse heard about the abysmal circumstances in the army camp of William of Orange in 1569, he noted that it was said that William was on a diet of bread and cabbage heads.<sup>19</sup> Such details may also have served to add credibility to the report.

Louis of Nassau was a true international celebrity of his time—a German prince who was also a key political figure in France and the Netherlands. Together with his brother William of Orange, he had joined the French Huguenot nobles in France during the Third War of Religion. One of the best sources highlighting Louis's fame are the memoirs of Michel de la Huguerye, who served as his personal secretary in 1572–1574.<sup>20</sup> Historians have used De la Huguerye as a source for the intricate diplomacy between European Huguenots in the beginning of the 1570s but have questioned the accuracy of the memoirs.<sup>21</sup> He was suspect among historians because, expressing an ambitious wish to make a fortune, he very easily switched patrons, countries, and religions. Born and raised a Catholic, he joined the entourage of Jeanne d'Albret, became secretary of Louis of Nassau and Henry of Condé, then turned to the German Protestants, before defecting to the Lorraine family in the 1580s, turning Catholic again. Among his many various patrons, he expresses in his memoirs a particularly strong affection and tenderness for Louis of Nassau. He records entire dialogues he conducted with Louis of Nassau and persistently

17 Kristen B. Neuschel, *Word of Honor: Interpreting Noble Culture in Sixteenth-Century France* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 95.

18 Randall, *Credibility*, pp. 105–106.

19 'on dict que le prince eust de grandes necessitez, jusques à estre contrainct de se passer en son camp de pain et manger des tettes de chou'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 81.

20 De la Huguerye probably wrote his memoirs in 1604, but they are so full of detail that they must be based on notes he made shortly after the events he described. *Mémoires Michel de La Huguerye*, 1. xxiii–xxvi. The best biographical article on De la Huguerye dates from 1903: Henri Longnon, 'Un agent politique au xvie siècle: Michel de la Huguerye, 1545–1616', *Revue des questions historiques*, 37 (Paris, 1903), pp. 233–250.

21 Hugues Daussy, 'Louis de Nassau et le parti huguenot', in Yves Krumenacker (ed.), *Entre Calvinistes et Catholiques: Les relations religieuses entre la France et les Pays-Bas du Nord (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010), pp. 31–43; Sutherland, *The Massacre of St Bartholomew*.

repeats how close he stayed to Louis, day and night.<sup>22</sup> De la Huguerye also expressed his hatred for William of Orange, whom he thought had been jealous of Louis's popularity among the Dutch, even blaming him for Louis's death on the Mookerheide.<sup>23</sup>

Contemporaries often assessed the character of nobles in their chronicles and frequently praised the courage of army leaders. Jehan de la Fosse, after noting the news about the death of Timoléon de Brissac, a colonel of the infantry, described him as a 'vaillant homme'.<sup>24</sup> The Arras chronicler Pontus Payen, writing about the Count of Hoogstraten, added 'qui portoit courage de lion'.<sup>25</sup> De la Huguerye likewise never missed a chance to praise Louis's character. According to his secretary, Orange's brother was sweet, temperate, forgiving, and averse to bloodshed.<sup>26</sup> After Louis had fallen on 14 April 1574 during the Battle of Mookerheide, De la Huguerye recounted how he had spent eight days on the muddy battlefield in search for his body and that of his brother Henry—which were never found.<sup>27</sup> As a result, many contemporaries believed he was not dead at all. The chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke recorded how in

22 De la Huguerye described for instance how Louis used him as his personal confidant during the siege of Mons in 1572, complaining about the rash actions of the French nobleman Jean de Hangest, Lord of Genlis: 'And turning to me, who hardly ever left him and even carried his lantern before him during nightly rounds, he said: "On my life, that fool of Genlis has done exactly the opposite of what was recommended to him, and has taken the road to us!"'. *Mémoires Michel de La Huguerye*, I. 123.

23 *Mémoires Michel de La Huguerye*, I. 235–236.

24 *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 84.

25 *Mémoires Pontus Payen*, 247.

26 De la Huguerye: 'led. sr comte, qui n'aymoit poinct le sang'. *Mémoires Michel de La Huguerye*, I. 120. Chronicler Pontus Payen provides a different description, calling him 'doué d'une extreme hardiesse et d'un esprit subtil et remuant'. *Mémoires Pontus Payen*, I. 223; Walsingham described him as 'éloquent et moelleux (supple) en parole', Walsingham to Leicester, 12 August 1571, quoted in: Daussey, 'Louis de Nassau', p. 31. See the (relatively outdated) works by P.J. van Herwerden: *Het verblijf van Lodewijk van Nassau in Frankrijk: Hugonoten en geuzen 1569–1572* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1932), and *Lodewijk van Nassau: Een leven gewijd aan de Nederlanden* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1939).

27 *Mémoires Michel de La Huguerye*, I. 236–237. De la Huguerye was sent to deliver the bad news personally to Jan van Nassau in Cologne. In this section, De La Huguerye again lashed out against William of Orange: 'In this way the Prince of Orange lost three brothers here and in Friesland, all brave and better-loved than the prince, for whom they risked their lives and goods voluntarily, while he did not show any signs that he loved them'. 'Ainsi led. sr prince d'Orenge y perdit et en Frise trois frères, tous vaillans et ayman plus led. sr prince, pour lequel ilz exposoient volontairement la vie et leur bien, qu'il n'a faict cognoistre les avoir aymé'. *Mémoires Michel de La Huguerye*, I. 237.

December 1574, nine months after the battle, news arrived in Antwerp that Louis had been spotted alive and kicking in Liège.<sup>28</sup>

In the context of these personal interests, it followed that news about appearance and manners of dress could also spread widely. Sixteenth-century people expressed a notable interest in fashion, fabrics, and materials. The chronicler Pierre Fayet in Paris, following a description of the death of Don Juan of Austria in 1578, added rather abruptly: 'This same year began the fashion of the large collars, which had fifteen or sixteen layers, a third of a yard wide'.<sup>29</sup> Nobles often took trouble to catch the eye of the public. William of Orange was conspicuously dressed in red during his first reappearance on the streets of Antwerp after surviving a murder attempt in 1582. News about his manner of dress even reached Cologne.<sup>30</sup> Henry III of France was famous for his extravagance in dress, wearing the most spectacular costumes. Contemporaries also commented on the way he dressed his favourites, or *mignons*, having them wear costumes in gold and silver.<sup>31</sup>

28 'Is alhier de tijdinge hoe dat Grave Lodowijck van Nassouwe noch in levenden lijve was ende dat hij tot Luijck gesien was geweest'. 27 December 1574. Felix Archief, Antwerp, 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 1567–1580, ms PK108, 219.

29 Victor Luzarche (ed.), *Journal historique de Pierre Fayet sur les troubles de la ligue* (Tours: Ladevèze, 1852), 11. On matters of dress in Early Modern Europe see: Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

30 Weinsberg, 5 May 1582. Compare Ulinka Rublack, 'Renaissance Dress, Cultures of Making, and the Period Eye', *West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture*, 23:1 (2016), pp. 6–34 (11): who urges that 'we need to reorient our research agenda to include clothing and colors as signal media of symbolic communication and as integral to emotional experiences ..., to fully understand the visual appreciation and discernment skills of ordinary people during the Renaissance'. Red 'emphazed vigor and a celebratory festiveness', *Ibid.*, p. 20. See also Rublack on Luther dressed in red: *Dressing Up*, pp. 97–101.

31 Diarists often commented on this extravagance: See for example the journal of Pierre Fayet: '[le roi] fut accompagné de ses mignons ... vestus tous de drap d'or et d'argent, dont chaque habillement revenoit à plus de milles escus'. *Journal historique Pierre Fayet*, 6. Compare René de Brilhac, a magistrate in Poitiers, for a long descriptions of Henry's manner of dress, on 23 September 1577, during a ceremony of the Order of Saint-Michel: '[Il] estoit vestu de son grand manteau de damas blanc tout fait en broderie d'or, avec le chapron de velours cramoisy tout batu d'or en orfebvrie, et le grand ordre par le dessus, et tout le reste de l'accoustrement blanc, le bonnet de velours noir avec la plume blanche, et estoit accompagné de [follows a list of nobles] tous habillez comme le roy'. Bélisaire Ledain (ed.), *Journaux de Jean de Brilhac, conseiller en la sénéchaussée de Poitou de 1545 à 1564 et de René de Brilhac conseiller au présidal de Poitiers de 1573 à 1622* (Poitiers: Oudin, 1885), 13. Compare also Jean Pussot, who remarked on 'la sumptuosité et richesse des habillements' watching the wedding of Louise de Lorraine in his town. *Journalier Jean Pussot*, 85.

Dress could turn into politics, for example in the case of the Beggars, who dressed in the grey habits of minor friars to express their discontent with the government.<sup>32</sup> Their fashion statement did not go unnoticed, as Étienne Pasquier commented on their unusual choice of clothing—he found it *très-sinistre*.<sup>33</sup> The same went for Willem van de Marck, Count of Lumey, or ‘Fox Tail’, who famously wore a fox tail attached to his hat.<sup>34</sup> Apart from textiles and fabrics, physical beauty featured prominently in chronicles. Anne of Austria, daughter of archduke Maximilian, and the fourth wife of Philip II, particularly impressed contemporaries with her good looks. Godevaert van Haecht’s brother, who kept Godevaert’s diary in 1570 in the absence of his brother who was living in Paris at the time, described her as ‘about 22 years, sitting on a horse in a gold or gilded saddle, wearing an embroidered velvet cloak, beautiful and blushing’.<sup>35</sup> Her appearance even struck the nun from Den Bosch, who thought her a ‘beautiful young woman’.<sup>36</sup> The same nun regretted the death of the son of the Duke of Medina Celi, ‘for he had been a handsome boy’.<sup>37</sup>

News about the protagonists of the troubles in France and the Netherlands also abounded in private and commercial newsletters. While gentlemen made use of their personal networks of correspondence, these years also witnessed the emergence of commercial news services such as the Fugger newsletters or the Italian *avvisi*.<sup>38</sup> High officials often received a combination of personal and commercial news: their correspondents would attach commercial newsletters to their private writings. These letters offered their readers information on political and public social life, also handling topics such as the arrival of ambassadors, aristocratic marriages, and the deaths of famous persons.<sup>39</sup>

32 Henk van Nierop, ‘A Beggars’ Banquet: The Compromise of the Nobility and the Politics of Inversion’, *European History Quarterly*, 21 (1991), pp. 419–443.

33 ‘qui ne prognostique autre chose que la ruine des Pais-Bas’. Thickett, *Lettres historiques*, p. 164.

34 *Kroniek Godevaert van Haecht*, I. 179; Van Nierop, ‘Beggars’ Banquet’, p. 433; Arnade, *Beggars*, p. 66.

35 *Kroniek Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 132–133.

36 *Kroniek eener kloosterzuster*, 26.

37 *Kroniek eener kloosterzuster*, 41.

38 Zsuzsa Barbarics, and Renate Pieper, ‘Handwritten Newsletters as a Means of Communication in Early Modern Europe’, in: Francisco Bethencourt and Florike Egmond (eds.), *Correspondence and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 53–79 (67); David Randall, ‘Epistolary Rhetoric, the Newspaper, and the Public Sphere’, *Past & Present*, 198:1 (2008), pp. 3–32 (26–27).

39 Barbarics and Pieper, ‘Handwritten Newsletters’, pp. 60–61: ‘Besides accounts of battles or descriptions of political unrest and quarrels, they offered information about political and public social life. The arrival of an ambassador was as noteworthy as an aristocratic

## 2 Praise, Poetry, and Prints

Chroniclers, then, were decidedly able to identify the main characters of the wars in France and the Netherlands. Songs and poems were a key source of information on the deeds of noblemen, and very popular among chroniclers.<sup>40</sup> A great number of chroniclers, both in France and in the Netherlands, recorded rhymes and songs about current events throughout the conflicts. This kind of poetry was truly international: poems about Don Juan of Austria reached audiences throughout Europe.<sup>41</sup> What is more, such poetry abounded with references to classical antiquity, particularly the Roman Civil Wars. Authors of these poems were keen to compare their protagonists to Caesar or Cato. Chronicles show that while some (Latin) poems circulated in the correspondence between members of the elite, songs in the vernacular were disseminated on street corners. In the Netherlands, Beggars' Songs often provided complete lists of men who had participated in a battle or siege.<sup>42</sup> Noblemen were aware of the importance of poetry in spreading their fame. Members of their entourages, or other individuals who strove for their patronage, often composed news poems for special occasions.<sup>43</sup>

The Calvinist author Jean-François le Petit, famous for his history of the Dutch Revolt, wrote a more obscure booklet in the early 1590s that contained fifty-six sonnets about Maurice of Nassau. In a fruitless effort to regain Maurice's favour, he aimed to build the stadtholder's reputation in the eyes of an international audience. One of the sonnets sang the praises of Maurice's physique:

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marriage, the death of a famous person or nominations to ecclesiastical and administrative posts'. Compare Sadler, 'News as a Path to Independence'; Dooley, *Social History of Skepticism*, chapter 1.

40 Scholars have recognized the importance of songs and poems in early modern news cultures. See my introduction, n. 67. See also, for instance Van Groesen, *Amsterdam's Atlantic*, pp. 57–60; Compare Dunthorne: '... news or comment first issued in pamphlet form could be given wider currency through ballads, plays or sermons', *Britain and the Dutch Revolt*, pp. 50–52.

41 See for instance *Journal historique Pierre Fayet*, 11. See also Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 143.

42 See for example 'Een nieu Liedeken, vande gantsche handelinge ende belegeringhe der stadt van Alcmaer', Kuiper, *Geuzenliedboek*, pp. 163–167.

43 See for example Stensland on 'celebrating Farnese', *Habsburg Communication*, pp. 108–110; René van Stipriaan, 'Words at War: The Early Years of William of Orange's Propaganda', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 11:4–5 (2007), pp. 331–349.

Because your perfections of body and stature  
are impossible to exceed  
and they are even hard to match,  
so well has Mother Nature shaped you

your size and height are of good measure  
and the rest of your body, to speak shortly of it  
without wanting to neglect or hide anything,  
harmonizes completely with your straight posture,

Your severe yet soft eye, your high, large, and full forehead,  
the chestnut-blond beard and hair,  
the eyebrows, nose and well-made mouth:

of a natural colour, neither pale nor too red,  
that embellishes your face with an incomparable luster,  
testify to the perfect excellence of your body.<sup>44</sup>

News was conveyed not only through laudatory poetry. Chroniclers happily recorded mocking rhymes, so-called pasquils or pasquinades that circulated in their towns. The diary of the Parisian chronicler Pierre de L'Estoile shows that the death of a famous person often spurred both praise and satire. Yet the authors of such rhymes had to be cautious not to be too insulting: Jehan de la

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44 Car tes perfections de corps & de stature / Sont telles, qu'en cela on ne peult t'exceller / Et mesmes à grand peine on pourroit t'égaller / Si bien t'a façonné nostre Mere Nature / Ta grandeur & haulteur sont de bonne mesure / Et le reste du corps, pour brièvement parler / Sans vouloir blasonner, sans aussi rien celer / Se correspond en tout à ta droicte posture. / Ton oeil severe-doux, ton front hault, large & plein, / La barbe, & les cheveux d'un poil de blond castein, / Les sourcils, & le nez, & la bouche bien faicte: / Avec un tainct nayf, ni pale, ne vermeil, / Qui ta face embellit d'un lustre nonpareil, / Tesmoignent de ton corps l'excellence parfaicte. Jean-François Le Petit, *Cinquante six sonnets, a hault, puissant etc. prince Maurice d'Orange* (Haarlem: Gillis Rooman, 1592), USTC 4361. On demonstrative oratory on strength, beauty and health see Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric, 1380–1620* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 16; On the structure of the encomia of persons see: Laurent Pernot, *Epideictic Rhetoric: Questioning the Stakes of Ancient Praise* (Austin: University of Texas, 2015), pp. 31–42. See also Le Petit's more famous work: Jean-François Le Petit, *La grande chronique ancienne et moderne, de Hollande: Zelande, West-frise, Utrecht, Frise, Overysseel & Groeningen, jusques à la fin de l'an 1600* (2 vols., Dordrecht: Jacob Canin, 1601), USTC 1505669.



Fosse in Paris cited a popular pasquil on 'les grands seigneurs': 'He, who speaks well of them is lying, he who speaks ill of them will regret it'.<sup>45</sup>

Criminals constituted another group that enjoyed a certain international fame. Particularly the names of those who had tried (or succeeded in) murdering kings and noblemen spread rapidly. In 1563, after the assassination of Francis, Duke of Guise, Netherlandish contemporaries recorded the name of his murderer, Poltro de Méré.<sup>46</sup> The names of the (attempted) murderers of William of Orange, Jean Jaureguy and Balthasar Gérard, were well known in France.<sup>47</sup> Typically, names of criminals stuck in public memory: when noting news about the Cardinal of Lorraine in December 1574, Jehan de la Fosse described him as 'the brother of the Duke of Guise, who was murdered by Poltro'.<sup>48</sup>

Fame spread not only by tales, songs and poetry, but also by imagery, giving contemporaries the opportunity to visualize (international) celebrities. These years saw a surge in the production of high-quality newsprints in Western Europe. In Cologne, Frans Hogenberg began publishing his beautifully detailed maps of events, mainly on the Dutch Revolt and French Wars of Religion.<sup>49</sup> In 1570, the accomplished Genevan engravers Jacques Tortorel and Jean Perrissin designed meticulous pictures of momentous events from the French Wars of Religion.<sup>50</sup> Legends at the bottom of battle scenes provided their viewers with the names of the protagonists. Portraits of famous noblemen flanked depictions of sieges.<sup>51</sup> Helmer Helmers has noted how portraits were used as propaganda: during the Polish elections in 1573, the French ambassador to Poland disseminated portraits of Henry III among the Polish nobility to get him elected as king.<sup>52</sup> Pierre de L'Estoile was an avid collector of portraits of the

45 'Des grandz seigneurs: Quy bien en dict il ment, quy mal il s'en repent'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 177.

46 See for example *Antwerpsch chronykje*, 61.

47 See chapter 6.

48 'frere du duc de Guise qui fut tué par Poltro'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 127.

49 Ramon Voges has estimated that from the approximately 420 visual reports from 1570 to 1631, Hogenberg devoted about three quarters of his publications to the Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt. Ramon Voges, 'Power, Faith, and Pictures: Frans Hogenberg's Account of the Beeldenstorm', *BMGN—Low Countries Historical Review*, 131:1 (2016), pp. 121–140 (131).

50 Benedict, *Graphic History*.

51 Christl Klinkert, *Nassau in het nieuws: Nieuwsprenten van Maurits van Nassaus militaire ondernemingen uit de periode 1590–1600* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2005); Daniel R. Horst, *De Opstand in Zwart-Wit: Propagandaprenten uit de Nederlandse Opstand 1566–1584* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2003).

52 Helmers, 'Public Diplomacy', p. 408.

famous, assembling hundreds of prints. He even possessed a crayon depiction of Poltrot de Meré that had initially belonged to the Princess of Condé and had allegedly been one of her favourite drawings.<sup>53</sup> Geert Janssen has pointed out the case of an English Catholic owning an engraving that illustrated the murder of the Prince of Orange in 1584.<sup>54</sup> Unfortunately, chronicle comments revealing the reception of visual material are extremely rare. Enthusiastic collectors such as Pierre de L'Estoile and Hermann Weinsberg in Cologne are exceptional. Chroniclers, being politically engaged and well-to-do urban dwellers, must have formed the target audiences *par excellence* for high-quality news prints. Yet they commented far more often on songs and rhymes than on images.<sup>55</sup>

### 3 Famous Frenchmen during the First Years of the Religious Wars

Louis de Bourbon, Prince of Condé (1530–1569), King Charles IX, and Gaspard de Coligny (1519–1572), Admiral of France, commonly called ‘the Admiral’, featured the most often in Netherlandish news reports from France. But tidings also included less prominent figures such as the young Henry of Lorraine, the Duke of Guise, Anjou, the younger brother of the French king (who would later become Henry III), Catherine de’ Medici, and Coligny’s brother François d’Andelot.<sup>56</sup> We are fortunate to have some astonishingly detailed chronicles from these years. In Ghent, the moderate Catholic magistrate Marcus van Vaernewijck recorded the ‘troubles of his times’ for three years, from 1566 to 1568 in hundreds of pages. In Antwerp, the Lutheran painter Godevaert van Haecht started a chronicle in 1565. He meticulously noted all the news reports that reached his city and often reflected on European politics. Somewhat lesser-known is the ‘Chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke’, probably a Lutheran legal professional in Antwerp. When Jan himself went abroad in 1567, his chronicle was very likely continued by one of his relatives.<sup>57</sup> Despite the obscurity of its author(s), the chronicle is particularly useful as it records on an almost daily basis the news that arrived in Antwerp. What is more, these chroniclers did

53 Florence Greffe and José Lothe, *La vie, les livres et les lectures de Pierre de L'Estoile: nouvelles recherches* (Paris: Champion, 2004), p. 118.

54 Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, p. 128.

55 See my introduction, n. 67 and 68.

56 See for example Wouter Jacobszoon or the anonymous nun in 's-Hertogenbosch about ‘die Ammerael’. *Dagboek Wouter Jacobsz*, 1. 2; *Kroniek eener kloosterzuster*, 44.

57 I am very grateful to Guido Marnef, who sent me information on the Wesenbeke-chronicle. For more information on this chronicle, see my appendix.

not only make note of the news, but also reflected on its credibility and tried to interpret the reports they received. They thus provide us with rare insights into the content of reports and mechanisms behind news that reached these towns. They show how news about major battles and sieges in France rapidly reached the larger towns of the Southern Netherlands and how eagerly their well-informed citizens discussed the reports.<sup>58</sup>

It is no coincidence that these chronicles were written in the large, rich, and literate urban centres of the Low Countries that were connected with the major news routes in Europe. Many French news reports must have reached other cities in the Low Countries as well, but it is hard to determine whether citizens of smaller cities heard fewer reports, or simply made less elaborate notes. Augustijn of Hernighem in Ypres, for instance, only mentioned having heard news about the outbreak of the Second War of Religion in October 1567, when he laconically stated: 'that rumour has it that things are not going well in France'.<sup>59</sup> He wrote how some said that Condé, whom he invariably called 'Condeit', had gone to Picardy, where many nobles had rallied around him, but that others said that they were in Lorraine, 'but nobody knows for certain the truth'.<sup>60</sup>

It is small wonder that the movements of Condé featured prominently among news reports from France. He was the official leader of the Huguenots and engaged in numerous battles with the royal troops throughout the Second and Third Wars of Religion. How Netherlandish chroniclers described and judged him depended on their religious preferences. Marcus van Vaernewijck was less enthusiastic about this 'captain and head of the heretics in France', than was Godevaert van Haecht.<sup>61</sup> Catholic opponents strongly questioned his religious motives, suspecting him of having his eye on the crown of France. In November 1567, rumours reached Ghent that he had minted his own coins, featuring him as King of France. Van Vaernewijck expressed his doubt about a rumour that said that Gleijn Temmerman, provost of St Peter's Abbey in Ghent, owned one of these coins.<sup>62</sup>

Chroniclers frequently recorded false news items featuring Condé. Most of them concerned his death. In November 1568, Jan van Wesenbeke noted how

58 See for a more extensive analysis of news in the chronicles of Van Vaernewijck and Van Haecht: Van Tilborg, *Alzoo sprack elck*.

59 'In t beghinsel van de maent van Octobre, zoo ghinck een maere hoe dat in Vranckerycke niet zeer wel en ghinck'. *Eerste bouck van beschryvinghe*, 55.

60 Ibid.

61 *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, III. 85–87, 7 October 1567: 'den prince van Condée, die den capiteijn ende thooff van de heretiquen in Vranckrijck was'.

62 *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, III. 128–129, 6 November 1567.

inhabitants of Antwerp said that Condé was captured and 1,500 of his troops were defeated. This turned out to be a lie, he added.<sup>63</sup> On 22 March 1569, news arrived in Antwerp about the battle of Jarnac (13 March), in which Condé was killed, but this time many refused to believe the news. Condé's death was controversial, as a Catholic soldier had shot him from behind after he had surrendered. German Protestant pamphlets complained that it was 'contrary to all of the laws of war'.<sup>64</sup> Godevaert van Haecht recorded how his contemporaries speculated for a long time whether Condé was alive or dead. And as had been the case with Louis of Nassau, some of them for a long time refused to believe that the prince had actually died.<sup>65</sup>

The amount of detail in these reports is remarkable. The Antwerp and Ghent chroniclers recorded the movement of troops, numbers of foot soldiers and cavalry, and the backgrounds of noblemen. They could place battles geographically without any trouble. Godevaert van Haecht described a battle between the Protestant troops of the German Duke of Zweibrücken and William of Orange on one side and royal troops on the other at the end of April 1569. The Protestant princes, who were, according to Van Haecht, eager to avenge the death of the 'highly noble' prince of Condé, spared no one and attacked without restraint. Van Haecht noted that this battle happened between Dijon and Gré, at a distance of five days' travel from Paris.<sup>66</sup> There existed a strong Netherlandish connection as William of Orange and Louis of Nassau had joined the French Protestants, while Netherlandish Catholic noblemen had joined the royal troops. This must have contributed to the number of detailed reports they received about the Netherlandish noblemen. Van Vaernewijck even gathered that the horses belonging to the Catholic Duke of Aremberg, who was sent to France by Alva to assist King Charles against the Huguenots, had died from drinking water that was too cold.<sup>67</sup>

Chroniclers also frequently noted in what manner they received news from France. Van Vaernewijck often saw letters from other officials. He mentioned how he had first heard about the battle of Saint-Denis, a clash between

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63 'Op den selven tijt heeft men sterck geseijt dat Condé in Vranckrijck soude gevangen zijn ende 1500 van sijn volck verslagen hetwelck naedemaal gelogen is bevonden'. *Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke*, 37.

64 Benedict, *Graphic History*, p. 348.

65 'Hieraf was langhe spraecke, oft hy levende oft doot was, maer ten lesten hoorde men de waerheyt.... Hoewel sommige noch langhe tyt van syn doot niet gelooven en wilden'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 83–84.

66 'Het geschiede tusschen Dion en Gre, vyf dachreysen van parijs naar Lens toe'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 86.

67 *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, III. 208.

royal and Reformed troops in the vicinity of Paris, on 10 November 1567: 'On 25 November the bishop of Tournai had sent a letter to the Dean in Ghent, which I have seen, in the presence of Jan Damman, esquire, and other Ghent notables'.<sup>68</sup> The chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke specifically mentioned the post from France bringing important tidings. After the battle of Jarnac, this post reported only the first few facts on the death of Condé, the demise of many of his troops and of other noblemen. As the chronicler recorded, more detailed reports on the battle reached Antwerp later.<sup>69</sup> Most of the reports that chroniclers noted had been transmitted orally. They used phrases such as 'people strongly said' or 'others told us'. Contemporaries also questioned travellers from France. Van Vaernewijck recorded how a Frenchman arrived in Ghent in March 1568 and was asked 'how matters stood' in France. Van Vaernewijck, however, did not set much store by his report, as the man was clearly biased, claiming that the whole of France now sided with the Prince of Condé.<sup>70</sup> Occasionally, these chroniclers saw news in print and copied pamphlets or edicts in their chronicles.

The Habsburg government and the urban magistrates in the Netherlands, in their turn, actively tried to control the news. Godevaert van Haecht noted on 28 April 1568 how it was now prohibited to 'repeat new tidings or inquire after them, on pain of being flogged'.<sup>71</sup> In June 1569, the Antwerp magistrate even specifically forbade the passing on of tidings from France.<sup>72</sup> The Habsburg government did not prohibit the spreading of all news from France. Catholic victories were celebrated publicly, and Alva was keen to make these triumphs widely known. He preferred to celebrate good news from France with

68 'Up den xxven van november quam serteijne tijdinghe vanden bisscop van Doornicke an den deken vanden Christenen te Ghendt, welcx brief ic ghezien hebbe, present den voorschepenen joncheere Jan Damman ende andere notable vander stadt van Ghendt'. *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, III. 241.

69 'Den xxen Martij. Nieuwe tijdinghe vuyt Vranckrijk. Des havonts isser eenen post vuyt Vranckryck comen ende heeft de tydinge gebrocht dat den Prince van Conde soude in eenen slach sijn deurschooten ende den meesten deel van sijn volck met meer andere heeren oyck verslaghen ende veriaecht Maer naederhandt oft naedemael isser beter bescheet overbrocht hoe dat Conde inden slach soude ghebleven sijn, welcken slach soude gebeurt sijn den xiiien dach martij lestleden ende soude gheduert hebben drij dagen lanck totten xvi Martij toe soe datter wel sesse mijlen lanck nijet dan doode lichamen en lagen zoe dat des concinckx meesten edeldom aldaer soude sijn ghebleven ende de Hugenoten de victorie en het velt behouden'. 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 52.

70 'Ontrent dees tijt quammer een Franchoijs te Ghendt, die gevraegd wart hoet in Vranckrijk stont'. *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, III. 292–293.

71 *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, I. 21.

72 *Ibid.*, I. 92.

thanksgiving masses and processions throughout the Netherlands.<sup>73</sup> Various diarists mention processions after the battles of Saint-Denis (1567), Jarnac (1569), and Moncontour (1569).<sup>74</sup> The victory of Jarnac, in which Condé was killed, caused particularly great joy among Alva and his court. In a report to the king, the French ambassador Ferrals described Alva's reaction to the news. The duke had joyously embraced him and exclaimed that he had never been happier than at that moment.<sup>75</sup> Alva ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung in the chapel of the Très-Saint Sacrement-de-Miracle in Brussels, which he attended with his entire court, the Privy Council, and the Council of Finances.<sup>76</sup> In turn, the duke usually sent reports about his military victories in the Netherlands to the King of France.<sup>77</sup>

Yet these measures proved insufficient to stop citizens from discussing the news. As chronicles show, inhabitants of Antwerp and Ghent regularly reflected on the news they received and debated the motivations of the 'grand seigneurs'.<sup>78</sup> After hearing the latest tidings on the troubles in France in January 1568, Van Vaernewijck reported an elaborate discussion about Condé's motives:

Some said that Condé was not against the King, but that he just wanted to be a governor of the King, who is only 17 years old; for the house of Guise and some cardinals held them under their protection, and retained the government. And Condé with his allied nobilists, who were of a large number, wanted to be closest [to the King] because he was a close relative, but since he was suspected, and being a Calvinist by inclination, as he had shown, they did not want him to have control of the government, to prevent him from corrupting the whole land and kingdom with the

73 Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, p. 33.

74 See for instance *Mémoires de Pasquier de le Barre et de Nicolas Soldoyer*, 278; *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II, 106.

75 Ambassador Ferrals to King Charles IX (28 March 1569), Gachard, *La Bibliothèque Nationale*, II, p. 472. Cited by Van Tilborg, *Alzoo sprack elck*, p. 48.

76 Morillon to Granvelle, 28 March 1569. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, III, p. 522.

77 See for example after Jemmingen: L.P. Gachard (ed.), *Correspondance du duc d'Albe sur l'invasion du comte Louis de Nassau en Frise, en 1568, et les batailles de Heyligherlee et de Gemmingen* (Brussels: Muquardt, 1850), pp. 154–156.

78 For the distinction between 'grands seigneurs' and 'gentilshommes' see: Henk van Nierop, 'The Nobility and the Revolt of the Netherlands: Between Church and King, and Protestantism and Privileges', in Philip Benedict, et al. (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt, and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555–1585* (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999), pp. 83–98 (83).

harmful sect of the Sacramentists or Calvinists'. So, he concluded, 'it was more than reasonable and fitting [that Condé was not accepted as governor of the King].'<sup>79</sup>

Godevaert van Haecht reflected on the reports about Constable Anne de Montmorency's behaviour during the battle of Saint-Denis. The first news that Condé had captured the city soon turned out to be false, and shortly afterwards, more accurate stories reached Antwerp. Van Haecht deplored the death of 'the good old Lord Constable' and cried out against those who spread critical reports:

And they pretended it to be the constable's fault, the misfortunes that had happened to them. They claimed that he had been a friend of the Huguenots, and had failed to command his troops. And so they unjustly accuse the dead, yes, they even dare to venture that he had been shot by one of his own soldiers.<sup>80</sup>

To contemporaries trying to make sense of the wars, it was not always clear why nobles acted as they did. Various sources reveal an uncertainty about the interpretation of 'noble' news. Sometimes contemporaries considered themselves not well enough informed to assess the stories they had heard. They complained about not having the same amount of knowledge as the elite, and consequently they felt unable to grasp the meaning of events or understand decisions that nobles had made. Marcus van Vaernewijck commented

79 'Sommighe zeijden: Condée en was jeghen den Coninc niet, maer was de questie om tgouvernement te hebben vanden Coninc, die maer xvij jaren audt en was; want thuys van Ghuijse met sommighe cardinalen hilden hem onder haer protectie ende behilden tgouvernement. Ende Condée met zijn ghealleierde nobilisten, die in grooten ghetale waren, wilde zelve de naeste wesen, als naestbestaende van bloetsweghen, maer om dat hij suspect ghehauden was ende calvinisch ghezint, zoo hij hem wel laten meercken hadde, zoo en wilden zij hem tgouvernement niet laten, up dat tgheheele landt ende conincrijcke niet ghecorrumpert en werde met de schadelicke secte der Sacramentisten oft Calvinisten, zoot meer dan reden ende behoorlic was'. *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, 111. 195.

80 'Item deestyt quam den roep tot Antwerpen en overal, dat den prinsche van Conde de stat van Parys ingenomen hadde, maer ten lesten hoorde men 't recht besceet, als hoe dat er voer Parys, tusschen Sint-Denys en Parys eenen swaren slach gesleghen is op den tienden Novembris, op Sinte Mertens avont, tusschen den prinsche van Conde en des conicx volck ende die borgeren van Parys, wel 16000. Ende sy gaven uyt, dat het al haerder conicktabels scult was, het ongeluck dat haer gesciet was, seggende, dat hy der hugenoosen vrint was, en syn volck niet aenvuerde. En besculdichden also den dooden tot onrecht, ja, seyden dat een van syn eygen soldaten hem doerscoten hadde'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, 1. 241.

on discussions among his fellow townsmen after the arrest of the counts of Egmont and Hornes. However, in his opinion, discussing these matters was not appropriate for the common folk:

many thought that it was not right that the Duke of Alva, who was of a lower status than some of the princes whose goods and body he had seized, did so before the arrival of the King, and that he gravely endangered the land; but the common man does not know or understand the affairs of princes: it is therefore stupid and unwise wanting to discuss them.<sup>81</sup>

Similar sentiments appear in the diary of Godevaert van Haecht. In February 1569, he reflected on news about the movement of the armies of Condé and Orange in France. He wondered why they had not cooperated to resist the French king, but concluded that 'it is hard studying in the books of lords'.<sup>82</sup> The chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke likewise shows that contemporaries speculated on the reasons behind certain actions: 'The commander of Brussels has arrived and stays in the convent of St Michiel, but nobody knows why'.<sup>83</sup> And the nun from 's-Hertogenbosch likewise complained: 'Oh, it does not matter what one knows or what one says. No one tells the common man what is really going on! He does hardly know what these lords are doing!'<sup>84</sup> Incomprehensible actions were frequently explained by citing personal motives, such as revenge and jealousy. Godevaert van Haecht wrote how Granvelle still wanted to have his revenge on Egmont for having once given Granvelle a smack in the face.<sup>85</sup> In

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81 'Vele meenden, dat qualic ghedaen was, dat de hertoghe van Alve, die van faculteyt minder was, zoo zij zeijden, dan sommige princen, welcx ghoden ende lijven hij aangehetast hadde, dat hij hem zulcx bestont te doene voor de comste vanden Coninc, ende dat hij dees landen in groot perijckel stelde; maer den ghemeen man en weten noch en verstaen de zaken vande princen niet, ergo blent ende onwijs om daer af veel te willen spreken oft disputeren'. *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, 111. 209.

82 'Den prinsche van Oraengien was van den conick vervolcht, die nou by Mets lach met syn ermeye; maer den prinsche d'Oraengien hadde so vele gedaen, dat den prinsche van Condé ermeye die in last was, byeen was comen en vry opgebrocken waeren na Provincien en Languedock. 't Is verwonderlyck dat se niet samen den conick wederstonden, maer het is quaet in heeren boecken studeeren'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, 11. 78.

83 'Is den Commandeur van Bruesel alhier gecomen ende liggende int clooster van Ste. Michiel, waeromme en weet men niet'. 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 182, August 1574.

84 'Och het is al om niet, dat men wet of dat men seet. Het is al een ander, datter briet ende dat en seet men den gemeynen man niet! Die weet dick qualijck, watter schuylt onder die heren!' *Kroniek eener kloosterzuster*, 60.

85 'Hier was mogelyck den cardinael Granvelle goey help in, die eertyts Egmont wel gedreycht heeft, doen Egmont teghen de inquisitie was en Egmont den cardinael een kinneback gaf'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, 11. 27.



the same strand, Zweibrücken and Orange plundered the French countryside to avenge the Prince of Condé.<sup>86</sup> Similar opinions can be found in contemporary printed histories: in Alfonso d'Ulloa's book on the wars in the Netherlands, Louis of Nassau killed the Duke of Arenberg during the battle of Heiligerlee to avenge the killing of his brother Adolf.<sup>87</sup>

#### 4 News about Alva, Orange, and the Troubles in the Netherlands

French chroniclers devoted far less attention to foreign affairs than did their colleagues in the Netherlands. But some of them did notice and record the troubles that befell the Netherlands in these years. Their focus was on the movements and motives of the nobility, with William of Orange and the Duke of Alva as key characters. Often, there had to be a 'French connection' to make events in the Low Countries of interest. Jehan de la Fosse mentioned the siege of Valenciennes in the first months of 1567 chiefly because of the arrest of French 'rebels' in the Beggars' defence army who had helped during the siege.<sup>88</sup> Valenciennes maintained strong ties with French Huguenots, and the city had sent envoys to Condé begging for help. When this aid did not materialize, Valenciennes surrendered to Philip of Noircarmes on 24 March 1567.

The progress of Alva's army along the eastern border of France in the summer of 1567 caused general alarm in France.<sup>89</sup> It was not only Huguenots who felt threatened by the Spanish military presence: the French king, too, anxiously watched Alva's movements, apparently afraid of an unexpected attack.<sup>90</sup> When it became clear that the army was heading for the Netherlands, many French were knowledgeable about the intentions of the campaign: the conflict between the Spanish king and the rebels, the 'Gueux'. A Calvinist diarist in Millau, an important centre of trade in the Languedoc, saw the Spanish troops assembling in the countryside and called them 'all enemies of the religion'. Initially rumour had it that the Spanish armies would seek to take Geneva. This turned out to be false when they 'took the straight road to Flanders'. The

86 Moreover, Zweibrücken killed all the French nobles he encountered on his way: 'ende tot wraecke van den seer edelen prinsche van Condé en spaerde den Hertogh van Tweebruggen geen en edeldom'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, 11. 86.

87 'Comte d'Arenberg tué de sangfroid par le Comte Ludovic, et pourquoy'. Alfonso de Ulloa, *Commentaire premier et second contenant le voyage du duc d'Albe en Flandres* (Paris: Jean Dallier, 1570), USTC 27053, 46r.

88 *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 69; Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 98.

89 Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, p. 64; Parker, *Army of Flanders and Spanish Road*.

90 Sutherland, *The Massacre of St Bartholomew*, pp. 47–62.

Calvinist diarist deplored the fate of the 'Churches' in the Netherlands, which were now in grave danger.<sup>91</sup>

French chroniclers were notably less concerned with geography than were their Netherlandish counterparts. While Antwerp or Ghent chroniclers were able to situate small villages in France, many Frenchmen considered the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands to be one and the same. According to Jehan de la Fosse, the infamous beheadings of Egmont and Horne on the Grand Place in Brussels in 1568 took place in the city of Antwerp.<sup>92</sup> The Catholic cleric Claude Haton from Provins probably began writing his extensive chronicles in the middle of the 1570s. Before jotting down contemporary events, he also recounted the most important events from the years 1553 onwards. He recorded how Egmont and Horne had been executed in 'the city of Valenciennes or another town in that land'.<sup>93</sup> Chronicler Denis G  n  roux in Parthenay wrote about the battle of Jemmingen having taken place in 'the swamps of Gruynge (Groningen) in Flanders or Holland'.<sup>94</sup> Only Pierre de L'Estoile, who began chronicling in the 1570s, would display an unusual aptitude for localizing Netherlandish events. This might be explained by the fact that his inventory listed a map of the Netherlands.<sup>95</sup> Why were Netherlandish chroniclers in the 1560s so much better informed about French politics and geography than vice versa? An important reason might be that they had already been oriented towards France for many years, before the religious wars began. Many chroniclers, as members of the urban elites, had visited France during their studies. Law students went to Orl  ans, while theology students visited Paris. This also explains why many inhabitants of the Netherlands were particularly worried about French troubles: as Marcus van Vaernewijck noted, during the upheavals of the late 1560s, many Ghent citizens had children studying in France.<sup>96</sup>

91 *M  moires d'un calviniste*, 147.

92 *M  moires d'un cur   de Paris*, 77. Brendan Dooley has observed on notions of geography in Early Modern Europe: 'Finally, current notions of geography in any one place might stand somewhat in the way of precisely conceptualizing where those in another place could be ... The further from home one got, in fact, the more fantastic the picture might be'. Dooley, *Dissemination of News*, p. 7.

93 'dedans la ville de Valenciennes ou aultre ville dudit pays'. *M  moires de Claude Haton*, III. 421.

94 'des marais pr  s Gruynge en Flandre ou Hollande'. *Journal historique de Denis G  n  roux*, 27.

95 Greffe and Lothe, *La vie, les livres et les lectures*, p. 121.

96 'ende de studenten waren ghevloten van daer, want veel ghoeede ende edellieden uut Nederlanden hadden haer kinderen in tijts van daer ghedaen'. *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, III. 99–100.

Yet those French chroniclers who read pamphlets—or histories for that matter—were able to acquire a very detailed knowledge of the Netherlands. In 1570, news pamphlets printed in Paris, Lyon and Rouen described the infamous All Saint's Flood, a disaster that affected large areas along the coasts of Flanders, Zeeland, and Holland and even threatened Antwerp and its surroundings. The Parisian pamphlet entered into a detailed description of the affected villages of the Netherlands, from Brouwershaven to Vianen, relating for every small village the number of drowned people, cattle, and horses. While its purpose was mainly an edifying lesson on God's punishment for sins, it also assumed a comprehensive geographic knowledge on the part of its French readers.<sup>97</sup> However, Jehan Louvet, a chronicler from Angers, making note of the flood, only recorded that the city of Antwerp was partly drowned.<sup>98</sup>

During the first years of troubles in the Netherlands, French chroniclers shaped a discourse about the events. The word 'vengeance' turned up remarkably often in their vocabulary.<sup>99</sup> The vendetta between the Coligny and Guise clans in France may have influenced this. Nicola Sutherland has noted how 'within France, at least on national level, the conflict was to a great extent personalized by the faction leaders'.<sup>100</sup> Chroniclers did indeed explain many decisions of the nobles as acts of revenge or desire for personal gain. Claude Haton recorded hearing reports about French Huguenot captains going over to the Netherlands to assist the Prince of Orange and his brother 'the Count of Nansau'. They did so at the request of Coligny as an act of retaliation against Alva, who, a year earlier, had assisted the King of France against the Huguenots.<sup>101</sup> Various

97 *Les merveilles et espouventables tourmentes de mer et effroyables ondes veuées en la ville d'Anvers* (Paris: Guillaume Nyverd, 1570), USTC 13104; *Merveilles et espouventables tourmente de mer et effroyables hombies advenues en la ville d'Anvers* (Rouen: Martin Le Mégissier, [1570]), USTC 61279; *Discours sur les causes des inondations de la mer et la narration de l'inondation advenue à Anvers* (Lyon: Benoît Rigaud, 1571), USTC 64051.

98 'fust ... la ville d'Anvers partye submergée'. Jehan Louvet, 'Récit véritable de tout ce qui est advenu digne de mémoire tant en la ville d'Angers, pays d'Anjou et autres lieux (depuis l'an 1560 jusqu'à l'an 1634)', *Revue de l'Anjou et de Maine et Loire* (Angers, 1854–1856) vol. 1, pp. 257–304 (300).

99 Compare the works of Stuart Carroll, who has stressed the importance of notions of vengeance in early modern France. Stuart Carroll, *Blood and Violence in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); and by the same author: *Noble power during the wars of religion: the Guise affinity and the Catholic cause in Normandy* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998) and 'Vengeance and Conspiracy during the French Wars of Religion', in Barry Coward and Julian Swann (eds.), *Conspiracies and conspiracy theory in early modern Europe: from the Waldensians to the French Revolution* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 71–86.

100 Sutherland, *The Massacre of St Bartholomew*, p. 17.

101 *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, II. 241.

diarists also described the execution of Egmont and Hornes as the tragic culmination of a personal feud between Alva and Netherlandish nobles.<sup>102</sup>

It is small wonder that French Catholic diarists tended to denounce the actions of the Prince of Orange. Orange had become a focus of attention from April 1567, when he had left the Netherlands and retreated to his German family estate of Dillenburg. Claude Haton commented how the Prince had been 'chased from his lands'.<sup>103</sup> When he launched a military campaign in early 1568, Orange's name became synonymous with Protestant rebellion. An angry Catholic chronicler in Rouen condemned Coligny for engaging with the Prince of Orange, 'that wretched chief of the Calvinists, who was chased from his lands, and had now come to France to cause trouble'.<sup>104</sup> Etienne Pasquier, too, did not hold Orange in high regard, stating that the Prince had managed to escape from the fate of Egmont and Hornes, 'more by accident than by wisdom'.<sup>105</sup> Claude Haton thought that William of Orange had invaded the Netherlands just to regain his 'goods', which the Duke of Alva had seized after he had fled to Germany.<sup>106</sup> Interest in Orange's movements continued when he and his brother joined Condé and Coligny during the Third War of Religion in 1569. Together they fought in the battle of La Roche Abeille (25 June 1569). Louis of Nassau also participated in the battle of Moncontour (3 October 1569).<sup>107</sup>

News pamphlets that celebrated victories were in demand, while no one liked to read about losses.<sup>108</sup> It is pertinent that diarists, too, tended to report on battles only when 'the right side' had won. Jehan de la Fosse mentioned hearing news about two battles in the Netherlands in the summer of 1568. According to his diary, both concerned victories for the Duke of Alva. One of these must have been the battle of Jemmingen in East Frisia (21 July) where Alva's troops crushed the army of Louis of Nassau. The other battle probably referred to the battle of Heiligerlee, near Groningen (23 May), which, in fact, had been won by Louis of Nassau. Denis G  n  roux, a Catholic notary in Parthenay, also triumphantly recorded Catholic victories in the Netherlands. He wrote about the battle of Jemmingen:

102 See the section on Egmont and Hornes below.

103 *M  moires de Claude Haton*, II. 210.

104 *Relation des troubles*, 44.

105 'il ... se fut, plus par hazard que par conseil,   vad  '. Thickett, *Lettres historiques*, p. 164.

106 *M  moires de Claude Haton*, III. 422.

107 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 122. For Louis' participation in the battle of Moncontour also see the engraving by Tortorel and Perrissin. Benedict, *Graphic History*, p. 264.

108 Randall, *Credibility*, p. 109.

On Wednesday the 21st of this month, the Duke of Alva fought a battle against Count Louis of Nassau, brother of William of Orange, in the swamps near Groningen in Flanders or Holland, where more than 7000 'Gueux' were killed, 16 pieces of canon taken and 15 chariots reitres [horse carts] and only ten Catholics died, a miracle, while during the battle it never stopped raining and hailing, [and he repeated:] and only ten Catholics died.<sup>109</sup>

A similar bias characterized Protestant chronicles. The Calvinist diarist in Millau remained silent about the troubles in the Netherlands during the late 1560s and early 1570s. But in 1573 he noted down happily that the Prince of Orange was winning 'grandes victoires' over the Duke of Alva.<sup>110</sup> Most likely, these diarists also received news about losses, but they were simply averse to recording them for posterity.

## 5 Egmont and Hornes

The execution of the counts of Egmont and Hornes in 1568 constituted the most dramatic news event in these years. After his arrival in the Netherlands in September 1567, Alva had the counts and numerous lesser nobles arrested. Lamoral of Egmont and Philip de Montmorency, Count of Hornes, were among the most prominent and wealthiest members of the aristocracy, and knights in the Order of the Golden Fleece.<sup>111</sup> Although they had never supported the Protestants, both men were blamed for the troubles of 1566 and accused of *lèse majesté*. Alva had hoped to arrest the Prince of Orange as well, but the latter had escaped the Netherlands before the duke's arrival. Egmont and Hornes

109 'Le mercredy XXI du dit mois, le duc d'Albe donna une bataille au comte Ludovic de Naussau frère du prince d'Orange huguenot en des marais près Gruynge en Flandre ou Hollande où furent tués plus de VII mille hommes Gueux, XVI pièces de canons pris, XV<sup>e</sup> chariots Reitres, sans que mourut X catholiques, chose miraculeuse, tant que dura la bataille il ne cessa de pleuvoir et grêler, et n'y mourut que X catholiques'. *Journal historique de Denis Généroux*, 27. Alva celebrated his victory in Jemmingen abundantly with processions and thanksgiving masses. Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, p. 34.

110 'En ce mesmes temps, le prince d'Orenge faisoit grant guerre au peïs de Flandres, car il eüst de grans victoires; tellement qu'il desfit l'armée du duc d'Albe, Spaignol, de sorte qu'il feüst victorieux sur lui. Dont, feüst maistre sus la plus grant part dudit pais'. *Mémoires d'un calviniste*, 270.

111 Marcus van Vaernewijck thought it 'very strange' that Alva dared to arrest members of the high nobility: 'aldus ghijunct daer zeer gheckelic, als men bhegonde dees groote meesters up te rapen.' *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, II. 27–28.

were imprisoned in the Gravensteen Castle in Ghent for months and were in a trial condemned to death. On 3 June 1568, the counts were taken to Brussels, where they were beheaded two days later, during an elaborately staged ceremony on the Grand Place.<sup>112</sup> The news of the execution of the two knights of the Golden Fleece caused sensation throughout Europe.<sup>113</sup> Netherlandish and German Protestant pamphlets decried Alva's cruelty.<sup>114</sup> In France, chroniclers recorded being particularly shocked by the dishonour of Egmont and Hornes's death.<sup>115</sup>

News about the execution that reached France centred on the theme of revenge. It particularly discussed the extent to which the deaths of the counts had been a matter of vengeance for the Duke of Alva. Many French contemporaries saw the public execution as an immediate consequence of the battle of Heiligerlee, of 23 May 1568, which had ended disastrously for the royal army. The royal stadholder, Jean de Ligne, Duke of Aremberg had been killed. Jehan de la Fosse in Paris commented on the timing of the execution of Egmont and Hornes. He considered it to be Alva's personal act of revenge, pointing out that Egmont and Hornes had been held captive already for months when the battle had taken place in which the 'Gueux' had triumphed over Alva's army. The Duke of 'Noreborg' (Aremberg) and a 'nephew of Alva's' had perished, and the rebels had allegedly hanged all the captured Spaniards. According to Jehan de la Fosse, this had angered Alva so much that he had the captive aristocrats executed.<sup>116</sup>

Diarists in the Netherlands, too, recognized the notion of revenge. Cornelis van Campene in Ghent claimed that the battle of Heiligerlee and the executions

112 On executions as theatre see: David Nicholls, 'The Theatre of Martyrdom in the French Reformation', *Past & Present*, 121:1 (1988), pp. 49–73.

113 Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots*, p. 183; Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands', pp. 330–331. Montaigne also commented on the event: Van der Lem, 'Echos de la révolte', pp. 51–55.

114 See for example Jacob van Wesenbeecke, *La deduction de l'innocence de messire Philippe baron montmorency conte de hornes, franc seigneur de vveert, admiral et capitaine general de la mer du pais bas, et cheualier de l'ordre de la thoison d'or. Contre la malicieuse apprehension, indeue detention, iniuste procedure, fausse accusation, iniques sentences, et tyrannique execution en sa personne à grand tort, par voye de faict perpetrees* ([Cologne]: [Gottfried Cervicornus (II)], 1569), USTC 671403. William of Orange to August of Saksen, 14-6-1568; William of Orange to Wilhelm von Hessen, 15-6-1568; William of Orange to Günther von Schwartzburg, 16-8-1568. William was not the only one who corresponded with the German Princes; the Spanish government did the same, see: Weis, *Légitimer la repression des troubles*.

115 Claude Haton called it the 'disgraceful and ignominious death' of the rebels Egmont and Hornes. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, II, 260.

116 *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 77.

were connected: 'the deaths [of AreMBERG] and other nobles, who have perished in the battle in Groningen, have angered Alva a great deal, and so it must be the reason for the deaths of the nobles who have been in prison until now'.<sup>117</sup> Many contemporaries, then, refused simply to accept Alva's narrative account of punishing rebellious nobles. They looked for personal motives behind the execution.

However, the French expressed an interest not only in stories about noble vengeance. It also mattered to them how the nobles had died. On 1 and 2 June, days before the execution of Egmont and Hornes, Alva had eighteen lesser nobles sentenced to death for treason. A pamphlet, published in France, listed who among them 'had died with diabolic obstinacy', and who had died as Catholics 'with contrition and recognition of their faults'.<sup>118</sup> It also described at great length how Egmont and Hornes had prayed and confessed before their execution, and how they were dressed.<sup>119</sup> Denis G  n  roux wrote in his diary that the counts of Egmont and Hornes were sentenced because they had conspired with the 'Gueux' against His Majesty, but also found it important to emphasize that they had died as 'good Catholics'.<sup>120</sup>

In 1570, the Lyon printer Benoit Rigaud brought out an illustrated broadsheet of the execution. Published two years after the event, the pamphlet documents the continuing popularity of the story in France.<sup>121</sup> It was illustrated with two portraits of the 'noble and illustrious knights of the Fleece'. According to the caption, the Duke of Egmont had died as a good Catholic and therefore received the honour of two candles burning next to his body. But Hornes,

117 F. de Potter (ed.), *Dagboek van Cornelis en Philip van Campene behelzende het verhaal der merkwaardigste gebeurtenissen, voorgevallen te Gent sedert het begin der godsdienstberoerten tot den 5en april 1571* (Ghent: Annoot-Braeckman, 1870, reprint 2001), 139.

118 [list of nobles] 'Tous lesquels moururent avec une obstination diabolique' ... [other list of nobles] 'Mais quant    ceux-l   ils moururent Catholiques, avec contrition & reconnaissance de leurs fautes'. *Execution de la sentence et jugement donnez contre les contes d'Aiguement et de Horne* (Lyon: Michel Jove, 1568), USTC 49656.

119 The pamphlet *Execution de la sentence* (USTC 49656) describes Egmont being dressed in a crimson nightdress and wearing a hat: 'vestu d'une robe de nuit de damas cramoisy, & d'un chapeau sur sa teste'. Alonso d'Ulloa also commented on the clothing of the two counts: 'Or, estoit le Comte vestu d'un casaquin de damas cramoisy, & le manteaux noir, & enrichi d'un passement d'or, son chapeau de tafetas noir, avec des p  naches noirs et blancs, portant un mouchouer    la main'. In comparison, Hornes was simply wearing 'un manteau noir & le bonnet de drap noir', and 'seulement un chemise de coton'. d'Ulloa, *Commentaire premier et second*, 41–43 (USTC 27053).

120 *Journal historique de Denis G  n  roux*, 26–27.

121 *L'execution et supplice fait par sentence judiciaire,    l'encontre des nobles et illustres chevaliers de la Toison d'or, les contes d'Aihuemont et de Horne* (Lyon: Benoit Rigaud, 1570), USTC 4068. Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands', pp. 330–331.



FIGURE 7 'Illustrated broadsheet of the execution of Egmont and Hornes', *L'exécution et supplice fait par sentence judiciaire, à l'encontre des nobles et illustres chevaliers de la Toison d'or, les contes d'Aiguemont et de Horne* (Lyon, Benoist Rigaud, 1570). Bibliothèque nationale de France (RESERVE FOL-QB-201)

according to the pamphlet, had died 'differently' and was therefore denied this honour.<sup>122</sup> This rumour allegedly had arisen after Hornes had refused to kiss

<sup>122</sup> d'Ulloa states that both counts died as Catholics, *Commentaire premier et second*, 41–45 (USTC 27053). According to Arnade, this rumour arose after Hornes had refused to kiss the crucifix. Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots*, p. 187.



a crucifix, but Alva himself, in a letter to Philip II, claimed that both counts had died as good Catholics.<sup>123</sup> However this may be, their manner of dying remained a topic for discussion among French audiences.

## 6 Don Carlos

Another event that captivated chroniclers in the Netherlands and France in these years was the death of Don Carlos. The only son of Philip II died under mysterious circumstances in Spain in July 1568. The official text about his death, proclaimed by Philip II, stated that the prince had fallen ill and died in prison.<sup>124</sup> Philip had had his son arrested in January 1568, since he showed increasing signs of mental instability and violent behaviour. In July, the Prince's situation had deteriorated, and he died on the 18th. His death has been an enigma ever since. Geoffrey Parker blames William of Orange among others for mystifying Carlos's death for posterity, as William claimed in his *Apology* of 1581 that Philip had murdered his own son.<sup>125</sup> However, wilder stories already ran in August 1568. One of these rumours stated that Carlos had wanted to assist the Calvinists in the Netherlands and that Philip had prevented this by killing him. Remarkably, this latter version was widely accepted in France, among Huguenots and Catholics alike.

In August 1568, news about the death of Philip's 23-year-old son reached the Low Countries. Alva attended an official funeral ceremony in 's-Hertogenbosch, and churches and convents all over the Netherlands held services in Carlos's remembrance.<sup>126</sup> In France, too, Don Carlos was honoured with official ceremonies. The monk François Grin attended the funeral service in the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on 21 September 1568. The entire French high nobility was present, including Anjou and Alençon, the younger brothers of the king, and the Spanish ambassador dressed in mourning.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Geoffrey Parker supports this story, but at the same time calls it an enigma. Geoffrey Parker, *Imprudent King: A New Life of Philip II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), chapter 10, 'The enigma of Don Carlos'.

<sup>125</sup> Parker, *Imprudent King*, p. 175; Andrew Villalon, 'The 1562 Head Injury of Don Carlos: A Conflict of Medicine and Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain', *Mediterranean Studies*, 22:2 (2014), pp. 95–134 (97).

<sup>126</sup> Monica Stensland has seen this as deliberate Habsburg policy where 'people were also made to get involved in the more personal life and well-being of the dynasty's members'. Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, p. 34; *Kroniek eener kloosterzuster*, 23.

<sup>127</sup> 'Journal de François Grin', 48.

The French ambassador to the Netherlands, the Baron of Ferrals, immediately deemed Carlos's death suspect. Having taken over his duties from the seigneur de Durescu in June, he was in 's-Hertogenbosch when the news from Spain reached the Netherlandish court. A letter from Ferrals to King Charles IX shows how the news was already unofficially known while the court was waiting for the official report from Spain: 'The entire court demonstrates a great sadness, having heard the news about the death of the prince of Spain, which they have kept a secret until yesterday. All the *seigneurs* persist that he has died from an illness: but when talking to some of them individually, they say that he has been poisoned in prison'.<sup>128</sup>

In Ghent, Marcus van Vaernewijck heard the story of the alleged poisoning, but he dismissed it as Calvinist propaganda: 'The rumour went that if had he been able to reach the Netherlands, he would have supported the Protestant gentlemen and princes, and revolted against his father like a second Absalom'.<sup>129</sup> This was something the diarist found hard to believe. Godevaert van Haecht, on the contrary, had no trouble believing Philip guilty of killing his own son. According to him, it was openly said that Carlos had been poisoned in prison.<sup>130</sup> In France, diarists also discussed his death. Denis G  n  roux, a notary in the village of Parthenay, wrote that 'in this month, the King of Spain has had Don Carlos of Austria killed, his only son, for having communicated with the *Gueux* in the Netherlands and for having wanted to poison his father'.<sup>131</sup> Jehan de la Fosse recorded how 'in Paris they say that his father has had him killed

128 'Toute ceste court monstre d'estre contrist  e d'avoir entendu la mort du prince d'Espagne, laquelle ilz ont tousjours c  l  e jusques hier. Tous les seigneurs d'icelle tiennent qu'il est mort de malladie: mais quelques particuliers disent qu'il a est   empoisonn   en sa prison'. Gachard, *La Biblioth  que Nationale*, II, pp. 463–464.

129 'Daer ghijnck ooc een mare uute, oft zij van hemlien quam dat en weet ic niet, dat onsen Coninx zone niet zijns zelfs doot ghestorven en was, maer eijmelic van die inquisitie van Spaengien ter doot ghebrocht was, men zecht doot ghelaten, zegghende: hadde hij in dese Nederlanden connen gheraken, hij zoude dees ghuesche heeren ende princen alle bij ghevallen hebben, ende, als een ander Absolom, jeghen zijnen vader upghestaen hebben; maer dat stelic bij den anderen'. *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, IV. 213.

130 'Maer hoe soud  n sy dese sparen, die des coninx sone niet gespaert en hebben, en den conick so weten te beclappen, dat hy concent daer toe ghegheven heeft, welcken sone Carel, die in 't beginsel des jaers gevanghen werdt, is in 't gevanghenisse gestorven oft vergeven; want men hoorde nou opelyck, dat hy eer vyf daghen na syn gevanghenisse doot is geweest en vergeven'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 35.

131 'En ce mois le roi d'Espagne fit mourir don Carle d'Autriche son fils unique pour l'intelligence qu'il avait avec les Gueux du Pays-Bas et pour avoir voulu empoisonner son p  re'. *Journal historique de Denis G  n  roux*, 34.

because he was a Huguenot and belonged to the party of the *Gueux*, and that he even had attempted to murder his father'.<sup>132</sup>

Claude Haton in Provins and the anonymous Calvinist in Millau provided more elaborate stories. Haton described in detail how Netherlandish preachers had travelled to Spain and convinced Don Carlos to murder his father. Carlos subsequently pretended to be ill in order to lure his father to his sickbed and to kill him when the king was off guard. Philip, however, had gotten wind of Carlos's intentions and entered his son's room wearing a 'corselet', a bulletproof vest. When Carlos attempted to shoot him, he was arrested, tried, and beheaded.<sup>133</sup> The Millau Calvinist went further and mixed up several stories about Don Carlos, whom he confused with his uncle, Don Juan. According to his story, this Don Jehan, son of the King of Spain, had become a Protestant, and Philip had unsuccessfully attempted to convert him back to Catholicism. When he did not succeed, he had a court of justice sentence him to death by poison because a public execution was considered 'dishonourable'. After Don Carlos had taken the poison, and Philip visited his deathbed, Carlos entertained his father with edifying stories from the Bible. A certain Calvinist preacher, Monsieur Lavon, who had supposedly been Carlos's teacher, was granted a leading part in this story. According to the Calvinist diarist, he had escaped Philip's wrath and had even visited Millau.<sup>134</sup>

During the wars in France and the Netherlands in the 1560s and early 1570s, reports about nobles thus dominated the news. Inhabitants of the largest cities, such as Antwerp, Ghent, and Paris obtained the most detailed information. Yet even villagers in more remote areas knew the names of William of Orange or the Prince of Condé. Trying to make sense of the troubles of their times, contemporaries interpreted the events as factional strife among the high nobility. Many chroniclers were used to describing the conflicts in terms of civil wars, as their educational curriculum had included histories about civil war in classical antiquity, such as those by Cicero, Livy, and Lucan.

Contemporaries eagerly consumed news about nobles, admiring their appearance, identifying with their sorrows, and occasionally questioning their motives. Knowledge of the other country thus increased during these first years of troubles. Inhabitants of France and the Netherlands learned to identify the main protagonists of the wars and map far-away battle sites. Chroniclers in

132 'on dict que son pere le fait morir pour cause qu'il estoit <Huguenot> du parti des gueux, mesme qu'il avoit voulu attenter à la personne de son pere'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 79.

133 *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, II. 258–260.

134 *Mémoires d'un calviniste*, 297.

France wrote about fights in the swamps of Groningen while Netherlandish diarists learned about 'Rotsiele, a strong city close to the sea'.<sup>135</sup> One of the French nobles who had achieved considerable fame in the Netherlands was the 'Admiral' Gaspard de Coligny. As we shall see in the next chapter, his brutal murder, which precipitated the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre, would become a major news event in the Netherlands.

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<sup>135</sup> 'des marais près Gruynge en Flandre ou Hollande'. *Journal historique de Denis Généroux*, 27; 'De stat van Rotsiele, een sterke stat aen de zee'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 43.

## St Bartholomew's Day Massacre and the Credibility of News, 1572

During the siege of Mons in the summer of 1572, Secretary Michel de la Huguerye was staying in the military camp of his patron Louis of Nassau. A few months earlier, Louis had occupied the city in the Netherlandish province of Hainault as the commander of an invading French Huguenot army. With Alva's royal troops closing in, the occupiers were now hoping for more Huguenot forces from France to arrive and relieve them. De la Huguerye kept a detailed account of what happened in and around the besieged city. On 29 August, for example, he recorded how a group of French soldiers, naked and covered with dust, had arrived at the city gates in the early morning. The men were prisoners of war, who had been sent by Spanish officials to inform Louis and his troops about the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre, which had been carried out in Paris earlier that month. Nobody believed the horrific story because the news seemed to have come from an enemy source. De la Huguerye noted: 'We did not believe a word of it, as the message came from the Spaniards, although we suspected something was the matter'.<sup>1</sup> Eager to know more about the story, Louis's men interrogated a captured Spanish soldier, who told them the news had come from the Duke of Alva himself. He had arrived in the royal camp the day before. Still, Louis of Nassau and his entourage were willing to believe the news only when two French Protestant ministers, who had been sent by the French ambassador Claude de Mondoucet, turned up in Mons and confirmed the gruesome story.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter maps and analyses reactions in the Netherlands to the news about the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre. More specifically, the case of the Parisian news event allows us to examine the problem of news credibility. Who was to be trusted in troubled times of civil wars? Whose authority was deemed credible in confirming rumours? Historians have previously studied international reactions to the news about the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre, but they have largely neglected the Netherlands. This lack of interest may be explained by the paucity of printed responses to the event in the Low Countries.

1 'Nous ne creusmes rien de cela, venant desd. Espaignolz, bien que nous eussions soupçon qu'il y eust quelque chose'. *Mémoires de Michel de La Huguerye*, 1. 127–129. See for an adapted version of the argument in this chapter also my forthcoming article in *French History*.

2 Ibid.

Scholars instead have focused on public celebrations of the massacre in Rome and Spain, or considered printed Protestant reactions in England, Geneva, and cities in the German Empire.<sup>3</sup>

All the same, a vast amount of evidence suggests that news about the massacre spread quickly in the Netherlands, too. It is notable that several chroniclers commented at length on the (oral) reports. What is more, the ongoing religious war had made contemporaries aware of manipulative strategies that influenced news and its media, including false reports that were spread deliberately by the enemy. This common practice had compelled Netherlandish audiences to check and identify carefully the sources of news reports. Chroniclers also pondered the reasons for disseminating particular news facts. Were the authors perhaps driven by secret motives? Diarists such as Godevaert van Haecht or Wouter Jacobsz as well as Pierre de L'Estoile in France appeared to be well trained in this type of source criticism.<sup>4</sup> Thus, one of the consequences of the religious troubles was an increasing lack of faith in news reports among contemporaries. Doubts increased when recipients did not share the sender's religion. Over the course of the wars, many chroniclers in France and the

3 For general works on St Bartholomew's Day Massacre see for example: Denis Crouzet, *La nuit de la Saint-Barthélemy: un rêve perdu de la Renaissance* (Paris: Fayard, 1994); Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston and New York: Bedford/ St. Martin's, 2009); Arlette Jouanna provides the best overview: *La Saint-Barthélemy: Les mystères d'un crime d'état, 24 août 1572* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007)—see also its English translation: *St Bartholomew's Day Massacre: The Mysteries of a Crime of State* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2013). For her view on European reactions see esp. pp. 202–227, 'Perplexités et suspicions européennes'. Nicola Sutherland has studied the international dimensions of the conflict: Sutherland, *Massacre and the European Conflict*; Robert Kingdon has explored the Protestant reactions in print following the massacre: Robert M. Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres, 1572–1576* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988). For more literature on reactions to the news about St Bartholomew's Day see: Kate van Orden, 'Cheap Print and Street Song following the Saint Bartholomew's Massacres of 1572', in Kate van Orden (ed.), *Music and the Cultures of Print* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 271–323; Pierre Hurtubise, 'Comment Rome apprit la nouvelle du massacre de la Saint-Barthélemy: contribution à une histoire de l'information au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae*, x (1972), pp. 188–209; Buchanan, *Massacre of St Bartholomew's*; Pettegree, *Invention of News*, pp. 145–151; Robert Kingdon, 'Quelques réactions à la Saint-Barthélemy à l'extérieur de la France', in Jean-Pierre Babelon et al., *L'Amiral de Coligny et son temps* (Paris: Siège de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français, 1974), pp. 191–204.

4 Henk van Nierop and Femke Deen have commented on the ways in which Wouter Jacobsz checked his facts. Van Nierop, 'And Ye Shall Hear', p. 70; Deen, *Publiek debat en propaganda*, p. 145.

Netherlands became increasingly critical of reports and developed complex methods for checking the news.<sup>5</sup>

It is puzzling that reactions to the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in the Netherlands have received scant attention from historians. After all, scholars have generally acknowledged its considerable impact on the course of the Dutch Revolt.<sup>6</sup> In the summer of 1572, the rebels in the Netherlands strongly anticipated military support from France, which never materialized due to the massacre. Conversely, French politics in these months centred on the question of whether to intervene in the Netherlands. In the spring of 1572, numerous French Huguenots had departed to the north. Coligny had stayed in Paris to plead with the French king for money and troops to support William of Orange. It did not take much for concerned contemporaries to assume the existence of a secret link between events in the Netherlands and the massacre. Some claimed that 'the plans for the wars in the Netherlands were designed to entice Protestant leaders to come to Paris and their deaths'.<sup>7</sup>

The first part of this chapter explores different reactions to the news about the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in the Netherlands. More specifically, it assesses the links between the massacre and the siege of Mons and examines the content of the news that reached the Netherlands. To what extent did it follow or depart from the official royal Habsburg story? This will also allow us to address the fear of copycat incidents in the Low Countries. The second

5 Compare my chapter 6; Van Nierop, 'And Ye Shall Hear', p. 75; Foa and Mellet, *Le bruit des armes*.

6 Geoffrey Parker has stressed the importance of the situation in France on the course of the Dutch Revolt in the summer of 1572. Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 138. Nicola Sutherland in particular has stressed the international dimensions of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre, devoting several chapters to the Netherlands: Sutherland, *Massacre and the European Conflict*. Although her book was published in the series 'Journées qui ont fait la France', Arlette Jouanna pays attention to international reactions to the massacre as well. Jouanna, *La Saint-Barthélemy*. Henri Hauser, in the beginning of the twentieth century, included 'la Saint-Barthélemy à l'étranger' in his overview of contemporary sources, focusing on sources from Rome, the Swiss cities and Poland; Hauser, *Les sources de l'histoire de France III*. Except for an article by Robert Kingdon, 'Quelques réactions', I have found no literature that deals expressly with reactions to the massacre in the Netherlands. Andrew Pettegree states in his 'France and the Netherlands', p. 330: 'it was hardly to be expected that the bitter denouement of this phase of the conflict, the St Bartholomew's Day massacre of 1572, should have gone unremarked in the Netherlandish press'. However, he fails to produce any examples of reactions in print.

7 Kingdon, *Myths*, p. 43; For the massacre as a 'confessional conspiracy theory' see: Cornel Zwierlein, 'Security Politics and Conspiracy Theories in the Emerging European State System (15th/16th c.)', *Historical Social Research/ Historische Sozialforschung* 38:1 (2013), pp. 65–95 (82–88).

part assesses the ways in which chroniclers dealt with questions of authority and verification. I will argue that newsletters were most often used to confirm oral news and rumours. Some historians have asserted that printed pamphlets made news more 'fixed' or 'permanent', and hence more trustworthy than oral or manuscript news. By contrast, I will argue that many contemporaries did not trust printed news more than letters. The Dutch and the French became media-savvy over the course of the wars and preferred to use a combination of news media to get at the truth.

## 1 Part 1. Reactions to the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in the Netherlands

In August 1572, French noblemen, among them many Huguenots, had assembled in Paris to attend the wedding of Henry of Navarre and Marguerite of Valois, the king's sister. On 22 August, a gunman wounded the French Admiral and Protestant leader Coligny. The Huguenot nobility was outraged. Rumours that Protestants would seize the opportunity to attack the French royal family in retribution were spreading fast. The king ordered a pre-emptive strike, and a group of men, possibly led by the Duke of Guise, murdered Coligny. At the same time, royal guards hunted French Protestant noblemen. The populace of Paris took this as permission to start killing their Protestant fellow citizens. An estimated 2,000–3,000 Protestants perished.<sup>8</sup> In the following weeks, news about the massacre reached other French cities and sparked massacres in Orléans, Rouen, Bordeaux, Troyes and eight other towns.<sup>9</sup>

News about the massacres spread fast through Europe. Catholic countries triumphantly celebrated the event. Philip II reportedly laughed with joy and danced around the room. Pope Gregory and his cardinals ordered the performance of a solemn *Te Deum*.<sup>10</sup> In contrast, Protestants in Swiss cities and

8 Jouanna, *La Saint-Barthélemy*, pp. 9–10; The agency of Catherine de' Medici, the Guises, king Charles, his brother Henry, and the violent populace in the massacre are the subject of ongoing debates. However, scholars contend that the massacre started at least partly spontaneously. Studies that point to Catherine de' Medici and Charles as conspirators who had planned the massacre years before are now widely considered to be outdated. Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 145. Jouanna's *La Saint-Barthélemy* is generally considered to be the best recent work on St Bartholomew's Day Massacre. Carroll stresses the importance of the Coligny-Guise vendetta. Carroll, *Blood and Violence*, p. 277.

9 Philip Benedict, 'Saint Bartholomew's Massacres in the Provinces', *The Historical Journal*, 21:2 (1978), pp. 205–225.

10 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 138; Kingdon, *Myths*, pp. 45–46. On the singing of the *Te Deum Laudamus* in France during the Religious Wars, see Van Orden, 'Cheap Print and Street Song', pp. 276–277.



Elizabethan England were in shock. Some scholars have claimed that the massacres were followed by silence. According to Mark Greengrass, there were few oral reports: 'Huguenot survivors were too traumatized to speak or unable to recall what had occurred'.<sup>11</sup> He also found few testimonies among Catholics, who did not take pride in their actions. Others just did not want to hear about the bloodshed. In these chaotic times, it was dangerous to know too much: some locked themselves in their rooms with their ears closed.<sup>12</sup> This may have been the case for contemporaries in France. Yet elsewhere in Europe, citizens of various colouring seemed only too eager to receive more details about this extraordinary event.

### 1.1 *The Massacre and the Siege of Mons*

Louis of Nassau's attacks on Valenciennes and Mons in the spring and summer of 1572 had a significant impact on politics in France. Coligny sought to obtain permission from Charles IX to send support troops to the Protestants in the Netherlands. The king, however, remained indecisive. On the one hand, he feared war with Spain should he decide to take sides with Louis and William of Orange. On the other hand, an intervention in the Netherlands might enable the French crown to regain parts of the Southern provinces, which had once belonged to France. What is more, a military expedition might relieve tensions in France itself, thus transferring the Wars of Religion from French soil.<sup>13</sup> Alva was aware of Charles's doubts and exerted strong pressure on him to prevent his subjects from joining rebel forces. Some historians have accused Charles of ambiguity, while others have pointed out that his conduct was, in fact,

11 Mark Greengrass, 'Hidden Transcripts: Secret Histories and Personal Testimonies of Religious Violence in the French Wars of Religion', in M. Levene and P. Roberts (eds.), *The Massacre in History* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1999), pp. 69–88 (81).

12 Greengrass, 'Hidden transcripts', pp. 81–82. See also Broomhall who mentions the 'official injunctions to *oubliance*' during the Wars of Religion: Susan Broomhall, 'Disturbing Memories: Narrating Experiences and Emotions of Distressing Events in the French Wars of Religion', in Erika Kuijpers, et al. (eds.), *Memory before Modernity: Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 253–267 (254). Diefendorf notices how Denis Crouzet makes a similar statement in *Guerriers de Dieu*, about the horrible violence of St Bartholomew's day massacre causing a 'retreat to an interiorized, discursive violence' for both Protestants and Catholics. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, p. 213, n. 49.

13 Sutherland, *Massacre and the European Conflict*, p. 242; Daussy, *Le parti Huguenot*, pp. 750–757; Several of the King's trusted advisers composed memoranda on the question in the summer of 1572. See for example Jean de Morvilliers' 'Rémonstrance au Roi sur le faict de Flandres et de s'opposer à y porter la guerre'. Morvilliers had lived in the Netherlands from 1568–1571; Thickett, *Lettres historiques*, p. 172.

consistent in its inconsistency.<sup>14</sup> During the summer of 1572, Charles expediently waited to see how matters would turn out, secretly supporting both parties. In letters to Catholic rulers he claimed to disapprove of French Huguenots fighting in Mons, while at the same time providing the French Protestant forces with money.

Contemporaries in France and the Netherlands closely followed the siege of Mons. In Paris, Jehan de la Fosse noted several details about the siege, even quoting alleged conversations between Alva and Genlis.<sup>15</sup> Godevaert van Haecht heard in the beginning of September that rumours were circulating in Paris and Rouen that William of Orange had been beaten.<sup>16</sup> News about the siege of Mons reached Antwerp and Amsterdam every few days. Because of the volatile state of relations between Spain and France, Alva sought to keep his campaigns against Huguenot troops secret. In a letter to Philip II, in June 1572, Alva wrote about the capture of a group of Huguenots, 'some members [of which] were quietly hanged and others taken away and secretly drowned because he [Alva] and Medinaceli were agreed—despite his ultimatum—that they must avoid any open risk of rupture with France'.<sup>17</sup> Despite these precautionary measures, Alva could not hide the killings. The chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke shows that news about the murders reached Antwerp the following day. It also described the treacherous role of a local farmer. He had pretended to show the Huguenots the way to Louis, but instead had led them straight into Alva's arms. Louis was said to have taken immediate revenge, burning the village where the farmer lived. The author of the 'Van Wesenbeke-chronicle' obtained proof of the silent murder of Louis's Huguenot friends when some weeks later corpses of hanged Frenchmen washed ashore in a shipyard in Antwerp.<sup>18</sup>

14 Crouzet, *La Nuit de la Saint-Barthélemy*, pp. 315–355; Daussy, *Le parti Huguenot*, pp. 754–755.

15 'Lors que led. Janlis fut présenté au duc d'Albe, led. duc dict à Janlis de quy il estoit advoué « de faire » et s'il avoit gens comme voleurs ou gens de guerre; lors Janlis fait response quil estoit à la guerre et avoit esté prins en guerre, estant advoué du Roy de France; lors que le duc tyra de son seing la lettre du Roy « par laquelle » de France par lesquelles il desadvouet led. Huguenotz, et dict lors led. duc: "La lettre de vostre prince vous condamne". *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 109–111. Compare the memoirs of Pierre de Jarrige: M.H.B. de Montégut (ed.), *Journal historique de Pierre de Jarrige: viguier de la Ville de Saint-Yrieix (1560–1574) continué par Pardoux de Jarrige, son fils (1574–1591)* (Angoulême: Goumard, 1868), 62.

16 'Ende so van Rouwaen en Parys en ander plaetsen quam scriyven, dat de spraecke aldaer was, dat den prinsche van Oraengien al verslagen was, begeerende sekerheyt te hooren, waerdoer vele vermoeyden by de groote daer hope moest af syn en eenich verraet in synen leger moest besteken wesen'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 211.

17 Sutherland, *Massacre and the European Conflict*, pp. 245–246.

18 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 14 June 1572, 128–129.

On 27 August, the first reports about the St Bartholomew's Massacre reached Alva in Antwerp. He immediately left the city to join his army that was besieging Mons. The chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke notes that Alva marched from Antwerp completely dressed in blue, with his entire retinue dressed in the same colour, in an apparent attempt to impress the citizens and signal unity.<sup>19</sup> As pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, the duke lost no time in informing Louis of the news from Paris. He anticipated that the gruesome story would have a destructive impact on morale in the besieged city. After all, Louis had placed his hopes on Coligny and his French supporters. The Parisian murders meant that these support troops would never turn up. Michel de la Huguerye witnessed the devastating effect of the news about the massacre in Paris on the Protestant nobles in Mons. 'Seigneur Comte [Louis of Nassau], who experienced such grief over what had happened in Paris that he fell ill for more than three months, nevertheless demonstrated such courage, being everywhere where he was needed, day and night, and encouraged everyone with his example'.<sup>20</sup> Another French nobleman, Colonel Rouvroy, also reportedly became 'very ill, due to working day and night in this siege, and because of the news of the death of his master, the said sr. Admiral, and all his friends'.<sup>21</sup> Godevaert van Haecht expected the news to provide a strong psychological boost to the Duke of Alva, who now 'probably advanced more daringly'.<sup>22</sup>

The besieged held out for three more weeks, eventually surrendering the city to Alva on 19 September 1572. Louis's illness became news in itself. Godevaert van Haecht and provost Morillon both mentioned Louis 'being sick with sadness when he left the city'.<sup>23</sup> Michel de la Huguerye indeed wrote how, in a village six miles from Mons, 'when we helped him [Louis] descend from his

19 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 27 August 1572, 136. On groups wearing the same color to signal unity see: Rublack, 'Renaissance Dress', pp. 18–20.

20 'Led. sr. comte, qui conceut ung si grand regret du faict de Paris qu'il en fut malade plus de troys moys, avoit tel courage néantmoins que jour et nuict il se trouvoit où il estoit besoning et encourageoit à son exemple tout le monde'. *Mémoires de Michel de La Huguerye*, I. 130. On Louis of Nassau and the siege of Mons see: Van Herwerden, *Lodewijk van Nassau*, pp. 166–170.

21 'fort malade, pour le travail qu'il avoit pris jour et nuict en ce siege et la nouvelle de la mort dud. sr. admiral, son maistre et du tout ses amys'. *Mémoires de Michel de La Huguerye*, I. 134.

22 'waerdoere Ducdalbe mogelyck te stouter optrocke'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 207.

23 'Loduwyck was sieckelyck van droefheyt als hy uyttrocke'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 216. Morillon to Granvelle, Arras, 28 September 1572. [Mons has been surrendered to Alva] 'au grand regret et contre le vouloir du comte Lodovic que at cuidé crever de despict et en est venu malade'. Poullet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, IV, p. 438.

carriage, to bring him to his chamber, he was so weak that he fainted in our arms, and then, with some help, he revived, and we put him to bed'.<sup>24</sup> Many of Louis's French friends, who had been with him during the siege, were slaughtered when they crossed the border with France. Historians contend that this was done by order of Charles, who feared that the Huguenots would seek revenge for their murdered relatives and friends.<sup>25</sup> Louis had tried to persuade his French comrades to stay with his army, instead of returning to a France that was 'still red with blood'.<sup>26</sup> Yet many nobles declined the offer, anxious to return to their estates and families. According to Jan de Pottre, this was one of the reasons why Mons had surrendered quickly after the news about the St Bartholomew events. As he wrote: 'the French longed to be home, because of the death of the Admiral'.<sup>27</sup>

### 1.2 *Rumour and the Official Story*

After the massacre of St Bartholomew, the French king was keen to control the spread of information, for which he employed a complex strategy. First, he sent his ambassadors to the major courts in Europe, equipped with individually tailored stories. Catholic rulers were told that the French king had sought to restore religious unity in his kingdom. Protestant rulers, by contrast, heard that the king just wanted to punish a few rebels among the nobility. What is more, Charles found it important to distinguish between the 'royal execution' of Coligny and his lieutenants, and the popular killings that had followed, and which had risen spontaneously.<sup>28</sup> The official royal version of the story of the massacre was disseminated throughout France through a pamphlet, *Discours*

24 'quand nous descendismes led. sr. comte de son chariot pour le mener en sa chambre, il se trouvoit si foible qu'il s'esvanouit entre noz bras, et puis avec remède revint, et fut couché'. *Mémoires de Michel de La Huguerye*, I. 143.

25 They would cross the border at the 'arbre de Guise', where they were slaughtered by Guise and his men. Daussy, *Le parti Huguenot*, p. 765; Jouanna, *La Saint-Barthélemy*, pp. 156–159; Sutherland, *Massacre and the European Conflict*, p. 344.

26 'encore tout rouge de sang, ... il ne fut possible de le persuader à tous, et la plus grande partie, désireuse de retourner donner ordre en leurs maisons'. *Mémoires de Michel de La Huguerye*, I. 141.

27 'Item, den XXIsten september soe woert Berghen oevergeheeven in de handen van onsen Duck d'Alve sonder eenich bloetstortinghe, want die van de stadt die begheerden te perlementeeren, want de Franchoesen dier inne waeren die begheerden thuyt te sijne, om dat de Amerael doot was'. *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 48. Compare Morillon to Granvelle, Arras, 28 September 1572. 'Depuis que les François avoient entendu le mauvais traitement que l'on at faict à l'Admiral, ilz ont desire d'eulx en aller pour adsister leurs amy et allies'. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, IV, p. 439.

28 Jouanna, *La Saint-Barthélemy*, chapter 6, 'Vérité du roi, raison de l'état', pp. 201–227; Zwierlein, 'Security Politics and Conspiracy Theories', p. 86.

*sur les causes de l'exécution faite es personnes de ceux qui avoyent conjuré contre le roy et son estat.* Christopher Plantin in Antwerp also issued a version of the text.<sup>29</sup> In short, it blamed Coligny and other Protestant nobles for conspiring against their princes and the State. Coligny and his entourage had 'aimed to hide their pernicious intentions under the cloak of religion' and had used 'false rumours' to turn French subjects against their ruler.<sup>30</sup> Charles had been forced—out of self-defence—to order a 'prompt and sovereign execution'.<sup>31</sup> As for the massacre of the two thousand other Protestants: Parisian Catholics had been so outraged about Coligny's plan to murder their king that they had spontaneously attacked his coreligionists.<sup>32</sup>

William of Orange, too, received a full oral account from the diplomat Gian Galeazzo Fregoso, who was sent by the French ambassador Mondoucet. It is striking that Charles—through his ambassador Mondoucet—took pains to explain his motivations for the killings to Orange. William received a report that was virtually identical to the one sent to Elizabeth in England, which suggests that the French king still thought him someone to be reckoned with. He obviously did not want to estrange Orange completely.<sup>33</sup> According to Mondoucet in a letter to Charles, the man who brought William the news 'had elaborately recounted the great reasons that have caused Your Majesty to permit and let the execution take place'.<sup>34</sup> The ambassador consciously used the word 'permit' and not a term such as 'ordain' or 'decree' thereby denying the king's role in initiating the massacre. Nevertheless, William was as devastated as his brother Louis. In a letter to his brother Jan in Germany he confessed: 'with regard to human means, my only hope was pinned on France'.<sup>35</sup>

29 *Discours sur les causes de l'exécution faite es personnes de ceux qui avoyent conjuré contre le roy et son estat* (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, 1572), USTC 3404. Kingdon, *Myths*, p. 26; Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands', p. 330.

30 'ceulx qui ont voulu attenter contre l'estat & la vie de leurs Princes, ou contre la liberté, & la tranquillité de leur Patrie, qui ont tousiours couvert leurs pernicieuses intentions du manteau de la Religion, & du zele du bien publicq, faisants de deux bonnes & saintes choses, deux mauvais & dangereux pretextes'. *Discours sur les causes*, 3 (USTC 3404).

31 'une prompte et souveraine execution', *Discours sur les causes*, 34 (USTC 3404).

32 *Discours sur les causes*, 37 (USTC 3404).

33 See on the French king's various 'mémoires justificatifs' to European rulers, Arlette Jouanna, 'Le discours royal sur la Saint-Barthélemy', in Jérémie Foa and Paul-Alexis Mellet, *Le bruit des armes: mises en formes et désinformations en Europe pendant les Guerres de Religion (1560–1610)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2012), pp. 201–214.

34 'Mon homme luy aient amplement discours les grandes raisons que avoient meü Vostre Majesté de permettre et donner lieu à l'exécution'. Ambassador Mondoucet to Charles IX, 5 September 1572. Gachard, *Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris*, 11, p. 527.

35 'Quant aux moyens humains, mon unique espoir estoit du costé de la France'. William of Orange to Jan van Nassau, 21 September 1572 in: G. Groen van Prinsterer (ed.), *Archives*

Protestant reactions to the massacres, in particular in pamphlets, have long been a focus of scholarship. The massacre triggered the publication of well-known Protestant resistance treatises including the *Reveille-Matin*, the *Franco-Gallica* and the *De Furoribus Gallicis*. These texts originated chiefly from Geneva, Basel, England, and Scotland.<sup>36</sup> It is notable, however, that the Protestant response in print appeared only after a year. In the first months after the massacre, there were not many Protestant news pamphlets that contradicted the Catholic version of the story, especially not in the Netherlands.<sup>37</sup> Robert Kingdon has blamed this lack on the situation of that year when 'both the Netherlands and its printing industry were in chaos'.<sup>38</sup> A closer inspection of sources, however, reveals that oral news about the massacre rapidly reached the larger cities. Despite the chaos in some provinces, many inhabitants became well-informed in a short time. Three particular features from these reports stand out. First, that reports in the Netherlands were surprisingly accurate, despite the assumption of some historians who have stressed the dissemination of wild rumours. Second, that already amongst the early oral

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*ou correspondance inédite de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, (première serie, 8 vols., Leiden: S. en J. Luchtmans, 1835–1847), III, pp. 511–514. Interestingly, this constitutes one of the few passages in the letter that is in cipher.

36 Kingdon, *Myths*, pp. 22–24; James R. Smither, 'The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre and Images of Kingship in France: 1572–1574', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 22:1 (1991), pp. 27–46.

37 The only pamphlet telling the Protestant story that was published in the Netherlands in 1572 is based on a letter by English ambassador in Paris Francis Walsingham to Elizabeth: Francis Walsingham, *Copije eenes seyndtbriefs aen coninghinne Elizabeth, vervatende int corte de moort die binnen Parijs in de Navareesche bruyloft is gheschiet* ([Delft]: Aelbrecht Hendrickz, [1572]) USTC 428454. See also: *Roemische practicken und frucht der saulischen hochzeit des Koenigs von Nawarren und des Koenigs von Franckreich schwester zu Pariß im Augstmonat des vergangenen 72. jars gehalten eines moerderischen spitzzubens wie man alle Evangelische Christen nit allein in Franckreich und Nederland sonder auch in Engelland und Teutschland außrotten soll einem Fratzoesischen gesanten in hoch Burgund zugeschrieben. Anno 1572. Im December. Auß lateinischer sprach in das Teütsch gebracht* (Kampen: s.n., 1573), USTC 689596; *Het treurliet des vorstes Jaspas van Chastilion amirael van Vranckrijck. Die binnen Parijs door een onghheoorde verraderije ende tyranniye ghemoordet is* ([Emden: Goossen Goebens], 1573), USTC 415352. In contrast, a flood of German and English Protestant pamphlets were published, some just across the border in Emden and Wesel. See for example *Ein warhafftige Newe Zeitung auß Franckreich was sich in diesem 72. jar den 29. tag Augusti auff der Koen. Mayt. Von Nauerra hochzeit zu Pariß in Franckreich mit den Cardinalischen unnd des Herrn von Guisen Volck zugetragen hat* (Wesel: [Clais Geifertsen], 1572), USTC 647433. See also some illustrated news prints, for instance, *De Bartholomeusnacht met portretten van Willem, prins van Oranje en Lodewijk graaf van Nassau*, Anonymus, 1572, in: Horst, *De Opstand in zwart-wit*, p. 127.

38 Kingdon, *Myths*, p. 20.

reports differing Catholic and Protestant versions can be discerned. And third, that almost all followed Charles's narrative which distinguished between the murder of Coligny and the popular killings.

The first tidings about a massacre in Paris reached Antwerp on 26 August. By 3 September, the news had also spread to Amsterdam. Wouter Jacobsz, former prior of the convent of Stein in the city of Gouda, had fled the wars that plagued his city and had escaped to Amsterdam. Still firmly Catholic, Amsterdam had become an asylum for refugee priests, nuns and lay Catholics from all over Holland. In his diary, Wouter rejoiced over the 'very happy tidings' from Paris. He took them as a sign that God still watched over the faithful.<sup>39</sup> In Brussels, Jan de Pottre's relation of the events followed the official story of Charles's pamphlet. According to him, 'here, it was generally said' that Coligny and the other Huguenot nobles were killed as a precautionary measure to prevent them from attacking the king and his brothers.<sup>40</sup> The diarists from Antwerp were, as usual, best informed. Godevaert van Haecht and the chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke recounted many details, especially concerning the gruesome violence. They also stressed that many foreigners, including Netherlandish emigrants, were amongst the victims of the massacre.<sup>41</sup>

Historians have found it difficult to estimate the number of slaughtered Huguenots. The consensus is that between 2,000–3,000 men and women were killed in Paris, and at least 7,000–8,000 in the provinces. This is partially based on records of money paid to Parisian gravediggers.<sup>42</sup> Contemporary reports that reached the Netherlands confirm these numbers. Plantin's daughter Martine in Antwerp heard from her brother-in-law Gilles in Paris that 2,000 men and women had died. However, on Monday the 26th, when he had finished his letter, the killings had not yet ended.<sup>43</sup> Wouter Jacobsz and Jan de Pottre mentioned that 3,000 persons had died in Paris in the massacre, and Wouter later added another 6,000.<sup>44</sup> The chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke claimed to have heard of 4,000 deaths; Godevaert van Haecht mentioned 5,000–6,000 killings.<sup>45</sup> Hermann Weinsberg in Cologne registered 6,000

39 *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, I. 2.

40 *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 46. This has been noted by Lex van Tilborg, *Alzoo sprack elck*, pp. 68–70.

41 *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 209; 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 138.

42 Jouanna, *La Saint-Barthélemy*, pp. 9–10; Compare for sixteenth-century estimates Crouzet, *La nuit de la Saint-Barthélemy*, pp. 30–32.

43 Langereis, *De Woordenaar*, pp. 289–291.

44 *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, I. 7; *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 46.

45 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 137–138; *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 209.

Huguenot deaths in Paris alone.<sup>46</sup> The Spanish agent in London, Antonio Guaras, wrote a newsletter to the Duke of Alva on 30 August. He described how refugees from Paris had told stories about the killing of more than 8,000 Huguenots.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, refugee centres such as London and Geneva, where soon after the massacre the first traumatized eyewitnesses arrived, abounded with wild rumours. Some claimed that not only Coligny, but also the young Louis de Bourbon, the Prince of Condé and Henry of Navarre had been killed.<sup>48</sup> Few Huguenots fled to the Netherlands. Contemporaries in the Low Countries therefore probably heard more moderate stories from Paris than did the English, Germans, or Swiss. Only in a few cases did the diarists receive news that was completely unfounded. On 13 October 1572, a rumour ran in Antwerp that the King of France had been murdered, but that soon was proved false. The author of the Jan van Wesenbeke-chronicle duly added 'postea falsum' to the entry stating this news. Unfortunately, it is impossible to say when he made this addition.<sup>49</sup>

Elizabeth of England received a full explanation from the French ambassador, who denied that the massacre had anything to do with the matter of religion. The French Huguenot nobles had been executed as rebellious subjects. The Pope, on the other hand, was informed that the French king finally had taken decisive measures against the religious divisions in his kingdom. Paradoxically, Catholic diarists in the Netherlands accepted the story told to appease the Protestant rulers, while the Protestants believed in a premeditated murder of religious dissenters. The Lutheran diarist Godevaert van Haecht thought that the Huguenots were lured to Paris under false pretences to have them all assembled to be slaughtered. The 'birds were now in the net, which had been spread and knitted long before'.<sup>50</sup>

The murder of Coligny seems to have made a stronger impression on Netherlandish contemporaries than the popular killings that followed.

46 *Autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen Hermann Weinsbergs*, 24 August 1572.

47 Antonio de Guaras to the duke of Alva, London, 30 August 1572: 'Pero en este pueblo se ha entendido de gente que viene huyendo de Francia, que ha contescido en Paris un caso como increíble, segun lo se dize, y, si ello es verdad, que an muerto passados de ocho mill Ugnotes, y toda la facion dellos, y al que se nombra Rey de Navarra y al principe de Conde y al Almirante de Francia y a todos los principals congregados para las fiestas del casamiento del de Navarra'. J.M.B.C. Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques des Pays-Bas et de l'Angleterre sous le règne de Philippe II* (11 vols., Brussels: Commission Royale d'Histoire, 1882–1900), VI, pp. 500–502.

48 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, pp. 146–147. Greengrass, *Hidden Transcripts*; Kingdon, *Myths*.

49 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 13 October 1572, 145.

50 'In somma de vogels waeren nou in 't net, dwelcken net men lange gespreyt en gebreydt heeft, soo men na lesen sal'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II, 207.



Catholics in particular were preoccupied with the death of the Protestant nobleman. The nun from 's-Hertogenbosch noted among her chronicle entries of 1573 that 'last year, the Admiral was killed in France during a wedding' while failing to write down anything about the ensuing massacres.<sup>51</sup> Wouter Jacobsz, too, was more fascinated with the murder of 'the Admiral and his adherents' than with the massacre.<sup>52</sup> Jan de Pottre recorded a detailed story about the first murder attempt on Coligny on 22 August and the actual assassination that followed two days later, mentioning the three thousand other killings only briefly.<sup>53</sup> As shown in chapter 2, Coligny had become an important Protestant figurehead during the 1560s, well known to Netherlandish contemporaries. Many simply referred to him as 'the Admiral'.<sup>54</sup> In contrast to the Catholics focusing on Coligny, the Lutheran Godevaert van Haecht devoted a great deal of attention to the larger massacres. He made no distinction between the 'execution' of Coligny and the massacre; they were all part of the same plan to exterminate the Huguenots.<sup>55</sup>

### 1.3 *Copycat Events*

In a seminal article Philip Benedict has shown how news about the massacre in Paris spurred similar incidents in cities throughout France. The news of the events formed the catalyst for the violence, as had been the case with iconoclasm in the Netherlands. Massacres took place in La Charité, Meaux, Bourges, Saumur, Angers, Lyon, Troyes, Rouen, Bordeaux, Toulouse, and Gaillac.<sup>56</sup> Here, too, inconsistent communication caused confusion. Benedict has argued that those Catholics who started the killings thought they did so at the king's command. Charles's first letter to the provincial governors directly after

51 'Int jaer tevoren so is die Ammerael doot geschoten in Vranckrijck in een bruyloft'. *Kroniek eener kloosterzuster*, 45.

52 *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, I. 7.

53 *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 46–48. Pettegree has discerned the same trend among Catholics in Madrid and Rome: 'It is noticeable that the Catholic reaction, in both Madrid and Rome, concentrates almost exclusively on the decapitation of the Huguenot leadership: the scale of the subsequent killings concerned them hardly at all'. Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 149.

54 He figured in a number of Beggars' Songs, and in pamphlets in the 1560s and 70s. See chapter 2.

55 *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 207–211.

56 Benedict, 'Saint-Bartholomew's Massacres', p. 206. For excellent studies of (reactions to) the massacre in various French cities see for example Penny Roberts, *A City in Conflict: Troyes during the French wars of religion* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 142–162; Benedict, *Rouen*, pp. 125–150; Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, pp. 93–106.

St Bartholomew's Day stated that the carnage was an outburst of the vendetta between de Guise and de Coligny. In his second letter of 28 August, he claimed responsibility for having the Protestant nobles killed, but stated that popular violence had broken out against his orders.<sup>57</sup> However, several radical Catholic noblemen acted faster than Charles. They had their own reports quickly sent to the provinces with the order to spread the news that the king wished the annihilation of all Huguenots in the kingdom.<sup>58</sup> In the Netherlands, too, many contemporaries wondered whether the violence in the rest of France was spontaneous or on the government's orders. When the slaying spread through the kingdom, Godevaert van Haecht wrote that 'some said that [the Catholics] had received the order [to do so].'<sup>59</sup>

In the weeks following St Bartholomew's Day, inhabitants of Antwerp feared a similar massacre in their own city. Godevaert van Haecht described how tensions rose in September 1572: on 2 September 1572, inhabitants worried that 'the soldiers and Spaniards and Italians might easily commit a murder like the one in Paris'. He tried to put these fears into perspective: 'in Paris, the citizens have turned on each other, and although the people here, too, were diverse in religion, they trusted that nothing like that would happen, unless it was done by the foreigners'.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, the actions of the Spanish army commander Cristóbal de Mondragón caused concern among the citizens of Antwerp: he had closed the water gates, and his wife had fled the city. On 8 September, fresh anxiety arose when Walloon soldiers entered the city. Citizens feared that they would join forces with the Spanish and Italian merchant nations, 'committing a Parisian murder', or at least forcing all non-Catholics to leave Antwerp. The governor intervened and ordered the Spanish and Italian merchants to disarm.<sup>61</sup>

On 20 September, a new injunction from the city government provoked general alarm. No citizen was to enter the streets at night, whatever noise or alarm they might hear. Citizens again saw this development as an indication that a 'Parisian murder' was afoot and feared that the edict would prevent citizens from coming to each other's rescue. Many stayed awake that night, keeping

57 Benedict, 'Saint-Bartholomew's Massacres', p. 209.

58 Benedict, 'Saint-Bartholomew's Massacres', pp. 214–215.

59 'Ja, so sommige seyden, daer bevel af creghen'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 210.

60 'oock vreesden vele dat tot Antwerpen so doer de soldaten en Spaengiarden en Italianen wel eenige moort als tot Parys lichtelyck soude aengerecht worden. Maer tot Parys hebben 't de borgers malcanderen gedaen; ende hoewel 't volck hier oock diversch in religie waeren, betrouwen wel dat sulcx niet gescieden en soude 't en waer doer vremptdelingen'. *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 212; Cited in and translated by Pollmann, 'Countering the Reformation', p. 83.

61 *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 212–213.

the lights on and guarding their houses, while others stood chatting in front of their houses until after midnight. Van Haecht interpreted this response as a strong signal to the authorities, showing that the citizens of Antwerp remained vigilant.<sup>62</sup> An English newsletter from Flushing on 30 September 1572 even reported that a massacre actually had been committed in Antwerp: 'Here is talk of an other new murder that should have been done in Fraunce and how certain englisshe merchants should be slayne at Rouen. They say also their was the lik practice at Andwerp for the murdering of the protestants as was in Fraunce'.<sup>63</sup> In October, Godevaert van Haecht wrote indignantly how Bishop Franciscus Sonnius of Antwerp dared to preach publicly that the situation in the Netherlands would improve only after the occurrence of a 'similar wedding' in the Netherlands.<sup>64</sup>

The massacre in France remained an important point of reference and a fearsome spectre in the Netherlands for many years.<sup>65</sup> In July 1575, in a letter to Granvelle, Morillon again mentioned fear amongst the inhabitants of Antwerp, who expected 'a massacre, like the one in Paris'.<sup>66</sup> The Jan van Wesenbeke-chronicle, too, recorded in June 1575 how a 'bad rumour persisted strongly among the people [of Antwerp] that the citizens would be murdered as they had been murdered in France'.<sup>67</sup> The arrival of Anjou in the Netherlands in 1581 as lord of the Netherlands again spurred the publication of pamphlets recalling the massacre of 1572.<sup>68</sup> An important point of reference, the events

62 *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 213–214.

63 Avis des Pays-Bas, Flushing, 30 September 1572 in: Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, VI, p. 534.

64 *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, II. 221. Sonnius had become bishop of Antwerp on 1 May 1570. Before that, he had been inquisitor and bishop of Den Bosch. L.J. Rogier describes him as 'tactful and moderate'. L.J. Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en 17e eeuw* (Amsterdam: Urbi et Orbi, 1964), I, p. 175, p. 180; II, pp. 272–278, pp. 298–300. Judith Pollmann has posed the question why popular Catholic violence on the scale of the St Bartholomew Day's Massacre has never occurred in the Netherlands. She points to the role and behaviour of the Netherlandish clergy. Pollmann, 'Countering the Reformation'. Compare Benjamin Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 1–7.

65 For references to the massacre in Netherlandish pamphlets see Geurts, *Nederlandse Opstand in pamfletten*, pp. 174–175.

66 Morillon to Granvelle, Brussels, 3 July 1575. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, v, p. 328.

67 'Heeft hier onder tvolck eenen quaden roep zeer sterck gegaen als dat men de borgers zoude vermoorden gelijk in Vranckrijck geschiet was'. *Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke*, end of June 1575, 225.

68 Geurts, *Nederlandse Opstand in pamfletten*, p. 223.

of St Bartholomew's Day were again often used in the seventeenth century as a warning against the 'untrustworthiness' of the French.<sup>69</sup>

## 2 Part 2. Credibility and Verification

Louis of Nassau and his men in Mons wanted trustworthy men—Protestant preachers—to confirm the news about the massacre. Throughout the 1560s, inhabitants of France and the Netherlands had become familiar with propaganda, having learned to deal with misinformation being used as a weapon in the wars. Their diaries show an impressive degree of media-savviness: they would check facts elaborately, muse over rumours, and compare sources. Chroniclers demonstrated a determination to find out what had really happened and record in their diaries only those reports that were found to be true.<sup>70</sup> Henk van Nierop has analysed the way Wouter Jacobsz, Godevaert van Haecht and Marcus van Vaernewijck dealt with oral news and rumours. He has shown the intricate ways they developed to check reports they received daily. Over in France, chroniclers displayed very similar methods, except that some of them living in remote regions had fewer sources at their disposal than did their colleagues in commercial urban centres. The Huguenot chronicler Faurin in Castres, for example, or the anonymous Calvinist chronicler in Millau had fewer opportunities to compare reports. They received their news from a single (Protestant) source and simply recorded the reports as they had heard them. Chroniclers in a big city such as Paris, however, used the same techniques of checking facts as did their colleagues in Antwerp, Ghent or Brussels.

How did a diarist living in a city buzzing with rumours acquire certain information? Chroniclers distinguished various rankings in trustworthiness.

69 Particularly in the debates surrounding the Peace of Munster pamphlets recalled to memory the horrors of St Bartholomew's Day Massacre. In the mid-1640s, more than 150 pamphlets were published that again discussed the causes of the massacre. One opponent of peace with France wrote: 'let the massacre of France speak for itself, where, under the pretext of friendship, 60,000 people were killed during one night'. 'Laet de *Massacre van Vranckrijck* spreken, waer onder pretext van vrientschap, op eene nacht 60. duysent menschen omgebracht wierden ...' Theophilus Philopatri, *Anatomie ofte ontledinghe van 't verderffelijck deseijn der hedendaechse paepsghesinde ...* (Groningen: Jan Geertssen, 1644), USTC 1026032. While sixteenth-century contemporaries had stuck to figures of 2,000 to 8,000, in seventeenth-century memory the number of victims rose to tens of thousands. H. Duits, *Van Bartholomeusnacht tot Bataafse Opstand: Studies over de relatie tussen politiek en toneel in het midden van de zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1990), pp. 43–50.

70 Van Nierop, 'And Ye Shall Hear', p. 86: 'They therefore assiduously dedicated themselves to the task of processing the daily stream of rumours into solid, trustworthy history'.

Several among them were legally trained and had consequently learned to deal with contradictory testimonies in court. Contemporary books on law stressed the importance of numbers in certifying the truth: the more reliable (male) witnesses the better. A famous lawbook that was published and reissued many times both in the Netherlands and France by Joos de Damhouder stated regarding the number of witnesses: 'some say ten reliable men, others say 20 or 25'. They had to be able to mention the names of their sources and found their testimonies on a solid basis.<sup>71</sup> Let us consider news reports about, for instance, a siege of a faraway city—a very common situation in those years in both France and the Netherlands. How did chroniclers verify which news was true?

### 2.1 Correspondence

Official correspondence, such as letters from a stadtholder to the king, or from a general to the city magistrates, was considered the most trustworthy source available. Not only did high officials maintain wide international correspondence networks, they were also often the first to be officially notified when a major event had taken place.<sup>72</sup> When on 20 March 1569 news about the death of Condé during the Battle of Jarnac (13 March 1569) reached Antwerp, Provost Morillon found it hard to believe, as seven days later no official reports had yet arrived. As he wrote to his patron Cardinal Granvelle: 'A merchant has arrived in Antwerp, who has left Paris on the 18th and claims that the Prince of Condé has been killed in battle ..., but I do not believe a word of it, because this supposedly has happened on the 13th, and up till now the French ambassador, who is here, has not received any reports on the matter'.<sup>73</sup> The arrival of news-letters in a town usually caused a great stir by itself and constituted an event that was important enough to write down in a chronicle.<sup>74</sup> Wouter Jacobsz first heard the news about the St Bartholomew's Massacre when, as he wrote, 'it was said that the stadtholder almost certainly has received a letter that says how

71 Joos de Damhouder, *Practycke ende handbouck in criminele zaeken* (Leuven: Stephanus Gualtherus & Joannes Bathenius, 1555), USTC 400942; idem, *Practique judiciaire es causes criminelles* (Paris: Benoît Prévost chez Guillaume Cavellat, 1555), USTC 79770. *Practycke ende handbouck*, 10–11 (USTC 400942). They have to be able to mention the names of their sources and found their testimonies on a solid basis.

72 Van Nierop, 'And Ye Shall Hear', pp. 74–76.

73 Morillon to Granvelle, Brussels, 20 and 21 March 1569. 'Il est venu ung marchand en Anvers, que partit le xviii<sup>e</sup> de Paris, et dict que le prince de Condé seroit esté tué en une bataille, que d'Andelot se seroit saulvé sur ung chasteau et l'admiral en quelque vilette; mais je n'en croy rien pour ce qu'il seroit advenu le XIII<sup>e</sup>, et que jusques ores l'ambassadeur de France, qui est icy, n'en at nouvelles'. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, 111, pp. 521–522.

74 Van Nierop, 'And Ye Shall Hear', pp. 79–81; Deen, *Publiek debat*, p. 145.

the Admiral in France was killed by the King'.<sup>75</sup> The stadtholder, Maximilien de Hénin-Liétard, Count of Bossu, had indeed received a letter from Alva, who had written on August 29, almost immediately after he had heard the news himself.<sup>76</sup>

Some chroniclers ranked among the important city officials themselves and were allowed to see the official letters. Marcus van Vaernewijck often recorded that he had seen a letter with his own eyes. If not that highly placed, it helped to live close to important officials in order to stay abreast of the latest news. After a courier had arrived with a message for an important official, the content was often quickly passed on in the corridors of the court and duly went out on the streets. The intended successor of Alva, the Duke of Medinaceli, stayed in Den Bosch for a few months in 1572–1573. During that time the diary-keeping nun was well-informed about the siege of Haarlem, often reporting tidings that 'Duck Medien' had received.<sup>77</sup> Official letters frequently had been perused by others before reaching their intended recipient. Couriers played a central role, sometimes divulging the message they had to convey, or passing on news they had picked up on the way. Chronicler Michel le Riche in Saint-Maixent recorded how news had arrived from Poitiers indicating that a courier heading for Spain had conveyed the latest news about troops in Germany.<sup>78</sup> In Amsterdam, a courier carrying letters for the burgomasters in 1573 revealed their content to several others.<sup>79</sup>

Right below official letters came letters written by eyewitnesses of the event. These were preferably family members, or the family members of neighbours and friends. Amidst the chaos of battles, sieges, and marauding bands of soldiers, many contemporaries managed to maintain correspondence with friends and relatives all over the country and abroad. Wouter Jacobsz mentioned sending letters to a relative in Gouda; Carolus Clusius and Justus Lipsius received letters from fellow scholars in France and the Empire; Plantin kept corresponding regularly with his relations in Paris.<sup>80</sup> These correspondents usually included

75 'Op denselfden morghen werden geseyt dat die stadthouder voerseker scriven hadde ontfangen hoe die ammerael in Vrancrijk van den coninck aldaer vermoort was met wel drieduysent van sijn anhangers'. *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, 1. 2.

76 Alva to Bossu, 29 August 1572. Buchanan, 'Massacre of St Bartholomew's', p. 118.

77 *Kroniek eener kloosterzuster*, 41–43; Compare for instance La Fosse, *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 84: 'En ung mercredy 4 de may fut apportées nouvelles à monsr le duc en ceste ville de Paris que monsr de Brissac avoit esté tué d'ung coup d'arquebuzé devant Mussedan'.

78 Armand-Désiré de La Fontenelle de Vaudoré (ed.), *Journal de Guillaume et de Michel le Riche, avocats du roi à Saint Maixent (de 1534 à 1586)* (Saint-Maixent: Reversé, 1846. Reprint Geneva: Slatkine, 1971), 249.

79 Deen, *Publiek debat*, p. 140.

80 *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, 1. 5; Or see for instance Hubertus Languetus to Carolus Clusius, 12 October 1569, for comments on the political situation in France. See for

the latest news. Contemporaries liberally shared the news they received with friends and neighbours: until well into the nineteenth century, the reading of letters was a social event.<sup>81</sup> Michel le Riche frequently writes how acquaintances came by to show him letters. The son of one of them, a Monsieur de Vaire, stayed at the army camp of the Prince of Condé in St-Jean d'Angely and sent first-hand reports about the wars.<sup>82</sup> The brother of Hermann Weinsberg was present at the siege of Mons and wrote about the progress of the war and the exploits of William of Orange to his family in Cologne.<sup>83</sup> Marcus van Vaernewijck at some point complained about being unable to verify a rumour because he had 'no access to the services of a trusted friend or relative (*famili-aer*) or a secretary who could inform him about current events'.<sup>84</sup>

## 2.2 Eyewitnesses

Chroniclers often report the arrival of travellers in their town, who claimed to have been present at a siege or to have talked to people who had been. In these cases, the social status of the messenger contributed to the trustworthiness of a report. French chroniclers in particular often recorded that noblemen arrived in their city to share news about a battle. Generals would indeed send highly placed nobles to report a victory or defeat, to lend style to their news report. Chroniclers also described how local noblemen having participated in a fight returned to their hometown with their retinue, regaling their community with tales about the battle.<sup>85</sup> Were nobles deemed more trustworthy in general? In the case of Elizabethan England, David Randall has stated that gentlemen were considered to be more credible than commoners because their honour as a gentleman was at stake if they lied.<sup>86</sup> It is small wonder that chronicles in the urbanized Low Countries mention considerably fewer noble news messengers than did their French colleagues. Instead, Netherlandish chroniclers

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Clusius' letters the Leiden database: <http://www.library.leiden.edu/special-collections/scaliger-institute/projects/clusius-project.html>. I would like to thank Dirk van Miert for his help.

81 Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, pp. 107–108; Van Nierop, 'And Ye Shall Hear', p. 79.

82 For instance *Journal de Guillaume et de Michel le Riche*, 275.

83 'Min swager Conrat Eck ist allet heirbei an und uber gewest, auch noit sins leibs erlitten, doch darvon neulich komen, und hat den prinschischn provant und foeterong gemangelt, derhalb das sei entlich den wick zuruck moisten nemen'. *Autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen Hermann Weinsbergs*, 1 September 1572.

84 *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, II. 43–44, cited in Van Nierop, 'And Ye Shall Hear', p. 75.

85 For instance *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV. 427. Letters also often mention that the messenger has an oral message in addition to the written news letter. See for instance Duplessis-Mornay to Marnix, 14 February 1583: 'Monsieur Calvart vous dira au reste de nos nouvelles'. Gerlo and De Smet, *Marnixi Epistulae*, IV, p. 157.

86 Randall, *Credibility*, p. 49, pp. 97–98.

referred to merchants, wandering preachers or soldiers arriving with news. In the process of assessing the truth of a report, much depended upon the background of the chronicler himself: clergymen, for example, were generally more disposed to believe the reports of fellow clergymen.<sup>87</sup>

When no official or personal letters were available, one could always assess the veracity of oral news using other ways. An approved method involved simply waiting to see how long a rumour would persist. The longer it circulated, the higher the chance of the report being true. Sometimes tidings arrived in rapid succession. Early in the morning of 3 September 1572 Wouter Jacobsz heard a report about the definite capture of Mons by the Spanish troops that was already contested in the afternoon.<sup>88</sup> Another approach involved comparing oral sources to see if they would corroborate one another's story.<sup>89</sup> Diarists frequently complained about the uncertainty of these rumours. Claude Haton grumbled about 'fast spreading tidings that seem to persons of a sound mind to be fables or tales of women when they go see their godmother'.<sup>90</sup> As members of the (urban) elites, many chroniclers often commented disdainfully on rumours that circulated among the 'common folk'—suggesting that they were above such ordinary gossip.<sup>91</sup> Yet these chroniclers, too, sometimes succumbed to recording uncertain reports that circulated in a town, simply because they wished them to be true.<sup>92</sup> Again, it was easier to be a critical news consumer when one lived in Antwerp than if one were an inhabitant of a small town in the Poitou or Pyrénées. Diarists in remote regions apparently were content when they received any report at all: their chronicles demonstrate far less reflection on the reliability of news.

87 Wouter Jacobsz often refers to other clergymen as dependable sources. *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, passim.

88 'Op den derden van dese selfde maent [September] ontvingen wij smorgens vouch tijdinck van / Berghen in Henegouwen dattet sekerlick in soude sijn, maer began nae die middach al wat te falgieren'. *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, I, 2.

89 See for example *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, I, 18–19.

90 'Et encore aultres nouvelles volantes qui sembloient aux gens de bon esperit estre fables ou contes de femmes quant elles vont veoir leur commere'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, III, 196.

91 See for example: 'de maere hadde langhe gheloopen, onder tghemeene volck ...'. Anonymous cleric, 'Vlaamsche Kronyk', in C. Piot (ed.), *Chroniques de Brabant et de Flandre* (Brussels: Hayez, 1879), pp. 173–876 (713).

92 See also on early modern fact-checking: Rosanne M. Baars, 'Constantinople Confidential: News and Information in the Diary of Jean-Louis Rigo (c.1686–1756), Secretary of the Dutch Embassy in Istanbul', *Lias. Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and its Sources*, 41:2 (2014), pp. 143–171 (168–170).



### 2.3 *News Pamphlets*

Especially during the first decades of the wars, news pamphlets did not play such a prominent role in contemporaries' daily media consumption as historians have frequently assumed. Chronicles from the 1560s and 1570s abound with oral reports and letters, yet they mention very few pamphlets. This changed from the late 1570s onwards when chroniclers began to display a more varied media intake and started to mention the occasional pamphlet. These years also saw the emergence of some highly committed information gatherers such as Pierre de L'Estoile or Hermann Weinsberg. From their diaries we perceive how, after receiving the first oral reports, chroniclers used pamphlets to become familiar with the background of an event, learn the reasons for a certain act, or, in a dispute, acquaint themselves with the arguments of the other side. Many pamphlets commenting on current events, such as the French king's *Discourse*, assumed that the reader was already familiar with the particulars. News pamphlets might even appear several years later. As we have seen in chapter 2, the Lyon printer Benoit Rigaud published a broadsheet on the execution of the counts of Egmont and Hornes in 1570—a full two years after the fact. In the case of Pierre de L'Estoile, Tom Hamilton has offered yet another intriguing reason for collecting pamphlets: archiving print material for posterity.<sup>93</sup>

Some historians have argued that print established the last phase in the process of news verification. They claimed that news pamphlets hastened the closure of rumours. As Brendan Dooley puts it: 'Printed information seemed to fix the unfixable, to render permanent the ephemeral, ... seeing a lie in print was not the same as hearing it from someone else or seeing it in a manuscript newsletter'.<sup>94</sup> Yet sixteenth-century media consumers soon proved as critical of printed material as they were of other news sources. They did distinguish, however, between common (polemical) pamphlets and official edicts, issued by a magistrate or king, and signed officially. The publication of an edict constituted an important event, as edicts were proclaimed on town squares and

93 Hamilton, 'Recording the Wars of Religion'.

94 Brendan Dooley, 'Veritas Filia Temporis: Experience and Belief in Early Modern Culture', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 60:3 (1999), pp. 487–504 (495). Craig Harline has argued that 'printed information and commentary provided uncorrupted facts and arguments; somehow print was more reliable and truthful than spoken opinions or rumor and therefore more persuasive'. He adds, however: 'This is not to say that people believed everything they read'. Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture*, p. 12. Frances Dolan has called these assumptions into question, stating: '... it might be argued that print has never achieved "fixity". That places an onus on the reader, who must decide whether a relation is true for him- or herself'. Frances E. Dolan, *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), p. 7.

crossroads, heralded by a blast of trumpets. Chroniclers deemed local and foreign edicts of considerable value. Almost all of them copied parts of acts or even whole edicts into their chronicle: sometimes they used dozens of pages to write down the articles of some edict issued by a foreign prince.<sup>95</sup> Men of the law, as many of them were, they must have attributed great importance to recording official documents for posterity.

#### 2.4 Celebrations

News could remain uncertain for weeks, sometimes months. It is fascinating to see how even key information masters of the period such as Cardinal Granvelle or Elizabeth's 'spymaster' Francis Walsingham would spend long periods groping in the dark. Their letters often show frustration about receiving contradictory reports from their many correspondents. When did sixteenth-century people experience closure—the feeling that they had finally found out what had really happened? Chroniclers in the 1560s and 1570s in both France and the Netherlands stress the importance of thanksgiving ceremonies for the establishment of the veracity of an event. When on 29 September 1572, after weeks of uncertain rumours, a lackey arrived in Amsterdam with the final news of the surrender of Mons to Alva, this news was 'validated', as Wouter Jacobsz termed it, through the ringing of church bells all over Amsterdam, processions, and the singing of *Te Deum Laudamus* during High Mass.<sup>96</sup> While celebrations in Rome of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre provoked indignation among Protestants, the fact that the authorities took the trouble to organize elaborate festivities served as confirmation that the news was true. After the Protestant defeat at the Battle of Jarnac on 13 March 1569, reports of bonfires and the ringing of bells in the Champagne also served as proof of the veracity of the news.<sup>97</sup> Protestant areas would establish the equivalent of the Catholic thanksgiving masses in declaring a common day of prayer.

95 There are numerous examples. See for instance the chronicle of the Ommelander farmer Abel Eppens tho Ecquart who in the summer of 1585 copied the entire Treaty of Nonsuch in his diary. J.A. Feith and H. Brugmans (ed.), *De kroniek van Abel Eppens tho Ecquart* (2 vols., Amsterdam: Müller, 1911), II. 204.

96 'Den negen ende twintichste, welck was dach van sinte Michiel, quam des grave lakay met seker missive van den hartoch dat waerachtelick Berghen in was. Ende is oeck op desen dach dese tijding in waerden genomen, want men luyden met alle die clocken in Amstelredam, men vierde, men droech processie. Ende wij regulieren songhen met malcander die hoochmisse, sonder die susteren yet te singhen. Te Deum laudamus songhen wij oeck feestelick'. *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, I. 19; See also Van Nierop, 'And Ye Shall Hear', pp. 75–76.

97 Béatrice Nicollier, "Certains brodent, inventent des combats, des sièges de villes, des morts des hommes illustres ...": information de guerre en Allemagne pendant la seconde

Thanksgiving ceremonies were truly international affairs and constituted important international news. Chroniclers often recorded prayer days and festivities taking place abroad. In the first half of the century, the whole of Western Europe had repeatedly celebrated Christian victories over the Turks. From the 1560s onwards, celebrations increasingly split along confessional lines. As Andrew Pettegree has pointed out, the victory of the allied Catholic forces over the Ottoman fleet at Lepanto in 1571 constituted the last pan-European celebration, as the Wars of Religion ended this European spirit forever.<sup>98</sup> While the Duke of Alva in Brussels triumphantly celebrated French Catholic victories, Calvinists in France would pray for international Protestant successes. Yet these celebrations did not always stem from international religious loyalties. Godevaert van Haecht recorded how various cities in Zeeland celebrated the Peace of la Rochelle of 1573, which was in fact a peace on rather unfavourable terms for the Huguenots, as many of the privileges granted to them earlier were withdrawn.<sup>99</sup> The celebration in Zeeland thus must have been organized more out of self-interest—that their most important trading partner was no longer under siege—than from a spirit of transnational Protestantism.

As the case of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre and many other news events demonstrate, chroniclers did not only write down the content of foreign news reports; they also extensively recorded their troubles and worries in their search for reliable facts. Remarkably, even if they edited or copied their notes years later, they often included reports that had proved to be untrue. In those cases, they added remarks such as 'idque falso', 'postem falsem' or simply 'this proved to be a lie' to the news report.<sup>100</sup> Pierre de L'Estoile, modifying his journals in retrospect, distinguished between *bruits* and *nouvelles*—rumour and news. Recordings of events that had turned out to be true he called *nouvelles*, while those that had proved false he called *bruits*.<sup>101</sup> Thus, it appears that the fact that chroniclers had once believed this news to be true, even for a short time, was also important to record for posterity.

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et la troisième guerre de Religion', in Jérémie Foa and Paul-Alexis Mellet (eds.), *Le bruit des armes: mises en formes et désinformations en Europe pendant les guerres de religion (1560–1610)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2012), pp. 383–395 (388–389).

98 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, pp. 143–144.

99 *Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht*, 1. 260.

100 This is something many chroniclers did. See for example the Groningen chronicler Egbert Altling: 'Saterdach 26 Augusti 1589. Dat der coningk Henri de Vallois den 1 huius doerschoten. Item dat de coninginne van Engeland gestorven. Falso'. W.J. Formsma and R. van Roijen (ed.), *Diarium van Egbert Altling, 1553–1594* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964), 770.

101 Greengrass, 'Outspoken Opinions', pp. 59–60.



## Peace Negotiations, 1576–1579

During the Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt, events in the two countries often mirrored one another. As we have seen, both countries had experienced iconoclasm in the 1560s and witnessed the rise of rebel Protestant noblemen, while the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in France had aroused fear among inhabitants in the Netherlands that they would suffer a similar fate. In the late 1570s, the political situations in France and the Netherlands again showed remarkable parallels, as the two war-weary countries made serious efforts to pacify the religious troubles, with local authorities testing various peace settlements.<sup>1</sup> Yet the attempts at biconfessional arrangements failed dramatically. France saw the rise of militant Catholicism, united in the Catholic League. In the Netherlands, the arrival of Governor-general Alexander Farnese caused a split between those provinces that decided to continue the war and the (Walloon) provinces that reconciled with Farnese and Philip II. In both countries, around 1580, 'the role of the moderates came to an end'.<sup>2</sup>

The obvious similarities between the political events in the later 1570s raise questions about the interest the French and Dutch had in their mutual situations. Netherlandish chroniclers did indeed display curiosity about news concerning peace in France. And historians have noted the large number of pamphlets on Netherlandish peace negotiations that were published in France in 1576 and 1577.<sup>3</sup> A number of recent publications have addressed the making of peace during the French Wars of Religion.<sup>4</sup> Mark Greengrass has explored theories of concord and its moral implications among the French elites, while Penny Roberts and Jérémie Foa have studied the often difficult practice of enforcing the edicts in the provinces.<sup>5</sup> For the Netherlands, Violet Soen has

1 According to Henk van Nierop, the text of the Pacification of Ghent resembled that of the Pacification of Saint-Germain of 1570. Van Nierop, 'Similar Problems', p. 48. See also Thomas Nicklas, 'À la recherche de la paix et de la patrie: Les pacifications religieuses en France et aux Pays-Bas 1575–1576', in Yves Krumenacker (ed.), *Entre Calvinistes et Catholiques: Les relations religieuses entre la France et les Pays-Bas du Nord (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010), pp. 45–58. Compare Van Gelder, 'Een historische vergelijking', pp. 33–34.

2 Van Nierop, 'Similar Problems', pp. 50–51; Woltjer, 'Violence during the Wars of Religion'.

3 Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands', pp. 331–332.

4 See for a recent overview: Allan A. Tulchin, 'AHR Roundtable: Ending the French Wars of Religion', *American Historical Review*, 120:5 (December, 2015), pp. 1696–1708.

5 Greengrass, *Governing Passions*; Penny Roberts, 'Religious Pluralism in Practice: The Enforcement of the Edicts of Pacification', in Keith Cameron, Mark Greengrass, and Penny

explored the unsuccessful peace attempts made by the Netherlandish nobility during the first decades of the Dutch Revolt.<sup>6</sup> Andrew Pettegree has suggested that contemporaries saw their own problems reflected in the neighbouring country: 'Here, interest in this unusual experiment in religious conciliation spread across confessional lines.... The spirit in which these events were interpreted depended very much on the current local context. At the time of the Pacification of Ghent French elites were themselves giving earnest attention to issues of peacemaking and reconciliation'.<sup>7</sup> Was this an occasion for an increase in the recording of news from across the border among French and Netherlandish chroniclers? And why was there a sudden surge of French news pamphlets about the situation in the Netherlands at the end of the 1570s? This chapter seeks to answer these questions by exploring the interest in news about peace negotiations and comparing it to the production of pamphlets, and the degree to which the public read and digested them.

## 1 Peace Attempts in France and the Netherlands

Holland, Zeeland, rejoice.  
Rejoice in these times,  
Worship the Lord of Lords,  
May he give us his Peace at once,  
May we live in concord.

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Roberts (eds.), *The Adventure of Religious Pluralism in Early Modern France* (Oxford etc.: Peter Lang, 2000), pp. 31–43; Penny Roberts, *Peace and Authority during the French Religious Wars, c.1560–1600* (Basingstoke: Hampshire England, 2013); Penny Roberts, 'Peace, Ritual, and Sexual Violence during the Religious Wars', *Past and Present Supplement*, 7 (2012), pp. 75–99; Jérémie Foa, 'Making Peace: The Commissions for Enforcing the Pacification Edicts in the Reign of Charles IX (1560–1574)', *French History*, 18:3 (2004), pp. 256–274; Jérémie Foa, *Le tombeau de la paix: une histoire des édits de pacification 1560–1572* (Limoges: Presses Universitaires de Limoges, 2015); De Waele, *Réconcilier les Français*.

- 6 Violet Soen, *Vredehandel: Adellijke en Habsburgse verzoeningspogingen tijdens de Nederlandse Opstand* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012); Violet Soen, 'Een vredesgezant worstelt met de Pacificatie van Gent: de vreemde wendingen van de vredesmissie in de Nederlanden van Jan van Noircarmes, baron van Selles (1577–1580)', *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d'Histoire*, 171 (2005), pp. 135–192. See also the essays of sixteenth-century political thinkers such as Etienne Pasquier and Justus Lipsius on war and peace, who often used examples from both France and the Netherlands; Waszink, 'Virtuous Deception'; James Hutton, 'Erasmus and France: The Propaganda for Peace', *Studies in the Renaissance*, 8 (1961), pp. 103–127; Thickett, *Lettres historiques*, pp. 223–243.
- 7 Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands', pp. 331–332.

But not as in France, so be sensible,  
 Where they have shed the Christian's blood,  
 And have broken their oath:  
 They were like lions and mad bears,  
 But vengeance will come.

*Beggars' Song, probably written at the beginning of the peace talks of Breda,  
 March 1575*<sup>8</sup>

In the middle of the 1570s, chroniclers in both France and the Netherlands displayed their desire for concord after years of almost continuous fighting. The record-keeping nun in Den Bosch noted how 'every day we hoped peace had arrived. Rumour went among the common folk and some said: there will be peace before Shrove Tuesday'.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, as the Beggars' Song above suggests, radical Protestants strongly opposed religious peace and compromise.<sup>10</sup>

The St Bartholomew's Day Massacre had sparked the outbreak of a new religious war in France. It had delivered a severe blow to the Calvinist movement, but there remained a considerable force of Huguenots, especially in the South. After almost a year of fighting, the Peace of La Rochelle ended the Fourth War of Religion in 1573. The young king Charles IX died in May 1574 and was succeeded by his younger brother Henry III. The year 1575 saw various peace conferences, among them a great assembly at Nîmes, where Protestants and Catholics met but failed to reach an agreement.<sup>11</sup> Many Frenchmen increasingly called for the convocation of the Estates-General as a solution to the religious troubles. In September 1575, the Duke of Alençon (later called Anjou), Henry's younger brother, complicated matters for the king after he fled the court and joined the rebellious Protestant nobles Navarre, Condé and the Catholic Damville in the South. A fifth civil war erupted. The large Protestant military presence, aided

8 'Hollant Zeelant weest nu verblijft. / Verheucht u nu in desen tijt, / Aenbidt den Heer der Heeren, / Dat hy ons wil gheven sijnen Pays subijt, / Dat wy eendrachtich moghen leven. / Maer niet ghelijck in Vrancrijk, zijt dies wel vroet, / Daer sy hebben vergoten het Christen bloet, / En haren Eedt hebben ghebroken: / Sy waren als Leewen en Beeren verwoet, / Maer het sal noch werden gewroken'. Kuiper, *Geuzenliedboek*, 1, p. 244, nr. 106.

9 'Want wy aen genen vrede en consten geraken. Nochtans hoepten wy alle dage, dat sijn soude, soe ginck die spraek onder tvolck. Die sommyge seden: 'noch ver Vastelavent salt peys sijn'. *Kroniek eener kloosterzuster*, 59.

10 As did many radical Catholics: see Marc Venard, 'Catholicism and Resistance to the Reformation in France, 1555–1585', in Philip Benedict, *et al.* (eds), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555–1585* (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 1999), pp. 133–148.

11 Nicklas, 'À la recherche de la paix', pp. 45–58; Sutherland, *Huguenot Struggle*, pp. 222–224.

by German mercenaries under Count John Casimir of the Palatinate, forced Henry III to a new peace treaty in May 1576. The edict of Beaulieu, or Peace of Monsieur, was widely regarded as favourable to the Huguenots; as a consequence, many Catholics refused to accept it.<sup>12</sup>

At the end of 1576, the Estates-General gathered at Blois to discuss the troubles that plagued France. While the Third Estate pleaded for peace, most members of the First and Second Estates recommended religious unity in the realm and war as the means to achieve it. The crown's financial resources to resume the war were limited though, and few were willing to support the imposition of new taxes.<sup>13</sup> The emergence of a militant Catholic League in this period frustrated royal leadership, too. In an attempt to neutralize the movement, Henry III made himself head of the League. The king thus began a new war against the Huguenots in the South, and Catholic armies succeeded in conquering various cities. Exhaustion on both sides led to a new peace in Bergerac in September 1577. Its conditions were less advantageous for the Protestants than the Peace of Monsieur had been, but the Huguenots still achieved considerable concessions, such as places where they would enjoy freedom of worship.<sup>14</sup>

In the Netherlands, fighting between the rebels and royal troops had continued since 1572. In 1574 Philip sent more funds to the Netherlands than ever before, and yet the royal government failed to crush the rebel forces. In March 1575 peace talks began in Breda. Among other things, the participants discussed the matters of religious toleration. Philip refused to grant concessions to non-Catholics to practise their religion, and the negotiations stalled. Tensions mounted as many closely followed the news about the siege of Zierikzee, on the strategically important island of Schouwen, the last city in Zeeland that remained loyal to the Prince of Orange.<sup>15</sup> In September 1575, Philip II issued a decree of bankruptcy, and in March 1576, governor-general Requesens died. The sudden twin disasters of financial crisis and lack of leadership created a power vacuum. The Council of State decided provisionally to take over the government of the Netherlands. Following the capture of Zierikzee by the Spaniards, unpaid mutineers marched into Brabant and sacked the city of Aalst near Brussels. This prompted the Council of State to

12 Mark Greengrass, 'Pluralism and Equality: The Peace of Monsieur, May 1576', in Keith Cameron, Mark Greengrass, and Penny Roberts (eds.), *The Adventure of Religious Pluralism in Early Modern France* (Oxford etc.: Peter Lang, 2000), pp. 45–63.

13 Mack P. Holt, 'Attitudes of the French Nobility at the Estates-General of 1576', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 18:4 (1987), pp. 489–504.

14 Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, pp. 99–118; Sutherland, *Huguenot Struggle*, pp. 211–282.

15 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 168.



declare the mutineers outlaws. On 4 September 1576, the States General overthrew the Council of State in a coup.

Both William of Orange and the States General envisioned a major role for France, and the States sent letters to Henry III and his brother soliciting advice and assistance. While the States were debating peace, Spanish mutineers, unpaid for months, sacked Antwerp on 4, 5, and 6 November 1576. This event accelerated the conclusion of the so-called 'Pacification of Ghent' between the rebellious provinces of Holland and Zeeland and the other (loyal) provinces. It was foremost a solution to get rid of the Spanish soldiers, just as the threat of the plundering soldiers of John Casimir had hastened the establishment of peace in France in 1576.<sup>16</sup>

In the meantime, Requesens's successor Don Juan of Austria had arrived in the Netherlands. After the sack of Antwerp, he found himself in a difficult position, as the mutiny of 'his soldiers' had greatly damaged the reputation of the government. In February 1577, he signed a Perpetual Edict, which recognized the Pacification of Ghent. The States of Holland and Zeeland and William of Orange, however, opposed the agreement. In July 1577, Don Juan violated the terms of the Eternal Edict by taking the citadel of the city of Namur. Early in 1578 he won an important victory at Gembloux. A final attempt at peace at a large conference in Cologne in 1579 came to nothing.<sup>17</sup>

## 2 Parallels and Differences

Historians have long noticed the parallels between peace negotiations in France and the Netherlands, but differences between the two countries existed as well. In France, the Third Estate traditionally clamoured for peace, while many nobles and members of the clergy advocated continuation of the wars. Their opposing views became particularly clear at the Estates-General meeting at Blois in 1576.<sup>18</sup> Arlette Jouanna has stressed the importance of the French ideal of the warrior king, which spurred Henry III to follow his father Henry II and his grandfather Francis I in leading his men into battle; a noble ideal that favoured war over peace.<sup>19</sup> Historians of the Netherlands, notably Violet Soen,

16 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 169–184; Anton van der Lem, *De Opstand in de Nederlanden, 1568–1648: De Tachtigjarige Oorlog in woord en beeld* (Nijmegen: Uitgeverij Vantilt, 2014), pp. 99–120.

17 Soen, *Vredehandel*, pp. 97–146.

18 Holt, 'Attitudes of the French Nobility', pp. 489–504.

19 Arlette Jouanna, 'Idéologies de la guerre et idéologies de la paix en France dans la seconde moitié du xvi<sup>e</sup> siècle', in Myriam Yardeni (ed.), *Idéologie et propagande en France: colloque*

have shown how the Netherlandish nobility, in contrast, made serious efforts to arrange peace between Philip II and the rebellious provinces.<sup>20</sup> Another dissimilarity concerned the implementation of religious toleration. Article four of the Pacification of Ghent stated that Protestantism was to be the official religion in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, but that Catholics would have freedom of worship as well.<sup>21</sup> Yet the authors of the pacification did not address the matter in detail, and it was decided to postpone the question of religion to the next meeting of the States General.<sup>22</sup> In France, the peace edicts forced every province, and even each village, to make detailed arrangements about places of worship for Huguenots.<sup>23</sup>

The experiences of war and peace differed little for the common man or woman, however. Penny Roberts has downplayed the importance of the peace edicts, arguing that 'there was little distinction for much of the population of France between periods of open conflict and supposed peace'.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, chronicles show that inhabitants in both France and the Netherlands associated peace chiefly with the absence of soldiers in their area. Jan de Pottre rejoiced over the proclamation of peace in 1577, since it meant that the soldiers, the 'Spanish tyrants', would finally leave the country.<sup>25</sup> Jean Pussot, a fiercely committed Catholic master carpenter in Reims, lived through years of turbulent civil wars in the 1570s, while laconically noting in his diary 'this year, the country was peaceful' for several years.<sup>26</sup> He did not care about the massacres and battles that went on in the rest of France, but referred only to the

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*organisé par l'Institut d'Histoire et de Civilisation Française de l'Université de Haïfa* (Paris: Picard, 1987), pp. 87–98. Holt has nuanced this assumption, stressing that some members of the nobility in France, too, made efforts to make peace. Holt, 'Attitudes of the French Nobility', pp. 489–504.

20 Soen, *Vredehandel*.

21 For the text of the Pacification see: [http://www.dutchrevolt.leiden.edu/dutch/bronnen/Pages/1576\\_11\\_08\\_ned.aspx](http://www.dutchrevolt.leiden.edu/dutch/bronnen/Pages/1576_11_08_ned.aspx).

22 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 177.

23 Roberts, *Peace and Authority*; Foa, 'Making Peace'. In the Netherlands, too, cities made arrangements to deal with religious toleration. This, however, was not as in France enforced by the government but happened mostly on the cities' own initiative. Van Gelderen, *Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt*, pp. 46–47; Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, p. 45.

24 Penny Roberts, 'The Languages of Peace during the French Religious Wars', *Cultural and Social History*, 4:3 (2007), pp. 297–315 (306).

25 *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 72.

26 See for example: 'Tousjours, ce pays fut paicable' (in 1571); 'ceste année paicable en ce pays' (in 1572), or 'in 1577 ce pays estoit bien payable et exempt de gendarmerie'. *Journalier de Jean Pussot*, 82–87.

absence of soldiers in his own vicinity. The horror of the Spanish mutineers in the Netherlands rivaled the general fear in France of John Casimir's *Reiters*.<sup>27</sup>

Elites in France and the Netherlands, however, had firm ideas about what constituted a 'good' or a 'bad' peace.<sup>28</sup> Peace was not to be concluded at all costs. Protestants in particular became more demanding over the course of the wars. Huguenots doubted the 'sincerity' of the French king's intentions to keep his promises and insisted on the formulation of specific guarantees by the royal government. William of Orange and the States of Holland and Zeeland expressed a similar distrust towards the peace offers of Don Juan of Austria.<sup>29</sup> The suspicion of Catholic deceit was widely shared among Protestants, as the Beggars' Song at the beginning of this section shows. The song also demonstrates that Protestants in the Netherlands used French examples to warn against easy promises of peace.

### 3 News in the Netherlands about Peace in France

That France wants to reach an agreement,  
And conclude peace over there,  
And that the Huguenots are triumphant,  
That pains our heart,  
They will send aid to the Beggars  
To our great detriment,  
Wherever we turn,  
Our power diminishes fast.

*Beggars' song. A mock requiem for Governor-general Requesens, purportedly written from a Catholic point of view, March 1576*<sup>30</sup>

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- 27 The mercenaries were an important party in the negotiations leading to the Edict of Beaulieu of 1576. Greengrass, 'Pluralism and Equality', p. 46.
- 28 In 1585 Etienne Pasquier, tired of civil war, abandoned his hopes of a good peace, and claimed to be satisfied with peace without any conditions: 'Je souhaite une bonne paix, si telle on la peut obtenir; & si on ne la peut obtenir, il me semble que la plus fascheuse que l'on puisse proposer, est plus expediente au Roy, qu'une guerre civile. Les armes sont journalieres, les jugemens de Dieu incogneus....' Thickett, *Lettres historiques*, pp. 236–237.
- 29 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 182–183; Roberts, 'The Languages of Peace', p. 309: 'As the wars progressed, so Huguenot reluctance to accept the sincerity of royal overtures for peace grew'.
- 30 Dat Vranckrijck wil accorderen, / End maken daer pays en vree, / En de Hughenoten daer tryumpheren, / Dat doet ons Herte so wee, / Sy sullen de Geusen hulpe senden / Tot ons groote ruijn, / Waer wy ons keeren of wenden, / Onse macht gantsch al verdwijnt. Kuiper, *Geuzenliedboek*, I, pp. 256–257, nr. 112.

Inhabitants of the Netherlands eagerly longed for detailed news about the French peace attempts of 1576. As the Beggars' Song above suggests, Protestants strongly expected help from their French coreligionists. Wouter Jacobsz recorded in 1575 how inhabitants of Amsterdam told each other that Philip Marnix of Sint-Aldegonde had departed for France to see how the peace negotiations were progressing because the Netherlandish Calvinists refused to negotiate before being completely up-to-date about the situation in France.<sup>31</sup> The Edict of Beaulieu of May 1576 was controversial among Catholics. After hearing about the treaty, Morillon sent an indignant letter to Granvelle complaining about the 'terrible and infamous peace that was concluded in France':

The treaty has been printed and I have seen it, and it is one of the worst that has been published in a thousand years. I have asked the secretary Aguillon to give me a copy to send to Your Excellency, although I think you have already seen it.<sup>32</sup>

According to the diary of Wouter Jacobsz, peace in France was a regular topic of conversation on the streets of Amsterdam. On 6 December 1575, a visitor from Delft reported tidings that the king and his brother had reached a five-month truce.<sup>33</sup> This so-called Truce of Champigny was an armistice of actually not five but six months, from November 1575 to May 1576. Its conclusion led to a period of protracted talks between various parties in France, who all put forward different demands.<sup>34</sup> The king and Catherine de' Medici had to come to an agreement with the Huguenot princes, with Damville, the governor in

31 'Op den XVIIen ... (17 March 1575) men hoorde oeck anderen vertellen, dat die heere van sinte Aldegundis in Vranckrijck gereyst was om daer te vernemen op wat middelen die landen daer gepayseert waeren, doende tselفة doer instantie ende versouck van den guesen, die verder in accord niet wilden coemen voer ende eer sij van dies volcomen kennisse hadden.' *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, II. 481.

32 Morillon to Granvelle, Brussels, 28 May 1576: 'Le traicté est imprimé, et je l'ay veu et le tiens pour ung des malheureux que soit esté fait en mille ans. J'ay prié le secrétaire Aguillon de me donner ung exemplaire pour Vostre Illme Sgrie, encoires que je pense elle l'aurat désià veu'. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, VI, p. 91.

33 'Op den Vie Decembris quame één uyt Delft bij ons ende brocht die voer nieuwe tijdinge, dat in Vranckrijk nu bestande gemaect was die tijt van vijf maenden tusschen den coninck ende sijnelfs broeder, die hemselfen oeck voer coninck wuytgave doer assistensie ende toemaekinghe van sulcke pertiedrijvers, huygenoosen, als daer tlant tegenwoordelick in rebellicheyt behielen. Hij seyde, dat hij hadde verhoort, dat ygelick van die twee gebroeders wonderlick veel volcks tegen malcander in wapenen hadden, sulx dat het te vreesen stonde—ten waere daer geaccordeert werde—van groete moorderie over wetersijde te willen vallen.' *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, II. 544.

34 Sutherland, *Huguenot Struggle*, p. 227.

the Languedoc, and Alençon, the king's rebellious brother.<sup>35</sup> According to the chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke, letters with news about the truce had reached Antwerp already on 25 November.<sup>36</sup> Inhabitants of the Netherlands had their doubts about the strength of the French armistice. On 28 December, and again on 8 January, new reports reached the citizens of Amsterdam that the combatants were rearming. In Antwerp, the chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke recorded on 17 December 1575 that the truce between the Huguenots and the King of France had been violated.<sup>37</sup>

It often took French royal officials some time to establish peace on a local level after its official announcement. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, contemporaries made sharp distinctions between war, peace, and armistice in France.<sup>38</sup> A truce was not deemed an acceptable solution: chroniclers recorded how they waited for news concerning a definite decision about peace, and how they closely followed the negotiations. The complicated meetings that led towards the Peace of Monsieur between the king and the confederates—the Huguenot princes, Alençon, Damville, and John Casimir—went on for weeks. In early March, the confederates had proposed a list of articles, which the king initially refused to accept. On 31 March, the peace was almost concluded, but negotiations again floundered three days later.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, already on 23 March, Wouter Jacobsz received reports that ‘the troubles in France have been appeased’.<sup>40</sup> On 8 April Morillon reported to Granvelle that in Brussels ‘people speak of peace in France, but nothing is sure yet’.<sup>41</sup> On 13 April the king made significant concessions regarding the equality of worship. On 2 May Catherine de’ Medici, Alençon, Navarre, Condé, and John Casimir consented to sign the articles, and finally, on 6 May Henry III officially signed the Edict

35 Greengrass, ‘Pluralism and Equality’, pp. 46–48.

36 ‘Syn hier deur brieven tydingen comen als dat in Vranckryc sesse maenden bystandt was gemaect, ende dat de fortse van peerdtvolck ende voetvolck derwaerts gewelt hebbende nu herwaerts het hooft hadden’. ‘Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke’, 25 November 1575, 233.

37 ‘Heeft men geseegt dat het bystandt tusschen de Hugenotten ende den coninck van Vranckryck was gebroken ende dat de duytsche peerden ende soldaten derwaerts trocken’. ‘Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke’, 17 December 1575, 235.

38 Compare Mout, ‘Justus Lipsius between War and Peace’.

39 Greengrass, ‘Pluralism and Equality’, pp. 49–50.

40 ‘Op den XXIIen ontfingen wij tijdinge dat in Vranckrijck alle haer beroerte geslecht ende gepayst waere’. *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, II, 565.

41 ‘L’on parle fort de la paix de France; mais il n’y at encores rien d’assuré’. Morillon to Granvelle. Brussels, 7–8 April 1576. Poulet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, VI, p. 52.

of Beaulieu. Yet the chronicle of Jan van Wesenbeke recorded that already on 28 April people in Antwerp said that peace had been made.<sup>42</sup>

The 14th of May, the day the edict was officially published throughout France, marked an important date: both Jan de Pottre and the Wesenbeke-chronicle mention the event.<sup>43</sup> It is remarkable that Netherlandish contemporaries set so much store by the official publication of the peace edict, as the Peace of Monsieur concluded the fifth war in fourteen years. In the preceding years, edicts had proved to be of little worth, as many of them had been broken soon after they were pronounced. Contemporaries must have been well aware that fighting could recommence at any moment, yet they still considered the conclusion of peace as an important event. They were probably hopeful this time the peace in France would last and that the Netherlands would also soon establish peace.

Chroniclers in the Netherlands were also aware of the hostility towards the edict among Catholics in France. Opposition was especially strong in Péronne in Picardy, where the Huguenots were allowed to have garrisons. Catholics refused to hand over the citadel to Henry de Bourbon Condé, who had been appointed governor of the Péronne garrison. The Wesenbeke-chronicle in Antwerp recorded how the king had to send an army to force the Péronnais to accept the terms of the peace.<sup>44</sup> In Brussels, Morillon sympathized with the Catholics of France who had to swallow peace terms that were to the Protestants' advantage. In a dramatic letter to Granvelle he described the sorrow of 'all Catholics, there and over here', thus linking the situation of the French Catholics directly to that of their coreligionists in the Netherlands. He did not believe that, 'such a dirty and prejudiced peace will persist. It is said that tears fell from the eyes of the King when he signed the edict'.<sup>45</sup> Morillon

42 'Opten 28 April 1576 heeft men geseedt dat den peijs in Vrankcryck was gesloten'. 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 239.

43 'Den XIIIsten mey waest wt gheroepen pays tusschen de Hueghenoesen ende den coninck in Vrankrijck'. *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 65; 'Opten 17. Is de tyndinghe comende hoe dat den peijs in Vrankcryck opten 14e meij was gepubliceert'. 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 239.

44 'Alsdoen is oyck geseedt dat die van Peronen in Vrankcryck nyet en wilden obedieren den Mandamente des Coninx noch achtervolgende den conditien vande Peyse der Hugenoten garnisoen inne nemen waeromme den heelen leeger nae Peronen was treckende om henlieden per fortse te bedwingen der Conditien vanden peyse te achtervolghen'. 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 241. Mark Greengrass sees the Péronne affair as an important moment in the process of the foundation of the Catholic League: Greengrass, 'Pluralism and Equality', pp. 56–57. Compare Sutherland, *Huguenot Struggle*, pp. 238–239.

45 Morillon to Granvelle, Brussels, 28 May 1576: 'Enfin la paix s'est concludte en France, très ordé et infâme, à la grande confusion du Roy et de son conseil, que fut publiéé le xvie au

also wrote how the canons of the Notre-Dame refused to sing a *Te Deum*. The peace did indeed not last long. But the short war that followed was soon concluded by the Treaty of Bergerac (September 1577), an agreement that was just as bad in the eyes of many Catholics in France and abroad. In Rome, Granvelle gave vent to his grievances in a letter to Philip II:

The peace in France is abominable. I do not know if the Huguenots could have asked for more if they had taken the King of France prisoner. The funny thing is that the King says in the preamble of his edict that he hopes that someday his kingdom will be pacified and united in one religion by means of a free and general council—as if Trent never happened—and it frightens me that here [in Rome] they do not make more fuss about it.<sup>46</sup>

However, not all Catholics shared his dislike of peace. Jan de Pottre recorded a procession in Brussels in early June 1576 with all participants praying for peace. He admiringly praised the richness and inventiveness of the parade that focused on the theme of peace employing a wealth of metaphors. On one stage, Peace was lying sick in bed. In another *tableau*, people searched for peace with lanterns, but were unable to find it.<sup>47</sup>

After the conclusion of the Pacification of Ghent, many cities in the Netherlands celebrated the newfound peace. Paul van Peteghem has described how the news about the Pacification was announced in various cities throughout the Netherlands. In 's-Hertogenbosch, a large crowd witnessed the publication of the pacification on the decorated wall of the city hall, accompanied by the sound of trumpets and shawms, while the cathedral sounded its bourdon and carillon.<sup>48</sup> Like Granvelle though, some hard-core Catholics in the

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grand regret de tous catholicques, là et icy. Le traicté est imprimé, et je l'ay veu et le tiens pour ung des malheureux que soit esté fait en mille ans. J'ay prié le secrétaire Aguillon de me donner ung exemplaire pour Vostre Illme Sgrie, encoires que je pense elle l'aurat désià veu; et n'est possible que une si salle et préjudiciable paix dure. L'on dit que le Roy signa, que les larmes luy tombaient des yeulx ...'. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, VII, p. 91.

46 'La paz de Francia es abominable, ni sé que pudieran pedir mas los Hugonotes si tubieran el Rey de Francia preso: lo Bueno es que dice el dicho Rey en el preambulo de su edicto que espera que algun dia se pacificará su Reyno en lo de la religion con un concilio Bueno general y libero, como si el de Trento no se hubiese hecho, y espantome que aqui no hayan sobre ello mas rumor'. Granvelle to Philip II, Rome, 31 October 1577, Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, VII, pp. 280–281.

47 *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 65.

48 P. van Peteghem, 'De Pacificatie van Gent: triomf van de herwonnen eenheid? Kanttekeningen naar aanleiding van de publikatie en de verspreiding van de

Netherlands were not happy with peace at all costs. Parish priest Jacob Buyck in Amsterdam raged against the Pacification, which he called the 'Beggar peace'. Wouter Jacobsz recorded how Buyck warned his audience that those who celebrated the Pacification, 'would henceforth burn in hell unless they did penance'.<sup>49</sup>

#### 4 French News regarding the Events in the Netherlands

When studying French chronicles from these years, one wonders whether French authors grasped the state of affairs in the Low Countries. Claude Haton and Pierre de L'Estoile, prolific diarists with a keen interest in foreign news, do not mention a word about any attempts at peace or pacification in the Netherlands at all. Quite to the contrary, Claude Haton even contrasted the newfound peace in France with the enduring troubles in the Netherlands in 1578. In a passage reviewing the recent history of the two countries he summarized: 'If France was somewhat restful by the recent slumbering of the civil wars recently subdued, the lands of Flanders, Hainault, the county of Artois and other Low Countries belonging to the King of Spain were in great trouble for revolting against their king and his lieutenants, governors of these lands'.<sup>50</sup>

The emergence of the Catholic League spurred the printing of pamphlets that stressed the troubles Protestants had caused in the Netherlands in the 1570s. Emphasizing religious conflict, they failed to mention the various attempts at reconciliation between the Catholics and Protestants in the Netherlands. In the *Brief discours de certaines victoires spirituelles advenvues en Hollande & Zelande*, for example, published by Simon Calvarin in Paris in 1579, readers were presented with the notorious story of the martyrs of Gorcum. In 1572, invading Sea Beggars had tortured and hanged Catholic priests in the town of Gorcum in Holland. The 1579 pamphlet recounted in detail what had happened seven years earlier in Brill, 'a little city not very famous, except for

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pacificatietekst', in Michel Baelde (ed.), *Opstand en pacificatie in de lage landen. Bijdrage tot de studie van de Pacificatie van Gent* (Ghent: Snoeck-Ducaju, 1976), pp. 99–135 (109).

49 *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, II. 618–619. Cited in Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, pp. 44–45.

50 'Si la France estoit quelque peu en repos par l'assoupissement des guerres civiles nagueres retirees, les pays de Flandres, Haynault, conté d'Artois et aultres des Pays-Bas appartenans au roy d'Espagne, estoient en grands troubles pour s'estre revoltez contre leur roy et ses lieutenants gouverneurs desditz pays'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, III. 16.



the murders and massacres the Beggars have perpetrated over there'.<sup>51</sup> The publication of the Gorcum pamphlet follows a trend we can also detect in other areas of Europe. Counter-Reformation pamphleteers began to put local Reformation troubles in an international context.<sup>52</sup>

Stories of war, sacks and military triumphs prevailed. In Paris, Jehan de la Fosse and Pierre de L'Estoile recorded the sack of Antwerp that had begun on 4 November 1576. Thousands of people perished, and many houses were destroyed. L'Estoile recorded hearing the 'tristes et piteuses nouvelles' on 10 November, nearly a week later. He compassionately wrote about the poor inhabitants who had undergone the 'Spanish fury', showing himself well informed on such facts as the numbers of houses plundered and people killed. In his diary, he strongly condemned the actions of the 'insolent Spaniards', who had murdered without distinction people of all 'ages, sexes and qualities'.<sup>53</sup> Jehan de la Fosse only recorded, with a bit of understatement, how 'the Spanish killed several citizens of Antwerp and held others for ransom'.<sup>54</sup> Compared to the great number of extant pamphlets on this subject in England, the French produced few news pamphlets.<sup>55</sup> A French song, published in a Lyon song-book in 1580, described the horrors of the sack, but also chided the citizens of Antwerp for their sins and compared the city to Sodom and Gomorrah.<sup>56</sup> The writer of the song did not exhibit the same compassion as L'Estoile had shown

51 'ville de Hollande petite et peu congneue sinon par les meurtres & massacres qu'avoit faict les Gueux ...'. *Brief discours de certaines victoires spirituelles advenues en Hollande & Zelande* (Paris: Simon Calvarin, 1579), 4, USTC 4058.

52 B.A. Vermaseren, *De katholieke Nederlandse geschiedschrijving in de 16e en 17e eeuw over de Opstand* (2nd edition: Leeuwarden: Dykstra, 1981), pp. 123–127; Compare Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, pp. 104–105.

53 Madeleine Lazard and Gilbert Schrenck (eds.), *Registre-journal du règne de Henri III* (6 vols., Geneva: Droz, 1992–2003), II, p. 62. [On 10 November] 'arriverent à Paris les tristes et piteuses nouvelles du sac de la ville d'Anvers'.

54 *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 134: 'Environ ce temps les Espagnolz prindrent la ville d'Anvers que les estatx de Flandre voloient chasser, et mirent le feu dedans la ville, tuerent plusieurs bourgeois et les mirent à rançon'.

55 Compare the flood of news that arrived on the sack in England: Buchanan, *Massacre of St. Bartholomew's*, pp. 163–212. Andrew Pettegree only mentions the pamphlet published two years later by Frédéric de Champagny. Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands', p. 332. Pettegree also mentions the instant histories by Cornejo and Stratijs as indication for the interest of French readers in Netherlandish affairs.

56 'Chanson nouvelle du pillage & surprise de la ville d'Anvers faict par les Espagnols: sur le chant de Nimes'. Pierre de Ronsard, *Le rosier des chansons nouvelles. Tant de l'amour, que de la guerre, contenant la pluspart les heureuses victoires obtenues en Auvergne & ailleurs* (Lyon: [Benoît Rigaud], 1580), pp. 33–35, USTC 59747.

for the people in Antwerp. Instead, he found the news about the pillaging a suitable topic for entertaining his listeners:

Who has made this song,  
It is a young boy  
Who has heard about the defeat  
of the perfidious Antwerp  
hearing about this bitterness  
he has not been idle  
and has taken in his cheerful hands  
ink, paper and quill  
to make you sing  
and relieve you of your boredom.<sup>57</sup>

French chroniclers mainly expressed an interest in the exploits of Don Juan, again showing their preference for news about the deeds of famous noblemen. Don Juan was a key figure in sixteenth-century European politics; the hero of Lepanto and half-brother of King Philip II. If he made himself increasingly unpopular among the population of the Netherlands, he remained an important figurehead for French Catholics. The French Leaguers actively supported him and compared him favourably to the peace-loving Henry III. As Mark Greengrass has pointed out: '[in the summer of 1576] Protestants complained about the activities of preachers at Troyes and around Chartres who denounced the peace and compared the King's capitulation adversely with Don John of Austria's flamboyant arrival in the Netherlands to lead the Spanish assault on the patriot opposition'.<sup>58</sup>

Don Juan's sudden seizure of the castle of Namur on 24 July 1577 did not only instigate a rupture between the governor-general and the States General, but also caused a stir in France. This was an event of special interest for the French, as Marguerite de Valois, Queen of Navarre, was implicated in the affair. She was at that time staying in the Low Countries under the pretext of visiting the health resort of Spa, but actually reconnoitering for her brother, the Duke of Anjou. Don Juan accompanied her gallantly when she entered Namur,

57 'Qui la chanson a faite / c'est un ieune garçon / qui a sceu la deffaicte / d'Anvers d'un coeur felon / Oyant telle amertume / n'a esté paresseux / de mettre en main ioyeux / l'ancre, papier & plume / pour vous faire chanter / et vous desennuyer'. *Rosier des chanson nouvelle*, p. 35, USTC 59747.

58 Greengrass, 'Pluralism and Equality', p. 57.

and then had his soldiers unexpectedly occupy the citadel.<sup>59</sup> Reports of his bold move reached Paris on 10 August; Pierre de L'Estoile recorded hearing the news.<sup>60</sup> Claude Haton in Provins was especially entertained by this story. Yet he commiserated with Marguerite de Valois, who according to him must have been unaware of Don Juan's intentions. Haton, as usual, could not quite place the events geographically, thinking that Don Juan had captured Valenciennes instead of Namur. In a later passage, he even thought it had been Antwerp and went on to describe how soldiers of Don Juan had plundered that city. He thus conflated the seizure of Namur and the sack of Antwerp as one single event. Haton admitted his uncertainty about correctly describing the event but did not really care: 'I do not know if I am mistaken in saying Valenciennes for Antwerp; in any event, it happened either in Valenciennes or in Antwerp'.<sup>61</sup>

The unexpected death of Don Juan on 1 October 1578, too, was important news in France. The Parisian diarist Pierre Fayet recorded his death in his chronicle, celebrating him as the famous hero of Lepanto.<sup>62</sup> Laudatory epitaphs circulated in Paris, commemorating his military victories. Meanwhile, his adversaries, including the Duke of Anjou, tried to sully his memory by spreading insulting pasquils.<sup>63</sup> Pierre de L'Estoile mentioned a sonnet disseminated in Paris that originally had been published in the Netherlands. Its author was either Lucas d'Heere or Jean-François le Petit, both propagandists in the entourage of William of Orange.<sup>64</sup>

59 On this episode, see for example: Charles Petrie, *Don John of Austria* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1967), pp. 304–310.

60 'Le Samedi Xe Aoust, vinrent nouvelles à Paris de la ville de Namur, surprise par Dom Joan d'Austria, sous ombre d'y recevoir et festoyer la Roine de Navarre alland aux bains'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, 11, p. 126.

61 'Je ne scè si j'equivoque poinct en disant Valanciennes pour Envers: quoy qu'il en soit, cela advient en l'une ou en l'autre des deux villes de Valanciennes ou Envers'. *Memoires de Claude Haton*, 111. 426.

62 'Environ ce temps, don Juan d'Autriche, frère bastart du roy d'Espagne, et son vice-roy en Flandres, morut au dict pays d'un flux de ventre. C'est celuy qui gaigna ceste tant renommée bataille de Lepante, en laquelle le Turc perdit toutes ses galères, reservées dix ou douze que conduisoit Ochele, roy d'Algier'. *Journal historique de Pierre Fayet*, p. 11.

63 Geurts, *Nederlandse Opstand in pamfletten*, p. 82.

64 The first poem is reproduced in the pamphlet *Deux lettres interceptes par le sire de Saint Leger. Epitaphe de don Jehan (au camp à une lieue pres de Namur, 16.09.1578)* (Antwerp: Willem Silvius, 1578), 'Sur la mort de Don Jehan', p. 13, USTC 13151. According to P.A.M. Geurts, the Calvinist *rederijker* Lucas d'Heere was its author. Geurts, *Nederlandse Opstand in de pamfletten*, p. 82. According to the USTC database, however, the pamphlet was written by Jean-François le Petit. See for Orange's propagandists also Stipriaan, 'Words at War'. The second poem is reproduced in: Pierre de L'Estoile, *Registre-Journal* 11, p. 219.

Jean-François le Petit (or Lucas d'Heere), *Sur la mort de Don Iehan*

Dieu voulant chastier la prouince  
Belgique  
Luy enuoya Duc d'Albe, Antioche en  
rigueur,  
Puis vn moyne encharmé, d'assez  
sèblable humeur  
Qui n'ont peu acheuer leur dessain  
tyrannique.

Après tu es venu fils de mere  
impudique,  
Et as par fantasie esté nostre  
vainqueur,  
Mourant à my-chemin, ensemble ton  
honneur:  
Phaëton orgueilleux, voylà ta fin  
inique.

Car entre ces tyrans Dieu nous  
envoye icy  
Moïse ou Machabee, & nous deliure  
aussi  
De leur oppression, erreur &  
tromperie.

Vienne donc l'ennemy & fust ce  
Satan mesmes,  
Il sentira de Dieu les jugemens  
extremes,  
Et floriront tousiours l'Eglise & la  
patrie.

Pierre de L'Estoile, *Registre-Journal*

Dieu, voulant chastier la province  
Belgique,  
Lui envoya le Duc Antioche en  
rigueur,  
Puis un moine encharmé, d'assez  
semblable humeur,  
Qui n'ont peu acheiver leur dessein  
tirannique.

Après, tu es venu, fils de putain  
publique,  
Et as par fantaisie esté nostre  
Vainqueur,  
Mourant à mi-chemin, ensemble ton  
honneur.  
Phaëton orgueilleux, voila ta fin  
inique!

Car contre ces tirans Dieu nous  
envoie ici  
Moïse et Maccabée, et nous delivre  
ainsi  
De leur oppression, erreur et  
tromperie.

Vienne donc l'ennemi, et fut le  
Diable mesmes,  
Il sentira de Dieu les jugemens  
extremes,  
Et floriront tousjours l'Eglise et la  
Patrie.

The Parisian version had changed slightly and had become somehow more explicit than the Netherlandish poem: for example, the phrase 'fils de mère impudique' (son of a loose woman) had been converted into 'fils de putain publique' (son of a street whore).

The Pacification of Ghent, then, failed to become a major news event in France, but the doings of Don Juan and William of Orange did. There are other examples of peace edicts that triggered few reactions abroad. Catherine Secretan has wondered why the Edict of Nantes of 1598 received such a lukewarm response in the Netherlands.<sup>65</sup> As she has shown, almost no Netherlandish sources mention hearing about or discussing the Edict in the spring of 1598. Offering various explanations for this ‘silence’, she has among other things suggested that the hawks in the Northern Netherlands, including Maurice and Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, had no interest in celebrating the Edict of Nantes. Moreover, news about the Peace of Vervins between the French king and Philip II would follow two weeks later, putting reports about Henry’s religious settlement in the shade. Interestingly, Michel de Waele has demonstrated that French chroniclers, too, hardly mention the Edict of Nantes in their records.<sup>66</sup> He has suggested that this was due to Henry IV himself, who gave much more publicity to the Peace of Vervins in comparison. He had the peace celebrated with bonfires and festivities all over his kingdom, while on the religious settlement he only modestly remarked that he had ‘mis fin à l’affaire de ceulx de la Religion’.<sup>67</sup> He also initially refused to elaborate on the exact content of the terms of the Edict.<sup>68</sup> Thus, authorities in both France and the Netherlands seem to have maintained a high level of control over news about peace.

## 5 Pamphlets and Readership

The apparent lack of interest among French chroniclers in recording Netherlandish peace attempts contrasts strongly and rather remarkably with the number of French pamphlets on the subject that were printed in those years. We know that the French chroniclers discussed so far, most of them literate and erudite members of the urban elites, enjoyed buying pamphlets in

65 Catherine Secretan, ‘L’édit de Nantes et l’indifférence Hollandaise: l’idée d’une autre tolérance’, *Revue de synthèse, Série 5*, 2005, 126 (2005), pp. 15–32.

66 De Waele, *Réconcilier les Français*, pp. 233–234.

67 De Waele, *Réconcilier les Français*, p. 234.

68 See also an anonymous chronicler in Dunkirk: ‘Nopende de poincten ende conditien van den selven paeys, en wierden noch onder tghemeente niet verclaerst; maer naederhandt soude men de selve overal uut laten ghaen’. ‘Vlaamsche Kronyk’, 851–853.

order to get acquainted with political news and debates.<sup>69</sup> One explanation for their apparent lack of interest may be that they simply did not find the pacification a subject suitable to record. It may also be that urban chroniclers were not the ones principally interested in foreign peace attempts and that there were other groups in French society who did find it a matter of concern.<sup>70</sup> Mark Greengrass has shown that members of the intellectual and political circles around Henry III often discussed peace, as evocatively described in his chapter on the 'Palace Academy' of the French king.<sup>71</sup> A third explanation is that pamphlets did not always respond to an existing demand. Helmer Helmers has pointed to the phenomenon of early modern public diplomacy, where diplomats spread pamphlets in a foreign country in the hope of influencing foreign audiences. I will argue that this last option may explain the increase in pamphlet material, as the importance of influencing foreign audiences increased in times of peace negotiations.

## 6 International Pamphleteering

As Monica Stensland has argued, especially during the first stages of the Dutch Revolt, pamphlets were the medium of the rebels. The Habsburg government initially refused to lower itself to enter into a public discussion. It preferred to communicate through ceremonies, official edicts and rituals such as processions. Pamphlets were for the desperate, a last resort for exiled Calvinists such as Philip Marnix of Sint Aldegonde.<sup>72</sup> The situation differed in France where a fierce pamphlet exchange between Catholics and Huguenots had been going on since the first troubles of the Reformation. As we have seen in Chapter 1, circles around the Guises issued pamphlets that told the Catholic story. These pamphlets were translated into Dutch throughout the 1560s.<sup>73</sup>

In 1568, the main rebel leaders in France and the Netherlands, the Prince of Condé and the Prince of Orange, had both issued pamphlets to justify

69 See for example *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, III. 245–250, for Marcus van Vaernewijck paraphrasing an edict issued by the king of France against the Huguenots. Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture*, pp. 21–25; See also Andrew Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), chapters 6 and 7.

70 See for instance the enormous collection of sixteenth-century copied edicts in the archives of the ministry of foreign affairs in Paris: *Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris*. Mémoires et documents, Pays-Bas, 2. 1567–1677. CP 54–1567–1583.

71 Greengrass, *Governing Passions*, pp. 44–65.

72 Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*.

73 See Chapter 1; Racaut, *Hatred in Print*.

their actions. An anonymous Antwerp press published a French edition of Condé's pamphlet, while in Emden exiled Calvinists produced a translation into Dutch.<sup>74</sup> In the introduction, the translator made it clear why this publication was of importance to the Netherlands: reading about the wars in France was like looking into a mirror.<sup>75</sup> The pamphlet warned that 'everything that had happened in France and worse would happen in the Netherlands'.<sup>76</sup> The *Justification* of William of Orange was published in Dutch, French, Latin, and German—although, to my knowledge, no French printer produced his own version.<sup>77</sup> Pamphleteering abroad became a tried and tested method, especially for Protestant princes. Michel de la Huguerye recorded how in 1577 John Casimir had come up with a pamphlet against Anjou, called 'Le Patriote' 'that he had printed and published everywhere'.<sup>78</sup>

Traditionally, in the historiography of news and public debate, pamphlets have received the lion's share of attention. A great deal has been written, for example, about foreign news pamphlets in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. These pamphlets were often translated into English from an original continental copy.<sup>79</sup> It is more problematical to establish whether pamphlets on the situation in the Netherlands were pitched to a Netherlandish or a French audience, as they were often printed in the Netherlands both in French and in Dutch versions. Some French pamphlets were printed in Brussels and subsequently sold in Paris. Similarly, inhabitants of the Netherlands could easily lay their hands on pamphlets that were printed in France. Yet there are many examples of Netherlandish news reports that were printed or reprinted after the original by French printers.

74 Lodewijk van Bourbon, prins van Condé, *Recueil de toutes les choses memorables advenues tant de par le roy, que par monseigneur le prince de Conde, gentils-hommes et autres de sa compaignie, depuis 28.10.1567 avec le discours des guerres civiles du pais de Flandres* (Antwerp: s.n., 1568), USTC 6530. And its translation into Dutch: *Cort verhael op de middelen die de cardinael van Lorainen heeft ghehouden ende gebruyct om groot te maken zijn huys met de verderffenisse vande croon ende Conincrijcke van Vrancryck* (Emden: [Willem Gailliarth], 1568), USTC 411386.

75 'clær als in eene Spiegel', *Cort verhael op de middelen*, 3.

76 Idem, 4.

77 It might be that this pamphlet was printed in France: *La justification du prince d'Oranges contre les faulx blasmes que ses calumniateurs taschent à luy imposer à tort* (s.l.: s.n., 1568), USTC 441686.

78 'lequel le feist imprimer et publier par tout'. *Mémoires de Michel de La Huguerye*, II. 24. He probably referred to *Le vray patriot aux bons patriots* (Mons: Joos Hoste, 1579), USTC 8580.

79 Compare Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Dunthorne, *Britain and the Dutch Revolt*; Randall, *Credibility*.

## 7 Explaining a *Coup d'état*

Following the mutiny of the Spanish soldiers in the summer of 1576, cities in the Low Countries took measures to protect the populace from the plundering soldiers. Without the presence of a new governor-general after the death of Requesens in March, and with negotiations with Philip still going on without results, the States of Brabant and Hainault decided to take matters into their own hands. Probably supported by William of Orange and the Duke of Aerschot, they arrested the Council of State, the king's representatives in the Netherlands, and called for a meeting of the States General.<sup>80</sup> They immediately felt the need to explain their actions to a wider audience. The official printer of the States of Brabant, Michel de Hamont, printed two pamphlets, one clarifying the measures taken against the mutineers, and the other a justification for the coup against the members of the Council of State.<sup>81</sup> Shortly afterwards, the Lyon printer Benoit Rigaud combined the two pamphlets in a copy of his own, 'made after the copy printed in Brussels'. The argument of the States became even more convincing in the Lyon version of the pamphlet: the outrageous behaviour of the Spanish mutineers was directly linked to the arrest of the Council of State, which consisted of untrustworthy and 'machiavellistic' Spaniards. The pamphlet sought to explain to as wide an audience as possible the 'causes and circumstances' that had forced the States to act in this way.<sup>82</sup>

In November 1576 and the beginning of 1577, the text of the Pacification of Ghent appeared in many copies in the Netherlands, as almost every city had its own copy printed.<sup>83</sup> The pamphlet initially appeared in Dutch, and a French translation followed three weeks later.<sup>84</sup> It was also printed in at least six

80 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 174–175.

81 *Discours veritable sur ce qui est advenu touchant l'alborote et esmotion des Espaignolz mutinez es isles de Zelande* (Bruxelles, 02.07.1576) (Brussels: Michel de Hamont, 1576), USTC 88263; *Justification du saisissement et sequestration d'aulcuns sieurs du conseil d'estat et aultres au Pays Baz* (Brussels, Michel de Hamont, 1576), USTC 88264.

82 *Discours veritable sur ce qui est advenu touchant l'alborote et esmotion des Espaignolz mutinez es isles de Zelande* (Lyon: Benoît Rigaud, 1576), USTC 11399. Compare Thomas Wilson to Francis Walsingham, Brussels, 13 November 1576: 'I doe sende herewith the justification in prynte of the arrest and a discours of the Spanyardes mutynes and alborotes, whiche yow maye communicate to My Lordes'. Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, IX, p. 29.

83 On all the different versions of the Pacification that were printed locally throughout the Netherlands see: Van Peteghem, 'De Pacificatie van Gent'.

84 Van Peteghem, 'De Pacificatie van Gent', p. 103. See also Thomas Wilson to Francis Walsingham, 3 December 1576: 'I doe also sende the accorde which the Prynce and States,



cities throughout France. It appeared in three different versions in Paris, one in 1576 and two in 1577, and in Lyon, Poitiers, Orléans, Rouen, and La Rochelle.<sup>85</sup> Printers in Paris at first mentioned the original copy by Michel de Hamont in Brussels on their title page. The Lyon version, however, merely referred to the Paris copy and failed to mention the original.<sup>86</sup> When comparing the Paris and Lyon versions to the original printed in Brussels, there are no differences in content: the text was copied verbatim, without added introductions or paratexts. Even the copy of the Pacification that was printed in the Protestant stronghold of La Rochelle lacked an introductory text.<sup>87</sup> The only difference concerns the spelling, which was slightly altered in the French versions. These pamphlets marked only the beginning of a surge of pamphlets on the events in the Netherlands that were printed in France in subsequent years. In 1577 there followed at least three copies of the Perpetual Edict, and in 1578 yet more pamphlets appeared on the negotiations and troubles in the Netherlands.<sup>88</sup>

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now latelie printed in frenshe, toguether with the commissions thereunto annexed'. Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, IX, p. 63.

85 On the Pacification of Ghent compare: *Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas* (Orléans: Eloi Gibier et Saturnin Hotot, 1576), USTC 15353; *Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas assemblez en la ville de Bruxelles* (Paris: pour Jean de Lastre, 1577), USTC 13145; *Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas assemblez en la ville de Bruxelles* (Paris, pour Jean de Lastre et Jacques Lucet, 1577), USTC 29514; *Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas assemblez en la ville de Bruxelles* (Lyon, Michel Jove et Jean Pillehotte, 1577), USTC 11419; *Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas assemblez en la ville de Bruxelles* (Poitiers, Aimé Ménier et Antoine Delacourt, 1577), USTC 61950; *Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas assemblez en la ville de Bruxelles* (Rouen: pour Martin Le Mégissier, 1577), USTC 2589; *Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas assemblez en la ville de Bruxelles* (Bruxelles [=La Rochelle]: Michel de Hamont [=Jean Portau], 1577), USTC 3989.

86 Booktraders often cultivated strong international networks. See for example the links between Plantin in Antwerp and Sonnius in Paris. Denis Pallier, *Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585–1594)* (Geneva: Droz, 1975), p. 10.

87 *Traicté de la paix faicte*, USTC 3989.

88 *Edict perpetuel sur l'accord faicte entre messire Jehan d'Austrice et les estatz generaulx (Marche en Famijne, 12.02.1577)* (Bruxelles: Michel de Hamont, 1577), USTC 4087; *Edict perpetuel sur l'accord faicte entre messire Jehan d'Austrice ... et les estatz generaulx* (Orléans: Eloi Gibier et Saturnin Hotot, [1577]), USTC 61945; *Edict perpetuel sur l'accord faicte entre messire Jehan d'Austrice ... et les estatz generaulx* (Paris, chez Pierre L'Huillier, [1577]), USTC 67551; *Copie des lettres escriptes aux estatz, prelatz, nobles, villes et aucuns particuliers des provinces de Pays Bas* (Paris: pour Nicolas Roffet, 1577), USTC 67552; *Lettres d'advertissement à la noblesse et autres deputez des estatz de Flandres* (Reims: Jean de Foigny, 1578), USTC 1218; *Lettres d'advertissement à la noblesse et autres deputez des estatz de Flandres* (Lyon: Benoît Rigaud, 1578), USTC 6290; *Lettres d'advertissement à la noblesse et autres deputez*

Who had an interest in the publication of these pamphlets—and what did publishers think they could achieve? Historians have posed that question for many other cases concerning book sales in the sixteenth century, and it is a very hard one to answer. Were pamphlets published for commercial or ideological reasons? Did the French *imprimeurs-libraires* expect high sales, or were they supported by patrons? Luc Racaut has described this uncertainty in the case of the Parisian Catholic printer Nicolas Chesneau: ‘The extent of patronage is unclear, however, and if Chesneau produced the works of theologians in Lorraine’s entourage and expressed support for the Guise, it may simply have been in response to the public’s demand’.<sup>89</sup> Paul Arblaster similarly stated: ‘The possibility cannot be ruled out that some of these pamphlets were, like opinion pieces, paid for upfront by an interested party rather than printed speculatively for the open market’.<sup>90</sup> And Andrew Pettegree wondered as well: ‘Are we dealing here with a market for news, or a conscious attempt to shape opinion?’<sup>91</sup>

Yet in these years, for some of the pamphlets, we can identify quite clearly the individuals who had a political interest in spreading them. Several internationally orientated groups did their best to draw the attention of French audiences to the wars in the Netherlands. One of these groups consisted of French Huguenot nobles such as François de la Noue, Henry of Navarre, and Philippe Duplessis-Mornay, who maintained strong ties with William of Orange.<sup>92</sup> Pierre de L’Estoile recorded in his diary how De la Noue visited Paris

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*des estats de Flandres* (Paris: chez Jean Poupy, 1578), USTC 11440; *Discours veritable des choses passees és Pais Bas* (Lyon: Nicolas Guérin, 1578), USTC 4163; Frédéric Perrenot de Champagny, *Recueils contenant par quels moyens les gens de guerre Espaignols ammenez es Pays Bas par le duc d’Albe, s’estans mutinez en iceux diverses fois, entrerent en Anvers* (Lyon: Nicolas Guérin, 1578), USTC 4171; Braechmus Damuis, *Remonstrance aux habitans du Pais Bas pour les reunir au devoir de vrays et loyaux sujets* (Reims: Nicolas Martin, 1578), USTC 4170; *Lettres patentes contenant que ses sujets de son Pays Bas de Flandres n’obeissent à aucun autre que au seigneur don Jean d’Austrice* (Lyon, Jean Stratius, 1578), USTC 13179.

89 Luc Racaut, ‘Nicolas Chesneau, Catholic Printer in Paris during the French Wars of Religion’, *The Historical Journal*, 52:1 (2009), pp. 23–41 (40); Compare Robert Kingdon, ‘Christopher Plantin and His Backers, 1575–1590: A Study in the Problems of Financing Business during War’, in *Mélanges d’histoire économique et sociale en hommage au professeur Antony Babel* (Geneva: Faculté des sciences économiques et sociales, 1963), pp. 303–316.

90 Arblaster, *Ghent to Aix*, p. 258.

91 Pettegree, ‘Provincial News Community’, p. 46.

92 Some of the negotiations were conducted through the French ambassador in the Netherlands, Claude de Mondoucet. The English kept a close watch on the proceedings: Dr. Thomas Wilson to the Conseil Privé, s.l., 19 November 1576: ‘The Ambassadors of France was no dealer in this action of the arrest by any thynge that I can learne, albeit

briefly in October 1576, to ask the French king for troops to aid 'the States in the Netherlands'. L'Estoile added how the populace in Paris hated him and that he therefore stayed in the capital only for a very short time.<sup>93</sup> Secondly, there were the States General, who repeatedly tried to win over Henry III and Catherine de' Medici to their side, sometimes using letters, at other times making use of pamphlets. Interestingly, at first they neglected to send a copy of their original justification, the one published by Benoît Rigaud, to the French court. They did send the justification to Philip II, the Pope, the Emperor, the bishops of Liège and Cologne, the Duke of Cleves and other princes of the Empire, and the governor of the Franche-Comté.<sup>94</sup> Having very soon decided to approach the French as well, they sent messages to the French king, his mother, brother, and the dukes of Guise and Condé from October 1576 onwards.<sup>95</sup> At the end of 1576, an agent of the States even announced that Catherine de' Medici was prepared to negotiate between Don Juan and the States General. A third group consisted of Don Juan and his entourage, who stayed in contact with the French Catholics. Rumour had it that he had conferred with Henry de Guise on his way to the Netherlands. An English agent in the Netherlands had heard reports that Guise was willing to 'dyvert the warres of France to the Lowe-Cowntrie, and to doe some good to hymselfe that waye'.<sup>96</sup>

## 8 Ideas regarding Public Communication

All these various groups employed agents in Paris to negotiate, spy, and also print and spread pamphlets. Correspondence abounds with discussions

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he is thought to bee a dealer with the States for a power of Frenchemen to cumme to their ayde, but how and in what manner I cannot yet learne any certayntie'. Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, ix, p. 38. Orange also sent letters immediately to the French king. See for example William of Orange to Henry III on 19 October 1576, Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou correspondance*, v, 444–445. See William of Orange to Henry of Navarre, 14 November 1576, thanking him for the help offered: 'pour l'assurance de ce pais, avecq lequel est conjointe celle de la France ...'. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou correspondance*, v, pp. 520–522. See also the correspondence between French ambassador Mondoucet and Henry III. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris. MS Français, 16127. *Lettres originales de plusieurs ambassadeurs français aux Pays-Bas et autres personnages; minutes de lettres de la Cour; pièces diverses*. (1571–1594).

93 Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, II, p. 59.

94 N. Japikse, *Resolutiën der Staten-Generaal van 1576–1609*. Deel 1. 1576–1577 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1915), p. 6.

95 Japikse, *Resolutiën der Staten-Generaal*, p. 70.

96 Thomas Wilson to Francis Walsingham, 3 December 1576. Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, ix, p. 66.

between political leaders and their agents about this print material. Don Juan retained a special representative in Paris, Maximilien de Longueval, who arranged the printing and dispersal of pamphlets defending Don Juan's actions in the Netherlands. When Don Juan captured the citadel of Namur on 24 July 1577, Longueval had the Parisian printer Nicolas Roffet publish letters explaining his decision.<sup>97</sup> As Monica Stensland has argued, 'the overall theme of Don John's publications was the continued presentation of himself and the regime as virtuous peacemakers'.<sup>98</sup> According to Don Juan, capturing Namur was not an act of aggression but a defensive measure because he claimed to fear assassination. Longueval, however, was not simply a passive client following Don Juan's instructions. Nurturing his own ideas on public communication, he was not satisfied with the quality of the texts Don Juan sent him. In a letter to his patron, he complained about not having received a draft version of the pamphlet in advance, so he could correct its French because he was afraid it would be poorly translated from the Latin by Don Juan's propagandist Hannard van Gameren:

I trust that the Justification of Your Highness, to which everyone is looking forward, will turn out as it should be, and hopefully in better French. I am sad that Your Highness does not want me to polish it up a bit before it is published.<sup>99</sup>

The States General also actively disseminated pamphlets in Paris that explained their side of the story. In October 1577, the States' agents d'Aubigny and Mansart had liberally spread a justification of their policy among members of the court

97 *Copie des lettres escriptes aux estats*, USTC 67552. Don Juan himself worked on yet another pamphlet, entitled *Véritable récit des choses passes ès Pays-Bas*. Don Juan to Longueval, 13 November 1577: 'Quant à la justification que m'escripvez, elle est venue presque à la fin, estant jà encommenché d'imprimer et se vous enverrons quelques exemplaires si tost que l'on pourra'. Poulet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, VI, pp. 577–578.

98 Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, p. 84.

99 Maximilien de Longueval, sr. de Vaux to Don Juan, Paris, 22 November 1577. 'Je seray aise que la justification de V.A. tant désirée d'ung chascun se voie telle qu'elle doit estre, et en milleur franchois que je ne l'espère, estant marry que V.A. n'a point voulu qu'elle eust esté ichi ung petit polliée avant d'estre publiée, pour me sambler qu'il en adviendra ce que j'en ay crains'. Poulet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, VI, p. 586. See also Don Juan to Longueval, 7 December 1577. 'Le livret responsif à l'escript des Estatz plain de calumpnyes, comme vous savez, s'achèvera en peu de jours d'imprimer, duquel vous ferey tenir quelques exemplaires, afin de les distribuer par les moyens que m'escripvez, etc.' Poulet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, VI, p. 598. Geurts, *Nederlandse Opstand in pamfletten*, p. 68.

of Anjou, the brother of the French king.<sup>100</sup> The first edition of the justification of 1577 issued by the States General consisted of 300 copies, and the States' delegates in Paris soon wrote home asking for more.<sup>101</sup>

Longueval, in turn, assured his patron that the pamphlets of the States General made no impact at all in Paris:

And concerning what the delegates of the said States are doing over here, I hear that they are trying to justify their cause, and to that means have presented Their Majesties with something they have printed, and everyone here just laughs at it.<sup>102</sup>

Pierre de L'Estoile indeed recorded the negative response from the French court to the overtures of the Netherlandish States in his diary.<sup>103</sup> William of Orange meanwhile had allies in the South of France who intercepted Spanish correspondence to the Netherlands. These letters reached Orange through a Huguenot network involving François de la Noue, Henry of Navarre and Philippe du Plessis-Mornay. Intercepted letters did not only forewarn Orange about the intentions of the enemy but also served as propaganda when he had them printed.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, I, p. 78.

<sup>101</sup> 'Résolu donner acte de permission des Estatz à l'imprimeur Silvius d'imprimer discours véritable des raisons. Et avecq défence que personne aultre en quatre ans ne pourra imprimer, saullf qu'il donnera troyz cent livres imprimez aux Estatz ...'. Japikse, *Resolutiën der Staten Generaal*, pp. 228–229, 9 September 1577. Geurts, *Nederlandse Opstand in pamfletten*, p. 66. The archives of the ministry of French foreign affairs contain various copies of the pacification of Ghent. Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris. Mémoires et documents, Pays-Bas, 2. 1567–1677. CP 54–1567–1583; A single print run of a pamphlet usually consisted of 250 to 1,500 copies. Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering*, p. 80; Femke Deen, David Onnekink and Michiel Reinders, 'Pamphlets and Politics: Introduction', in Femke Deen, David Onnekink and Michiel Reinders (eds.), *Pamphlets and Politics in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), pp. 3–30 (23–24).

<sup>102</sup> 'Et au regard de ce que les depputés desdicts Estatz peuvent avoir ichy besogné, j'entens qu'ilz ont procuré de justifier leur cause, et a ces fins présenté a LL. dictes MM. ce qu'ilz en ont fait imprimer, et de laquelle impression l'on ne se fait que se rire par icy'. Longueval to Don Juan, 22 November 1577. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, VI, p. 583.

<sup>103</sup> 'Le Jeudi dernier dudit mois d'octobre, veille de la Toussaints, le Roy et toute sa Cour arriva à Paris, où peu apres arrivent des deputes des Estats de Flandres, pour supplier Monsieur de les vouloir prendre en sa protection: dont ledit Seingneur s'excusa'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, II, p. 146.

<sup>104</sup> Geurts, *Nederlandse Opstand in pamfletten*, p. 64. Compare Marnix to Jan of Nassau, 28 July 1577: 'Quoy qu'environ sept ou huict jours auparavant de ceste surprinse de Namur, j'aye esté dépesché de Monseigneur le Prince d'Oranges vers eulx, pour leur

Thus, many pamphlets on Netherlandish politics that reached France in these years were initiated and patronized by political leaders, hoping to engage French audiences for political gain. Yet French printers did not just print Netherlandish news on demand. Apparently, some printers thought that money could be gained from printing pamphlets about the war in the Low Countries. Nevertheless, this did not resonate in the chronicles I have explored. Benoit Rigaud from Lyon regularly published copies of Netherlandish pamphlets after copies printed in Paris or Reims. These Parisian and Reims pamphlets were sometimes originals and sometimes copies made after pamphlets printed in Antwerp or Brussels. Rigaud must have expected an audience in Lyon for this print material.<sup>105</sup> Other printers also specialized in 'Netherlandish affairs'. Eloi Gibier and Saturnin Hotot in Orléans printed the *Pacification of Ghent* and some months later the *Perpetual Edict*. Nicolas Guérin in Lyon printed both the pro-States *Discours veritable* with an answer by the States General and an account of the sack of Antwerp by Granvelle's younger brother, the Antwerp governor Frédéric Champagney.<sup>106</sup> Some printers saw ways of making extra money from propaganda. Willem Silvius, official printer of the States General in Antwerp, asked for a privilege granting him the right to print the *Discours Sommier*, another justification of the States' policy, in seven languages. He also approached Burleigh and Walsingham to obtain a privilege to sell the *Discours* in England.<sup>107</sup> Printers thus could have varied motivations for issuing a pam-

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communicquer aucunes lettres interceptées en France, par lesquelles on descouvre manifestement leur mauvais desseins brassés de longue main'. Gerlo and De Smet, *Marnixi Epistulae*, II, pp. 96–97.

105 *Discours veritable sur ce qui est advenu touchant*, USTC 11399; *Lettres d'advertissement a la noblesse*, USTC 6290; *Lettres des princes electeurs, assemblez à Colongne pour accorder la paix des Pays Bas* (Lyon: Benoît Rigaud, 1579) [copied from a version by Plantin in Antwerp], USTC 62089. See on Rigaud: Natalie Zemon Davis, 'On the Protestantism of Benoît Rigaud', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 17:2 (1955), pp. 246–251. Pettegree calls him 'the undisputed king of sensation literature in the Rhône printing emporium'. Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands', p. 331.

106 *Traicte de la paix faicte*, USTC 15353; *Edict perpetuel sur l'accord faicte*, USTC 61945; *Discours veritable des choses*, USTC 4163; Champagney, *Recueils contenans par quels moyens*, USTC 4171. On Champagney see: Hugo de Schepper, 'Frederik Perrenot van Champagney (1536–1602), het "enfant terrible" van de familie Granvelle', in Krista de Jonge and Gustaaf Janssens (eds.), *Les Granvelle et les anciens Pays-Bas* (Leuven: Universitaire Pers Leuven, 2000), pp. 233–244.

107 Guillaume Silvius to Lord Burleigh, Antwerp, 6 October 1577, Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, IX, p. 565; Guillaume Silvius to Walsingham, Antwerp, 13 October 1577. 'Addidi nostrorum Ordinum sive Statuum Justificationes sex. Heac uti hilari accipias animo (quando quidem tali a me dantur) submisso, totoque pectore oro ut primum aliis

phlet: patrons paying for the printing of pamphlets and the prospect of selling pamphlets were not mutually exclusive: a combination of these two factors can explain the surge of pamphlets in these years.

Analogous to the increase of print material, contemporaries gradually developed ideas about the proper ways to inform and convince audiences by means of pamphlets.<sup>108</sup> Cardinal Granvelle in a letter to Margaret of Parma complained about a pro-Habsburg pamphlet of 1577 that was far too long to persuade its readers:

And with it [the letter to Margaret] comes a printed piece against the States which has been sent to me from Burgundy. I think Assonleville is the author. When people start arming, papers will cease. Therefore, it should have been written earlier, and it should have been shorter; because no one will read something that lengthy.<sup>109</sup>

Assonleville himself meanwhile worried that foreign audiences would believe the slander the States General produced about his master. In a letter to Granvelle he grumbled about the terrible and untrue pamphlets the States General had produced: 'Several members of the States revenge themselves by speaking and writing badly against the Lord Don Juan, as is shown in various books that are being produced every day; they are filled with injuries and calumniation rather than truth'.<sup>110</sup>

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linguis in lucem prodibunt (prodibunt autem adhuc seks), faxo Vestrae Dominationi de aliquot exemplaribus pro tantis in nos meritis prospiciatur'. Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, x, pp. 13–14; Geurts, *Nederlandse Opstand in pamfletten*, p. 67. *Sommier discours des justes causes et raisons qu'ont constrainct les estats generaux des Païs Bas de pourveoir à leur deffence contre le seigneur don Jehan d'Austrice* (Antwerp: Willem Silvius, 1577), USTC 4082.

108 This arguably started with Martin Luther. See for example Pettegree, *Brand Luther*.

109 Granvelle to Margaret of Parma, 21 February 1578: 'et avec ceste ira ung escript imprimé, que l'on m'a envoyé de Bourgongne, contre celluy des Estatz. J'ay opinion que l'auteur soit Hassonleville. Quant l'on vient à l'exécution des armes, les papiers cessent, cela devoit piéça estre fait et plus court; car chose si longue ne se lit pas de beaucoup'. Poulet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, vii, pp. 42–43.

110 Assonleville to Granvelle, 30 April 1578. 'Aulcuns des Estatz se vengent à mal dire et escrire contre le Seigneur Don Joan, comme plusieurs livres que se font journellement, monstrent, estantz plus pleins d'injures et de calumnies que de vérité'. Poulet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, vii, pp. 80–81.

## 9 French Peace Edicts in the Netherlands

Compared to the number of pamphlets printed in France on the pacification of Ghent and the Perpetual Edict, few French pacification edicts were reprinted in the Netherlands or translated into Dutch. Throughout the 1560s and 1570s, France saw the publication of a series of peace edicts, concluding each successive religious war: Amboise in 1563, Longjumeau (the re-establishment of Amboise) in 1568, Saint-Germain in 1570, Boulogne in 1573, Beaulieu in 1576, Poitiers in 1577 and Nérac—an agreement between Catherine de' Medici and Henry of Navarre—in 1579. Each time after the conclusion of a peace treaty in France, it was spread by couriers and announced at crossroads throughout the country to the sound of trumpets.<sup>111</sup> Then, the *Parlement de Paris* would register the edict and it would appear in an official print edition throughout France.

Many of the French edicts, with clauses that extensively stipulated the rights granted to Protestants, had been controversial in the Habsburg Netherlands. For example, no Netherlandish printer apparently dared to publish a reprint of the Edict of Longjumeau of March 1568 that concluded the Second War of Religion. The government of the Duke of Alva would immediately have repressed such a pamphlet, as Philip II had fiercely opposed the agreement between Charles IX and Condé.<sup>112</sup> This is not to say that no one in the Netherlands was familiar with the text: Filips van Campene mentioned having seen the French original in April 1568, 'printed in Paris, by Robert Estienne, official printer of the King'.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, several illegal Protestant pamphlets containing (parts of) the edict circulated, printed in the Protestant exile community of Emden or without mention of printer, place and date.<sup>114</sup>

One would expect that from 1572 onwards Protestant printers in those areas of Holland and Zeeland that had sided with William of Orange would be free to print Netherlandish copies of French edicts. Yet the Edict of Boulogne of 1573 was considered to be a Catholic triumph, as it rigorously reduced many of the rights that had been granted to the French Protestants in the Peace

111 Pierre de l'Estoile wrote how peace was published 'par les rues et quarrefours de Paris.' Lazard and Schrenk, *Registre-journal Henri III*, II, p. 31.

112 Van Tilborg, *Alzoo sprack elck*, pp. 78–81.

113 *Dagboek van Cornelis en Philip van Campene*, 128.

114 *Cort verhael op de middelen*, USTC 411386; *Copie van het contract ende pacificatie gheacordeert tusschen de conincklike Mt. van Vranckrijcke ende den Prince van Conde* (s.l., s.n., 1567), USTC 409831. Femke Deen has shown that, in the years preceding the alteration of 1578, the magistrates of Amsterdam also attempted to curtail local debates about peace: 'Criticism of the magistrates' refusal to consider making peace spread to such an extent that in December 1576 a by-law was issued, strictly forbidding any negative commentary about local policy'. Deen, 'Handwritten Propaganda', p. 219.



of Saint-Germain. A pamphlet made after the copy published in Paris on 1 August 1573 was duly printed in the Catholic print centre Douai, while in Emmerich a Dutch translation of the edict was published.<sup>115</sup> It is remarkable, however, that the Peace of Monsieur of 1576 did not spur the publication of many pamphlets in the Netherlands, as it was so widely discussed on the streets. Or is it perhaps a problem of lost editions? The edict did trigger the publication of news pamphlets in Germany.<sup>116</sup>

As we have seen in this chapter, a large discrepancy exists between the number of extant news pamphlets that were printed on a certain topic, and the news events chroniclers thought important to record in their chronicles. While Netherlandish chronicles displayed widespread concern for news about peace in France in 1575 and 1576, pamphlets printed on this subject are scarce. Conversely, historians have assumed a keen interest in Netherlandish peace attempts among the French, gauged by the flood of pamphlets that were printed in those years. Yet French chroniclers recorded little news about Netherlandish peace attempts. Scholars have debated whether high pamphlet numbers reflected commercial interests among publishers or if they reflected stakeholders' attempts at influencing public opinion. This case of the years 1576–1578 suggests that the production of pamphlets and the interest of audiences were not necessarily connected. When we focus on pamphlet production alone, the prevalence of 'public diplomacy' and stakeholders' initiatives to campaign for their cause tend to distort our view of what international audiences considered to be important news events.

<sup>115</sup> *Edict sur la pacification des troubles* (Douai: Jacques Bosccard, 1573), USTC 37466; *Edict belangende den Frieden ende Verdrach so nyeuwelicker tydt 11.08.1573 in Parlement tho Pariss publiciert ist worden* ([Emmerich: Berendt Petersz], 1573), USTC 428473.

<sup>116</sup> See for example *Warhaffte kurtze beschreibung wie der newgemacht religion fried zu Pariß angenommen die 63.artickel am Parlament von wort zu wort verlesen und publiciert völgendt von Koenigklicher Mayestet welche in irem Koenigklichen ornat und habit, persoenlich gesessen und sampt den fuernembsten hoechsten officirs der kron Franckreich den 14. May diß 1576. jars mit dem ayd bestettigt worden* ([Nürnberg, Nikolaus Knorr], 1576), USTC 704977. See on the matter of lost editions Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree (eds.), *Lost Books: Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe* (Brill: Leiden, 2016).

## Anjou, 1578–1583

Historians have had little positive to say about the decision of François de Valois, Duke of Anjou and Alençon, to assist the rebellious provinces in the Netherlands in the late 1570s. They have called his mission a failure, a catastrophic enterprise of an overambitious prince.<sup>1</sup> They have also criticized William of Orange for 'bringing the hated French into the country and inciting the "disastrous" Anjou-episode'.<sup>2</sup> Few contemporaries were happy with the French intervention in the Netherlands. The French living in the north suffered greatly from Anjou's troops scourging the country on their way to the Low Countries, and many inhabitants of the Netherlands were distrustful of his intentions. While Protestants suspected him because of his Catholicism, many Catholics preferred remaining under the reign of their 'rightful prince' Philip II to becoming subjects of a French ruler.<sup>3</sup> Yet inviting Anjou to the Netherlands was an emergency measure in a period when the Revolt was in serious danger of being suppressed. Alexander Farnese, Philip's new governor, who had

- 1 Only two biographies of Anjou exist, both dealing predominantly with Anjou's mission in the Netherlands. Mack P. Holt, *The Duke of Anjou and the Politique Struggle during the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) and Frédéric Duquenne, *L'entreprise du duc d'Anjou aux Pays-Bas de 1580 à 1584: les responsabilités d'un échec à partager* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Nord Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 1998). Both are more sympathetic towards Anjou than more general works on the Dutch Revolt or the Wars of Religion. Holt especially blames the States General for not providing Anjou with money. He concludes: 'Anjou should not, therefore, despite his numerous personal faults, bear total responsibility for his military failure in the Netherlands'. Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 199. See also Robert J. Knecht, *Hero or Tyrant? Henry III, King of France, 1574–89* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014), pp. 163–183.
- 2 K.W. Swart, *William of Orange and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1572–84* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p. 199, p. 214; Nicola M. Sutherland, 'William of Orange and the Revolt of the Netherlands: A Missing Dimension', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 74 (1983), pp. 201–231 (204).
- 3 Swart, *William of Orange*, p. 165. See for example the Ghent lawyer Philip van Campene: 'O silly Netherlanders, who suppose you will live much happier under a foreign lord than you would under your own king, while both are Catholics'. Ph. Blommaert (ed.), *Vlaemsche kronijk, of dagregister van al het gene gedenkwaardig voorgevallen is, binnen de stad Gent, sedert den 15 july 1566 tot 15 junij 1585* (Ghent: L. Hebbelynck, 1839), p. 299. Quoted in Anne-Laure Van Bruaene, 'Spectacle and Spin for a Spurned Prince: Civic Strategies in the Entry Ceremonies of the Duke of Anjou in Antwerp, Bruges and Ghent (1582)', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 11:4–5 (2007), pp. 263–284 (266).

succeeded Don Juan in 1578, would reconquer many cities from the rebels.<sup>4</sup> The rebellious provinces needed foreign help in order to survive, and it made sense to turn to the French king's brother. Supporters of Anjou were eager to stress that history justified French interference in the Netherlands: had not Flanders been a French fief in Burgundian times? As a follower of Anjou stated: 'French kings have always given assistance to the Flemish counts when the latter were in need of it'.<sup>5</sup>

Anjou's intervention in the Netherlands was a major political event, followed closely throughout Europe. During these years, Cardinal Granvelle's correspondence mentions his name even more often than that of William of Orange.<sup>6</sup> As Mack Holt has stressed, contemporaries never forgot that he would most likely become the next king of France.<sup>7</sup> As Henry III seemed unable to produce an heir, Anjou's lordship over the Netherlands could provoke a major shift in the European balance of power. Many reports speculated on the position of Henry III and Catherine de' Medici; while the queen mother and king officially disapproved of Anjou's mission, they were nevertheless suspected of secretly supporting him.<sup>8</sup> Another topic concerned the extent to which Elizabeth of England aided Anjou financially. Contemporaries also wondered whether she would marry him.<sup>9</sup> Such a match would unite England, France, and the Netherlands under a single crown, a prospect that greatly distressed Catholic and Protestant rulers alike.<sup>10</sup>

With Anjou in the Netherlands, the political situations in France and the Low Countries became more closely entwined than ever before. This chapter explores the exchange of news between the two countries during the Anjou era. How did French and Netherlandish chroniclers record and interpret Anjou's mission? I will argue that despite an increase in the exchange of news about the situation in their neighbouring country, these chroniclers did not

4 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 209–213.

5 'Proposition de l'envoyé du duc d'Anjou aux états généraux'. The deputies of Ypres to the magistrate of Ypres, Brussels, 26 November 1577. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, I, p. 102; see also Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots*, p. 311; Geurts, *Nederlandse opstand in pamfletten*, p. 109.

6 Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, IX, passim.

7 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 1.

8 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 157.

9 Natalie Mears, 'Love-making and Diplomacy: Elizabeth I and the Anjou Marriage Negotiations, c. 1578–1582', *History*, 86:284 (2001), pp. 442–466.

10 Ivan Cloulas, 'La diplomatie pontificale médiatrice entre la France et l'Espagne: La mission de l'archevêque de Nazareth auprès de François d'Anjou (1578)', *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez*, 5 (1969), pp. 451–459.

demonstrate any feelings of international solidarity or recognition of the interconnectedness of their situations.

## 1 Anjou Goes to the Netherlands

One of Anjou's major problems was 'his complete ignorance of the constitutional complexities of the Netherlands'.<sup>11</sup> However, even for well-informed and experienced diplomats, the situation in the Low Countries must have been extremely complicated during the late 1570s and early 1580s. While Don Juan and his successor Farnese conquered cities in the South, the States General were disintegrating, so-called 'Calvinist Republics' emerged in Brabant and Flanders, and in January 1579, the Walloon provinces of Hainault and Artois, and Douai, Lille, and Orchies, agreed in the Union of Arras to return under Philip's rule. The remaining provinces signed a treaty of mutual support, the Union of Utrecht. In July 1581, they took further steps, signing an Act of Abjuration ending their allegiance to Philip II. In the meantime, local considerations often prevailed over general interests; cities and noblemen easily switched sides whenever they thought switching would best serve their interests.<sup>12</sup>

The Dutch had made overtures to Anjou as early as 1573. Netherlandish envoys had frequented the French court in 1576 and 1577 in the hope of receiving aid from Henry III and his brother. In October 1577, they had even tried to persuade him by offering three costly Flemish tapestries, which the prince was forced to refuse on Henry's orders.<sup>13</sup> When the States instead turned to Archduke Matthias of Austria, Anjou opened separate negotiations with the States of Hainault.<sup>14</sup> In July 1578, he left France for Mons in Hainault. Upon his arrival, he wrote to William of Orange that he had come to 'assist, help, and aid the gentlemen of the States General of this country in their just quarrel'.<sup>15</sup> The latter, however, hesitated to accept his offer, doubting the amount of aid he would be able to provide. William of Orange eventually managed to persuade them to accept Anjou.

On 13 August 1578, the States appointed Anjou as 'defender of the liberty of the Netherlands against the tyranny of the Spanish and their allies'.<sup>16</sup> Only

11 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 111.

12 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 193.

13 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 93.

14 Swart, *William of Orange*, p. 151.

15 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 101.

16 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 104.

five months later he returned to France, plagued with financial troubles and with few supporters left in the States General. A trip to England in an attempt to win the hand of Elizabeth failed. In the winter of 1579–1580, William of Orange managed to convince the States General that they again needed to ask for Anjou's help. On 19 September 1580, they signed with Anjou the Treaty of Plessis-lès-Tours, a contract of alliance between the States General and the French prince.<sup>17</sup>

## 2      **Netherlandish Expectations**

What did inhabitants of the Netherlands expect from Anjou? They knew more about his brother, King Henry III, as they had heard reports about him for years, first as a general fighting for the Catholic League, then as elected king of Poland and king of France. Were they aware of Anjou's exploits against the French Huguenots in 1577? In April of that year, together with the Duke of Nevers, he had commanded the royal troops during the siege of the Huguenot stronghold of La Charité. In June 1577, he had captured another Protestant bulwark, Issoire. During the plundering that followed, his soldiers burned down the houses of Protestants and raped girls and women.<sup>18</sup> After Anjou's many years of associating with Huguenot nobles, these victories again rendered him a Catholic hero. The siege of La Charité and Anjou's part in it were the subject of various triumphal Catholic songs.<sup>19</sup>

Protestants in the Netherlands were indeed suspicious of Anjou.<sup>20</sup> William of Orange and Philip of Marnix had had a hard time trying to convince the towns of Holland to accept him as their overlord. Calvinist cities in the south were particularly anti-French. A Catholic song dating from 1580 voiced the misgivings that many Dutch Protestants apparently harboured—or it may in fact have been composed to arouse concern among Protestants:

Some say: 'How will matters go in Flanders?  
When the Duke d'Alençon, of French blood,  
will have received the government of Flanders,

17 For an analysis of the treaty's articles see Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, pp. 133–140. Holt has argued that the treaty with Anjou was far more revolutionary than the Act of Abjuration of 1581.

18 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 90.

19 See for example De Ronsard, *Rosier des chansons nouvelles*, song 31 (USTC 59747): 'Chanson nouvelle du siege de la Charité'.

20 See for instance the comments of the Groningen chronicler Abel Eppens tho Equart: *Kroniek van Abel Eppens tho Equart*, I. p. 401, p. 404, p. 417; II. p. 465, p. 576.

and the Seventeen Provinces are under his jurisdiction?  
Who knows if he will punish us with the murderer's rod'

...

The fear among the people is that in Ghent,  
a wedding such as the one in Paris will take place,  
it may well happen, as has been told,  
And some say: 'The people of Ghent deserve it'  
But one does best to be silent on this subject.<sup>21</sup>

Catholic cities were no less afraid of Anjou and his troops. The magistrates of Landrecy, Le Quesnoy, and Bavay in Hainault flatly refused to let any of Anjou's soldiers enter their cities. The States had promised Anjou these fortified towns as bases. The inhabitants, however, had heard reports about the misbehaviour of his soldiers and stated that they would rather leave their city and deliver it to Anjou completely empty than admitting him and his troops.<sup>22</sup> The French were soon aware that they would not receive a warm welcome. An agent of Anjou reassured his sister, the Queen of Navarre, that this was not the prince's fault, as the inhabitants of the Netherlands were distrustful by nature: 'we have to deal with a very affectionate people, that is however infinitely suspicious'.<sup>23</sup>

The diaries of Wouter Jacobsz and Jan de Pottre initially report moderate enthusiasm about Anjou's arrival. Wouter Jacobsz heard in August 1578 'that everyone said they would rather bring in the French and be their subjects, than that the States be subjected to the Spanish nation'.<sup>24</sup> Jan de Pottre, expressing his usual interest in highly placed persons, stressed Anjou's lofty position: 'he

21 'Dan zegghen de zommighe: 'Hoe sal 't in Vlaendren gaen? / Als duc d'Alençon van den franschen bloede / 't Gouvernement van Vlaendren zal hebben ontfaen, / Ende als de Zeventien Provincien onder zijn jurisdictie staen? / Wie weet of hy ons straffen zal met eens moorders roede ...; / De vrees es in 't volck nu zoo gheingient / Dat te Ghendt een bruloft, als te Parijs moght hebben lest stê.' / Eens moght gebeuren, 't zy u vercombient / En zom zegghen se: 'De Gentenaers hebben 't wel verdient.' / Maer dieder minst af zeght, die vaerter best mê'. Ph. Blommaert (ed.), *Politieke balladen, refereinen, liederen en spotdichten der XVI<sup>e</sup> eeuw* (Ghent: Annoot-Braeckman, 1846), pp. 157–159.

22 See for instance the complaints of the *lieutenant* and the *jurés* of Le Quesnoy to the States General, Le Quesnoy, 3 June 1578. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, 1, p. 258; Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, pp. 106–107.

23 'Nous avons à faire à ung peuple très affectioné, mès aveques infinys sopsonz'. Des Pruneaux to the Queen of Navarre, s.l., n.d. (probably Mons, May 1578). Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, 1, p. 256.

24 'Op den XXXIen (31 August 1578) ... Ende worden veel gehoort, dat overal geroepen werde, dat men die Fransoysen soudien liever inhaelen om onder haer gebod te staen dan die Staeten haer soudien willen begeven onder die Spaensche natie'. *Dagboek van Wouter Jacobsz*, II, 748.

is the brother of the King of France, and will be next in line to be king, because the present king has no children'.<sup>25</sup> Sometime later he wrote: 'And so we have a new lord again: he is supposed to be better than the other governors we have had; they say he is about 26 years old'.<sup>26</sup> In August 1581, the city of Bruges organized a day of prayer to implore God for the 'safe arrival of the Duke of Alençon in this country and a victory over the Walloons'.<sup>27</sup> The Arras chronicler Pontus Payen, in contrast, expressed ferocious anti-French sentiments, as did many other chroniclers in the Walloon provinces.<sup>28</sup>

### 3 Marriage Plans

During the winter of 1581–1582, news about a possible marriage between Anjou and Elizabeth caused a stir throughout Europe. The idea of a marriage between the two royals was not new. In 1578, Anjou had already travelled to England to court its queen, but to no avail. Holt attributes the failure of the match to the hostile reaction of the English people as public opinion was fiercely against the marriage. Pamphlets reminded their readers that Anjou was a Catholic who had committed 'abominable cruelties' against Protestants.<sup>29</sup> Many among Elizabeth's councilors were also opposed to the match. Nevertheless Anjou again crossed the Channel in October 1581 to renew the marriage project.<sup>30</sup>

Diarists in France, England, and the Netherlands followed the negotiations with great interest. Pierre de L'Estoile described how already in 1578 'everyone, although not having heard anything, has something to say on the subject: so most of the shopkeepers and workers in Paris talk and chat lightly about

25 'den Duck d'Anjou; het is den bruer van den coninck van Vrancrijck, ende hy was naeste oock om coninck van Vrancrijck te syne, want de coninck gheen kinderen en hadde'. *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 114.

26 'Alsoe dat wy nu wederomme eenen nuwen heere hebben; beter moet hy zijn dan dander gouvernuers gheweest hebben, men sayt dat hy ontrent xxvi jaeren out es!' *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 117.

27 'ende om te bydden dat duc d'Allensoen zoude indt landt gheraeken, ende dat zy zouden vycitoryhe hebben jehghens de Vaelen'. Émile Varenbergh (ed.), *Chronique Flamande 1571–1584* (Ghent: Hoste, 1869), pp. 33–34.

28 *Mémoires de Pontus Payen*, II. passim. See a letter from the Prior of Saint-Vaast, 26 October 1578; 'A Mons, dimanche dernier xix, se fait une esmotion de trois mille bourgeois quy disoient debvoir jecter Monsieur le duc et le conte de Lalaing et tous les françois en l'eau'. *Mémoires de Pontus Payen*, II. 235–239.

29 John Stubbes, *The discoverie of a gaping gulf whereinto England is like to be swallowed by another French mariage, if the Lord forbid not the banes, by letting her Majestie see the sin and punishment thereof* ([London: Hugh Singleton for William Page], 1579).

30 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, pp. 146–165; Mears, 'Love-making and Diplomacy'.

state affairs'.<sup>31</sup> Claude Haton expressed his doubts about the feasibility of the marriage: 'the queen of England is 46 or 48 years old, and could well have been his mother'.<sup>32</sup> While English Protestants generally opposed the match, their coreligionists in the Netherlands prayed for the marriage to happen. On 22 November 1581, Elizabeth surprised everyone when walking through the corridor in Whitehall, she suddenly kissed Anjou on the mouth, gave him one of her rings, and declared she wished to marry him. Philip of Marnix, who was in London, immediately sent letters with the happy news to the Council of State and William of Orange.<sup>33</sup> William subsequently wrote to the States, who thereupon decreed a common day of prayer to celebrate the news.<sup>34</sup> Its announcement revealed how the reports had reached the Netherlands: 'The States have received news from His Princely Excellency on the 27th, saying that the Queen of England and Anjou have married at last on the 22nd: His Excellency is certain that we shall rejoice over this news, and has therefore sent it to us with diligence, trusting that we shall thank God, and hoping that we shall make demonstrations of joy, as he is certain that they will please Her Majesty and His Highness'.<sup>35</sup>

The city of Bruges did not need telling twice. On November 28, they celebrated the news with bonfires, lanterns, and the tolling of bells. They hung the

31 'et duquel chacun se mesloit de discourir, encore qu'il n'entendist rien: les contouers et ouvriers des boutiques de Paris servans, pour la pluspart, à en conter et deviser des affaires d'Estat'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, 11, p. 220; compare Haton, *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV, p. 429: 'Et y avoit quai deux ans entiers que on parloit par la France de ce mariage, que plusieurs estimoient ester au damage de la France, aultres estimoient que non'.

32 'la royne d'Angleterre aagée de quarente-six ou huit ans et qui eust bien esté sa mere'. Haton, *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV, p. 342.

33 Marnix to the Council of State and to William of Orange, 22 November 1581. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, 111, pp. 258–260.

34 Marnix to the Council of State, London, 22 November 1581. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, IV, pp. 258–260.

35 'Is de Staten gelevert seeckere schryvens van syne Princelycke Excellentie van 27 deser maendt uit de stadt Gent—dat den 22en dag der svoors maendt het huwelyck tusschen hare Majesteit (de Koninginne van Engelandt) en syne Hoogheydt (den Hartog van Anjou) eyndelyck is gesloten;—en syne Excellentie geheel verseeckerende dat alsucken tydinghe den Staaten seer aengenaem sal zyn—syne Excellentie niet en heeft willen nalaeten de Staaten in diligencie deselve tijdinge mede te deelen, verhoopende syluyden niet nalaten sullen Godt Almachtig daervoren te doen dancken ende loven, en voorts alle demonstratien van blydschap te doen, des syne Excellentie op de Staten is begerende, versekert zynde dat deselve hare Majesteyt en syne Hoogheydt aengenaem sal zyn'. N.C. Kist, *Neêrlands bededagen en biddagsbrieven: eene bijdrage ter opbouwing der geschiedenis van staat en kerk in Nederland*, 2 vols. (Leiden: S. en J. Luchtmans, 1848–1849), 11, pp. 38–39. See also William of Orange to the States of Zeeland, 27 November 1581.



coats of arms of Anjou and England next to each other on top of the *Bourse*.<sup>36</sup> On 2 December, however, Marnix had to report to Orange that Elizabeth after all had no plans to marry—although she would continue to fund Anjou's enterprise in the Netherlands. The news greatly disappointed Catherine de' Medici and Henry III.<sup>37</sup> Others watching the Anjou-Elizabeth courtship were less surprised. Granvelle, for example, had been skeptical from the start. As he wrote from Madrid to one of his correspondents in January 1582: 'It is the same old song: they compete to see who is better in misguiding the other; the French want money, as they are in great need of it'.<sup>38</sup> And in another letter he called it a 'farce, which he had seen the Queen playing many times before'.<sup>39</sup>

#### 4 News from France

During Anjou's stay in the Low Countries, many chroniclers seem, paradoxically, to have lost interest in news from France. It is true that during these years France witnessed fewer shocking events than before. Diarists recorded with relief how, after years of war and uncertainty, peace had arrived at last. Yet not all of France remained peaceful and quiet. During the first months of 1580, Henry of Navarre occupied several Catholic cities in the southwest, instigating the Seventh War of Religion.<sup>40</sup> Henry III subsequently ordered Anjou to go and establish peace in the south. Anjou, then, first had to fulfil his duty as peacemaker in the Midi, before he could think of raising an army

36 Varenbergh, *Chronique Flamande*, p. 47. De Pottre was still not sure about the failure of the marriage plans in February 1582: 'en X<sup>sten</sup> Februario a<sup>o</sup> XV<sup>c</sup> LXXXII, quam le Duc d'Aniou tot Vliessinghe wt Ingelant, daer hy langhe in Ingelant gheleghen hadde; men sayde hier dat was om de coeniginne te hebben te huewelijck'. *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 117. Pierre de L'Estoile stressed that important English noblemen accompanied Anjou from London to the Netherlands: 'la Roine, lui continuant ses faveurs et courtoisies, lui presta trois navires de guerre équippés à l'avantage, et le fist accompagner par les Milhords comte de Lester, de Havard, et de Housedon, et de plusiers autres seigneurs et gentilshommes anglois'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, IV, p. 13.

37 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 164.

38 'Au regard du mariage d'Alançon en Angleterre, c'est la vieille chanson: ilz contendent pour veoir qui mieulx trompera son compagnon; les François vuillent argent, dont ilz ont grand faulte'. Granvelle to Fonck, 8 January 1582. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, IX, p. 8.

39 'Et de son mariage c'est, comme vous dicts, une farce, laquelle j'ay veu jouer à la Roine d'Angleterre dès 21 en ça plussieurs fois'. Granvelle to Cardinal de la Baume, 11 February 1582. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, IX, p. 60.

40 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 118; Arlette Jouanna, *La France du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, 1483–1598* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996, reprint 2016), pp. 569–572.

and returning to the Netherlands, especially if he hoped to obtain support from his brother. The Peace of Fleix was concluded on 26 November 1580. Holt attributed the quick conclusion of the negotiations to the presence of the Dutch envoys, who constantly pressured Anjou to make the deal and return to the Netherlands.<sup>41</sup>

The States General were kept abreast of every event concerning Anjou. They had their deputies Provyn and Caron in Tours, providing them with regular newsletters. Marnix was there as well, keeping his correspondents informed of the situation.<sup>42</sup> Delft, where the States General were residing in the beginning of 1581, celebrated the news about peace in France.<sup>43</sup> Yet the Dutch focus on Anjou seems to have hidden the rest of France from view. Few chroniclers had anything to say about the situation in France during these years.<sup>44</sup> To be sure, diplomats and statesmen were as engaged as ever. The attitude and actions of Henry III were a special subject of concern: was he going to support his brother openly? Why did he suddenly inspect the troops in the north of France? How much influence could the Spanish ambassador exert to convince him to remain on the side of Philip II?<sup>45</sup>

41 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 140.

42 See for example Provyn and Caron to the States General, Tours, 24 August 1580. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, III, pp. 432–437 or Marnix to William of Orange, Plessis-lès-Tours, 19 September 1580. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, III, pp. 494–497.

43 The States General to Anjou, Delft, 1 January 1581. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, III, pp. 624–629.

44 Interestingly, although Netherlandish pamphlet production peaked in the years 1578–1585, there are hardly any Netherlandish pamphlets that discuss news from France. See Harline, *Pamphlets*, p. 7: ‘Hence, we see from about 1578 to about 1585 more pamphlets rolling off the press than ever before’. In his article on the interlocking of French and Netherlandish print cultures, Pettegree does not mention Anjou’s enterprise in the Netherlands at all: Pettegree, ‘France and the Netherlands’. Anjou himself was an enthusiastic pamphleteer and published many pamphlets explaining his actions and attacking his opponents, which were mostly printed in Antwerp. Monica Stensland remarks that in these years Farnese as well began to see the importance of pamphleteering. Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, pp. 96–107. This generated intense pamphlet debates between the rebels, the loyalists, Anjou, William of Orange, and other parties involved in the Dutch Revolt. For a list of Anjou’s polemical publications see: Geurts, *Nederlandse opstand in pamfletten*, pp. 83–127. See also Schellekens, ‘Antwerpen en de ontwikkelingen in de pamfletproductie’; Andrew Pettegree and Malcolm Walsby (eds.), *Netherlandish books: Books Published in the Low Countries and Dutch Books Published Abroad before 1601*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), I, ‘France’ (Alençon, Anjou), pp. 545–548. And compare Hauser, *Sources de l’histoire de France*, III, ‘Intervention de Monsieur aux Pays-Bas’, pp. 282–284.

45 These questions haunted Granvelle and his correspondents. See for example Morillon to Granvelle, 12 February 1582. ‘On dit que le Roy de France vad visiter ses frontières’, Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, IX, p. 66; or: ‘Le Roy de France faict samblant en descouvert que les emprinses de Monsieur luy desplaissent, mais qu’il ne le peult

There was one group in the Netherlands, however, that was very well informed about domestic French affairs: the agents, generals, and other members of Anjou's entourage and army in the Low Countries. Most of them kept up a steady correspondence with their friends and relatives in France. They heard about the quarrels at court, marriage plans between members of noble families, and more generally about rumours circulating in Paris. In these letters they encoded the most sensitive fragments: those that dealt with the relationship between Henry III and his brother and the movement of troops.<sup>46</sup> At the end of the 1570s, then, more French news circulated in the Netherlands than ever, though mainly among the members of Anjou's entourage.

## 5 French News Networks in the Netherlands

The large number of Frenchmen present in the Netherlands led to a significant intensification in the transnational exchange of news. Anjou had his agents everywhere, sending him the latest news from all over the Low Countries. François de la Noue, for example, sent him reports from Brussels, while his agent, le sieur Neveu, wrote from Middelburg.<sup>47</sup> The Frenchmen in the Netherlands also corresponded among themselves. Roch de Sorbies, seigneur des Pruneaux, who resided in Antwerp, functioned as Anjou's 'information hub', collecting the news he received and passing it on to Anjou in France.<sup>48</sup> Catherine de' Medici and Henry III had an agent of their own in Antwerp, Pomponne de Bellièvre.<sup>49</sup> William of Orange, in his turn, employed Frenchmen such as Philippe du Plessis-Mornay and Hubert Languet as news agents, while asking Des Pruneaux 'to warn him as often as possible about what happens in France'.<sup>50</sup> The political chaos in the Netherlands, in which the interests of

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empescher', Morillon to Granvelle, 24 March 1582. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, IX, p. 111.

46 See for example: Harengier (Paris) to Des Pruneaux (Antwerp), Paris, 7 August 1579. 'Bruits qui circulent à Paris', Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, III, pp. 117–122.

47 See for instance: François de la Noue to Des Pruneaux, 11 January 1579, Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, II, pp. 481–483, or Neveu to Villers, *maréchal de camp* of the French troops in Flanders, Middelburg, 23 July 1581, Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, IV, p. 119.

48 See on Roche de Sorbies, seigneur de Pruneaux: Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, pp. 98–100, and Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, passim.

49 For the (manuscript) correspondence of Pomponne de Bellièvre, see: *Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris*, Papiers et correspondance de Pomponne Ier de Bellièvre. (1566–4607). XVII Lettres, pour la plupart orig., adressées principalement à Bellièvre (1581–1582).

50 'de l'avertir autant que possible de ce qui se passe en France'. Orange to Des Pruneaux, The Hague, 1 July 1581. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, IV, pp. 105–108. Swart, *William of Orange*, p. 145.

cities and provinces varied greatly, stimulated every faction to operate its own agents. From the magistrates of Amsterdam to the Four Members of Flanders, every party corresponded with their own envoys.<sup>51</sup> Many of them also negotiated with Anjou on their own initiative, which added greatly to the confusion. Another reason for the chaos in the news exchange in those years was the collapse of the Taxis international post system in 1577. The States General had arrested general postmaster Leonard von Taxis, as they questioned his loyalties because of his old allegiance to the Habsburgs. He lost his property and left the Netherlands. Numerous local courier services rushed to fill the vacuum.<sup>52</sup>

Despite the busy communication back and forth between the French and Dutch at home and abroad, almost every letter contains urgent pleas for more information. Many correspondents complained about a serious lack of news, which made it hard for them to assess the political situation. A letter from De la Noue to Des Pruneaux in Ghent shows his worries about the absence of news: 'I have heard nothing from France and I have not heard stories nor received any news from my son or the rest of my retinue, whom I have left in the vicinity of Boulogne. It is true that the wind has been contrary ...'.<sup>53</sup> Marnix was more adamant as he wrote in an angry letter from France at the end of 1580 how the absence of news from the Netherlands made his job nearly impossible: 'I exceedingly want to receive your reports more often, because that matters enormously, as you know'.<sup>54</sup>

Apart from complaints about a chronic lack of information, Anjou's letters express irritation about the 'false rumours' that his enemies intentionally spread to blacken his reputation.<sup>55</sup> He tried to counter them by sending constant reassurances of his good intentions to his correspondents. Another

51 The 'Quatres membres de Flandres', for example, ran their own agent in Paris, who kept them informed about the 'attitude ambigue du roi de France'. Cormonti to the Four Members of Flanders, 27 May 1581, Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, IV, pp. 65–69.

52 Schobesberger *et al.*, 'European Postal Networks', p. 21; Liesbeth Geevers, *Gevalen vazallen: De integratie van Oranje, Egmont en Horn in de Spaans-Habsburgse monarchie (1559–1567)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 46.

53 'Je n'ay rien entendu de France et n'ay ouy comptes et aucunes nouvelles de mon filz ny de reste de mon train que j'avois laissé vers Boulogne. Vray est que le vente a esté contraire ...' La Noue to Des Pruneaux, Ghent, 18 March 1580. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, III, p. 263.

54 'Je voudrois extrêmement que nous fussions plus souvent adverty de voz nouvelles, car cela importe extrêmement, comme vous savez'. Marnix to the States General, Fleix-lès-Sainte Foy, 28 October 1580. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, III, pp. 546–548.

55 See for instance Anjou to 'various *seigneurs* in the Netherlands', Blois, 25 November 1576. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, I, pp. 23–24; or the count of Rochepot to the prince of Espinoy, Folleville, 1 May 1581. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, IV, pp. 15–16.

frustration concerned the interception of his letters. Apparently, a multitude of spies watched the French-Netherlandish border in hopes of catching his messengers.<sup>56</sup> An effective remedy was entrusting couriers with oral reports.<sup>57</sup> Interestingly, when Anjou first arrived in the Netherlands, he presented himself to the States as a useful news gatherer, constantly sending them the latest news and valuable information. On 29 September 1578, for example, after capturing Mons, Anjou sent the States 'interesting news concerning their safety, together with flags from the enemy captured by his soldiers ... to testify what has happened'.<sup>58</sup>

The assassination attempt on William of Orange in 1582 reveals the increase in news networks between the Netherlands and France in those years. On 18 March 1582, after Sunday dinner in his Antwerp residence, William of Orange was shot through the head by Jean Jaureguy, a young man from Biscay. Bystanders immediately stabbed Jaureguy to death. William, severely wounded, was taken to a bed chamber in the palace. Wild tales about the assassination attempt instantly flew around Antwerp. Many citizens believed that Anjou was behind the attack, forcing Anjou and his followers to hide from an angry mob. In the following weeks, William kept to his room where he was tended by the most prominent physicians. Meanwhile, many throughout Europe were under the impression that he had died.

Due to the presence of so many Frenchmen in Antwerp, Pierre de L'Estoile very shortly afterwards had a more detailed view of the events than did major political figures such as Cardinal Granvelle and Queen Elizabeth, who had a team of messengers and informants at their disposal. A week after the assault, he recorded a detailed account of the event. He knew exactly where the murder attempt had taken place and where the prince had been hit (in his jaw). Sometime later, he also knew what had happened to Jaureguy and the other conspirators: the first had been slaughtered on the spot; the others were executed ten days later. He stated that the prince had good hopes soon to recover fully.<sup>59</sup> L'Estoile, although often more knowledgeable than many fellow

56 For Farnese's spies, see Anjou to Villers, Evreux, 3 June 1581, footnotes. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, IV, pp. 73–74. Also see the baron d'Inchy to the prince of Espinoy, citadel of Cambrai, 17 June 1581, complaining about the 'multitude d'espions qu'ilz [the enemy RB] ont sur la frontière'. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, IV, p. 84.

57 'J'ay receu de voz nouvelles par mon homme et par voz letters'. La Noue to des Pruneaux, La Fère, 26 January 1580. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, III, pp. 206–207.

58 'leurs drappeaux, lesquels m'ont esté envoyez, et les vous envoie pour tesmoigner ce qu'est advenu'. Anjou to the States General, Mons, 29 September 1578. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, II, pp. 85–88.

59 'Le Prince d'Oranges si bien pensé, qu'au bout de trois mois il fust gueri de toutes ses plaies'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, IV, p. 18.

citizens, was not the only one who knew of William's recovery. Priest Jehan de la Fosse also knew that Orange had survived the assault. However, he had not heard that Jaureguy had been killed instantly, but recorded that he had been executed with the two others.<sup>60</sup>

In the rest of Europe, chroniclers remained in doubt as to Orange's condition. On 5 May 1582, Hermann Weinsberg did not know what to believe: several weeks before, the news had spread that William of Orange had been shot through the head and had succumbed to his wound. Now, however, new reports stated the prince had been seen walking around Antwerp, completely dressed in red. Some people said Orange lived, others contradicted the news. At the same time, Weinsberg had heard that William's wife Charlotte de Bourbon had died. This report, he wrote confidently, was definitely beyond doubt.<sup>61</sup> Closer to Antwerp, in the city of Bruges, there was confusion over Orange's condition as well. From his sickbed in Antwerp, on 23 March 1582, he had written a letter to the magistrates of Bruges, whom he assured that his doctors had good hopes of his recovery. The prince had even signed the letter himself.<sup>62</sup> However, on the 4th of April, the Bruges chronicler Willem Weydts recorded that news had reached Bruges that the prince had died.<sup>63</sup>

Usually highly informed news gatherers remained in the dark for a long time as well. In May, Elizabeth's secretary Walsingham was still in doubt as to whether Orange was alive or dead, due to contradictory reports from his spies in the Netherlands.<sup>64</sup> Granvelle, who was in Madrid at that time, had been overjoyed upon receiving the news of the assault. He wrote happily to his correspondents: 'God be praised. If only he had died twenty years ago!'<sup>65</sup> Although messages to the contrary reached Granvelle as well, he clung for a long time to the idea that Orange was dead. Despite receiving reports from

60 *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 144.

61 *Autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen Hermann Weinsbergs*, 5 May 1582.

62 William of Orange to the Magistrate of Bruges, 23 March 1582: 'naer het oordeel dat de doctoren ende chirurgienen daervan cunnen geven, daer is zeer goede hope van beter-inge'. See: Correspondence William of Orange, <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/wvo>.

63 'Op den iiiie dach van apryl, soe quam de tydinghe te Brughe dat de prynse van Oranghye gestorven was' Varenbergh, *Chronique Flamande*, p. 52.

64 Lisa Jardine, *The Awful End of Prince William the Silent: The First Assassination of a Head of State with a Hand-Gun* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005), pp. 72–74.

65 Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, 1x, pp. 107–108 and p. 121. For years, Granvelle and his faithful correspondent Morillon had gloated over William's fear of assassins. Some years earlier, Morillon had written to Granvelle that William of Orange was so scared that he looked under his bed and behind tapestries before he went to bed. See for instance Morillon to Granvelle, 23 March 1567: 'ledict prince est en telle terreur et appréhension que chascun soir il regarde soubz son liect et derrière les tapiz s'il n'y at personne'. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, 11, p. 315.

French sources in Antwerp stating the opposite, he flatly refused to believe them. Still in July 1582, he wrote: 'I believe that Orange is dead, and I do not care what the French say, that he is better and goes everywhere; because he is invisible, and if he were alive, he would make much more noise'.<sup>66</sup>

Anjou's intervention in the Low Countries, then, caused French and Netherlandish political interests to entwine closely. The presence of so many Frenchmen in the Low Countries—members of his entourage, soldiers, generals, diplomats—led to an intensification of the international exchange of news and changed the infrastructure of news. Diplomatic correspondence intensified, and, although it is as always hard to determine, there must have been an increase in oral reports as well, as many envoys sent news by word of mouth. Numerous expatriate Frenchmen corresponded with their friends and relatives back home. At the same time, the disintegrating political situation in the Netherlands prompted Netherlandish cities, noblemen, and organizations such as the Four Members of Flanders to negotiate with Anjou on their own initiative. Having an interest in keeping abreast of the latest news, these parties often ran their own news agents in France. News about Franco-Netherlandish relations, then, became a matter of concern for an increasing number of people, while news networks expanded significantly and paralleled the political fragmentation. However, as French chronicles will show, this intensification of news exchange did not consequently prompt feelings of sympathy for the Dutch among the French.

## 6 French Views of Anjou's Mission in the Netherlands

In 1581, chronicler Claude Haton made it clear how much he blamed the Dutch for the current turmoil in France:

What thefts, what ransoms, what oppression, what violation of girls, what rape of women, what freedom to behave badly the French soldiers have taken who have joined *Monsieur le Duc* to help those mutinous and rebellious Flemings and *Cambrésiens*! They [the Flemings] have caused the French to hate them, and to hate *Monsieur le Duc* forever. In order to liberate themselves, they have forced us into servitude.<sup>67</sup>

66 Granvelle, on 5 July 1582: 'Je tiens le Prince d'Orange pour mort, sans m'arrester [à] ce que disent les François, qu'il est guéri et vad partout; car il est invisible, et s'il vivoit feroit plus de bruit'. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou correspondance*, VIII, p. 97.

67 'Quelz volz, quelz larvins, quelles ranssons, quelles oppressions, quelz viollemens de filles, quelz efforcemens de femmes, quelle liberté de mal faire ont prins tous gens de guerre françoys qui se sons mis aux champs soubz le nom de monsieur le Duc pour

During the years that Anjou stayed in the Netherlands, the knowledge of many Frenchmen about the Dutch Revolt increased considerably. One could easily think that this would have led to more involvement and even international solidarity. Several French provinces, however, suffered from soldiers passing through their villages on their way to the Netherlands. At a time when many Frenchmen were relieved that domestic peace had finally arrived, they again saw soldiers, on their way to participate in a foreign war, pestering the countryside.

Claude Haton, then, could feel only hate for the rebels in the Low Countries. He did not acknowledge that the Netherlands suffered from a civil war very similar to the one that had plagued his own country. He failed to distinguish between rebels and loyal subjects of Philip II.<sup>68</sup> According to him, the whole of the Netherlands had risen in revolt and not without precedent either. He remarked that the 'inhabitants of that country are used to rebellion when their princes or governors begin to displease them'.<sup>69</sup> A few years later he backed this statement with historical sources: 'These lands of Flanders, Liège, Artois, and Cambrésis have always been subject to rebellion against their princes, and only want mutations and new changes, as it appears from the histories and annals from France and their own country'.<sup>70</sup> A contemporary pamphlet voiced similar opinions about the rebellious nature of the inhabitants of the Low Countries, stating how 'the Flemish have always preferred their *seigneurs* weak rather than powerful'.<sup>71</sup>

What news about Anjou's enterprise reached France? How did the French interpret his mission? Anjou made it clear that he fought both for his own glory and the glory of France. He actively encouraged the spread of news about his—scarce—victories and his splendid Joyous Entry into Antwerp

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le secours de ces mutins et rebelles flamens et cambresiens! Ilz sont cause que la France les hayra, et monsieur le Duc à jamais. Ilz sont cause de nous mettre en servitude pour se mettre en liberté'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV. 419.

68 However, he once wrote: 'du pays de Flandre, du moins des villes et pays rebelles'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV. 70.

69 'Fort subject les habitans desditz pais à rebellion contre leurs princes et gouverneurs, quant ilz commansent à leur desplaire'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV. 18. Compare Rodríguez Pérez, *Tachtigjarige Oorlog in Spaanse ogen*, pp. 49–114, esp. pp. 78–79.

70 'Ce pays de Flandre, de Lyege, d'Artois, de Cambresis ne cessa jamais d'estre subject à rebellion contre ses princes et ne demande que mutation et nouveau changement, comme il appert par les histoires et annalles françoises et de leur pays'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV. 419.

71 The pamphlet mentioned here is: *Lettre contenant un avis de l'estat auquel sont les affaires des Pais-Bas* (Reims [=Antwerpen]: François du Pré, 1578), USTC 4159, cited in: Machielsens, 'Bodin in the Netherlands', p. 179.



in 1582. However, these few positive reports could not blot out the many distressing stories circulating about his enterprise. The French Fury—his attack on Antwerp in January 1583—and the abominable behaviour of his soldiers ruined his reputation among his countrymen.

## 7 Why Go to the Netherlands?

On 8 July 1578, Anjou hurriedly left France for Mons, accompanied by only a small retinue. The Spanish ambassador Juan de Vargas Mexia wrote to Philip II how the news about his sudden departure shocked the French court: some even said that it had rendered Henry ill.<sup>72</sup> Diarists were impressed by the speed with which Anjou reached Mons, something he achieved due to his use of post relay horses.<sup>73</sup> Henry now faced a dilemma: in order to avoid war with Spain he had to prohibit his subjects from assisting his brother. In fact, he had already been doing so for months. As soon as it had become clear that Anjou intended to aid the rebels in the Netherlands, the king issued proclamations against joining him. On 5 July, he had blocked all Seine bridges to prevent Anjou's troops from crossing that river.<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, he did not want to allow his own brother to come to grief without any support. He therefore occasionally and secretly provided him with money.<sup>75</sup> Meanwhile, he had to deal with envoys of the States, on the one side, and the Spanish ambassador, on the other, who were constantly pestering him for assistance.

Contemporaries appreciated Henry's dilemma: Claude Haton recorded how the king was unable to help his brother openly because this would cause immediate war with Spain.<sup>76</sup> Henry, in fact, had published ordinances throughout the whole of France, announcing that it was prohibited on punishment of death and confiscation of property to enroll in Anjou's army.<sup>77</sup> In his diary, Pierre de L'Estoile expressed grave doubts that these edicts would prevent

<sup>72</sup> Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 101.

<sup>73</sup> Several diarists mention Anjou's fast journey to the Netherlands with 'chevaux de relais': *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV, 70; Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, II, p. 203; 'Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke', 301–302.

<sup>74</sup> Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, pp. 96–103.

<sup>75</sup> Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, pp. 172–173. Nevertheless, according to Pierre de L'Estoile, Anjou was often angry that Henry spent more money on his mignons than on his own brother. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, III, p. 162. On Henry and his mignons see Katherine B. Crawford, 'Love, Sodomy, and Scandal: Controlling the Sexual Reputation of Henry III', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 12:4 (2003), pp. 513–542.

<sup>76</sup> *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV, 18, and IV, 106.

<sup>77</sup> Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 153.

anyone from joining.<sup>78</sup> Distrustful as ever, Granvelle was positive that Henry supported his brother throughout the whole enterprise in the Netherlands in order to thwart Philip II.<sup>79</sup> Henry's subjects were more convinced of his claim that he did not want Anjou in the Netherlands. Jehan de la Fosse assumed that the French prince was in the Low Countries without the king's permission. According to Pierre de L'Estoile, Catherine de' Medici had desperately tried to stop her youngest son from going. And in a chronicle that he began in the late 1580s, the Catholic grammar teacher Sébastien le Pelletier from Chartres stressed that Anjou had gone to the Netherlands on his own initiative, 'following bad counsel'.<sup>80</sup>

There existed some confusion among French chroniclers as to whom Anjou was exactly going to help over in the Netherlands. The Calvinist diarist in Millau wrote in 1577 that Anjou rallied troops to assist William of Orange, who fought against the Spaniards.<sup>81</sup> Claude Haton, by contrast, thought that he had been invited by 'the rebel cities and provinces of Flanders', whose 'chiefs' resided in Mons.<sup>82</sup> Frenchmen began to acknowledge the States General as an important party in the civil war. Haton described them as: 'The *gueux* and Huguenots of Flanders that are called the States'.<sup>83</sup> For some, the situation was hard to grasp: the victories over the Huguenots in Issoire and La Charité had recently turned Anjou into a Catholic figurehead, and now he was off to aid Protestant rebels abroad? Yet the French did not automatically equate all rebels in the Netherlands with Protestants. They were familiar with rebels crossing religious divides: in France, too, malcontented Catholics had often joined forces with Huguenots. Therefore, many chroniclers described the Revolt not in religious terms, but as a political conflict between the States and William of Orange, on one side, and the King of Spain and his governors (Don Juan, Farnese) on

78 'Mais de tous ces mandemens n'en fut veue aucune execution, le Roi se contentant de les avoir publier, comme ont accoustumé les princes en tells affaires'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, III, p. 143.

79 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 157. Haton also suspected Henry III of being 'tacitement contents': *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV, 73.

80 *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 147; *Histoire de Sébastien Le Pelletier*, 61; Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, III, p. 142.

81 'le frère du roi feüst sollicité d'aler en Flandres, per l'aide et secours du prince d'Orange guerroyant en Flandre contre l'Espagnol. Lequel print ceste armée. Dont, ledict sieur duc d'Alanson fust mis en partie gouverneur, comme lui feüst donné, au dict pais de Flandres'. *Mémoires d'un calviniste*, 394.

82 'chefz de la rebellion flamende'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV, 70.

83 'Les gueux et huguenots de Flandre qu'on appelloit les estatz'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV, 204.

the other.<sup>84</sup> Even so, some Frenchmen were keen to stress that Anjou had not turned Huguenot: the Parisian priest Jehan de la Fosse found it important to mention that Anjou immediately organized a procession upon his arrival in Mons.<sup>85</sup>

Apart from speculating about Anjou's motivations for going to the Netherlands and questioning Henry's consent, some people also blamed the prince for leaving France at a time when the king needed his assistance. Claude Haton complained: 'as a true heir of the crown of France, and as the King's brother, he should cooperate with His Majesty to exterminate the rebels of the crown and the disturbers of the public rest in France, his native country'.<sup>86</sup> A sonnet circulating in Paris, recorded by Pierre de L'Estoile, voiced the same opinion:

Duke, do you have hope on such a great enterprise  
which means to subjugate the injurious Fleming?  
The Frenchman does not have it; because he already knows  
that on your return, mockingly, Flanders will be retaken.

...

Duke, draw back, avoid this misfortune.  
Leave the Flemish alone, the French, irritated,  
ask for your help, as of their one and only Hercules.<sup>87</sup>

Some Frenchmen received news about the Netherlands through correspondents residing there or because their relatives had joined Anjou's army.<sup>88</sup> However, most Frenchmen first learned about the conflict because of the bands of soldiers terrorizing their towns and villages. Diarist Jean Pussot from Reims usually wrote short notices about family matters and local events. Both in 1581 and 1583 he explicitly mentioned soldiers pillaging the area on their

84 'Au mois de juillet Monsr frere du Roy partit pour aller en Flandre, laquelle estoit divisée, sçavoir les Estatz contre le Roy d'Espagne et don Juan, lequel tenoit le party dud. Roy d'Espagne'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 136.

85 'Monsr estant arrivé en Mons en Henau fait faire procession à laquelle il assista'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 136.

86 *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, iv. 340.

87 'Duc, qu'avez-vous d'espoir de si grande entreprise / Qui tend d'assubjettir l'injurieux Flammant? / Le François n'en a point: car il sçait jà comment / Retournant et mocqué, la Flandre fut reprise.... Duc, retirez vos pas, ce malheur evitez. / Laissez là le Flammant: les François irrités / Vous demandent secours, comme à leur seul Hercule'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, iv, p. 38. Anjou was originally named 'Hercule'.

88 Family members of Michel le Riche joined Anjou's troops in June 1581. *Journal de Guillaume et de Michel le Riche*, 343.

way to the Low Countries.<sup>89</sup> Pomponne de Bellièvre, Henry III's ambassador in the Netherlands, once had tried to comfort Catherine de' Medici, saying that it was perhaps better that Anjou had gone to the Netherlands because he would be less of a nuisance abroad than in France.<sup>90</sup> This assumption proved to be wrong. Anjou's enterprise was a disaster for many inhabitants of Picardy, Champagne, and Brie. His army attracted vagabonds from all over Europe, who plundered villages, robbed shopkeepers, and kidnapped girls, demanding ransom from their parents. French chronicles from these years abound with complaints about the wantonness of Anjou's troops.<sup>91</sup>

Frenchmen who did not experience the plundering soldiers themselves heard gruesome stories. Pierre de L'Estoile recorded a horrible tale about soldiers who were said to have gang-raped a girl in a village on their way to Flanders. The reason this particular story spread so fast and wide was that the girl had bravely tried to defend herself. Pinned down on a table by four soldiers holding her arms and legs, she managed to grasp a knife and stick it into the captain of the gang who was standing over her. She did not survive her bravery: the other soldiers tied her to a tree and shot her with their harquebuses.<sup>92</sup> Pierre de L'Estoile commented that God would surely punish the French for their barbarities and cruelties.<sup>93</sup> Claude Haton blamed Anjou: 'Who will never receive, as long as he lives, as many *bonjours* as he has had curses from the people of France'.<sup>94</sup> But he did not forget to blame the Dutch as well: 'who needed to be rigorously chastised for being the cause of their own ruin and

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89 'Mais avint un gros camp à Monsieur d'Alençon qui alloit à chambray et au Pays-Bas; le quel camp gatta fort ce pays, molestant, rançonnant et usant de plusieurs tortions'. *Journalier de Jean Pussot*, 89; 'En ceste année, passa par ce pays grande gensdarmierie allant au Pays-Bas pour ledit sieur d'Alençon, laquelle gensdarmierie gasta et fict beaulcoup de peine en ce pays, tant pour les ranconnemens, viollemens, meurtres que volleries'. *Journalier de Jean Pussot*, 90–91.

90 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 144.

91 'Durant ce mois aussi passerent plusieurs troupes de François pour aller en Flandre, lesquelles pillerent toute la Picardye et les lieux où y passoient'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 146; '[Anjou] passa par ce pays chartrin avecque son armée qui feist ung dommage inestimable'. *Histoire de Sébastien Le Pelletier*, 61; Pierre de L'Estoile too commiserated with the 'pitaus Picards, Champenois et Normans'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, 11, p. 221.

92 Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, 111, pp. 147–148.

93 'Voilà ce que les troupes de Monsieur faisoient allantes en Flandres, et les jugemens de Dieu menassent les testes des François d'une prochaine vengeance ... pour tant de meschancetés et barbares cruautés qu'ils commettoient de toutes parts'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, 111, pp. 147–148.

94 'Lequel n'aura jamais, s'il vivoit cent ans, auttant de bonsjours qu'il a eu de maledictions du peuple de France'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, iv. 98.

that of the French by the rebellion they have made against their Spanish king, their natural prince'.<sup>95</sup>

## 8 Anjou's Honour

During his mission in the Netherlands, Anjou felt the need to defend his enterprise to his compatriots. In May 1581 he sent letters to the *parlements* in France, explaining his decision to go help the rebels in the Netherlands.<sup>96</sup> Prudently avoiding the tricky subject of religion altogether, he referred instead to the old wars between the Habsburg and Valois and reminded them of the ancient claims of France on the Netherlands. He repeatedly reasoned that he had undertaken the enterprise for the honour and glory of France. He used the same rhetoric to recruit for his army, as Haton observed: 'promising them on his word of honour as a prince to let them partake in the goods and fame that would result from this mission'.<sup>97</sup> French soldiers and noblemen thought they would be setting out to conquer 'the whole land of Flanders, Artois, Liège, Friesland, and other foreign countries, before returning to France'.<sup>98</sup>

Anjou's tenure in the Low Countries, however, did not see many victories he could boast of. One of the few military successes was the relief of Cambrai on 18 August 1581. Spurred by appeals from the Huguenot noblemen François de la Noue and the Prince of Condé, he had promised to aid the city, again against the will of Henry III and the queen mother. When he left for Cambrai with a group of young, inexperienced noblemen, the King's Council decided to provide him with money because they felt they could not abandon the *fine fleur* of

95 'estoient dignes d'estre rigoreusement chastiez comme estans cause de leur ruine et de celle de France par leur rebellion qu'ilz avoient faicte à leur roy espagnol, leur prince naturel'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, iv. 418.

96 'Declaration of the duke of Anjou to the parlements of France', 21 May 1581. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, iv, pp. 47–55; See also: François de Valois, duc d'Anjou et d'Alençon, *Copie des lettres de remonstrance envoyées à tous les Parlements de France concernans la ferme et louable resolution prinse endroit la defence et delivrance de ces Païs Bas (Alençon, [].05.1581)* (Antwerp: chez Christophe Plantin, 1581), USTC 4119. He also frequently wrote to other important institutions and individuals throughout the country, for example to the magistrate of Nantes and the duke of Montpensier. Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, iv, p. 298.

97 'leur promettant en foy de prince de les faire participans du bien et honneur qui en viendrait'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, iv. 65.

98 'qu'ilz allassent conquister tout les pays de Flandre, d'Artois, de Liege, Frize, et aultres pays estrange avant que de revenir en France'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, iv. 426.

the French aristocracy.<sup>99</sup> Elizabeth supported him as well, with a sum that was considerably larger. Anjou captured the city without much effort and encountered little resistance from Parma's soldiers. However, according to Claude Haton's chronicle, noblemen returning from Flanders told heroic tales about Cambrai and the subsequent capture of Cateau-Cambrésis.<sup>100</sup> Stories about his victory that stressed the gratitude of the people of Cambrai reached Paris, too. As Jehan de la Fosse wrote: 'The *Cambrésiens* were very glad about the entry of the said *seigneur*, because they believed themselves to be tyrannized by the King of Spain, who took large sums of money from them. They forged large coins in the name of the said *seigneur* on which was engraved: *Franciscus protector <Cambrésien> Cambrensiun*'.<sup>101</sup>

The inhabitants of the Netherlands were not commonly regarded as grateful. Frenchmen repeatedly complained about the ingratitude of the Dutch, accusing them of taking advantage of Anjou. Moreover, the Dutch proved inconsistent in their attitude towards the French prince. In a letter to his friend Philip Sidney, the French agent Hubert Languet complained that the people of Ghent had suddenly become pro-Anjou, while only a year earlier they had abused him in defamatory lampoons.<sup>102</sup> According to Claude Haton, the Netherlandish enterprise failed to give Anjou much honour: 'the said *seigneur* [Anjou] has found out that he is nothing more than their valet and their servant'.<sup>103</sup> He had heard how the citizens of Antwerp went so far as to perform morality plays at his expense, which were staged in public places under the scaffold—sites normally used for public executions.<sup>104</sup>

99 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 155; Duquenne, *L'entreprise du duc d'Anjou*, pp. 86–96.

100 *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, iv. 427; Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 158.

101 'Durant ce mois, Monsr frere du Roy fut ravitalier Cambray, ville forte, laquelle luy fut baillee par le gouverneur d'icelle, et « faisant » aprez avoir faict son entrée, mit les garnisons oualons de hors et mit en leurs places de François. Les Cambrisiens furent fort joieulx de l'entrée dud. Sr, par ce qu'il se pensoient tyrannizez par le Roy d'Espagne quy prenoit grandz subsidies sur iceulx. Ils firent forger monoies au nom dud. sr, et estoit la monoye quarrée, où estoit escript: *Franciscus protector <Cambrensiun> Cambrensiun*'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 144.

102 Languet to Sidney, 27 February 1580. Cited in: Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 129.

103 'il s'est trouvé ledit seigneur n'estre que leur valet et simple serviteur'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, iv. 160.

104 'Et leur a esté ledit seigneur fidelle en tout par tout, sans en avoir esté par eux recompencé d'un seul denier, mais trop bien en injures, par farce, mocquerie et risée que ceux de la ville d'Amvers et des principales du pays et aultres firent de Son Altesse en jouant des jeux et moralitez en lieu public sus des eschaufaux ...'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, iv. 160. These must have been plays performed by the Antwerp rhetorician's chambers. See on this topic: Guido Marnef, 'Rederijkers en religieuze vernieuwing in de 2e helft van de 16e eeuw', in Bart Ramakers (ed.), *Conformisten en rebellen: Rederijkerscultuur in de*

Anjou's Joyous Entry into Antwerp on 19 February 1582 was therefore a festivity highly needed to restore his frayed honour.<sup>105</sup> In April 1582, within two months after the event, Christopher Plantin published a splendidly illustrated folio volume to commemorate the Entry. The book had been written by William of Orange's court preacher Pierre Loyseleur, undoubtedly supported by the municipal organizers of the Entry. While the first edition of the book appeared in French and Dutch, an English printer soon published an English translation, testifying to the event's international appeal.<sup>106</sup> Interested readers were also able to purchase a cheaper unillustrated edition in quarto.<sup>107</sup> Margit Thøfner has observed that the Joyous Entry of 1582 was different from previous ones in its use of religious elements to celebrate the ruler: 'Protestant Antwerp had bestowed on the Duke of Anjou a processional honour previously reserved in that city for the transubstantiated host, for relics and other sacred objects'.<sup>108</sup> The French appreciated the exceptional nature of this tribute. Jean de la Gessée, Anjou's own secretary, was probably the author of a French pamphlet about the Entry that came out with two different publishers in Paris.<sup>109</sup>

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*Nederlanden (1400–1650)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), pp. 174–188 and Hubert Meeus, 'Antwerpse rederijkers op zoek naar een nieuwe rol', in Bart Ramakers (ed.), *Conformisten en rebellen: Rederijkerscultuur in de Nederlanden (1400–1650)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), pp. 126–138.

- 105 This event has recently received considerable attention from scholars, who have explored the Entry's use of rituals and its expression of civic identity. Van Bruaene, 'Spectacle and Spin for a Spurned Prince'; Thøfner, *Common Art*, pp. 125–141; Emily J. Peters, 'Printing Ritual: The Performance of Community in Christopher Plantin's *La Joyeuse & Magnifique Entrée de Monseigneur François ... d'Anjou*', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 61:2 (2008), pp. 370–413; Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots*, pp. 311–319.
- 106 *La joyeuse et magnifique entrée de monseigneur François fils de France en sa très-renommée ville d'Anvers* (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, 1582), USTC 7579. On the international audience see Thøfner, *Common Art*, p. 125 and Peters, 'Printing Ritual', p. 407. See for instance the English translation of the pamphlet: *The joyful and royal entertainment of the ryght high and mightie Prince, Frauncis the Frenche Kings only brother by the grace of God Duke of Brabande, Anjow. Into his noble citie of Antwerpe. 1582* (London: [Thomas Dawson] for William Ponsonby, [1582]), USTC 509539.
- 107 Pierre l'Oyseleur dit de Villiers, *La ioyeuse et magnifique entrée de monseigneur François de France, frère unique du roy, par la grâce de Dieu, duc de Brabant, d'Anjou, Alençon, Berri, etc. en sa très-renommée ville d'Anvers* (Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1582), USTC 4129.
- 108 Thøfner, *Common Art*, p. 135.
- 109 Jean de la Gessée, *Discours sur la venue et honorable reception de monsieur, fils et frere de roy* (s.l.: s.n., 1581), USTC 65286; Jean de la Gessée, *Discours sur la venue et honorable reception de monsieur fils et frere de roy* (Paris: Jean Le Noir, 1582), USTC 77622; Jean de la Gessée, *Discours sur la venue et honorable reception de monsieur fils et frere de roy* ([Paris: Pierre Le Voirier], 1582), USTC 54734. See also his: *La Flandre, a monseigneur. Plus XIII sonnetz francoys et quelques vers latins* (Antwerp: [Christophe Plantin], 1582), USTC 15457.



FIGURE 9 Abraham de Bruyn, 'Anjou under the Canopy', in: *La joyeuse et magnifique entrée de monseigneur François fils de France en sa tres-renommée ville d'Anvers* (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, 1582). Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (B1-B-FM-001-6)

These booklets stressed that neither Charles v nor Philip II had ever received the honour of having a canopy over his head.<sup>110</sup> Other patriotic French accents were added in the pamphlet as well. A mythical giant, for example, who was a recurring feature in Antwerp *ommegangen*, was said to have been defeated by a Roman soldier named Silvius Brabo, but the Parisian pamphlet made him into a Frenchman.<sup>111</sup>

In Paris, news about the unusual honour of Anjou's Entry clearly resonated. Pierre de L'Estoile wrote how Anjou

110 Which might have been true for their entrances in Antwerp, but during his entrance in Augsburg in 1530, where he was to attend the Diet, Charles v rode under a cloth-of-gold canopy. Rublack, 'Renaissance Dress', p. 16.

111 Thøfner, *Common Art*, pp. 137–138.



was given a reception that was as sumptuous and magnificent as a welcome ever given to Emperor Charles v or his son Philip, King of Spain. They [the people of Antwerp] had organized grand banquets and bonfires, for four days in a row, money was minted with his name on it and distributed among the people ... and he received the title and attire of Duke of Brabant and Marquis of the Holy Empire.<sup>112</sup>

A few pages down followed the complete list of titles Anjou received as lord of the Netherlands.<sup>113</sup>

While some authors continued to stress the negative features of Anjou's enterprise—e.g. by highlighting the diseases that afflicted his soldiers<sup>114</sup> or his maltreatment by the ungrateful Dutch—other commentaries were more sympathetic towards Anjou's audacious initiative. Jehan de la Fosse mentioned a pasquil dedicated to Anjou that included Virgil's famous quotation 'Fortune favours the bold and repels the coward'.<sup>115</sup> The French author of occasional poetry André Rossant in 1582 published an ode to Anjou's enterprise in the Netherlands. The poem exhorted the inhabitants of the Low Countries to submit to Anjou's authority. According to Rossant, the Netherlands regretted that 'they were no longer under the "soft sceptre of France", as they once, a long time ago, had been'. Capitalizing on his contemporaries' love for wordplay and rhymes, he came up with an anagram on Anjou's name that proved that the Netherlands should again adhere to the French prince. Astutely, he turned 'Fransoys de Valloys' into 'O Flandres soys a luy!'.<sup>116</sup> However, these poems could not compensate for the fiasco of the French Fury of 17 January 1583. This event would obliterate a great deal of the admiration that Anjou had gained in previous years.

112 'Il arriva en Anvers, le samedi 17e febvrier, et le lundi 19e, lui fust faite une reception et entrée autant somptueuse et magnifique qu'onques y aviot esté faite à l'empereur Charles Ve et Philippe, roy des Hespagnes, son fils, à leurs bienvenues. Grans festins lui furent faits, feus de joie, quatre jours continuels, monnoie forgée à ses armes et à son nom, d'or et d'argent, gettée et esparse au peuple, par forme de largesse et allegresse, et lui fut donné tiltre et habit de DUC DE BRABANT ET MARQUIS DU SAINCT EMPIRE'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, IV, p. 13.

113 Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, IV, p. 25.

114 See for example Claude Haton, who noted down in 1578 that Anjou's soldiers suffered from dysentery or 'cours du ventre'. *Mémoires de Claude Haton*, IV, 105.

115 'Audaces fortuna juvat, timidosque repellit'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 179.

116 'regrettans tristement le doux sceptre de France'. André Rossant, *Remonstrance au peuple de Flandres, de se tenir sous la puissance et autorité de monsieur, fils et frere de roy* (Paris: chez Pierre Chevillot, 1582), 8, USTC 89977.

## 9 The French Fury: 'Anvers, l'Enfer'

During the harsh winter of 1582–83, perhaps as many as 3,000 of Anjou's soldiers in the Netherlands died from cold and hunger. Frustrated about the lack of funds he received from the States, Anjou decided to take matters into his own hands. More specifically, he planned to take several towns in the Netherlands by force. On 17 January 1583, Anjou's soldiers attacked Antwerp and attempted to seize the city. This plan failed miserably. The citizens of Antwerp had already been on the alert—probably with memories of the Spanish fury at the back of their minds—and resisted the French forces with success. During the fighting, more than a thousand Frenchmen were said to have been killed, both soldiers and noblemen. Several hundred were taken prisoner. Contemporary sources suggest that the people of Antwerp suffered few casualties. Anjou himself narrowly escaped the furious citizens.<sup>117</sup> Immediately after the event, all parties involved sought to issue their own version of the aborted coup. The Antwerp magistrates published their account of the events in both French and Dutch, while Claude de la Châtre, an officer in Anjou's army, wrote a report in which he, rather desperately, tried to exonerate Anjou.<sup>118</sup>

Most reports corroborated the version of the Antwerp magistrates, and thus blamed Anjou. News of the French Fury caused sensation and shock in France. Not surprisingly, the blow was particularly felt at the French court.<sup>119</sup> L'Estoile describes quite vividly the reaction of Catherine de' Medici, who was said to have cried out in her own native 'Florentine' language: 'O, such a great misfortune for France, so many brave noblemen having perished! I do not know whether in 25 years of battles in France, so many noblemen have died as during this miserable day!'<sup>120</sup> Notary Michel le Riche in Saint-Maixent received

117 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, pp. 180–186; Duquenne, *L'entreprise du Duc d'Anjou*, pp. 145–155. See also for example Jan de Pottre's account of the French Fury: *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 125–128.

118 *Briefve declaration faicte par bovrgevemaistres, eschevins et conseil de la Ville d'Anvers* (Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1583), USTC 37219; Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture*, p. 131; Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, pp. 181–184; Another famous source is a letter from the political theorist Jean Bodin to his father-in-law. Bodin was a member of Anjou's entourage at that time, and was among those who were taken prisoner in Antwerp. Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, pp. 181–182; Machielsens, 'Bodin in the Netherlands'.

119 Catherine de' Medici could not believe the news at first. She wrote to William of Orange, asking for his confirmation. Catherine de' Medici to William of Orange, 30 January 1583. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou correspondance*, VIII, pp. 147–148. Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 184.

120 'O le grand Malheur pour la France, de tant de brave noblesse qui s'y est perdue! Je ne sçai si, en toutes les batailles données en France depuis xxv ans, on pourroit compter tant

the news on 3 February. He, too, was especially distressed about the news of the large number of dead French and Italian 'gens de nom'. He duly recorded a long list of noblemen who had died and summed up the names of those who had been taken prisoner.<sup>121</sup> Pierre de L'Estoile noted bitterly that Anjou himself had reacted with extreme indifference to the death of all these noblemen, not even mourning the drowning of one of his favorites, the Count of St Agnan.<sup>122</sup>

One might expect that the news about the French Fury would stir up hatred in France against the inhabitants of Antwerp. Claude Haton might have written a scathing comment about the aggressive nature of the people in the Netherlands, had not his diary ended in 1582, just before the French Fury. Pierre de L'Estoile, surprisingly, expressed sympathy for the inhabitants of Antwerp, who 'fought bravely to defend themselves, their wives, their children, their goods, and their freedom'.<sup>123</sup> A proud city-dweller himself, L'Estoile expressed his admiration for citizens protecting themselves against an attack by foreign troops—a fate all inhabitants of large cities feared. The diary of Hermann Weinsberg in Cologne expresses similar feelings of civic solidarity.<sup>124</sup> Sébastien le Pelletier noted that people punned in Reims that Frenchmen thinking they had gone to Antwerp had gone to Hell; a word play on the French quasi-homophones 'Anvers' and 'Enfer'.<sup>125</sup>

Apart from the wave of news reports about the event itself, the French Fury sparked a new flood of international correspondence: William of Orange and his partisans tried to salvage relations with the French, while French nobles, on their part, tried to free their imprisoned relatives.<sup>126</sup> Meanwhile, both in the Netherlands and in France, defamatory songs and poems poked fun at Anjou, which would damage his reputation forever. A Dutch news song rhymed

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de gentilshommes morts, comme il y en a eu en ceste malheureuse journée'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, IV, p. 69.

121 *Journal de Guillaume et de Michel le Riche*, 374–375.

122 Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, IV, p. 69.

123 'tant courageusement combatans (comme ceux qui combattoient pour sauver leurs personnes, leurs femmes, leurs enfans, leurs biens et leur liberté)'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, IV, p. 68.

124 'Dissen 7. jan. nach der alter, aber den 17. tag nach der nuwen calculation, mogen die von Antwerpen wol zum festage anrichten und got danken vor sulche herlige victorien, die sie ritterlich erhalten, dan hett dem Alanzonio mit sinen verrettern und Franzosen sin hei(1) lois anslag mogen gegluckt sin, es sult den von Antwerpen nit bess ergangen sin, dan den vur 10 jarn uff s. Bartholomei tag uff der verretterscher bruloft zu Paris. Es mag sich der Alanzonius und andern ihn ir bloit schamen, das sie sulche treulose, undankbare leut sin'. *Autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen Hermann Weinsbergs*, 7 January 1583.

125 'Et disoit-on que les François pensants aller à Anvers estoient allez à l'envers'. *Histoire de Sébastien Le Pelletier*, 63.

126 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 185; Muller and Diegerick, *Documents*, vol. IV and V, passim.

'Alenson' with 'poltron', French for coward, in every verse.<sup>127</sup> Weinsberg cited more sophisticated poems in Latin, in which every word began with the letter f. This did not make the poems less insulting: the composer used many declinations of the verb *fugere*, the Latin word for taking flight.<sup>128</sup> L'Estoile noted seven rhymes that mocked the French and accused them of 'madness and thoughtlessness, and their leader of treason and infidelity'. He stated that Anjou's disastrous actions had ruined the reputation of all Frenchmen:

On this day, the name Frenchman has received a large wound and it has lost [its reputation] among all foreign nations, and Monsieur, the brother of the King, has had his honour and reputation scorned.<sup>129</sup>

Throughout 1583 and the beginning of 1584, Anjou kept negotiating with William of Orange and the States, who were still willing to retain him as their lord. In 1584, his health declined, and he died on 10 June 1584. He had requested to be buried as 'Duke of Brabant and Lord of the Netherlands'. Henry, however, was keen not to incite Philip II's anger and had his brother buried as Duke of Anjou and Alençon.<sup>130</sup> Throughout the decades that followed, French chroniclers kept remembering Anjou's disastrous enterprise in the Netherlands. Jean Louvet, a chronicler in Angers, bitterly recorded how Anjou had gone to Flanders where he was given a 'beautiful Entry, but a bad leave'. He also wrote how Anjou's army had attracted a great number of 'wild youngsters' from his region, many of whom had never returned home.<sup>131</sup> According to chronicler Jean de Gaufreteau from Bordeaux, some of his contemporaries believed that

127 'Een Nieu liedeken van Duck d'Alenson, hoe hy ghedacht hadde Antwerpen te pilgieren, ende een Franssche furie aen te rechten, t'welck tegen zijn voornemen met groot verlies mislucht is'. The first verse goes as follows: 'Wie wil hooren een nieu Liet / wie wil hooren een nieu Liet / Al watter t'Antwerpen is gheschiet / Van d'Alenson, van d'Alenson / Hy is gaen loopen somen siet / *Come ung Poltron*'. Kuiper, *Geuzenliedboek*, pp. 314–315.

128 'Ad Alanzonium / Francisce / Flebile fecisti facinus, foelixque fuisses, / Foedifragos fugiens, foedifragusque fugans / Flere facis Flandros, faustum fera Francia foedus / Frangendo, fugiens fas, fugienda facis'. *Autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen Hermann Weinsbergs*, 7 January 1583.

129 'Et à la verité, à ceste journée, le nom François reçeust une grande plaie et fist une grande perte envers toutes les estranges nations, et Monsieur, frere du Roy, une escorne de son honneur et reputation'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, iv, p. 68.

130 Holt, *Duke of Anjou*, p. 210.

131 'M. le duc d'Anjou alla en Flandre où il reçut une belle entrée, et eut une mauvaise retraite et sortye, et emmena grant nombre de meschante jeunesse et brigands qui luy servirent, sur espérance de leur enrichir, où il en demeura grant nombre qui estoient de ce païs d'Anjou qui n'en sont jamais revenuz'. Louvet, 'Récit véritable', III, pp. 37–38.

it had been the Netherlands enterprise that had ruined Anjou's health for good, leaving France with a Protestant heir to the throne.<sup>132</sup>

As a result of Anjou's mission, French chroniclers such as Claude Haton had become better informed about the Dutch Revolt, as it provoked Frenchmen to wonder about the background and causes of the conflict. One would expect that the enterprise stimulated chroniclers in France and the Netherlands to view the conflicts in both countries as part of a single, international war. But chronicles and letters as well rather show that many people distinguished clearly between the 'French' and the 'Netherlandish' troubles. Why, then, did the Anjou enterprise fail to internationalize the perception of the conflict among contemporaries? One explanation might be that Anjou, while trying to avoid the subject of religion, clearly missed his chance to take advantage of feelings of religious international solidarity among his subjects. As a Catholic prince who had set out to assist rebels against their Catholic overlord, he instead chose to remind his audiences of the old Habsburg-Valois wars. He depicted his mission as an exhilarating military campaign, which he had undertaken in search of honour and fame.

On the topic of (international) loyalties, Andrew Pettegree has asked: 'In the Netherlands, as elsewhere, a sense of national identity had also to compete with new, super-national identities in a religiously divided Europe. In a Europe of Catholics and Protestants, with whom did one enjoy true kinship?'<sup>133</sup> While attracting many adventurous youngsters, Anjou's unruly army threatened the lives and livelihoods of many villagers and town-dwellers on both sides of the Franco-Netherlandish border. With their local interests at stake, chroniclers strongly condemned Anjou's international enterprise, as he had seemingly no higher goal in view than his own glory.<sup>134</sup> As we shall see in the next chapter, in the course of the 1580s, events such as victories of the Catholic League or the defeat of the Armada would bring religion more into the news, thus changing its perception among contemporaries.

132 'On attribua la cause de sa mort à divers objects; car les uns disoyent que c'estoit la desbauche de son voyage en païs-bas de Flandres qui avoit desreglé sa santé'. Jules Délpit (ed.), *Chronique bordelaise. Tome premier 1240 à 1599* (Bordeaux: Lefebvre, 1877), I, p. 252.

133 Pettegree, 'Provincial News Community', p. 34.

134 On local/international identities see: Pettegree, 'Provincial News Community', p. 33; Pollmann, 'Internationalising', p. 531. Monique Weis, in an article on Marnix and his relations with the Huguenots, argued that there was 'a natural sympathy between the coreligionists in both countries'. Weis, 'De l'interdépendance', p. 151.

## Transnational Solidarities, 1584–1598

The years 1584–1585 are considered major turning points in both the Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt. In July 1584, William of Orange was murdered, and a year later Farnese, in an impressive reconquest of rebel territory, besieged and conquered Antwerp. In France, the death of Anjou in June 1584 made the Protestant Henry of Navarre heir to the crown of France. French Catholics, shocked by the possibility of a Protestant succession, advanced their own candidate, Charles, Cardinal of Bourbon. The ultra-Catholic members of the nobility and commoners throughout the country formed an alliance, the Catholic League.<sup>1</sup> The last part of the 1580s saw battles between the Huguenots of Henry of Navarre, the royalist Catholic adherents of Henry III and the *Ligueurs* under the command of the Guise family.

Historians have widely acknowledged the increasingly international dimensions of the wars in the 1580s and 1590s—many call it a ‘European war’.<sup>2</sup> Geoffrey Parker has emphasized the growing European scope of the Dutch Revolt. An important factor in internationalizing the wars was the Treaty of Joinville of December 1584, in which Philip II agreed to support the French Catholic League with monthly contributions.<sup>3</sup> This pact forced Elizabeth to commit to the Protestant cause in the Netherlands. She signed the Treaty of Nonsuch in August 1585, promising to assist the States financially and militarily. In the years to come, she would also offer support to Henry of Navarre. After Elizabeth’s favourite Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester’s brief and unsuccessful period as governor-general of the rebel Netherlands, from 1589 onwards stadholder Maurice of Nassau would head the army of the States, while the States General and the Land’s Advocate Johan van Oldenbarnevelt became the most important leaders of the United Provinces. Philip’s decision to send Farnese to aid the Catholics in France after the death of Henry III made a huge impact on the course of the Dutch Revolt, as Farnese had to divide his troops

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- 1 For a concise overview of the rise and fall of the League see Chapter 2, ‘The Catholic League’, in: Mark Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV: The Struggle for Stability* (London and New York: Longman, 1984), pp. 39–67; Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, pp. 123–155.
  - 2 Parker, ‘Dutch Revolt and the Polarization’; Sutherland, *Huguenot Struggle*, who calls it a ‘European War’ from 1585 onwards, p. 281; Compare Hervé le Goff, *La Ligue en Bretagne: guerre civile et conflit international (1588–1598)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010); Carroll, *Martyrs and Murderers*, p. 258, who calls it a ‘great European war’.
  - 3 Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, p. 124.

and attention between two fronts. Geoffrey Parker has stressed the ‘clear connection between Philip II’s intervention in France and the emergence of the Dutch Republic’.<sup>4</sup>

With Philip supporting the French Catholics and Elizabeth assisting the Protestants, all stakeholders in the conflicts had an interest in placing the wars in an international context. The surge of international Catholicism in the early 1580s, in addition to the already widespread sentiments of international Calvinism, had a major impact on the reception of international news. This chapter seeks to contribute to debates on ‘national’ and ‘transnational’ identities and loyalties in these years. Recent scholarship has shown that in this period tridentine militancy became a transnational enterprise and that Catholics increasingly connected seemingly unrelated conflicts throughout Europe.<sup>5</sup> Although these years did not witness a significant change in the amount of foreign news recorded by chroniclers, a definite shift can be detected in the ways contemporaries digested the news. Many among them now painted the events they had heard about on an international canvas. This topic, covering fifteen turbulent years of conflict in two countries, means that this chapter will focus on some dominant patterns.

For many years Protestant propaganda had tried to depict the wars in France and the Netherlands as a single large international conflict, portraying the cardinals of Granvelle and Lorraine and the Duke of Alva as the joint enemies of Protestant Europe. Many chroniclers, however, and not surprisingly, particularly Catholic ones, had persisted in seeing the wars as two separate conflicts. As we have seen, even the departure of the Duke of Anjou to the Netherlands had not done much to promote the interconnectedness of the events in their eyes. However, the added force of international Catholicism changed all this. Catholic campaigners such as pamphleteer Richard Verstegan unified the plight of Catholics in the Netherlands, England, and France.<sup>6</sup> Jesuits, banished from France in the 1590s, settled in the Catholic print centre of Douai and pamphleteered against their joint enemies in France and the Netherlands. In Cologne, the Netherlandish priest in exile Michael ab Isselt in 1592 began to publish combined reports of the wars in France and the Netherlands, the

4 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 227.

5 Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, pp. 104–128; Compare Walsham, ‘Domme Preachers’.

6 Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, pp. 115–117; On Verstegan see: Paul Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World: Richard Verstegan and the International Culture of Catholic Reformation* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004) and Arblaster, *From Ghent to Aix. Compare Carroll, Martyrs and Murderers*, pp. 242–280.

*Mercurius Gallo-Belgicus*.<sup>7</sup> Reprints with updated supplements followed in 1594, 1595 and 1596, testifying to its success.

In this chapter I will link internationalization to media consumption and news reception, from the death of William of Orange, the fall of Antwerp and the Armada, to the Peace of Vervins between Spain and France in May 1598. I will show that increasing international religious polarization went together with a surge in media-savviness. While these years saw many ultra-Catholic diarists recording contemporary events echoing *Ligue*-propaganda, chroniclers at the same time became more aware of religious bias in news reports. This chapter ends with a case illustrating critical foreign media consumption: it presents the example of diarist Pierre de L'Estoile, who showed himself accomplished in critically assessing Netherlandish pamphlets from both sides.

## 1 Chroniclers Take Sides

When comparing chronicles from the last decades of the sixteenth century to those from the 1560s and 1570s, what strikes one is not only their international outlook, but also their religious-polemical tone. First, this may simply be explained by the collection methods and editing practices of later generations. As Judith Pollmann has argued, historians tend to use exciting chronicles that were written during periods of social or political troubles. Chronicles that were found dull simply have not been saved for posterity.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, from the 1990s onwards, influenced by the renewed interest in religious history, French historians have edited and published a large number of polemical chronicles written by priests or other *ligueurs*.<sup>9</sup> Yet editing practices cannot solely explain this shift in style from earlier chronicles. Chronicles also echoed contemporary public opinion. Sandy Wilkinson has pointed out the extreme radicalization of opinion in France during the propaganda campaign of the League at the end of the 1580s.<sup>10</sup>

7 Vermaseren, *Katholieke Nederlandse geschiedschrijving*, pp. 59–63.

8 Pollmann, 'Archiving the Present', p. 238.

9 Especially after the 'religious turn' in the study of the French Wars of Religion in the beginning of the 1990s. Denis Crouzet, *Guerriers des Dieu*. See for instance the extensively annotated editions of chroniclers Claude Haton, Sébastien le Pelletier, Jehan de la Fosse, and Nicolas Brûlart.

10 Alexander Wilkinson, "Homicides Royaux": The Assassination of the Duc and Cardinal de Guise and the Radicalization of French Public Opinion, *French History*, 18:2 (2004), pp. 129–153. Geert Janssen has detected the same phenomenon of radicalization in this period among Catholic exiles. Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, p. 125.



Thus, many French chronicles, echoing the polemics of their age, express strong sentiments about contemporary political events. Especially from 1589 onwards, the wars between the *Ligue* and Henry of Navarre spurred Catholic chroniclers' page-long scolding at heretics. Some chroniclers have later tried, during the reign of Henry IV, to erase these incriminating passages.<sup>11</sup> Chroniclers who did not have this opportunity reveal the full extent of their hatred of the Huguenots and their leader, Henry of Navarre. King Henry III, too, was no longer safe from abuse. Jehan de la Fosse declared how the death of his king in 1589, who he then had started to call irreverently 'Henri de Valois', was sanctioned by God, because, 'this traitor had accepted the aid of the queen of England and all the heretics'.<sup>12</sup> Some chroniclers who, spurred by the wars of the League, took up a diary at the end of the 1580s also recapitulated the decades before, recounting those years from their religious point of view. The Reims schoolmaster Sébastien le Pelletier, for instance, who started writing a chronicle in 1589, added a supplement covering the years 1579–1588, in which he positioned every event in the context of a larger European religious conflict.

Netherlandish chronicles are generally less vehement than their French counterparts, but they are even more focused on international developments. Jan de Pottre and an anonymous cleric in Dunkirk who kept an extensive chronicle, sympathized with Catholics abroad. The Dunkirk cleric repeatedly expressed his sympathy for the Duke of Guise and the ultra-Catholic *Seize*-regime in Paris. It helped that his own king Philip subsidized the Guise faction, thus legitimizing the League in the eyes of Netherlandish Catholics. When Henry III died, the Dunkirk cleric considered Charles of Bourbon, whom he called Charles X, the real king, and saw Henry of Navarre as merely the pretender.<sup>13</sup> When Farnese left for France, Catholics celebrated his campaigning for 'our cause'. In Antwerp in August 1590, the Marian sodality organized a week of prayers for his victories in France.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, Protestant chroniclers had placed their hopes in Henry of Navarre. At the beginning of the 1590s, the city of Groningen was still under Catholic control. The Calvinist city secretary Johan Julsing, while publicly supporting the Catholic cause, secretly kept a diary in which he vented his grievances, using a mix of Latin, Dutch, Spanish, Greek and Hebrew to encode his

11 See for example for the erasing of sensitive passages, the chronicles of the *ligueurs* Jehan Pussot et Nicolas Dare.

12 '[il] print l'aide de la Roine d'Angleterre et de tous les haeretiques'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 168.

13 'Vlaamsche Kronyk', pp. 668–669 and pp. 704–705.

14 Pollmann, *Catholic Identity*, p. 140; Andriessen, *Jezuïeten en het samenhorighheidsbesef*, p. 179.

writings. He constantly recorded the news about Henry's battles and victories that flooded the city of Groningen. Viewing the events in France as part of a larger European conflict, he stated that his hometown had chosen the losing side in the religious wars. After many tidings had arrived in favour of Henry of Navarre, he complained: 'Oh, if only, when the time was right, we had chosen to sit on the felicific side of the ship!'<sup>15</sup> Protestant chroniclers in exile in Emden, such as the Ommelander Calvinist farmer Abel Eppens tho Equart, were even more radically internationalist. In the eyes of Eppens everything Henry of Navarre undertook was connected to the future of the United Provinces. Yet he also expressed a wish for stronger allies who would 'protect Navarre and the Netherlands against their enemies'.<sup>16</sup>

At the end of the 1580s, Eppens for a short period entertained the hope of support from Henry III. When, in December 1588, the French king had the Duke and Cardinal of Guise murdered, he became a hero in Emden. On 30 April 1589, Henry III reconciled with Henry of Navarre, in many eyes another important step forward for international Protestantism.<sup>17</sup> Abel Eppens was under the false impression that Henry would proclaim freedom of worship in his kingdom or even become a Protestant. In April 1589, he wrote that it was said in Emden to be true that the French king had asked while sitting at his table: 'Why does the pope not excommunicate me, just as he has done with England, Denmark, Germany and other lords? Because of the ban, they now have peace in their countries because they are pope and king at the same time. That is also how I will secure peace in my kingdom'.<sup>18</sup> This was a rather optimistic view, as Henry had in fact approached the pope to mediate between him and his Catholic subjects.<sup>19</sup> Henry III's murder in August 1589 put a definite end to all speculation about his allegiances.

Apart from outspoken Catholic or Protestant chronicles, these years also saw diaries that testified to the authors' suffering from the situation of religious radicalization. Among those chroniclers are Catholic moderates such as Pierre de L'Estoile or the lesser-known Antoine Richart from Laon. They lived for some

15 15 September 1590. 'Utinam & nos (dum tempus) ad navis inclinaremus latus foelicus, sed fata nos prement'. *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 96, 192.

16 February 1588, 'die Navarreus und Nederland tegens hoeren vijanden bestaen solden konen'. *Kroniek Abel Eppens tho Equart*, II. p. 627.

17 De Waele, *Réconcilier les Français*, p. 94.

18 'Worde ock voor waeraffitch gessecht, dat die konick van Vranrick an sijn tafel solde gesecht hebben: Waeromme mach mij die Pauwest ock niet in die ban doen, als Engellanst, Denemarcket, Duyslant und andere heeren, die hebben dorch den ban vrede in hier rijcken und landen, want sie sindt pauwest und konick togelick; soe worden mij ock vrede'. *Kroniek Abel Eppens tho Equart*, II. 740-741.

19 De Waele, *Réconcilier les Français*, pp. 92-94.

time under a news regime where the ultra-Catholics suppressed all reports that were unfavourable to them. L'Estoile, for instance, recorded on 29 April 1592, a day after the celebration of the lifting of the siege of Rouen with a *Te Deum* in the Notre-Dame, how a 'poor woman from a village in the Province' was put in the stocks for stating that it was said in her region that the Prince of Parma had been defeated.<sup>20</sup> Moderate Catholic Antoine Richart disapprovingly witnessed his hometown being governed by the League. He recorded how he feared the implementation of the Spanish Inquisition. According to him, this had been the cause of the civil wars in the Netherlands.<sup>21</sup> He also displayed an aversion to Jesuits, stating that 'we have seen what damage they have done in France, England, and the Netherlands'.<sup>22</sup>

## 2 The Murder of William of Orange

Sébastien le Pelletier, starting his diary in 1589, first recapitulated the most important events of the preceding decade. He found few foreign events worthy of mention, with the notable exception of the assassination of William of Orange in 1584. Le Pelletier recorded how Orange had been the last survivor of four brothers, who had all been a scourge for the Church in Flanders, 'heretics and protectors of heresy'.<sup>23</sup> In July 1584, news about the murder of the prince quickly reached Paris. Pierre de L'Estoile recorded a detailed report on the assassination; he even knew that it had taken place in 'Delfen'.<sup>24</sup> In L'Estoile's account, Orange's murder had some specific French links. First, according to L'Estoile, Balthasar Gérard originally had planned to kill Anjou, but failing to find the opportunity, he had settled for killing Orange instead.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, Gérard had talked with the ambassador of Spain in Paris, Bernardino de Mendoza, who had supported him in his resolve and had offered him financial compensation. The news of Orange's death quickly spread throughout the

<sup>20</sup> Le Person, *Registre-journal Henri IV*, II, p. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Richart complains about a 'procédure trop cruelle (...) et laquelle eust peu admenier ung tel desordre et confuzion a la ville quelle avoit faict a plusieurs villes en Flandre en l'année MVcLXVII qui flamboient de guerre civile a cause de ceste inquisition'. Antoine Richart, *Mémoires sur la Ligue dans le Laonnois* (Laon: Société académique de Laon, 1869), 123; compare Dixhoorn: 'Making of a Public Issue'.

<sup>22</sup> 'De ces voeux et distinctions sont issus de terribles entreprises, jusques a attempter sur les vies et personnes des princes, roys et roynes, comme les histoires des Pays Bas, d'Angleterre et de France en font foy'. *Mémoires sur la Ligue*, 268.

<sup>23</sup> *Histoire de Sébastien Le Pelletier*, 65.

<sup>24</sup> Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal de Henri III*, IV, pp. 146–148.

<sup>25</sup> Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal de Henri III*, IV, p. 147.

country. In Castres, in the South, Huguenot diarist Faurin recorded this news, emphasizing that Orange had been killed by a 'bourgeois', perhaps to stress that it had been an assassination and not a fight between nobles.<sup>26</sup>

French Catholics expressed an interest not only in the murder; they were even more fascinated by the punishment of Orange's killer. Elaborate descriptions of his gruesome torture fitted with an increasingly international culture of Catholic martyrdom. English Catholics praised Gérard as a martyr, while Dutch exiles in Cologne even campaigned for his beatification.<sup>27</sup> Nicolas Dare, *liqueur* in Troyes, extensively recorded how he had been tortured and executed.<sup>28</sup> Pierre de L'Estoile was similarly well informed about the whole range of punishments he had received. The same interest in the fate of the murderer of Orange can be found in Netherlandish Catholic chronicles, such as the diary of Jan de Pottre.<sup>29</sup>

Yet as compared to the League pamphlets of the late 1580s, French news pamphlets in 1584 still were careful not to be too outspoken. In the pamphlets printed by Benoit Rigaud in Lyon and Pierre Jobert in Paris, William of Orange was praised as a courageous leader.<sup>30</sup> The author warned the reader not to fall as the 'miserable assassin' had fallen. After that, he focused on the sorrow of Orange's wife, the French princess Louise de Coligny, who, according to the pamphlet, had been crying for hours on end. Then, a detailed account of the torture and execution of Balthasar Gérard followed, which, admittedly, could be seen as a martyr account, but also as just a report of a spectacularly cruel execution. The author dwelt at great length on the emotional reactions of the public present at the execution. Not only were the girls and women crying loudly; boys and grown-up men as well were not able to hold back their tears. The French pamphlets ended with the lamentation of the Princess of Orange and with some poems in praise of Orange.<sup>31</sup>

26 M. de la Pijardière (ed.), *Journal sur les guerres de Castres* (Montpellier, 1878), 122.

27 Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*, pp. 127–128.

28 B. de Barbéry and R. de St-Mauris (eds.), *Mémoires et livre de famille de Nicolas Dare* (Troyes: L. Lacroix, 1886), 33–34.

29 Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, IV, pp. 147–148. *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 134–135.

30 According to Mark Greengrass, 'Balthasar Gerard, William of Orange's assassin, was given a martyrological gloss in the French translations of the accounts of that event in 1584'. Mark Greengrass, 'Regicide, Martyrs and Monarchical Authority in France in the Wars of Religion', in Robert von Friedeburg (ed.), *Murder and Monarchy: Regicide in European History, 1300–1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 176–192 (179).

31 *La mort du prince d'Orange tue en trahison d'un coup de pistole* (Troyes: Denis de Villerval, [1584]), USTC 52023; Pierre Louiselier dit de Villiers, *Discours du meurtre commis en la personne du tres illustre prince d'Orange* (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, 1584), USTC 4254; *La mort du prince d'Orange tue en trahison d'un coup de pistole* (Paris: Pierre Jobert, 1584),



FIGURE 10 Gerard van Bylaer, 1582, Silver medal, 'The failed assassination attempt on William of Orange by Jean de Jauregui', 1582. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (NG-VG-3-598)

Yet another aspect made political murders—not only that of Orange, but the many others attempted on political leaders in these years as well—so extremely newsworthy.<sup>32</sup> Political murder, in an age where politics was inseparable from personalities, offered the hope of large shifts in (international) politics. It could bring about peace, or the renewal of war. Granvelle, who had once believed that William of Orange had died in an earlier murder attempt in 1582, had expressed his hopes in a letter from Madrid: 'It is inevitable that the death of Orange will cause great changes: God gives that they will be for the better'.<sup>33</sup>

USTC 4256; *La mort du prince d'Orange tue en trahison d'un coup de pistole* (Lyon: Benoît Rigaud, 1584), USTC 4258; *Discours de l'assassinement commis en la personne du tres illustre et genereux prince et seigneur monseigneur Guillaume par la grace de Dieu prince d'Orange* (Delft: chez Aelbrecht Hendricksz, 1584), USTC 4253.

32 Franklin Ford called the period 1550–1650 'a century of bloodshed', counting 35 major political murders in this age. Franklin L. Ford, *Political Murder: From Tyrannicide to Terrorism* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 146–179; Anton van der Lem, 'Van de prins geen kwaad: De moordplannen van en op Oranje', in Tom Verschaffel (ed.), *Koningsmoorden* (Leuven: Universitaire Pers Leuven, 2000), pp. 159–173; Penny Roberts, 'Huguenot Conspiracies, Real and Imagined, in Sixteenth-Century France', in Barry Coward and Julian Swann (eds.), *Conspiracies and Conspiracy Theory in Early Modern Europe: From the Waldensians to the French Revolution* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 55–69; Robert von Friedeburg, (ed.), *Murder and Monarchy: Regicide in European History, 1300–1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

33 'Il ne peut estre que la mort d'Oranges ne cause de grands changements; Dieu doint qu'en mieulx ...' Granvelle to M. de Bellefontaine, 20 May 1582. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou correspondance*, VIII, p. 100.

In July 1584, after hearing about the death of William, Hermann Weinsberg also stated that contemporaries concluded that this would change matters: 'People used to say, things will get better when the Prince is no longer alive, then this war will end. Now he is dead, and we shall see if there will be peace. God knows'.<sup>34</sup> However, in a 1590 essay on the murder attempts on heads of state in the past decades, the French humanist Etienne Pasquier stated that experience showed that political murders actually do not have a major impact on the course of affairs: after the murder on Orange, the Netherlands did not return to the King of Spain, and even the massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day did not erase the Huguenot party in France.<sup>35</sup>

### 3 The Siege and Surrender of Antwerp

After the deaths of Orange and Anjou, the States General sought to keep Henry III involved in the Dutch Revolt. This became ever more urgent as Farnese successfully reconquered large parts of the Southern Netherlands. The French king, meanwhile, had to deal with mounting tensions in his own kingdom. Where he first had only the Huguenots to consider, the rise of the League added enormously to his problems. Both factions had strong international links: the *ligueurs* received support from Philip II, while the French Huguenots, represented by the diplomatic Philippe Duplessis-Mornay, maintained robust ties with the English and Netherlandish Calvinists.<sup>36</sup> Henry III, however, refused to commit to the Dutch rebel cause. Pierre de L'Estoile recorded how, in February 1585, Henry rebuffed a delegation of the States General, saying 'that his own affairs were more than enough to deal with already, without having to deal with the affairs of others'.<sup>37</sup>

Inhabitants of the Netherlands, meanwhile, anxiously awaited news from this embassy. The Antwerp merchant and diplomat Daniel van der Meulen was staying in Delft at this time, as the States General had moved to this town in the province of Holland. His brother Andries, who had remained behind in the

34 'Und man plach zu sagen, wan der prinz nit mehe were, so moigt es besser und der kreich gestilt werden. Nuhe ist er doit, wa es nuhe frit wirt, so hat man diss zu gleuben. Gott weiß es'. *Autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen Hermann Weinsbergs*, 10 July 1584.

35 Thickett, *Lettres historiques*, p. 374.

36 Daussy, 'L'insertion des *Vindiciae contra tyrannos*'; Hugues Daussy and Véronique Ferrer (eds.), *Servir Dieu, le Roi et l'État: Philippe Duplessis-Mornay (1549–1623)* (Paris: Champion, 2006).

37 '... disant avoir sur les bras trop de ses affaires propres à desmeler, sans s'empescher de celles d'autrui'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, v, p. 12.

besieged town of Antwerp, and his brother-in-law Jacques de la Faille, who had moved to Haarlem, constantly wrote him asking for news from France. They must have thought that the States General would be the first to hear reports from the diplomats. The expected support from France was also a topic of discussion in Haarlem. At the end of March, rumours abounded in the Dutch city that Henry and the Dutch envoys had signed a treaty. 'If there is good and certain consolation from France, let me know', Jacques de la Faille implored his brother-in-law.<sup>38</sup> Andries in Antwerp maintained a steady correspondence with his brother, despite the fact that his city was besieged all those months. He became ever more skeptical as news from France failed to arrive: 'the treaty with France takes too long to expect anything good'.<sup>39</sup>

During the siege of Antwerp, strange rumours reached France. Michel le Riche recorded how on Tuesday 7 May 1585, a certain Monsieur de Vezière had shown him a letter, which said that the King of Spain had died of sorrow caused by the death of so many of his men who were defeated while besieging that city. Le Riche had received other reports, saying that the Pope had lately died, which turned out to be true.<sup>40</sup> Reports about the health of the Spanish king were a recurrent feature in French news. Pierre de L'Estoile once quipped that Philip 'is killed and revived three or four times a year'. The King of Spain also was a favourite subject of pasquinades and word games. In August 1590, L'Estoile recorded how a woman in Toulouse had made an anagram of Philip's name, turning 'Philippe d'Austriche des Hespagnes' into 'Philippe est l'Antichrist des Esglises'.<sup>41</sup>

When in 1585 first Brussels and later Antwerp surrendered to Farnese, printers in Paris and Lyon published the conditions on which the cities had

38 Jacques della Faille to Daniel van der Meulen and Hester della Faille, Haarlem, 14 March 1585. 'Indien ... datter de Fransa goeden zekeren troost is, laet my weten'. Jongbloet-van Houtte, *Brieven en bescheiden*, p. 187; Jacques della Faille to Daniel van der Meulen, Haarlem, 25 March 1585, 'Voorts van de roepen de Fransa die daer omme gaen, waer ons lief yet sekens te verhooren'. Jongbloet-van Houtte, *Brieven en bescheiden*, p. 196.

39 Andries van der Meulen to Daniel van der Meulen, Antwerp, 25 March 1585. 'Het tractaet van Vrancrijk is al te lancwijlich om voorder goet daerof te verhopen'. Jongbloet-van Houtte, *Brieven en bescheiden*, p. 199.

40 Pope Gregory XIII had died on 10 April 1585. 7 May 1585: 'Le mardi 7, M. de Vezière me dit avoir vu une lettre, venant de la part de M. de la Guierche, où est porté que le roi d'Espagne étoit décédé, du deuil reçu de la perte de ses gens, défaits en Flandre, devant la ville d'Anvers, et que aussi le pape étoit décédé naguère'. *Journal de Guillaume et de Michel le Riche*, 403.

41 Gilbert Schrenck, Xavier Le Person and Volker Mecking (eds.), *Registre-journal du règne de Henri IV. Volume 1 (1589–1591)* (Geneva: Droz, 2011), p. 98.

capitulated.<sup>42</sup> Violet Soen has pointed out the image of Farnese as clement reconciliator among both contemporaries and in historiography.<sup>43</sup> Monica Stensland has wondered whether contemporaries associated this reconciliation discourse with Philip or with Farnese.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, Pierre de L'Estoile, gathering pamphlets for his collection, was impressed with the mildness of Farnese's demands, but thought they originated not from Farnese but from the king. He blamed the image he had of Philip II as a hardcore Catholic to French League propaganda: 'one can see that, Catholic King as they may call him, he is not that zealous to maintain the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Religion as those of the League want us to believe and publish [pamphlets on]'.<sup>45</sup>

#### 4 The Armada

The vast historiography on news and propaganda about the Spanish Armada of 1588 has mainly focused on the Spanish and English. Reactions in the Netherlands and particularly in France have received far less attention in comparison.<sup>46</sup> This is partly due to the small number of French pamphlets on the Armada: major internal events in France itself that summer

42 *Articles et conditions du traité, faict et conclu entre l'altesse du prince de Parme Plaisance ... et la ville d'Anvers* (Paris: chez Jean Richer, 1585), USTC 14047; *Articles et conditions du traité, arrêté et conclu entre monseigneur le prince de Parme Plaisance ... et la ville de Bruxelles* (Lyon: Benoît Rigaud, 1585), USTC 11775.

43 Violet Soen, 'Reconquista and Reconciliation in the Dutch Revolt: The Campaign of Governor-General Alexander Farnese (1578–1592)', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 16:1 (2012), pp. 1–22 (3, 14).

44 Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, p. 108.

45 'Le XVII<sup>e</sup>, la ville d'Anvers fut rendue au Roy d'Hespagne et remise entre les mains du duc de Parme, son lieutenant, aux charges et conditions contenues aux articles qui en ont esté imprimés, par lesquels on peut voir que, tout Roy Catholique qu'on le nomme, il n'est si zelé à la manutention de la Religion Catholique, Apostolique et Romaine, que ceux de la Ligue publient et veulent faire croire'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, V, p. 39.

46 See on the Armada: M.J. Rodríguez-Salgado, *Armada 1588–1988* (London: Penguin Books, 1988), pp. 12–38; Colin Martin and Geoffrey Parker, *The Spanish Armada* (Manchester: Mandolin, 1999); De Lamar Jensen, 'The Spanish Armada: The Worst-Kept Secret in Europe', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 19:4 (1988), pp. 621–641; Brendan Dooley, 'Sources and Methods in Information History: The Case of Medici Florence, the Armada, and the Siege of Ostende', in Joop Koopmans (ed.), *News and Politics in Early Modern Europe* (Leuven etc.: Peeters, 2005), pp. 31–46; See on the French connection: Le Goff, *La Ligue en Bretagne*; Pettegree, *Invention of News*, pp. 151–158.



overshadowed all foreign news.<sup>47</sup> As Andrew Pettegree has stated, in the summer of 1588 'France was mostly consumed by its own affairs'.<sup>48</sup> Mack Holt has argued that this remarkable lack of print was partly the outcome of efforts undertaken by the Spanish ambassador in Paris Bernardino de Mendoza. He spurred and financed printing campaigns of the Catholic League to distract the French from the passing of the Spanish fleet through the English Channel.<sup>49</sup> Mendoza made it even harder to follow the course of the events by deliberately spreading misinformation. Even on 3 September, a newsletter written in Antwerp described a Spanish invasion of England. In newsletters and in pamphlets Mendoza boasted that the Spanish had captured Francis Drake.<sup>50</sup>

Philip II had spent years preparing his invincible army of ships that was destined to invade England. About 130 ships left Lisbon at the end of May 1588. After two battles with the English and Dutch in August, in which a number of Spanish ships were destroyed, strong winds blew the Spanish fleet past the coast of England with no opportunity for the Spanish to disembark in the Netherlands. The Spanish commander Duke of Medina Sidonia gave the order to sail via the Shetland Islands and the Irish Coast back to Spain. Many Spanish ships perished in severe gales. Most members of the battered fleet eventually reached Spanish harbours, but 11,000 Spanish crewmembers and soldiers perished.<sup>51</sup>

In August 1588, Pierre de L'Estoile dedicated several pages to the news and discourses on the Armada. According to him, the English claimed the victory, when it was actually God who had not liked Philip's plan and had obstructed the expedition by 'un vent contraire'. At the time ultra-Catholic supporters of the Duke of Guise, the *Seize*, had taken over Paris and controlled the city. Nevertheless, not only news, but also Protestant reactions to it, managed to reach Paris. L'Estoile even jotted down a Latin poem by the Genevan theologian Theodore Beza that he had heard from a friend:

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47 Out of thirty news pamphlets that were published in France in 1588, only three dealt with the Armada. One of them was printed in Paris, but only concerned the preparations of the fleet in the spring. The other two were published in the Huguenot stronghold on the Atlantic Coast, La Rochelle. That city stood in close contact with English and Dutch coreligionists. In comparison, from the 31 'news books' published in Dutch in 1588, no less than 20 dealt with the defeat of the Armada. All these booklets were printed in cities in the Northern Netherlands. In the Southern Netherlands, by contrast, the Farnese government prevented printers from publishing about the event. See the Universal Short Title Catalogue, [www.ustc.ac.uk](http://www.ustc.ac.uk).

48 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 157.

49 Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, pp. 129–130.

50 Dooley, 'Sources and Methods', pp. 39–41.

51 Rodríguez-Salgado, *Armada 1588–1988*, pp. 12–38.

Th. De Beze has made verses in Latin in honour of this important victory, adressed to the Queen of England ... which, despite the impediments and stormy winds of the League have reached Paris, where one of my friends has given them to me, finding them well-made, and men of wit have received them enthusiastically.<sup>52</sup>

Pierre Fayet, another Parisian citizen, likewise dedicated a page to news about the Armada. He described the failed attempt of Farnese in the Netherlands to march with his troops to the coast to invade England.<sup>53</sup>

According to the chronicler Faurin, Huguenots in the Protestant stronghold of Castres celebrated the news about the Armada on 5 October 1588, when, after months of contradictory reports, a Catholic defeat was confirmed as definite. Faurin was a convinced Calvinist: in 1567 he had recorded that the 'papists' pursued only two goals: 'hand France over to the King of Spain' and 'exterminate all those of the Religion'.<sup>54</sup> Faurin triumphantly recorded how this was the greatest victory of the English over the Spanish ever. Though having correctly received the larger picture of an English triumph, he was less well-informed on the details. His chronicle entry mixed up the main persons, events and dates. He noted the false news that the Duke of Medina Sidonia had died of a bullet wound and asserted that the Duke of Moncada, who was actually killed during the Battle of Gravelines, had fallen on his knees before Francis Drake and had duly been saved. He also portrayed the English as much more merciful than they actually were, claiming that they had spared the lives of almost all their enemies on the conquered ships, except for Jesuits and English Catholics, who had served as 'meat for the fish of the sea'.<sup>55</sup>

From the diary of Abel Eppens tho Equart we can reconstruct the way news about the Armada reached the Dutch exile community in Emden. In the beginning of July, Eppens had read a pamphlet on the preparations for the Armada. It had originated in Spain and had been translated into French, English, German,

52 'Sur quoi Th. De Besze fist les vers latins suivants en l'honneur et triomphe de cest insigne victoire, adressés à la Roine d'Angleterre.... Lesquels, nonobstant les empeschements et vents impetueux de la Ligue, parvinrent jusques à Paris, où un mien ami me les donna, estant trouvés bien faits et fort recueillis des hommes d'esprit'. Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, vi, pp. 66–67; Sarah Knight and Stefan Tilg (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Latin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 34.

53 *Journal historique de Pierre Fayet*, 47.

54 *Journal sur les guerres de Castres*, 37.

55 'Mais les Anglois apostats qui y furent trouvés, avec quelques jésuistes, ont servy de viande aux poissons de la mer'. *Journal sur les guerres de Castres*, 168–169.

and Dutch.<sup>56</sup> It consisted of a long list of Spanish ships and their commanders. Then, on the ninth of July, Eppens heard that the Spanish fleet was on its way, as Emden shipmasters and sailors were invited to come to Holland to help defend the coast. Only on 10 September did he hear the whole story of the defeat of the Armada. His source, a certain Eppo Vechter, brother of an Emden sailor who was a friend of Eppens, had heard the news in England.<sup>57</sup>

In Emden, the old spectre of an international Catholic alliance against the Protestants of Europe revitalized. This image had been around for decades: Protestant propaganda prints of the 1560s had depicted the French Cardinal of Lorraine, the Cardinal of Granvelle, and the Duke of Alba as joint enemies of Protestant Europe.<sup>58</sup> Back in 1568, those with some knowledge of European politics knew that this image of Catholic cooperation was wholly fictitious. In a letter to Cardinal Granvelle, Provost Morillon had made fun of the supposedly 'secret confederation' between the Pope, the Emperor, the King of Spain, the King of France, and the Duke of Savoy: '[to unite them] would have been an amazing accomplishment'.<sup>59</sup> Morillon supposed that the old enmity between Habsburg and Valois was sufficiently strong to overcome any cooperation. Granvelle's brother-in-law from the Franche-Comté held this view, stating, when passing on the news about war in France, that it did not matter if the French fought among themselves, because 'good or bad, the French always remain enemies of our good king'.<sup>60</sup> But in the 1580s, with Philip aiding the Catholic League, and the Pope supporting the Armada, international Catholic cooperation had become a fact. In his diary Eppens wondered what would have happened if the Spanish had won. Apparently, someone had sent a letter to the Geneva city council describing a worst-case scenario. This letter had

56 *Relacion de los galeones y otro navios, que van en la felicissima armada de que es capitan general el duque de Medina Sidonia* (Lisboa: António Álvares, 1588), USTC 345804; Michael Aitzinger (transl.), *Warhafft relation uberschlag und inhalt der kriegsruestung oder Armada so Philippus der Koenig von Hispanien auff dem meer bey Lisbona ... zusammen hat lassen bringen* ([Nürnberg: Nicolaus Knorr, 1588]), USTC 704929; *Warachtighe relatie, overslach ende inhout der krijchs-rustinghe ofte Armade die Philippus van Spaignien op de Riviere by Lisbon te samen heeft laten brengghen* (Delft: Aelbrecht Hendricksz erst Gottfried von Kempen, Köln, 1588), USTC 422589; Daniel Archdeacon, *A true discourse of the armie which the King of Spaine caused to bee assembled in the haven of Lisbon, in the kingdome of Portugall, in the yeare 1588 against England* (London: John Wolfe, 1588), USTC 510911.

57 *Kroniek van Abel Eppens tho Equart*, II, 663–699.

58 Horst, *Opstand in zwart-wit*, esp. chapters 2 and 3; compare Zwierlein, 'Security Politics'.

59 'qui seroit une belle oeuvre ...'. Morillon to Granvelle, Brussels, 12 October 1567. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, III, p. 53.

60 'buenos y malos Franceses todos son inimighos de nuestro buen Rey'. Lannoy to Granvelle, Gray, 8 January 1568. Pouillet and Piot, *Correspondance de Granvelle*, III, p. 166.

subsequently been disseminated in Emden. Eppens dwelled on the horrors of a pan-European war, in which Catholic princes from Spain, Italy, France and Germany would eliminate Protestants everywhere in Europe.<sup>61</sup>

## 5 A Single European Audience

The international dimensions of news about the Armada and the existence of a 'European audience' become conspicuous in a short rhyme that turned up in various pamphlets and chronicles during the summer and autumn of 1588.<sup>62</sup> On 6 August 1588, an anonymous pamphleteer, probably Michael Aitzinger in Cologne, published a German translation of a Spanish pamphlet with a description of the preparations for the Armada. He concluded the translation with a distich:

'To the English Woman and her European followers'.  
You, who wished to despise the laws of Rome,  
will learn to put your neck under the yoke of Spain.<sup>63</sup>

As chroniclers were generally keen on recording funny or clever pasquinades, we are able to trace this particular distich in various diaries from several countries. Pierre de L'Estoile wrote in his chronicle that he heard it on the streets of Paris.<sup>64</sup> A Dutch translation of Aitzinger's pamphlet, published in Delft, concluded with the same verse.<sup>65</sup> Pieter Bor, the Dutch seventeenth-century historian, published the text in his *Origins of the Dutch Wars*.<sup>66</sup> Abel Eppens tho Equart heard it in Emden and thought the verse originated in Spain. He wrote that the Spanish had it attached to a picture of Queen Elizabeth. He even claimed that it had been painted on 'the Admiral's ship', the ship of the

61 *Kroniek van Abel Eppens tho Equart*, II, 697–699.

62 On models for international audiences and discursive communities see Helmers, *Royalist Republic*, pp. 26–28; compare De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, p. 118, who, instead of public opinion, calls it a 'plurality of continuously interacting publics'.

63 "Ad Anglam et eius asseclas Europae". / Tu quae Romanas voluisti spernere leges, / Hispano disces subdere colla iugo', *Autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen Hermann Weinsbergs*, 2 September 1588.

64 Lazard and Schrenck, *Registre-journal Henri III*, VI, p. 73.

65 *Warachtighe relatie, overslach ende inhout der krijchs-rustinghe* (USTC 422589).

66 Pieter Christiaensz Bor, *Oorsprongk, begin en vervolgh der Nederlandsche oorlogen, beroerten, en borgerlyke oneenigheden*, 4 vols. (Amsterdam, 1679–1684) II, p. 317.

Duke of Medina Sidonia.<sup>67</sup> In Cologne, Hermann Weinsberg mused in his diary that he did not understand to whom the verse was directed: 'I do not know who they mean by it, perhaps, as people are strongly suggesting, England, or Holland, or the Sea Beggars or Calvinists, or France. God knows'.<sup>68</sup> Weinsberg also recorded that in the early days of September 1588, when the first news of a Spanish defeat reached Cologne, Aitzinger desperately had his pamphlet containing the rhyme reprinted, to turn the tide of bad rumours, without much success.<sup>69</sup>

Protestants in England and the Netherlands reacted to Catholic propaganda with their own distiches. An English pamphlet on the composition of the Armada contained several parodies on Aitzinger's verse. The author, Daniel Archdeacon, obviously knew who was behind the Catholic propaganda. His parodies were directed at the inhabitants of Cologne in general, 'Colonienses', at Aitzinger, 'Poetam Coloniensem' and at Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador in Paris.<sup>70</sup> Marnix van Sint Aldegonde triumphantly wrote several parodies of the verse directed at 'the King of Spain and his followers', of which the following apparently was the catchiest version, as Bor included it later in his *Origins of the Wars*:

'To the Spaniard and his followers'  
You, who wanted to spill the blood of the followers of Christ,  
will learn to put your neck under the yoke of God.<sup>71</sup>

## 6 The Murders of the Guises and Henry III—Separation in Print

In 1588–1589, the propaganda battle between the royalists of Henry III and the pamphleteers of the League provoked an unprecedented flood of printed polemic in France.<sup>72</sup> As Andrew Pettegree has demonstrated, the events

67 'In Spanniën ommededragen hadden tom scowspill myt dusse upscryfft an hier Majestaets beldenisse gehangen: Ex Hispania ad Anglam und affectas Europae tu quod Romanas valuisti spernere leges Hispanico discas colla subdere jugo, und ys an des Amiraerlsscip ock gemalet west'. *Kroniek van Abel Eppens tho Equart*, 11. 681.

68 'Wen es da mit eigentlich oder specifice meinet ist mir unbewost, fillicht Engelandt wie man starck sagt, oder Hollandt, oder die guissen oder calvinisten, oder Franckreich. Got weiß es'. *Autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen Hermann Weinsbergs*, 2 September 1588.

69 Ibidem.

70 Archdeacon, *A true discourse of the armie* (USTC 510911).

71 'Ad Hispanum et eius assecclas' / Tu qui Christigenam voluisti perdere gentem, / Supremo discas subdere colla Deo'. Bor, *Oorsprongk*, 11, p. 317.

72 Wilkinson, 'Homicides Royaux'.

in France found echoes in Netherlandish print material.<sup>73</sup> Adherents in the Netherlands were neatly divided between north and south: printers in the northern Netherlands printed pamphlets that supported Henry III and Henry of Navarre; presses in the southern Netherlands printed pamphlets in support of the Guises and the League.

The civil wars that plagued France and the Netherlands had complicated the regulation of print. Censorship before the 1560s was rather straightforward: in France, Crown, Church and the *Parlement* of Paris decided what was allowed and what forbidden. In the Netherlands, Charles V and Philip II had issued edicts on censorship. After the outbreak of war, restrictions became increasingly complicated, as whole regions joined the rebels. In both countries, much depended on local magistrates, who possessed the best means to control the printing presses, regulate the spreading of newsletters and pamphlets and forbid the recounting of oral news and the singing of songs.<sup>74</sup> As chronicles habitually show, the spreading of unwelcome news was punished severely.<sup>75</sup> What the authorities allowed depended on what side their city had chosen. Amsterdam's magistrates for a long time desperately tried to repress all reports that were favourable to William of Orange, while other cities in the vicinity had already joined the Revolt. At the same time, city magistrates often actively disseminated news that was favourable to their side. Some groups were better at pamphleteering than others. In the Dutch Revolt, pamphlets famously were the medium of the rebels, although Monica Stensland has shown that the Habsburg government became increasingly adept at communicating with its subjects. In France, the Catholic League was skillful at producing extremely virulent polemical material.<sup>76</sup>

Mounting tensions among French *ligueurs* exploded after Henry III's murder of the Guises in December 1588. Earlier that year in May, the League had taken over Paris, where the ultra-Catholic Sixteen now formed a new revolutionary government. Henry, banished from his own capital, was forced to

73 Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands', pp. 333–334.

74 On seditious singing see for instance Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 126. Compare measures taken by the magistrates of Ghent, who prohibited in October 1566 the passing on of news stories without naming sources. *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, 1. 307–308.

75 Many examples can be found in the chronicles of Godevaert van Haecht and Pierre de L'Estoile.

76 On censorship see: Henk van Nierop, 'Censorship, Illicit Printing and the Revolt of the Netherlands', in A.C. Duke and C.A. Tamse (eds.), *Too Mighty to be Free: Censorship and the Press in Britain and the Netherlands* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1988), pp. 29–44; Alfred Soman, 'Press, Pulpit, and Censorship in France before Richelieu', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 120:6 (1976), pp. 439–463; Racaut, *Hatred in Print*, chapter 1, 'Print, Censorship and the Vernacular during the French Wars of Religion', pp. 7–22.

meet the demands of the Guises and the Sixteen. One of these requests was to convoke the Estates-General to organize a war against the Huguenots. The king was desperate to regain the initiative and reestablish his authority. In the morning of 23 December 1588, he summoned the Duke and the Cardinal of Guise to his room in the chateau of Blois, where the Estates-General had met. There, he had his guards murder the Duke, while he had the Cardinal arrested. The latter was murdered in his cell the next day.<sup>77</sup> Instead of regaining authority, the king now faced the deep and total anger of the League, who cried out for vengeance and no longer recognized him as king.

The murders in France echoed strongly in the Netherlands. While Catholic pamphleteers in the Southern Netherlands voiced their support for the Guises, the presses in the United Provinces expressed their support for Henry III. In Amsterdam and Utrecht, printers based their pamphlets on the explanatory letter the king had sent to some of his foreign diplomats. In the *Extract wt seker missive ...* for example, the author stated that circumstances had forced him to eliminate the Guises.<sup>78</sup>

King Henry III and his supporters, after the murder of the Guises, failed to seize the momentum in the propaganda war. Only in February 1589 did he start a print offensive against the Duke of Mayenne, the Guise brother who now headed the League.<sup>79</sup> At the end of December 1588, and in January 1589, however, printers in the United Provinces had already published the king's letters. In these pamphlets, the authors did not only explain why the king had murdered the Guises, but they also provided the reason why Henry III had failed to act more forcefully. He was suffering from melancholy caused by the indisposition of his mother—Catherine de' Medici eventually died on 5 January 1589. When Henry III and his supporters began to publish their own propaganda pamphlets, printers in the United Provinces were eager to produce Dutch translations.<sup>80</sup>

77 Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, pp. 131–132.

78 *Extract uut sekere missive inhoudende dat om-brenghen van den hertoghe van Guise met vele vanden verbonde van S. Ligue, gheschiet 23.12.1588* ([Amsterdam]: Cornelis Claesz, 1589), USTC 429254.

79 Wilkinson, 'Homicides Royaux'; On the Guise family see: Carroll, *Martyrs and Murderers*.

80 *Declaration sur l'attentat, felonie et rebellion du duc de Mayne, duc et chevalier d'Aumalle et ceux qui les assisteront* ([Middelburg: Richard Schilders], 1589), USTC 35012; *Adrys vanden ghenen die zijn geweest tot Blois, ten tijde van den moort, gheschiet inde personen van den hertoghe van Guise, ende den cardinael synen broedere* ([Dordrecht: Jan Canin], 1589), USTC 422714; *Copie vant ghene eensdeels op den tweeden Januarij, eensdeels op den seven den der selve maent gheresolveert is ter vergaderinghe van de faculteyt der allerheylichste theologie van Parijs teghen Henrick van Valois, coningh van Vranckrijck* ([Delft: Aelbrecht Hendricksz], 1589), USTC 422715; *Articulen die geaccordeert sijn tusschen den coning, ende*



FIGURE 11 Frans Hogenberg, 'The Murder of the Guise brothers, 23 and 24 December 1588'. In: Franse, Duitse en Engelse Gebeurtenissen, 1576–1610. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (RP-P-OB-78.785-238)

Mark Greengrass regards this period, with the death of Henry in August 1589, as the nadir of Henry's reputation and the 'epitome of the collapse of the

*den coning van Navarre, daer voor hy hem sterck maeckt op tbestant van een jaer, anno 1589* (Amsterdam: Harmen Jansz Muller eerst Tours, 1589), USTC 422718; *Instructie byden coninck van Vranckrijck, ghesonden aen syne Stadhouderen opt stuck vande doodt vanden Hertoghe van Guyse* (Delft: Bruyn Harmansz Schinckel, 1589), USTC 422726; *Copie van een brief van justificatie vanden coninck van Vranckrijck ghesonden aen all de steden sijz coninckrijcx* (Amsterdam: Cornelis Claesz, 1589), USTC 429232; *Copie van zekere brief van justificatie, uutten hove vanden coninck van Vranckrijck ghesonden beroerende het ombreng- hen vanden hertoghe van Guise* (Utrecht: Salomon de Roy & Jan Coenraetsz, 1589), USTC 429233; *Extract uut sekere missive* (USTC 429254); *Justificatie ofte ontschuldighen van den coninck van Vranckrijck ghesonden aen alle syne steden des rijcks, verclarende de cause van de versekeringe zijnes persoons ende rijcx door t'verliesen des levens van den hertoghe van Guyse* (Dordrecht: Jan Canin, 1589), USTC 429259.



moral authority of the French monarchy'. This certainly becomes clear from French chronicles, in which the authors openly vent their opinion of their king. *Ligueur* Nicolas Dare in Troyes, who later tried to sanitize his writings by rubbing out some parts, wrote regarding the murder of the Guises: 'King Henry III has given a demonstration that was very fine in appearance, but he has showed on 23 and 24 December 1588 his [nasty] [dissimulated] conspiracy by the [cruel and murderous] death that he has carried out in his study' (the words between brackets are those he had tried to erase in the manuscript).<sup>81</sup> Other Frenchmen simply started to call him 'the Valois' instead of the king.<sup>82</sup> In the print material from the United Provinces, however, Henry III retained his authority as the sole and uncontested French head of state.

In the Southern Netherlands, the production of news pamphlets about France was monopolized by printers in Brussels and Douai, who operated under strict Habsburg censorship and control. They published fewer pamphlets than their colleagues in the North did, but these were all firmly supportive of the Guises.<sup>83</sup> The Brussels printer Rutger Velpius sold pamphlets with titles that did not mince words, such as *Cruauté plus que barbare infidelement perpetré par Henry de Valois*.<sup>84</sup> Remarkably, as Paul Arblaster has noted, his pro-League pamphlets were chiefly intended for an international market and many of them were exported to France as propaganda material for French *ligueurs*.<sup>85</sup>

81 'Le Roy Henri III<sup>e</sup> de ce nom y a faict une démonstration fort belle et bonne en apparence, mais il a démontré le 23e et 24e décembre 1588 sa [meschante] conspiration [dissimulée] par la mort [cruelle et assassinat] qu'il a faict commettre en son cabinet'. *Mémoires de Nicolas Dare*, 83–84.

82 Jehan de la Fosse: 'this Valois was of a cruel and vindictive nature'. *Mémoires d'un curé de Paris*, 168.

83 *Copia eorum proposita in congregatione facultatis theologiae Parisiensis contra Henricum Vaesium Galliae regem apud collegium Sorbonae*. *Copie de ce que en partie le 2 de janvier este propose, faict & resolu* ([Bruxelles: Rutgerus Velpius], 1589), USTC 413934; *Cruaute plus que barbare infidelement perpetree par Henry de Valois en la personne de monsieur l'illustrissime cardinal de Guise* ([Bruxelles: Rutgerus Velpius], 1589), USTC 416119; Anne d'Este, *Remonstrance faite au roy par madame de Nemours* ([Bruxelles: Rutger Velpius], 1589), USTC 16150; *Discours veritable et dernier propos de monseigneur le duc de Guyse, pair et grand maistre de France. Ensemble son tombeau* ([Douai, veuve Jacques Boscard], 1589), USTC 8918; *Regretz et souspirs lamentables de la France, sur le trespas de tres-haut et tres-valeureux seigneur, monseigneur le duc de Guyse* ([Douai: veuve Jacques Boscard], 1589), USTC 10931; Catherine de Clèves, *Les regrets et lamentations faictes par madame de Guyse sur la mort de feu monseigneur le duc de Guyse* ([Douai: veuve Jacques Boscard], 1589), USTC 10932; *Propositio super morte Guisiani cardinalis, in congregatione consistoriali prolata Romae 27.02.1589. Proposition faicte par nostre saint pere le pape* (Lyon [=Bruxelles], Jean Pillehotte [=Rutgerus Velpius]: 1589), USTC 413971.

84 *Cruaute plus que barbare infidelement perpetree par Henry de Valois* (USTC 416119).

85 Arblaster, *From Ghent to Aix*, pp. 54–55; Pettegree, 'France and the Netherlands', p. 334.

Some of this print material contained vivid imagery: one broadsheet depicted the Duke of Guise bleeding to death, covered in wounds caused by daggers and halberds.<sup>86</sup> Female *complaintes*, written in the voices of women, stirred up emotions against Henry III. In two pamphlets, printed in Brussels and Douai, Anne d'Este, Duchess of Nemours, mother of the Guise brothers called for revenge for the murder of her 'two innocent children'. In another moving pamphlet, the voice of Catherine de Clèves, wife of Henry, Duke of Guise, lamented the death of her husband and promised the public she would seek revenge.<sup>87</sup>

The opinions expressed in propaganda pamphlets found their echoes in chronicles. Jan de Pottre endorsed the sentiments of the League in France, denouncing in his chronicle the 'scandalous murder', perpetrated by the king against the first nobles of the kingdom. In an attempt to explain the reasons behind the killing, he recorded how: 'they say the King was not a Catholic any longer, and the Duke of Guise was very Catholic. That is why the Catholics in France are in revolt against their king'.<sup>88</sup> In contrast, Abel Eppens celebrated Henry's murder of the Guises as an international victory for Protestantism: 'Unsuspectedly, things have changed in France against the Holy League; on 23 December 1588 the union between King Henry and the Guises of the holy, that is hellish, spirit has been broken, King Henry of Navarre has been liberated and the whole Christendom rejoices'.<sup>89</sup> Henry of Navarre, in fact, tried to reduce Protestant rejoicing out of fear of exacerbating tensions, forbidding the inhabitants of La Rochelle from setting off celebratory fireworks when the news of the murders reached their town.<sup>90</sup>

On 1 August 1589, the young monk Jacques Clément attacked Henry III with a dagger in the king's palace in Saint-Cloud. Before Henry died the following

86 *Pourtraict et description du massacre proditoirement commis au cabinet et par l'auctorite du roy pendant les estats a Blois en la personne de Henry de Lorraine, magnanime duc de Guise* ([Bruxelles, Rutger Velpius, 1589]), USTC 63827.

87 Wilkinson, 'Homicides Royaux', p. 146; Anne d'Este, *Remonstrance faite au roy* (USTC 16150); Catherine de Clèves, *Les regrets et lamentations* (USTC 10932). On the genre of female complaints, see Kate van Orden, 'Female Complaints: Laments of Venus, Queens, and City Women in Late Sixteenth-Century France', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 54:3 (2001), pp. 801–845.

88 *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 183.

89 'Voel onvermoedetlicker ys geboert die veranderinghe in Vrankrijck tegens den Sancta Lyga, offte verbundt des heiligen dat [is] helschen geestes, up den 23 Decembris anno 1588 gebroken, tusschen den koninck Hindrick van Vrankrijck und den Gwisianer, daermyt die konick Hendrik van Navarren ontvrijet, und die heele Christenheit verblijdet ys worden'. *Kroniek van Abel Eppens tho Equart*, II. 718–719.

90 Wilkinson, 'Homicides Royaux', p. 135.

day, he named Henry of Navarre as his sole and legitimate heir.<sup>91</sup> Pamphlets in Delft and in Alkmaar lamented the death of the king and celebrated the nomination of his successor.<sup>92</sup> Compared to the flood of material provoked by the death of the Guises in Catholic Paris, the murder of Henry III seems to have passed by rather quietly in the print centres of Antwerp, Brussels, and Douai.<sup>93</sup> The murder of a king, hated as he was, might still have been a controversial topic. While some French leaguers triumphantly celebrated the ‘miracle’ of Henry’s death, others expressed some confusion or hesitation about what to think of the event.<sup>94</sup> The ligueur canon Nicolas Brûlart in Paris wrote: ‘This murder was found very strange, and without previous example, because in the chronicles of France one will not find that ever before a king supported heretics’.<sup>95</sup> Jan de Pottre was well-informed of the circumstances surrounding Henry’s death, but, in contrast to his strong views on the death of the Guises, refrained from giving his opinion about this murder. He did, however, mention that Henry had designated Henry of Navarre as his successor.<sup>96</sup> Frederik Coenders van Helpen, a Calvinist nobleman who lived in Groningen, noted in his diary a pasquil on the deaths of the members of the Valois dynasty.<sup>97</sup>

The diary-keeping cleric in Dunkirk, on the contrary, voiced League-like opinions when he joyfully recorded receiving the news about Henry’s murder in the beginning of August. In contrast to League pamphlets, however, instead of attributing the event to divine miracle, he stressed human agency:

In the beginning of August we heard that various convents and persons in Paris, having together decided to save the Catholic religion, and the prosperity of the realm, had resolved to do away with the King, and stop that monster from completely ruining the noble realm, something he has

91 Greengrass, ‘Regicide, Martyrs and Monarchical Authority’, p. 176.

92 *Oprecht ende warachtich verhael, vande aenslaghen ende heymelijcke verbonden ende conspiratien ghemaect teghens den coninck van Vranckrijck ende Polen, waeruut sijn doot ghevolcht is* (Delft: Bruyn Harmansz Schinckel, 1589), USTC 422696; *Discours. Corte verclaringhe ende waerachtich verhael aengaende vande doot vanden coninck van Vranckrijck. Mitsgaders de instellinge vanden coninck van Naverre in sijn plaetse* (Middelburg (=Alkmaar): Richard Schilders [=Aert Cornelisz], 1589), USTC 422740.

93 Compare Greengrass ‘Regicide, Martyrs and Monarchical Authority’, p. 178.

94 ‘The king’s death was ‘admirable and prodigious’, ‘a miracle in our sight’. Ibidem.

95 ‘Ce meurtre fust trouvé bien estrange, d’aautant qu’il se trouvoit sans exemple, comme aussy ne c’estoit trouvé aux chroniques de France que jamais Roy eust adhééré aux hereticques’. *Journal d’un ligueur parisien*, 147; De Waele, *Réconcilier les Français*, p. 105.

96 *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 184.

97 H.O. Feith and J.A. Feith (eds.), ‘Reisjournaal van jhr. Frederik Coenders van Helpen’, *Bijdragen en mededeelingen van het Historisch Genootschap*, xiv (1893), pp. 114–226 (225).

tried very hard to accomplish every day ... and a religious Jacobin has consented to accept the job and risk his life for the common good.<sup>98</sup>

He complained, moreover, that even on his deathbed Henry still expressed rancour, saying that he wished to be revenged. This was something 'very unbecoming to a Catholic prince *et roy très-chrestien*', he wrote disapprovingly.<sup>99</sup>

## 7 Navarre versus Farnese

In the beginning of 1590 Philip II, agitated by Henry of Navarre's victories over the League, ordered Farnese (who by then had succeeded his father as Duke of Parma) to retreat from the Netherlands and bring his troops into action in France. In July 1590, Farnese left for France and marched to Paris, which had been besieged by Henry for months. By September, Paris was in his hands. Meanwhile, Maurice of Nassau and the other Dutch leaders used the opportunity offered by the duke's absence to reconquer cities in the north-east of the Netherlands. In 1591 and 1592, an exhausted Farnese had to divide his attention and his troops between the wars in the Netherlands and those in France.<sup>100</sup>

The States General appreciated from the beginning that the future of the United Provinces was closely tied to the fate of Henry of Navarre. In September 1589, they announced a public day of prayer to further Henry's successful ascension to the throne.<sup>101</sup> And in the years that followed they kept regularly announcing public days of prayer for Henry IV 'and the peaceful possession of his realm'.<sup>102</sup> Presses in the United Provinces provided the public with a steady flow of Dutch news pamphlets about Henry's deeds, his sieges and his battles against the Guises.<sup>103</sup> A Beggars' Song from 1589 was ahead of

98 'Alzoo wy verstaen hadden als dat diverssche conventen ende andre personagen binnen der stede van Paris, omme te conserveren de catholycke religie, als wesende twelvaert ende prosperiteyt van den rycke, ghesaemdelick ghesloten ende gheresolveert hadden den coninck van cante te helpen, ende zulck een monster dat edel rycke niet te laten totalick ruyneren, waer hy daeghelicx extreme debvoir toedede ... zodat onder andre een religieus Jacopin heeft anghenomen ende zyn leven te aventueren, totten generale welvaert van de ghemeente, tselve exploit te anveerden'. 'Vlaamsche Kronyk', 694.

99 'niet wel betamende tot een catholycq prince *et roy très-chrestien*'. 'Vlaamsche Kronyk', 694.

100 Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 226–228.

101 On 13 September 1589. Kist, *Neêrland's bededagen*, II, p. 58.

102 Kist, *Neêrland's bededagen*, II, pp. 59–60, pp. 64–65.

103 *Een cort verhael. Wonderlicke nieu tydinge van de groote victorie die Godt onsen volcke verleent heeft in Vranckrijk*, 10.09, hoe den coninck van Navarre den coninck van Vranckrijk afgeslaghen heeft (Haarlem: Gillis Rooman, 1587), USTC 429196; *Een cort verhael vande*

events when it celebrated Henry's coronation on the very day Henry III had died, as Henry would receive the heavily contested crown of France only in February 1594 after nearly five years of bitter fighting and his conversion to Catholicism. Nevertheless, it joyfully claimed:

He has been crowned [1589, the 1st of August],  
and given the honour that is due  
to the noble blood of the good Bourbons  
that have taken the Kingdom

He is a victorious Prince,  
brave as a giant, in his deeds,  
But the invidious Guisard  
with his black heart,  
is after his life  
but he will see God's mercy:  
Let us thank the Lord.<sup>104</sup>

By now, printers in even smaller provincial towns such as Gouda and Deventer published their own news pamphlets about Henry's exploits in France.<sup>105</sup> A

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*miraculeuse victorie dien Godt belieft heeft te verleenen den coninck van Naverre [sic], teghen dien de la ligue, 20.10. 1587* ([Amsterdam]: Harmen Jansz Muller, 1587), USTC 422482; *Corte sommarische verclaringhe, van sekere puncten betreffende den oorloghe in Vranckrijck, tuschen den coninc van Vranckrijck, den van Guyse tegen den coninck van Navarre, aengaende de croone van Vranckrijck* (Dordrecht: Peeter Verhaghen, 1587), USTC 422554; *Cort verhael vande hooghe ende vroomfe feyten van oirlooghe, vanden Francoischen edeldom onder tgheliedt ende belejdt van coninck Henrick de vierde, tegens den leger vande ligueurs oft bontplichtinghe* (Delft: Bruyn Harmansz Schinckel, 1589), USTC 422691; *Discours. Cort verhael vande grote victorie, die God almachtich belieft heeft te verlenen den doorluchtighen coninck van Vranckrijck teghen den hertoghe van Savoyen ende die van Guyse, byder stadt genaemt Diepen, 29.09* (Middelburg (=Amsterdam): Richard Schilders [=Cornelis Claesz], 1589), USTC 422694; *Cort onpartijlich verhael vande belegeringe voor Parys in Vranckrijck gheschiedt by Henrick den vierden coninck van Vranckryck ende Navarre* ([Amsterdam: Cornelis Claesz], 1591), USTC 422951.

104 'Giant' refers to the Latin spelling of Navarre's name, 'Navarreus'. Hy is ghecroont, eere betoont [1589. Den eersten Augusti] / Dat rechtelick toequam, den stam / Dat Edele bloet, van Bourbon goet / Het Coninckrijck aennam. / Hy is een Prince victorieus, / Kloeck als een Reus, in sijne daden, / Maer den Guysaert invidieus / Van herten beus, tot sijnder schaden / Staet naer sijn leven vroegh ende spaden, / Maer Gods genade neemt hy wel waer: / Gods Kerck coemt hy altijt tot staden, / Dus laet ons wesen den Heer danckbaer. Kuiper, *Geuzenliedboek*, II, pp. 25–27, nr. 149.

105 *Cort verhael van sommige heerlijcke victorien die den coninck van Vranckrijck ghehad heeft teghens den Guysaert. Midtzgaders oock die behoudinge van der stadt Sinte Denys* (Gouda: Peeter Gevaerts, 1591), USTC 422952; *Waerhaffte tijding uuth Vranckrijck, van*

curious court case in the village of Leiderdorp, close to the city of Leiden, demonstrates the extent to which news about Henry's actions was of interest to the inhabitants of the Netherlands. On 25 October 1594, a certain Cornelis Verdoes pressed charges against tailor Willem Ripperts to compel him to pay 8 guilders for a book Verdoes had once sold to him on the condition that he only had to pay when Henry IV would conquer Paris. Earlier that year Henry had in fact captured Paris, and the court duly forced the tailor to give the asked sum to his creditor.<sup>106</sup>

The diary of Johan Julsing abounds with news about Henry of Navarre in the years 1590–1593. Navarre was his hero and perhaps, so he thought, even his future king. Julsing one day wrote how some 'prophetic spirits predicted', 'that he would become King of France, and that his government would receive the highest praise, and that he would even expand his realm to the River Ems'.<sup>107</sup> France was a constant source of inspiration and frustration, as he often had to make sense of contradictory reports that reached his city. On 16 April 1590, someone had arrived from Dieppe to report about the battle of Ivry (14 March 1590) between Henry and the Duke of Mayenne. Philip, Count of Egmont, son of the famous Lamoral, had also participated in this battle. Despite what had happened to his father, he was a strong supporter of Philip II's Catholic cause, and he had joined the *Ligueurs* in France with troops from the Netherlands. The man from Dieppe reported that Henry had delivered a severe blow to Catholic troops and that Mayenne had died, together with many Netherlandish soldiers. While the battle had indeed been a victory for Henry, it had in fact been Philip of Egmont who had perished instead of Mayenne.<sup>108</sup>

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*den coninck van Navarren, ende den prince van Parma, twelck geschieden is tuschen den achtien den, ende nyegentienden aprilis, anno 1592 biss op den 16en may* (Deventer: Simon Steenberch (I), 1592), USTC 423055.

106 I am very grateful to Dick E.H. de Boer for showing this source to me. '25 okt 1594: Eis van Cornelis Jacobsz. Verdoes tegen Willem Ripperts, snijder te Leiderdorp' om betalinge te hebben van acht gulden van 40 r. tstuck spruijgende uuyt zaecke van cope van een bouck bijden gedaechde van eyscher gecoft op conditie wanneer de stadt van Parijs mitten coninck van Navarre ende Vrancrijck vereenicht, ende onder subiectie van zijne Maiesteyt zoude zijn; ende alsoe de conditie nu gevallen, is concludeert to condempnatie vandien mitten costen'. *Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken ELO*. Inventaris van het archief der gemeente Leiderdorp, 1561–1935, toeg.nr. NL-LdnRAL-0800, inv. nr. 1630. Dingbouck vanaf (14 januari) 1585, 55v. See also Geoffrey Parker on sixteenth-century people betting on the death days of the great at the Antwerp Exchange: Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 28.

107 'si est futurus Francie Rex et cum summa laude regnaturus, imo suum regnum usque ad Amasim propagaturus'. *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 82, 187.

108 *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 67, 179–180.

A similar confusion surrounded Farnese's relief of Paris in September 1590. Julsing's record of his uncertainty and his methods of fact checking again testify to the deliberate attempt of a sixteenth-century chronicler to get at the truth. At first Julsing reported a torrent of reports about and from France, 'all in favour of the King of Navarre'.<sup>109</sup> On Friday 20 September, however, a letter to stadtholder Verdugo arrived saying that Farnese had conquered Paris. Unwilling to believe this unwelcome news, Julsing five days later hopefully recorded that others said that the queen of England had received news about a complete defeat of Farnese through three separate postal deliveries. At the same time, an acquaintance showed Julsing a letter from a merchant in Cologne saying that Parma had been defeated. Julsing recorded (in secret code) how he had seen the letter himself and how this acquaintance had read it aloud to him.<sup>110</sup> However, his speculations on the outcome of the siege of Paris ceased when he recorded that on Friday 28 September the Spanish army commander Cristóbal de Mondragón received a letter from Farnese telling him that the troops of Henry had lifted the siege of Paris and had crossed the Seine.<sup>111</sup> Julsing's rather inconsistent way of dealing with news, then, shows how wishful thinking about international Protestant victories did not exclude a desire to find out what had really happened.

While Julsing in his diary secretly rejoiced over Protestant victories and commiserated with defeats, the authorities in his hometown of Groningen ordered its inhabitants to join in celebrations and masses for Farnese's French victories.<sup>112</sup> In other cities in the Netherlands, Catholic chroniclers recorded their support for Farnese. Jan de Pottre, always fascinated by the deeds of nobles, closely followed the movements of 'our Duke'. In November 1587, he recorded the first rumours spreading in Brussels that Philip planned to send Farnese to France.<sup>113</sup> When Farnese duly left in the beginning of 1590, De Pottre recorded how he 'went to France to help the brother of Guise, the Duke of Mayennes, as well as the inhabitants of Paris, who had a great need for food, because the King of Navarre was sieging Paris, to drive away the King of Navarre, who was not a Catholic, that is why the people of Paris did not want him'.<sup>114</sup> Yet his diary does not only celebrate Farnese; it also testifies to the

109 *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 96, 192.

110 *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 97, 193.

111 *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 97, 193.

112 *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 98, 194.

113 *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 180.

114 *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre*, 185–186, 189. '[Farnese went to] Vrancrijck ter hulpen van duc de Mynes, den bruer van Duc de Ghuyssse, ende oock om die van Parys, die in grooten noot van vivers waren; want den coninck van Naverne lagh voer de stadt om die te winnen, om

poverty and miseries of the troops he brought back from France. The Dunkirk cleric happily recorded Farnese's repeated efforts to come 'to the rescue of the Holy League'.<sup>115</sup> After hearing news about Farnese's supposed entry into Paris, something he later corrected as being untrue, he recorded how Farnese had been offered the Louvre, which he had modestly declined, opting instead to stay at the home of the Spanish ambassador. He also added the rather implausible story of how the whole of Paris had shouted 'vive le roy d'Espagne!'.<sup>116</sup>

Some Catholic French chroniclers, in turn, hailed Farnese as their saviour. Diarist Jean Pussot rejoiced at the news of the arrival of 'the Prince de Palme' and his son Ranuce coming to the aid of 'les pauvres catholiques'.<sup>117</sup> Despite sanitizing his own pro-*Ligue* notes after the triumph of Henry IV—he erased whole sentences—it is nevertheless clear how fervently he supported Farnese. He constantly distinguished between 'the enemies' and the 'Catholic party' and praised Farnese for going out of his way to deliver 'Paris and other neighbouring cities' from their opponents.<sup>118</sup> Pierre Fayet, having a passion for astrology and famous men, eagerly followed the news about Farnese and his son. He recorded Farnese's trip to Spa in August 1591, where the duke, who had been ill for some time, had gone in an attempt to recover his health.<sup>119</sup> Fayet was, however, less taken with Farnese's Spanish troops than with Farnese himself. After they had plundered the abbey of the Celestines in the village of Marcoussis, he

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den coninck van Naverne te verdryven, die niet catolijck en was, daer omme en wilden die van Parys niet hebben', 186.

115 See his reports on the siege of Rouen, December 1591; Farnese again went 'ten secourse van die van der Ste Ligue'. 'Vlaamsche Kronyk', 746.

116 'Vlaamsche Kronyk', 721.

117 *Journalier de Jean Pussot*, 105. See also on Farnese Nicolas Brûlart, *Journal d'un ligueur parisien*, 190: 'qui estoit venue pour secourir les catholiques'. Ligue chroniclers frequently distinguished between 'the poor catholics' and others. Compare the League sympathizer chanoine Jean Moreau in Bretagne who applauded the brave Spaniards, '... comme étant tous du parti du duc de Mercoeur, qui étoit le parti des catholiques, pour lequel lesdits Espagnols étoient venus. Ils mirent dans le fort trois à quatre cents hommes de combat, gens aguerris, qui avoient été aux armées de Flandre, commandés par le vaillant et renommé capitain Praxède...'. Henri Waquet (ed.), *Mémoires du chanoine Jean Moreau sur les guerres de la ligue en Bretagne* (Quimper: Archives départementales, 1960), 130. On Farnese's fame in the Netherlands see Stensland, *Habsburg Communication*, pp. 108–110.

118 *Journalier de Jean Pussot*, 104–105. For instance: The enemy 'estant chassé ou espouventé de nos gens en ayde [erased after the Ligue!] dudit sieur et prince de Palme, qui fit grand devoir pour la délivrance d'icelle ville de Parys et aultres villes voisines'. See also 108–110, 117. Arblaster also pointed out that 'Parma's fame was not limited to the Low Countries.' Arblaster, *From Ghent to Aix*, pp. 57–58.

119 *Journal historique de Pierre Fayet*, 99, 120–122.



ironically wondered: ‘whether this proves that they are better Christians than the French’.<sup>120</sup>

This chauvinistic strand is noticeable in other French chronicles. Despite having come to the rescue of the Catholics, and campaigning for the international Catholic cause, Farnese, in the eyes of some Frenchmen—although, of course, a born Italian—remained a Spanish commander. The Spanish had a bad press among the French. An anti-Spanish pamphlet, published in 1590, compared the good qualities of the French (honesty, bravery, magnanimity) to those of their southern neighbours, who were cruel, jealous, and distrustful, among many other things.<sup>121</sup> The League canon Nicolas Brûlart recorded how during the siege of Paris many Frenchmen remarked that Paris would surrender to either a heretic or a Spaniard. Farnese was apparently aware of the anti-Spanish sentiments that existed among the French. Brûlart recorded how he received the news that on Sunday 26 August 1590, shortly after his arrival in France, Farnese had made a solemn declaration to an audience in Meaux, stating that ‘he had come with no other intention than to defend the Catholic faith and that he did not want to undertake anything against the state’.<sup>122</sup>

The same could be said for anti-French sentiments that existed among Netherlandish Catholics, especially among those living close to the French border. Pontus Payen in Arras frequently expressed his displeasure with the French in general; the Dunkirk cleric deplored the amount of money that had gone into Philip’s support for France: ‘One should consider what the realm of France has cost him, only for the protection of the Catholic religion. One would almost have been able to buy the whole kingdom’.<sup>123</sup> Religious loyalties, then, constantly competed with local and national sentiments, even among the most internationally-minded chroniclers.<sup>124</sup>

120 ‘Par là peut l’on cognoistre s’ils sont meilleurs chrestiens que les François’. *Journal historique de Pierre Fayet*, 120.

121 *Le manifeste de la France aux Parisiens et a tout le peuple François* (s.l.: s.n., 1590), USTC 3917, 16. Cited by De Waele, *Réconcilier les Français*, p. 102.

122 ‘Il se disoit, le dimanche xxvi du mois d’aoust, que le prince de Parme, par une protestation solennelle apres la messe en la ville dudict Meaux, qu’il n’estoit venu à autre intention que pour la deffence de la religion catholique, apostolicque et romaine, qu’il ne vouloit rien entreprendre sur l’Estat’. *Journal d’un ligueur parisien*, 191.

123 ‘Men mach considereren wat schat hem dat rycke van Vranckerycke ghecost heeft, ende dat alleenlick omme de protectie van de Catholycke religie, men souder schier de weerde van den selve rycke om coopen’. *Vlaamsche Kronyk*, 857.

124 Robert Stein and Judith Pollmann (eds.), *Networks, Regions and Nations: Shaping Identities in the Low Countries, 1300–1650* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010).

## 8 Alternative Facts

France has already provided us with many made-up and false reports.<sup>125</sup>

JOHAN JULSING, 4 September 1590

Historians have pointed to the phenomenon of spreading disinformation as a weapon in the Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt. Slander and the planting of rumours constituted tested methods to disqualify political opponents.<sup>126</sup> The same went for the spreading of false news. In the summer of 1588, Bernardino de Mendoza, Spanish ambassador in Paris, persistently kept circulating false reports about a Spanish victory.<sup>127</sup> While he must have been aware that the truth would come out eventually, he nevertheless hoped to influence decision-making and the markets as long as possible. In one of his historical letters, Étienne Pasquier recognized the power of rumour and propaganda to sway events, as he wrote to his correspondent: 'It is as you said: we deliberately forge news as to we desire it to be, although the truth is different. But see how this sometimes produces wonderful results'.<sup>128</sup>

From the beginning, the troubles in France had strengthened the (justified) conviction, held by many in the Netherlands, that people would generally spread only such news that they wished to be true. 'Thus, everyone spoke according to their denomination', Marcus van Vaernewijck concluded in 1567 after an evaluation of contradictory Protestant and Catholic reports about Condé besieging Paris.<sup>129</sup> Over twenty years later, Johan Julsing expressed almost exactly the same sentiments about reports on the Battle of Ivry: 'Some say Navarre has won, others stick to the League. The tenor of such rumours

<sup>125</sup> 'Multa nobis Francia dedit ficta & ementita'. *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 92, 191.

<sup>126</sup> On rumour as a weapon during the Dutch Revolt see: Van Nierop, 'And Ye Shall Hear'; Alastair Duke, 'Dissident Propaganda and Political Organization at the Outbreak of the Revolt of the Netherlands', in Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (eds.), *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 137–156; Van Stipriaan, 'Words at War'; for rumour as weapon in the Wars of Religion see the conference volume by Foa and Mellet, *Le bruit des armes*, and esp. Denise Turrel, 'L'arme de la rumeur pendant les guerres de Religion: Michel de L'Hospital, "fils d'un bonnet orange"', pp. 89–111. Compare on eighteenth-century slander: Darnton, *The Devil in the Holy Water*.

<sup>127</sup> Pettegree, *Invention of News*, pp. 153–155.

<sup>128</sup> 'Il est ainsi comme le dites; nous forgerons des nouvelles, telle que desirons, encore que la verité soit autre. Mais voyez, je vous prie, comme cela produit quelquefois de miraculeux effects'. Thickett, *Lettres historiques*, p. 427.

<sup>129</sup> 'Alzoo sprack elck zoals hy ghesint was'. *Van die Beroerlicke tijden*, 111. 114–115. This is also the title (and the main argument) of Van Tilborg's thesis. Van Tilborg, *Alzoo sprack elck alzoo hij ghesint was*.

depends for the most part on the partiality, sentiment and denomination of those who spread them.<sup>130</sup> Yet in the 1560s, many still thought that, while propagandists would plant rumours, the authorities would publish the truth in the end. In the 1590s, by contrast, many had lost the belief in the trustworthiness of the established order. The campaigns of the League had completely undermined the authority of the French king. While calling Henry persistently a false king, and ‘that nasty Valois’, the League automatically discredited all of Henry’s communications to his subjects as false.<sup>131</sup> Moreover, official statements of other European rulers conflicted as well: in the summer of the Armada the Spanish and the English ambassadors both declared victory at the same time.<sup>132</sup> Contemporaries, then, increasingly felt that they could no longer trust official government statements.

Johan Julsing in Groningen similarly expressed his suspicion that the Catholic authorities hid the true news from France from their subjects. In March 1590, sailors who had reached Emden from France talked (falsely) about Henry having apprehended the Duke of Mayenne and having conquered Paris three months earlier. Julsing complained that he had not heard a word about these events from ‘those who are very pro-Spanish’. He trusted that time would reveal the truth.<sup>133</sup> A few months later, in September, he heard confusing rumours about Henry and Parma fighting in the vicinity of Paris. He again blamed ‘the authorities’ for trying to suppress the truth as long as possible, ‘until the truth is known so widely that they are no longer able to contradict the reports’.<sup>134</sup> On 8 September, he expressed his sentiments about false news very articulately. Remarkably, he thought it a phenomenon typical for the age in which he lived:

Never was there a time more suited for the dissemination of rumours. After all, people mostly follow their emotions; they forge and shape news reports as they like to favour their own party, by adding something, leaving

130 ‘quidam apud Navarrenum, quidam apud Ligam victoriam permansisse dicunt aiunt; favor, affectus & animorum inclinatio in spargendis talibus rumoribus multum operantur’. *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 66, 179.

131 On the League discrediting Henry III: Wilkinson, ‘Homicides Royaux’, passim; Greengrass, ‘Regicide, Martyrs and Monarchical Authority’, passim.

132 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 154.

133 ‘Fertur ante tres menses “Lutetia” potitus sit; mirum in modum haec silencio premuntur ab ijs, qui “Hispanorum” partibus plus aequo addicti sunt. Attamen tempus rerum aedax brevi nobis statum Franciae, adhuc latentem & tenebricosum, decelabit’. *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 61, 177.

134 ‘Haec superioribus adscribemus, donec vera omnibus ita innotescant, ut nullam amplius contradictionem admittant’. *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 93, 191.

fragments out, yea even by inventing news reports and re-creating them from their own imagination. I have caught very many guilty of doing just this.<sup>135</sup>

A contemporary of his in France, the chronicler Antoine Richart in Laon, saw grave danger in abandoning the truth. In his chronicle the royalist financial controller frequently complained about *liqueur* priests who from the pulpit passed on 'fausses nouvelles' to their flocks.<sup>136</sup> He feared the increase of tensions in his city due to false news that circulated about their king. Moreover, Richart witnessed wearily how League ordonnances forbade people to discuss certain topics.<sup>137</sup> Yet his chronicle also shows how the inhabitants of Laon did their best to find out the truth, hanging about in the vicinity of the city gates hoping to talk to a courier. What is more important, Richart displayed a strong belief that the people were entitled to know what had really happened. After the murder of the Guises at the end of 1588, he described how his fellow townsmen and women craved news, stating that: 'The people of Laon desire to know the truth about what really happened in Blois'.<sup>138</sup> Suspicions about receiving false reports under the League-regime caused him even to doubt news about the death of Farnese. He recorded Farnese's demise in Arras in December 1592 with reservation, adding, 'a report that later was found to be true'.<sup>139</sup>

Pierre de L'Estoile is certainly the most eminent sixteenth-century chronicler who has recorded in detail his life under a repressive, hostile regime.<sup>140</sup> He also testified to the power of his contemporaries' wanting to believe longed-for news. Describing the celebration of Farnese's troops ending the siege of Rouen in April 1592, he wrote: 'This morning the 28th they sang a *Te Deum* in the

135 'Nunquam tempus ad mendata spargenda aptius, affectus enim in hominibus ut plurimum dominantur et prout quisque suos promotos cupit, ita cudit et format sua nova addendo, detrahendo, imo & fingendo et ex suo cerebro formando, in quo ego plurimos deprehendi culpabiles'. *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 94–95, 192.

136 Richart, *Mémoires sur la Ligue*, 146.

137 Richart, *Mémoires sur la Ligue*, 142.

138 'Le peuple du Laon désire scavoir au vray de ce qui estoit passé à Blois'. Richart, *Mémoires sur la Ligue*, 9. Compare Willem Verwer in Haarlem during the siege of 1572–1573, who also showed that inhabitants of Haarlem thought that they had a right to be kept abreast of the latest news. J.J. Temminck (ed.), *Memoriaelbouck. Dagboek van gebeurtenissen te Haarlem van 1572–1581* (Haarlem: Schuyt, 1973).

139 'nouvelle qui depuis furent trouvées véritable'. Richart, *Mémoires sur la Ligue*, 392.

140 Hamilton, 'Recording the Wars of Religion', esp. pp. 293–294.



FIGURE 12 Floris Balthasarsz. van Berckenrode, 'Portrait of a soldier', 1597. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (RP-P-BI-1047)

Notre-Dame to celebrate the end of the siege of Rouen, which many people wished to believe out of passion rather than from reports'.<sup>141</sup>

L'Estoile also bore witness to the persistence of false news. Despite it being untrue, it could easily circulate for weeks. On Wednesday 8 May 1591, he wrote:

Today there was a large upheaval in Paris over the death of the King of Spain, who is killed and revived three or four times a year. However, this untrue report was authorized and communicated from many good places and different quarters, and was believed and held to be true by different persons. The *grand prevost* Du Val, the *procureur general* La Guesle, the president de Thou, and several from the King's party, who desired this, and many other persons of great name and quality, had sent letters and messages by express on this subject to their friends in Paris. And supporters of the Ligue, who feared this as much as the others wanted it, received the same reports from members of their party. And even those who were closest to the affairs, such as Ribaut, Janin, Maspairrault and Dalincour wrote it as the truth to a friend in Paris. And this false report continued to circulate in Paris for a good eight days, and for more than two weeks in Chartres, where they duly had the news published in print.<sup>142</sup>

A final case will serve to show L'Estoile's talent for assessing credibility as well as to demonstrate the skills that pamphleteers had developed for manipulating audiences. Also, it highlights the still increasingly international dimensions of propaganda battles.

141 'Ce matin 28e dudit mois, fust chanté le Te Deum à Nostre-Dame pour la levée du siege de Rouen, que beaucoup plus par passion que par discours ne vouloient croire'. Le Person, *Registre-journal Henri IV*, 11, p. 11. On the siege of Rouen see: Benedict, *Rouen*, pp. 218–222.

142 'Ce jour, fust grand bruit à Paris de la mort du roy d'Hespagne, lequel encores qu'on y tuast et ressussitast tous les ans, trois ou quatre fois, si est-ce que ceste fausse nouvelle, pour estre autorizée et mandée de plusieurs bon lieux et divers endroits, fust creue et tenue pour veritable de plusieurs personnes. Car le grand prevost Du Val, le procureur general La Guesle, le president de Thou et plusieurs du parti du Roy, qui la desiroient, et tout plain d'autres personnages de grand nom et qualité, en avoient donné part lettres et messages exprès advis certain à leurs amis qui estoient à Paris. Et quant à ceux de la Ligue, qui la craignoient autant que les autres la souhaitoient, ils en avoient pareil advis de ceux de leur parti, et de ceux mesmes qui de plus près approchoient les affaires, comme de Ribaut, Janin, Maspairrault, et de Dalincour, qui l'escrivit pour veritable à un sien ami de Paris. Et continua ceste fausse nouvelle à Paris bien huit jours, et à Chartres plus de quinze, où ils la firent imprimer'. Schrenck, Le Person and Mecking, *Registre-journal Henri IV*, 1, p. 160. On L'Estoile and rumour see Greengrass, 'Outspoken Opinions'.

## 9      **Mirroring Murder: The Affair of Maurice of Nassau and the Assault with the Quadruple Cutting Knife**

Henry's conversion to Catholicism in 1593 had come as a shock to Protestants in the Netherlands, yet they remained content as long as he went on fighting the Spanish.<sup>143</sup> In the beginning of 1598, however, it became clear that Henry IV planned to conclude peace with Philip II. Not even a high-profile embassy of Netherlandish envoys to Paris could prevent the concluding of the Peace of Vervins in May 1598. In a desperate final attempt at public diplomacy, they publicized a murder attempt on Count Maurice of Nassau that had supposedly transpired in Leiden. Pierre de L'Estoile mentioned in his diary how he bought a copy of this pamphlet:

During the same month, a conspiracy was discovered in Leiden by the Jesuits of Douai, to have Count Maurice assassinated with a knife by a man called Pierre Panne, who was executed. And this discourse was printed and read out by a crier in Paris, with a picture of the knife. And the Jesuits made a response that I have seen, very convincing, arguing that the said discourse was false, and it really has the appearance of it, considering the circumstances and reasons that are deduced from it.<sup>144</sup>

Behind these few lines in L'Estoile's diary lurks one of the most discussed media events in the Netherlands in 1598. The affair demonstrates the advanced ways in which pamphleteers targeted (international) audiences, while at the same time dealing with a public that had become increasingly used to judging polemical print.

On 22 June 1598, a cooper from Ypres was executed in Leiden after being convicted of planning the assassination of stadtholder Maurice of Nassau. The Jesuits at Douai were supposedly the brains behind the plot. The trial spurred a heated polemic between Jesuits in the Habsburg Netherlands and Calvinist

143 In September 1593, news reached Groningen about Henry IV expulsing Protestant preachers from his kingdom. Julsing expressed his incredulity. *Dagboek van Johan Julsing*, 146, 218.

144 'En ce même mois, fut découverte, à Leyde, une conspiration des Jésuites de Douai, pour faire assassiner le comte Maurice d'un couteau, par un nommé Pierre Panne, qui en fut exécuté à mort. Et fut ce discours imprimé et crié à Paris, avec le portrait du couteau, auquel les Jésuites firent réponse, que j'ai vue, très pertinente, arguant ledit discours de faux, comme il y a grande apparence, vu les circonstances et raisons qui y sont déduites.' Louis Raymond Lefèvre (ed.), *Journal de l'Estoile pour le règne de Henri IV. I: 1589–1600* (Paris: Gallimard, 1948), p. 521; Greffe and Lothe, *La vie, les livres et les lectures*, p. 498, pp. 510–511.

pamphleteers in the United Provinces. Hawks among the Dutch political elite used the murder conspiracy to demonstrate why peace with the Southern Netherlands was undesirable. In turn, Jesuits attempted to absolve their confraternity of any involvement.

The Leiden murder trial was based on very slim evidence. No shots were fired, and no discriminating letters were found. On 24 May 1598, authorities in Leiden arrested and questioned a man who was acting in a strange manner.<sup>145</sup> Pieter Panne, after weeks of interrogation and torture, confessed that he had been sent from the Southern Netherlands to assassinate Maurice of Nassau. The Leiden city magistrates court condemned him to death.<sup>146</sup> The story fitted well with the Calvinist propaganda campaign against peace with the Habsburg Netherlands. According to a Leiden pamphlet, written by secretary Jan van Hout, the college of the Jesuits of Douai had spurred Pieter Panne to murder Maurice. In a detailed story Van Hout described how the Jesuits had schemed to assassinate the stadtholder.

Frans Coster, the most experienced polemicist of the order, subsequently wrote a response to the Dutch allegations.<sup>147</sup> He managed to publish it within in a couple of months, in the summer of 1598. The pamphlet of 157 pages resembles a detective story, with Coster as the chief-inspector carrying out investigations and questioning witnesses in various cities throughout the Southern Netherlands.<sup>148</sup> Coster systematically tore the Leiden pamphlet

145 *Resolutiën van de Heeren Staten van Hollandt ende Westvrieslandt 1598*, 27 May 1598, pp. 168–169.

146 *Copie van het vonnisse by Schepenen der stadt Leyden, ghewesen jehghens Peter Panne van Ypre, ter sake van de voorgehenomen moordt ende assassinaet, op ende jegens den persoon van sijn Excellentie, door beleydt ende aensporinghe vande Hoofden vande Jesuijtische secte binnen Douay* (Leiden: [Jan Paets Jacobszoon] or Jan Bouwensz, 1598), USTC 424054; Bor, *Oorsprongk*, IV, pp. 453–461. *Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken ELO*. Inventaris van het oude rechterlijke archief van Leiden, 1370–1811, toeg.nr. NL-LdnRAL-0508, inv.nr. 28. Stukken betreffende het strafproces tegen Pieter Panne wegens voorgenomen moord op prins Maurits, 1598, en gelijktijdige afschriften.

147 Frans Coster was an intriguing person: a Jesuit teacher, founder of a great number of Catholic confraternities in the Netherlands and in Cologne, and a prolific writer. He wrote witty, insulting, and intensely polemical pamphlets, not afraid of using personal attacks on his opponents. Janssen, *Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile*; Vermaseren, *Katholieke Nederlandsche geschiedschrijving*, pp. 25–26. Andriessen, *Jezuïeten*; J. Muyldermans, *Franciscus Costerus, S.J. (1532–1619)* (Ghent: Siffer, 1901). For Coster as a founder of sodalities see: Louis Chatellier, *The Europe of the Devout: The Catholic Reformation and the Formation of a New Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

148 Frans Coster, *Antwoorde op de Hollandtsche sententie tegen Peeter Panne. Brieven ende depositien der steden Ypre, Antwerpen, Berghen, Duway ende Brussel* (Antwerp: Joachim Trognaesius, 1598), USTC 402425, 16–19.



apart, summing it up in sixty lies, to which he added his counterarguments. Unsurprisingly, Coster's answer did not end the controversy; indeed, it sparked the production of even more pamphlets, including new copies of the Leiden pamphlet in other cities in Holland.<sup>149</sup> This print material all played on contemporary prejudices surrounding the Jesuits. Dutch pamphlets depicted the order as defenders of regicide, emphasizing their ability to seduce people 'with their tempting tongues' to act as their murderous instruments.

However, Frans Coster and his colleagues were particularly shocked when they learned that the Leiden pamphlet also circulated in Paris in a French translation. It was said that Henry IV had reacted angrily upon hearing about the murder attempt.<sup>150</sup> A Dutch delegation, led by Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, including the Dutch army commander Justinus van Nassau and a young Hugo Grotius, had just left the French capital a month earlier. They had traveled to France to dissuade Henry from concluding peace with Spain, but to no avail. However, one member of their party, the Dutch envoy François van Aerssen, had remained in Paris.<sup>151</sup> Correspondence reveals how Van Aerssen remained in close contact with Van Oldenbarnevelt during these months.<sup>152</sup> It is highly probable that he was behind the dissemination of the Leiden pamphlet in Paris—and also behind its adaptation.

When comparing the original to its French translation, the changes are striking. Already in 1598, Frans Coster compared the two copies and made an analysis of the alterations. According to him, the changes were the ultimate proof that the Dutch were lying about the assassination attempt.<sup>153</sup> The most

149 *Copie van het vonnisse by schepenen der stadt Leyden* (USTC 424054); Pierre Panne, *Examen breve caedis ab Jesuitis comiti Mauritio per Petrum Panne intentatae* (s.l.: s.n., 1598), USTC 413468; *Vonnisse gewezen jegens Peeter Panne van Ypre, ter zake vande voorgenomen moort ende assassinaet, op ende jegens de persoon van zijn excellentie* ([Leiden]: Raadhuispers, 1598), USTC 429870; *Cort ondersoeck van de moordt die de Jesuiten van Duway door eenen Peeter Panne op den Graef Mauritius souden voor ghenomen ende aen-gherecht hebben* (s.l.: s.n., s.d.), USTC 441073; *Copie van het vonnisse by schepenen der stadt Leyden, ghewesen jehghens Peter Panne van Ypre ter sake van de voorghenomen moordt op zijn excellentie* ([Delft: Bruyn Harmansz Schinckel] or Aelbrecht Hendricksz (The Hague), 1598), USTC 424053.

150 Andriessen, *Jezuïeten*, p. 242, n. 87.

151 François was the son of Cornelis van Aerssen, a Calvinist refugee from the Southern Netherlands who had become secretary of the States General, and who was one of the most ardent members of the pro-war party.

152 S.P. Haak, *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, bescheiden betreffende zijn staatkundig beleid en zijn familie. Volume I, 1570–1601* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1934), pp. 440 ff.

153 'Het is wel te noteren, dat dese Leydensche sententie int Francoys overgheset is met groote reformatie, (soo wijse van Parijs ontfanghen hebben, naer den Hollandtschen druck daer geprent) op dat ghijse mooght suspect houden, als niet in alles waerachtich'.

interesting and conspicuous feature that was added to the French translation was a picture of the alleged murder weapon, a rather scary-looking knife. There was no reference to a knife in the original Leiden pamphlet. Yet the French title made special mention of the weapon—also stressing that it was a sinister Jesuit invention.<sup>154</sup> It was a trope the French must have recognized. While in 1584 William of Orange had been shot with a handgun, most murder attempts on French kings in the past ten years had involved the use of knives.<sup>155</sup> Henry III was stabbed to death in 1589. In August 1593, Pierre Barrière, who was in the possession of a double-edged knife, had confessed to having plans to murder Henry IV. He claimed he had been incited by the Rector of the Jesuit College in Paris. In December 1594, Jean Chastel came closer to assassination as he forced his way into Henry's chamber and tried to stab him. He thereby grazed Henry's lips. During his interrogations, he implicated the Jesuit College in Clermont. After this last attack, Henry had decided to expel the Jesuits from his kingdom.<sup>156</sup> In the summer of 1598, a few *parlements* in France, those dominated by radical Catholics, still refused to implement Henry's anti-Jesuit laws. The combination of Jesuits and the scary knife must have resonated with French audiences.

Still, the translator of the pamphlet also had to consider the fact that many among his intended French readers were Catholics. He therefore refrained from using the term 'popish superstition', which Jan van Hout had used in the original Dutch version. Coster accused the Calvinists of 'trimming their sails to the wind: because these heretics know that these words are not agreeable to the French'.<sup>157</sup> In another fragment, the translator is visible as he adds a special explanation for his French readers, clarifying the function of

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'It should be noted that the Leiden sentence has been transferred to French with huge reformations (as we have received them from Paris, printed after the Dutch version) so that we can suspect them of not being truthful'. Frans Coster, *De tweede apologie op ketter Gaspar Grevinchovens boeck* (Antwerp: Joachim Trognaesius, 1599), USTC 402505, p. 91.

154 *La conspiration faite par les jésuites de Douay pour assassiner le prince Maurice d'Orange, comte de Nassau, avec le portrait raccourci du couteau à quatre tranchant de l'invention jésuitique* (s.l.: s.n., 1598), USTC 64037; Simon Groenveld, and Paul Dirkse, *Ketters en papen onder Filips II* (Utrecht: Rijksmuseum Het Catharijneconvent, 1986), p. 179.

155 Jardine, *Awful End*.

156 Vincent J Pitts, *Henri IV of France: His Reign and Age* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), pp. 192–193; Claude Sutto, 'Quelques consequences politiques de l'attentat de Jean Chastel', *Renaissance and Reformation*, 1 (1977), pp. 136–155.

157 'Soo connen onse ketters de huyck naer den windt hangen: want sy vermoeden wel dat dese woorden in Vranckrijck niet aengenaem en sijn'. Coster, *De tweede apologie*, p. 91 (USTC 402505).

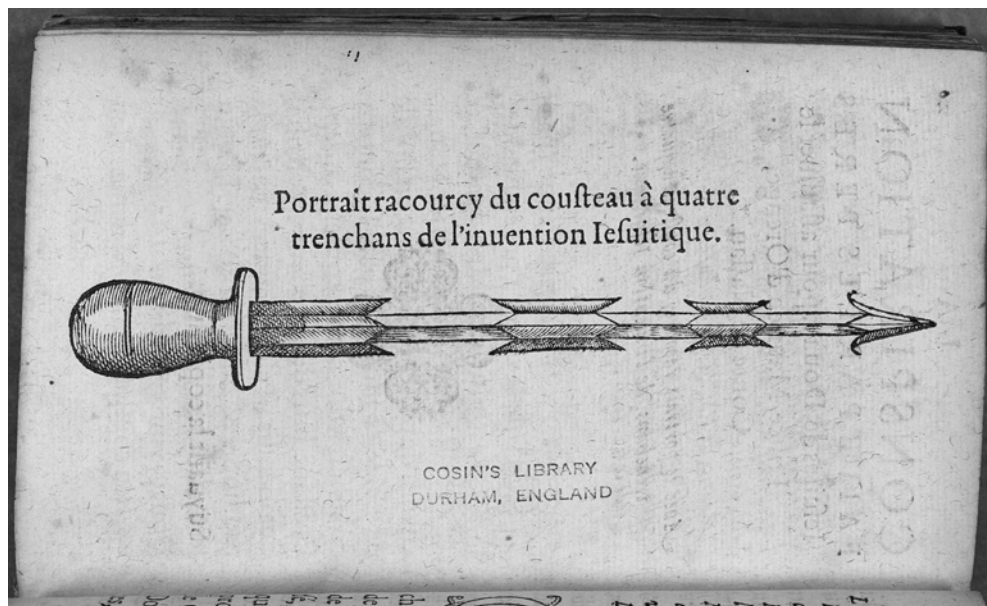


FIGURE 13 'Le couteau à quatre trenchans', or, 'the quadruple cutting knife' *La conspiration faite par les jésuites de Douay pour assassiner le prince Maurice d'Orange, comte de Nassau, avec le portrait raccourcy du couteau à quatre trenchans de l'inuention jésuitique* (Paris: [printer unknown], 1598). Reproduced by permission of Durham University Library (Cosin S.4.21/20)

'schepenen', aldermen: 'the alderman, which here you would call the "prévot des maréchaux"'. The Jesuits, on their part, quickly translated Coster's *Answer to the Dutch sentence* into French and made it also available in Paris.<sup>158</sup>

Pierre de L'Estoile, then, who was thoroughly anti-Jesuit, found Coster's arguments more convincing than those stated in the Leiden pamphlet. His diary indicates that the knife grabbed his attention (thereby confirming that adding a picture actually functioned as intended), but that in the end, for L'Estoile, Coster's counterarguments were more credible.

This affair, then, is illustrative of the way audiences had learned to deal with contradictory news after decades of civil wars and false news. By the turn of the seventeenth century, chroniclers had grown up with contradictory reports on the wars in Europe and had been thoroughly trained in assessing foreign

<sup>158</sup> It was translated into French by a certain father Segart, and in 1599 into Latin by father Aegidius Schoondonck (containing an extra chapter written by Coster). Franciscus Costerus, Aegidius Schoondonck, *Sica tragica comiti Mauritio a Jesuitis ut aiunt Calvinistae Leydae intentata nuper Germanice* (Antwerp: Joachim Trognaesius, 1599), USTC 402479.

news. Moreover, news pamphlets and propaganda would increasingly target international (confessional) audiences. The Thirty Years' War would see the zenith of this kind of news dissemination.<sup>159</sup> The Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt had been a rehearsal for this truly European information war.

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<sup>159</sup> See for example Helmer J. Helmers, 'Foreign News in Times of Domestic Crisis: The Truce Conflicts, the Thirty Years' War and the Rise of the Dutch Newspaper', in A. Wilkinson and G. Kemp (eds.), *Negotiating Conflict and Controversy in the Early Modern Book World* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 253–268.

# Conclusion

There is a rich tradition of historians commenting on the many similarities and parallels between the French Wars of Religion and the Revolt of the Netherlands. It was, however, far from clear to what extent sixteenth-century inhabitants of France and the Netherlands noticed these at the time. In this study, I have tried to determine what news the French and the Dutch received about the conflicts of their respective neighbours. I also addressed how they digested and interpreted this news, and how they fit it into a larger frame of reference. Another crucial question was whether the themes, infrastructure, and perception of news changed in the period between the beginning of the conflicts in the 1560s and the late 1590s—prompting a follow-up question of how to explain such changes.

In this work, I have concentrated on a specific group of people who systematically recorded news about the neighbouring wars: chroniclers—predominantly male, well-to-do, urban citizens, often with a background in Law. Their writings offer a vivid insight into the news that crossed the borders. Oral reports, seemingly elusive, turn out to be not entirely intangible: studying a large amount of chronicles has yielded a fairly good picture of the news exchange between the two countries in the second half of the sixteenth century.

## 1 Two Civil Wars in France and the Netherlands

To what extent did sixteenth-century inhabitants of France and the Netherlands use the conflict in the other country as a mirror? Contemporaries would only be able to recognize any parallels if they were thoroughly informed about the other conflict. It appears that many inhabitants in both countries had at least a general idea of what was going on across the border, and indeed did use the war in the other country as an example or a warning.

However, the parallel cases of iconoclasm in France and the Netherlands in the 1560s failed to become international news events. In contrast to what one might expect, chroniclers in both France and the Netherlands wrote a great deal on domestic image-breaking, but rarely took the trouble to comment on similar events across the border. Few inhabitants in the Netherlands and France had an interest in disseminating the news. Iconoclasm lacked international scope and newsworthiness, particularly in France, where it had been common during the First War of Religion.

Yet knowledge of the other country increased from 1567 onwards. Chapter 2 explores how inhabitants of France and the Netherlands learned to identify the leading characters of the conflicts and map the location of battles. In both countries, news reports dedicated a great deal of attention to noble leadership. Chronicles abounded with news about the campaigns of Condé and Coligny, the battles between the armies of Alva and Orange, and the execution of Egmont and Hornes. Contemporaries as they tried to make sense of the wars interpreted these events as factional dissention among the nobility. Many chroniclers were used to describing the conflicts in terms of civil war, as their education had involved reading histories of civil wars in classical antiquity. They frequently used the war in the other country as an example. In Laon in the 1590s, for instance, the chronicler Antoine Richart, confronted with the radical Catholics in his own country, referred to the regime of the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands, whose repressive measures, he asserted, had only made matters worse.<sup>1</sup>

Can we take this argument one step further, and claim that the wars in France and the Netherlands in the eyes of contemporaries constituted one single religious conflict? In recent years, historians have stressed the interdependency of the two wars and the many links tying the conflicts together. They have stressed that present-day national borders did not exist in the sixteenth century, and that using them as a frame of reference is therefore anachronistic. Protestant propaganda prints and pamphlets in the late 1560s did indeed depict the two conflicts as one single religious war, in which inhabitants of both France and the Netherlands resisted their Catholic rulers. This was not the view, however, that many chroniclers endorsed. Their diaries suggest two parallel but very distinct civil wars in two distinct realms.

A case in point is the much-repeated phrase *exporter la guerre* among French contemporaries, when first Coligny and then Anjou planned to march their armies to the Netherlands. The conflict would move from French territory to foreign soil rather than join the two countries. As Chapter 5 shows, Anjou's mission to the Netherlands, despite a marked increase in the exchange of news about the situation in the neighbouring country, did not prompt any feelings of international solidarity. Later in the 1580s, the internationalisation of militant Catholicism, in combination with the decline of the authority of the French monarchy, did cause a surge of international religious solidarity. Yet while many chroniclers expressed their support for their coreligionists in the other country, most of them continued to regard the two conflicts as separate.

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1 Richart, *Mémoires sur la Ligue*, 123.

## 2 The Emergence of a Transnational News Culture

Between the 1560s and the late 1590s, news culture in France and the Netherlands definitely changed. Yet many things remained the same as well during those forty years. Three key factors shaped the way news was exchanged: infrastructure, themes, and perception.

Recent research into early modern news has greatly increased our knowledge of the infrastructure of news networks in Europe. It has also demonstrated the impact of war on the circulation of news. War was both an obstacle and an incentive for the dissemination of news. Unsafe roads through war-stricken regions impeded merchants, couriers, and others who carried mail and oral reports. At the same time, the threat of war made inhabitants in France and the Netherlands keen for news; as we have seen, they eagerly questioned travellers arriving in their cities. Remarkably, the citizens of the largest cities such as Antwerp, Brussels, and Paris were not the only ones to be well-informed. Many inhabitants of the smaller towns, far removed from the large commercial and political urban centres, also regularly received foreign news reports, often in great detail.

Throughout the years, the themes covered in the reports remained generally the same. Thus the reigning monarchs (Philip II, Charles IX, Henry III, and Henry IV) dominated the news, along with the most important military leaders, such as William of Orange, Alva, Condé, and Farnese. Contemporaries became well aware that decisions of foreign rulers could have a major impact on their own lives. In times of war, an important and related topic concerned the movement of troops. News about armies and battles spread fast and broadly. Some events that are part of the present-day canon of the Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt did not receive the same amount of attention in the sixteenth century. News about the execution of the counts of Egmont and Hornes, for example, featured far more often in French chronicles than did the iconoclasm of 1566. The wars of Condé and Coligny were more interesting to Netherlandish chroniclers than the mission of Anjou.

Not surprisingly, another key news topic concerned religious persecutions. Arguably the most infamous was the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre of August 1572. As Chapter 3 demonstrates, news about the massacre spread rapidly throughout the Netherlands. A number of chroniclers commented in great detail on the oral reports. Three specific aspects of these reports stand out. First, they were remarkably accurate, despite the notion of some historians who have underlined the spread of wild rumours. Second, already amongst the first oral reports different Catholic and Protestant versions can

be detected. And finally, almost all followed the narrative of the French king, which distinguished distinctly between the assassination of Coligny and the popular killings.

'Media coverage' of an event depended on many variables. While Netherlandish chronicles displayed widespread concern for news about peace in France in 1575 and 1576, pamphlets printed on this subject are scarce. Conversely, historians have assumed a keen interest in Netherlandish peace attempts among the French, gauged by the flood of pamphlets that were printed in those years. Yet French chroniclers recorded very little about Netherlandish peace attempts. They were much more interested in the activities of William of Orange and Don Juan. Therefore, as I argue in Chapter 4, one should not make too easy a connection between the production of pamphlets and an interested audience, as 'public diplomacy' had a distortive impact on the output of pamphlets.

The most important change can be discerned in the perception of the conflicts among chroniclers. In the course of the civil wars, both their outlook and their loyalties became more international. Although Netherlandish chroniclers in the 1560s and 70s displayed an interest in the French wars and expressed their sympathy for their persecuted coreligionists across the border, they did view the French troubles as a basically 'foreign' conflict. During the 1590s, however, diarists cheered Henry of Navarre and expressed their hopes that the Low Countries would be incorporated into the kingdom of France. And while French diarists initially were rather unconcerned with the rebels in the swamps up north, they did become more engaged as they applauded the invasion of Farnese in 1590. The declining authority of the legitimate rulers in both countries, Philip II and Henry III, fostered an international outlook, in which religious loyalty superseded dynastic loyalty. At the same time, international loyalties almost always competed with, and usually had to yield to, local concerns.

This study aims to contribute to our knowledge of the reception of news, in contrast to the bulk of scholarly research that was hitherto largely dedicated to its production, especially in pamphlets and newspapers. Yet the relation between production and reception remains problematical. To what extent did political stakeholders exert influence upon the broadcasting of events that eventually became large news events? To what extent did censorship and pamphleteering determine what items chroniclers did record in their diaries—and what they left out? We have noticed that chroniclers tended to write about those events that (local) governments branded as important by ringing church bells, processions, and celebrations. The intricate interplay between official



edicts, pamphlets, letters, songs, poems, oral stories, and censorship constituted a complex multimedia landscape that remains to be explored.

### 3 The Well-Informed Chronicler

In the introduction I have defined news as ‘new information about a subject of public interest that is shared with some portion of the public’. Jürgen Habermas’ seminal work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* is still a point of departure for many scholars exploring public debate.<sup>2</sup> Many early modern historians, however, do not agree with Habermas’ claim that public debate was an eighteenth-century invention that started in London coffee houses, having detected it in earlier times.<sup>3</sup> This study outlines with many examples how chroniclers shared and digested matters of public interest. These examples serve to underscore that foreign politics were not just a matter for statesmen and women such as Cardinal Granvelle, Catherine de’ Medici, or William of Orange. Chronicles in towns all over the Netherlands and France testify to an inquisitive and politically engaged public. Lawyers, artisans, and clerics deemed it of the utmost importance to be aware of, and chronicle, foreign events. The development of the wars themselves stimulated the news consumption of local citizens: political decentralization brought about by the civil wars rendered more of them involved in local politics, and it became therefore imperative for them to remain *au courant*, not only of local affairs, but also of international politics. Before the arrival of the Duke of Anjou in the Netherlands, for example, individual Netherlandish cities often sent their own envoys to France to negotiate with Anjou and his entourage.

Finally, chroniclers exhibited a sophisticated level of dealing with the uncertainty of news. They often recorded news that they suspected to be ‘false’. They did so because they realized that reports, whether true or untrue, always had an impact on people’s actions and the decisions they made. As Chapter 3 shows, it was therefore imperative to remember that they had once believed in false news, albeit only for several days or weeks. Historians have stressed the role of propaganda and the common human inclination to believe news that is

2 Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Berlin: Hermann Luchterhand, 1969).

3 Pollmann and Spicer, *Public Opinion*, pp. 1–9; Helmers, *Royalist Republic*, pp. 26–28; Racaut, *Hatred in Print*; Van Dixhoorn, ‘Making of a Public Issue’; Haks, *Vaderland en vrede*; Deen, *Publiek debat*.

positive. However, most chroniclers, whether Protestant or Catholic, displayed an ambition to uncover the truth, no matter how inconvenient. They did not write down what they wished to believe, but expressed their uncertainty by scrutinizing the news reports that came to them. The French Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt stimulated the emergence not only of a transnational news culture, but also of a public of critical international news consumers, eager to know what had really happened.

## Consulted Chronicles

### Legend:

- \*\*\*\* has an exceptionally international outlook
- \*\*\* contains frequent mentions of international (French/Netherlandish) news
- \*\* contains some remarks on situation in neighbouring country
- \* contains no remarks on foreign situation at all/ concerned only with local or national events

NB: I use the term 'chronicle' interchangeably with 'diary'. For more information on the use of these terms, see my Introduction.

### 1 France

#### 1.1 *Angers*

##### 1. Jehan Louvet (?–after 1634) \*\*

Jehan Louvet, 'Récit véritable de tout ce qui est advenu digne de mémoire tant en la ville d'Angers, pays d'Anjou et autres lieux (depuis l'an 1560 jusqu'à l'an 1634)', *Revue de l'Anjou et de Maine et Loire* (1854–1856) vol. 1, pp. 257–304; vol. 2, pp. 1–64; vol. 3, pp. 129–192.

Chronicle written by a clerk in the civil registry of Angers, who was an enthusiastic *ligueur*. His interests varied from local marriages to disasters and battles abroad. He sporadically refers to the troubles in the Netherlands. Although Louvet probably wrote his account after 1589, he must have had access to notes from earlier years (written by himself or by others), since he also described events from the 1560s in detail.

#### 1.2 *Annonay*

##### 2. Achille Gamon (1530–1597) \*

Achille Gamon, *Mémoires de Achille Gamon, avocat d'Annonay en Vivarais* (1552–1586), ed. J. Brun-Durand (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1971).

The memoirs of Achille Gamon, advocat and alderman in Annonay, focus on local events, which are sparsely interlarded with news from Lyon, Avignon, and Paris.

### 1.3 *Bar-sur-Seine*

#### 3. Jacques Carorguy (c. 1555/1560–after 1595) \*\*

Jacques Carorguy, *Mémoires de Jacques Carorguy: greffier de Bar-sur Seine, 1582–95*, ed. Edmond M. Bruwaert (Paris: A. Picard, 1880).

This clerk of the bailiff of Bar-sur-Seine, a moderate Catholic, recorded the rumours he heard in his hometown. The chronicle mentions some news on Flanders, most of it in connection with Farnese.

### 1.4 *Bordeaux*

#### 4. Jean de Gaufreteau \*

Jean de Gaufreteau, *Chronique Bordeloise. Tome premier, 1240 à 1599*, ed. Jules Délpit (Bordeaux: Lefebvre, 1877).

Chronicle, written by a judge in Bordeaux, focuses almost exclusively on his hometown. It mentions the Netherlands only once, after the death of Anjou in 1584, complaining that the latter's trip to the Netherlands had ruined his health.

### 1.5 *Castres*

#### 5. Jean Faurin (1530–1605) \*\*

Jean Faurin, *Journal sur les guerres de Castres*, ed. M. de la Pijardière (Montpellier: Firmin & Cabénne, 1878).

Huguenot account of the events in Castres and its surroundings between 1559 and 1602. Faurin, a committed Calvinist, also noted important events for international Protestantism, such as the murder of William of Orange, and the defeat of the Armada.

#### 6. Jacques Gaches (1553–1646?) \*

Jacques Gaches, *Mémoires sur les guerres de religion à Castres et dans le Languedoc (1555–1610)*, ed. Charles Pradel (Paris: Sandoz et Fischbacher, 1879).

Memoirs of the wars of religion in the surroundings of Castres, without any references to the situation in the Low Countries.

### 1.6 *Chartres*

#### 7. Sébastien le Pelletier (before 1579–after 1592) \*\*

Sébastien Le Pelletier, *Histoire de Sébastien Le Pelletier. Prêtre ligueur et maître de grammaire des enfants de chœur de la cathédrale de Chartres pendant les guerres de la Ligue (1579–1592)*, ed. Xavier Le Person (Geneva: Droz, 2006).

Catholic priest, admirer of the Tridentine author Claude de Saintes, and *ligueur* was teacher of grammar to the choristers of the Chartres cathedral from 1583 to ca. 1593. He made daily records of the events in Chartres from 1589 onwards. His chronicle reflects Pelletier's worries about the fate of the Catholics in France. He added a description of the years 1579–1588 at a later stage. He incidentally mentions pamphlets, but only sporadically recorded international news.

### 1.7 *Laon*

#### 8. Antoine Richart (after 1525–1603) \*\*

Antoine Richart, *Mémoires sur la Ligue dans le Laonnois* (Laon: Société académique de Laon, 1869).

Richart was a financial officer in Laon. A committed royalist, he expressed an aversion to the *Ligue*. His writings constitute an exceptional source for the troubles of the *Ligue* in Laon and its surroundings. He rewrote his chronicle after Henry IV had retaken Laon in 1595–1596. He mentions very few foreign events, but makes some comparisons between the troubles in the Netherlands and France.

### 1.8 *Millau*

#### 9. Calvinist from Millau (?–after 1582) \*\*

*Mémoires d'un calviniste de Millau*, ed. J.L. Rigal (Rodez: Imprimerie Carrère, 1911).

This anonymous Calvinist chronicler in Millau in the Midi-Pyrénées was probably an artisan. He recorded tidings he heard in his hometown and takes a strong Calvinist point of view. He was well informed about the wars in the Netherlands and sporadically comments on them.

### 1.9 *Montferrand (Clermont-Ferrand)*

#### 10. Jehan de Vernyes, (?–after 1593) \*

Jehan de Vernyes, *Mémoires de Jehan de Vernyes, 1589–1593*, ed. Benoît Gonod (Clermont-Ferrand: Thibaud-Landriot, 1838).

This memoir, written by the president of the Court of Aids in Montferrand, who was also councillor of Henry IV, consists of a history of the troubles in the Haute-Auvergne during the early 1590s. It mostly covers the wars between (local) noblemen. De Vernyes does not write about foreign events.

### 1.10 *Montpellier*

#### 11. Jean Philippi (1518–1603) \*

Jean Philippi, *Mémoires de Jean Philippi touchant les choses advenues pour la fait de la religion à Montpellier et dans le Bas-Languedoc (1560–1600)*, ed. Léon Gaudin (Montpellier: J. Martel, 1880).

This chronicle, written by the president of the 'Cour des Aides' in Montpellier focuses on local events during the Wars of Religion.

### 1.11 *Paris*

#### 12. Pierre de L'Estoile (1546–1611) \*\*\*\*

Pierre de L'Estoile, *Journal de l'Estoile pour le règne de Henri IV. I: 1589–1600*, ed. Louis Raymond Lefèvre (Paris: Gallimard, 1948).

Pierre de L'Estoile, *Registre-journal du règne de Henri III*, ed. Madeleine Lazard and Gilbert Schrenck (6 vols., Geneva: Droz, 1992–2003)

Pierre de L'Estoile, *Registre-journal du règne de Henri IV. Volume 1 (1589–1591)*, ed. Gilbert Schrenck, Xavier Le Person and Volker Mecking (Geneva: Droz, 2011).

Pierre de L'Estoile, *Registre-journal du règne de Henri IV. Volume 2 (1592–1594)*, ed. Xavier le Person (Geneva: Droz, 2014).

The Parisian diarist and collector Pierre de L'Estoile is one of the most important sources for life in France during the Wars of Religion. Like many sixteenth-century chroniclers, he studied law and became a notary. He worked as an *audencier* for the *Chancellerie de France* for most of his life. He kept an extensive diary between 1574 and 1611, in which he inserted many pamphlets and contemporary poetry. A moderate Catholic, he was arrested by the radical Catholic *Seize* regime in 1589. L'Estoile showed a keen interest in European affairs and regularly wrote about the troubles in the Netherlands.

### 13. Pierre Fayet \*\*

Pierre Fayet, *Journal historique de Pierre Fayet sur les troubles de la ligue*, ed. Victor Luzarche (Tours: Ladevèze, 1852).

Chronicler Pierre Fayet was clerk of the *Prévôté des Étaines* in Paris and had a particular interest in astrology and famous men of his times. He eagerly followed news about Alexander Farnese and his son and recorded many details about the outfit and general appearance of noblemen. The text mentions foreign news when it concerned royals: Don Juan, Elizabeth of England, Philip II.

### 14. Jehan de la Fosse (c. 1525–1590) \*\*\*

Jehan de la Fosse, *Les « Mémoires » d'un curé de Paris au temps des guerres de religion (1557–1590)*, ed. Marc Venard (Geneva: Droz, 2004).

Jehan de la Fosse, son of an Amiens lawyer, went to Paris to become curate of the parish of Saint-Barthélémy on the Île-de-la-cité. He kept daily notes of events. Most of his information he got from hearsay, although he mentions some edicts he has read. He supported the Guises, but occasionally expressed his admiration for Henry of Navarre. He often mentions news from the Netherlands that reached Paris.

### 15. François Grin (c. 1535–after 1570) \*

François Grin, 'Journal de François Grin, religieux de Saint-Victor (1554–1570)', ed. Baron Alphonse de Rublé, *Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de-France*, 21 (1894), pp. 1–51.

This chronicle was written by a canon of the Paris abbey of St Victor between 1554 and 1570. It is a rich source for Parisian processions and ceremonies, but does not include news from the Netherlands.

## 16. Nicolas Brûlart (1528–1597) \*

Nicolas Brûlart, *Journal d'un ligueur parisien des barricades à la levée du Siège de Paris par Henri IV (1588–1590)*, ed. Xavier le Person (Geneva: Droz, 1999).

Nicolas Brûlart was a canon of Notre Dame and Master of Requests at the *Parlement de Paris*. He kept a daily account of the events in Paris from the Day of the Barricades in May 1588 to the ending of the siege of Paris by Henry IV in 1590. Xavier le Person has pointed out that Brûlart had a very good ear for '*les bruits de la rue*' but he does not record any news from the Netherlands.

1.12 *Parthenay*

## 17. Denis Générout (c. 1540–after 1576) \*\*\*

Denis Générout, *Journal historique de Denis Générout, notaire à Parthenay 1567–1576*, ed. Bélisaire Ledain (Niort: Clouzot, 1865).

This Catholic notary in Parthenay sought to record 'all the facts in our times that are somewhat significant'. These ranged from small family matters to major international events. He shows a remarkable knowledge of proceedings in the Netherlands, describing e.g. the execution of Egmont and Hornes and the battles between the armies of Louis of Nassau and the Duke of Alva in the province of Groningen.

1.13 *Poitiers*

## 18. René de Brilhac (before 1573–after 1622) \*

René de Brilhac, *Journaux de Jean de Brilhac, conseiller en la sénéchaussée de Poitou de 1545 à 1564 et de René de Brilhac conseiller au présidial de Poitiers de 1573 à 1622*, ed. Bélisaire Ledain (Poitiers: Oudin, 1885).

This very short account, written by a councillor of the *sénéchaussée* of Poitou, focuses on local politics and events in Poitiers. It is notable for its long and detailed descriptions of the clothes worn during official celebrations. It does not record any foreign news.

1.14 *Provins*

## 19. Claude Haton (1535–after 1605) \*\*\*\*

Claude Haton, *Mémoires de Claude Haton: édition intégrale*, ed. Laurent Bourquin and Jean-Pierre Andry (4 vols., Paris: Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques, 2001).

This prolific chronicler produced four large volumes of texts, covering the years 1553–1582. A priest and chaplain in the Hôtel-Dieu in Provins, a hospital for the poor and needy, he later became a priest at the church of Saint-Ayoul in Provins. In addition, Haton held several other positions, such as membership of the city's militia. He greatly admired the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine. He wrote his chronicles with the purpose to publish them. While the first two volumes seem to be written

long after the facts, the third and fourth volumes, from 1574 onwards, appear to have been recorded more closely to the time in which the events happened. It has been suggested that Haton dictated his chronicle to a secretary. Haton described the diffusion of oral news, but also copied pamphlets in his memoirs. He regularly refers to events in the Netherlands, and provides long descriptions of the troubles there.

### 1.15 *Le Puy*

20. Jean Burel (c. 1540–1603) \*

Jean Burel, *Mémoires de Jean Burel, bourgeois du Puy*, ed. Augustin Chassaing (Le-Puy-en-Velay: M.P. Marchessou, 1875).

This chronicle, written by a tanner from Puy, focuses on events in Puy and its surroundings, without mentioning any foreign news.

### 1.16 *Quimper*

21. Jean Moreau (1552–1617) \*

Jean Moreau, *Mémoires du chanoine Jean Moreau sur les guerres de la ligue en Bretagne*, ed. Henri Waquet (Quimper: Archives départementales, 1960).

Memoirs, written by a canon from Quimper in Bretagne between 1607 and 1617, concerning the wars of religion in Bretagne between 1584–1597. No references to the Netherlands.

### 1.17 *Reims*

22. Jean Pussot (1568–1626) \*

Jean Pussot, *Journalier de Jean Pussot: maître-charpentier à Reims, 1568–1626*, ed. Stefano Simiz and Jérôme Buridant (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2008).

The journal of master-carpenter Jean Pussot focuses on events in the region of Reims. Pussot complained about unrest and travelling troops of soldiers. He was particularly aggravated by the army of Anjou, which plagued his city on its way to the Netherlands. Other references to the Dutch Revolt are scarce.

### 1.18 *La Rochelle*

23. Joseph Guillaudeau (1571–1645) \*

Joseph Guillaudeau, 'Diaire de Joseph de Guillaudeau, sieur de Beaupréau (1584–1643)', ed. Louis Meschinot de Richemond, *Archives Historiques de la Saintonge et de l'Aunis*, 38 (1908).

Diary written by a magistrate of the king in the *présidial* (judicial tribunal) of the King in La Rochelle. It only mentions local events.



## 24. Jacques Merlin (1566–1620) \*

Jacques Merlin, 'Diaire de Jacques Merlin ou 'recueil des choses [les] plus mémorables qui se sont passées en ceste ville [de la Rochelle] de 1589 à 1620', ed. M. Charles Dangibeaud, *Archives historiques de la Saintonge et de l'Aunis*, v (1878), pp. 63–380.

Chronicle kept by a (Protestant) pastor in La Rochelle. He does not mention any news from the Netherlands.

**1.19 Rouen**

## 25. François de Scépeaux Vieilleville (1509–1571) \*

François de Scépeaux Vieilleville, *Memoires de la vie de Francois de Scepeaux, Sir de Vieilleville et comte de Duretal, Marechal de France*, ed. Claude Bernard Petitot (Paris: Foucault, 1822).

Memoir written by the Rouen nobleman Vieilleville. It covers the times of Henry II to c. 1570, without any references to the troubles in the Netherlands.

**1.20 Saint-Maixent**

## 26. Michel le Riche (c. 1516–1587) \*\*

Michel le Riche, *Journal de Guillaume et de Michel le Riche, avocats du roi à Saint Maixent (de 1534 à 1586)*, ed. Armand-Désiré de La Fontenelle de Vaudoré (Saint-Maixent: Reversé, 1846. Reprint Geneva: Slatkine, 1971).

Guillaume le Riche, magistrate for the king in Saint-Maixent, who studied law in Angers and Toulouse. A moderate Catholic, Le Riche maintained relations with many among the high nobility of France. Even the king of Navarre dined with him in 1582. He kept a journal almost daily over the period 1534–1586. He occasionally mentions foreign events, such as the 'French Fury' of 1583.

**1.21 Saint-Yrieix**

## 27. Pierre de Jarrige (?–1574) \*\*

Pierre de Jarrige, *Journal historique de Pierre de Jarrige: viguier de la Ville de Saint-Yrieix (1560–1574) continué par Pardoux de Jarrige, son fils (1574–1591)*, ed. M.H.B. de Montégut (Angoulême: Goumard, 1868).

Pierre de Jarrige was a Catholic magistrate in Saint-Yrieix in the Limousin. His chronicle contains some references to the political developments in the Low Countries, especially in 1571. He regularly travelled to Paris, where he may have picked up the international news he recorded. After his death in 1574, his son Pardoux took over his chronicle, who limited himself to recording family business and food prices.

## 1.22 *Troyes*

### 28. Nicolas Dare (1534–1602) \*\*

Nicolas Dare, *Mémoires et livre de famille de Nicolas Dare*, ed. B. de Barbery and R. de St-Mauris (Troyes: L. Lacroix, 1886).

Nicolas Dare, son of a prominent cloth merchant in Troyes, kept a chronicle from 1583 to 1608. A devout Catholic and *liqueur*, he held several important administrative functions in the city government. Failing to keep daily notes, he composed general overviews, in which he deleted references to his support of the Catholic League at a later stage. He provides an elaborate account of the assassination of William of Orange in 1584 and the subsequent execution of Balthasar Gérard.

### 29. Michel de la Huguerye (1545–1616) \*\*\*

Michel de la Huguerye, *Mémoires inédits de Michel de La Huguerye (1570–1602)*, ed. A. de Ruble (4 vols., Paris: Renouard, 1877–1880).

Michel de la Huguerye probably wrote his memoirs around 1604, but considering their detailed character, the texts must have been based on daily notes he had kept earlier. De la Huguerye was born in Chartres, in a family of *hommes de loi*. After his studies, he was determined to seek his own fortune. Although raised a Catholic, he joined the entourage of the Protestant noblewoman Jeanne d'Albret. Through her influence, in 1572, he became secretary of Louis of Nassau. After Louis' death, he entered the service of Henry of Condé and John Casimir of the Palatinate, traveling through Europe to take messages between prominent Huguenot leaders. In 1588, he joined the Catholic League, and entered the service of the family of the duke and cardinal of Lorraine. He was brutally murdered in 1616 in the woods close to his home.

## 2 *The Netherlands*

### 2.1 *Alkmaar*

#### 30. Nanning van Foreest (1529–1592) \*

Nanning van Foreest, *Kort verhaal van het beleg van Alkmaar. Een ooggetuigenverslag*, ed. M. Joustra (Alkmaar: Regionaal Archief Alkmaar, 2010).

This Protestant chronicler was banished from his hometown in 1568, and went to Emden. He returned to Alkmaar in 1572 and became a member of the city council. His account describes the siege of Alkmaar, without any references to the situation in France.

## 2.2 *Amsterdam (and Montfoort)*

### 31. Wouter Jacobsz (c. 1521–1595) \*\*\*

Wouter Jacobsz, *Dagboek van broeder Wouter Jacobsz (Gualtherus Jacobi Masius) prior van Stein, Amsterdam 1572–1578 en Montfoort 1578–1579*, ed. I.H. van Eeghen (2 vols., Groningen: Wolters, 1959–1960).

Wouter Jacobsz, prior of the convent of Stein near Gouda, fled to Amsterdam after Gouda joined the Revolt. In exile, he became rector of the nuns of the Ter Lely convent. His chronicle is a rich source for (international) news that reached Amsterdam in the years 1572–1578. Wouter Jacobsz recorded meticulously the news he heard, but also reflected on its meaning and importance, particularly regarding the position of the exiled Catholics.

## 2.3 *Antwerp*

### 32. Godevaert van Haecht, (1546–1589) \*\*\*

Godevaert van Haecht, *De kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht over de troebelen van 1565 tot 1574 te Antwerpen en elders*, ed. Rob. Van Roosbroeck (2 vols., Antwerp: De Sikkel, 1929–1930).

Godevaert van Haecht was a Lutheran painter, a member of the Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke. He began his chronicle when he was only eighteen years old—younger than most of the chroniclers in this list. He rewrote and edited his diary in 1574. His chronicle is remarkable for including rumours that circulated on the streets of Antwerp. Not being a member of the political elite, he depended mostly on news by word of mouth. He often reflected on the veracity of the tidings. He recorded remarkably detailed news from France.

### 33. Jan van Wesenbeke (c. 1547?–after 1594) \*\*\*

‘Kronijk van Jan van Wesenbeke’, 1567–1580, *Felix Archief, Antwerp*, ms PK108.

Jan van Wesenbeke was a Lutheran lawyer in Antwerp. He and his brother Peter went to Orléans to study the law in 1567. They are also mentioned in a list of students in Heidelberg. Jan van Wesenbeke probably returned to Antwerp after his studies, where he began keeping a chronicle on almost a daily basis. He did not only record the news he heard, but also reflected on its credibility and tried to interpret the reports. The chronicle shows how news about major battles and sieges in France rapidly reached the larger towns of the Southern Netherlands and how eagerly their citizens discussed the reports. Leaving Antwerp after 1585 with his family, Jan went to Frankfurt, where he is mentioned in the city records in 1594 as a citizen and a notary.

## 34. Kaspar Verstockt (1614–1683) \*\*

[Kaspar Verstockt], Frans Gerard van Loon, Frans van Mieris, and F.G.V., *Antwerpsch chronyke, in het welk zeer veele en elders te vergeefs gezogte geschiedenissen, sedert ... 1500. tot ... 1574. zoo in die toen zoo zeer vermaarde koopstad, als de andere steden van Nederland, en wel byzonderlyk op het stuk der geloofs-hervorminge voorgevallen, omstandig zyn beschreven* (Leiden: Pieter vander Eyk, 1743).

There has been a great deal of confusion about the authorship of this chronicle. However, most historians now agree that it was written by the 17th century friar Kaspar Verstockt from Antwerp. He probably based his seventeenth-century chronicle on records that were made in the sixteenth century. Running from 1500 to 1574, the chronicle devotes particular detail to the years 1566 to 1574, describing the religious troubles in the Netherlands from a Catholic point of view. Like the other Antwerp chronicles, it records in detail the rumours that ran among the 'common people' (*de gemeynen man*). It also mentions news from France, for example tidings about the Prince of Condé.

## 2.4 Arras

## 35. Pontus Payen (c. 1550–1609) \*\*

Pontus Payen, *Mémoires de Pontus Payen, 1559–1578*, ed. Alexandre Henne (2 vols., Brussels and The Hague: Muquardt, 1861).

Payen was an Arras lawyer, utterly loyal to Philip II and with an aversion to William of Orange and the French. A committed Catholic, he nevertheless deplored the prosecutions of Protestants. The *Mémoires* stop in 1567, only to continue in 1577. He describes in detail the various ways in which his contemporaries exchanged news.

## 2.5 Bruges

## 36. Willem Weijds (c. 1545–after 1618) \*\*

Guillaume Weydts, *Chronique Flamande 1571–1584*, ed. Émile Varenbergh (Ghent: Hoste, 1869).

This chronicle, written by the Catholic Bruges tailor Willem Weijds, focuses on events in Bruges during the years 1578–1584. It describes in detail the troubles during the Calvinist Republic. References to France only occur when Anjou arrives in the Netherlands.

## 37. Zeghere van Male (c. 1504–1601) \*

Zeghere van Male, *De lamentatie van Zeghere van Male: Brugge na de opstand tegen Spanje, 1590*, ed. A. Dewitte and A. Viaene (Bruges: Gidsenbond, 1977).

This chronicle takes the form of a 'complaint', written by the Bruges merchant Zeghere van Male. It addresses the supposedly destructive impact of the troubles in the Low Countries on his city. He does not write about news from France.

## 2.6 *Brussels*

38. Jan de Pottre (1525–1601) \*\*\*

Jan de Pottre, *Dagboek van Jan de Pottre, 1549–1602*, ed. Jules de Saint-Genois (Ghent: Annoot-Braeckman, 1861).

The Catholic Brussels merchant Jan de Pottre enjoyed recording processions, joyous entries, and news about famous people. The chronicle contains a few scattered mentions of news from France, mostly about the nobility. He closely followed the news about Farnese's campaign in France in the early 1590s.

## 2.7 *Dunkirk*

39. Anonymous cleric \*\*\*

'Vlaamsche Kronyk', in C. Piot (ed), *Chroniques de Brabant et de Flandre* (Brussels: Hayez, 1879), pp. 173–876.

This rich source was probably written by a cleric from Dunkirk, who admired Philip II and the Catholic League in France. The author regularly included news about events in England and France as well as rumours that ran among the 'common people'. An enthusiastic adherent of the 'Catholic International', he celebrated Catholic victories abroad and voiced the opinions of the League. The chronicle ends with the death of Philip II.

## 2.8 *Emden/Groningen*

40. Abel Eppens tho Equart (1534–after 1590) \*\*\*

Abel Eppens tho Equart, *De kroniek van Abel Eppens tho Equart*, ed. J.A. Feith and H. Brugmans (2 vols., Amsterdam: Müller, 1911).

An extensive chronicle, written by a Reformed literate landowner from the province of Groningen (Ommelanden). Eppens studied in Louvain, Cologne, and Wittenberg (with Melanchton), and went into exile to Emden in 1580, where he started to write a chronicle. He made notes, rearranged them, and continued to rewrite them until the end of the 1580s. He also attached copies of edicts, pamphlets, and songs. His focus on European affairs is prominent throughout his chronicle.

## 2.9 *Ghent*

41. Marcus van Vaernewijck (1518–1569) \*\*\*\*

Marcus van Vaernewijck, *Van die beroerlicke tijden in die Nederlanden en voornamelick in Ghendt, 1566–1568*, ed. Ferdinand Vanderhaeghen (5 vols., Ghent: C. Annoot-Braeckman, 1872–1881).

The '*Beroerlicke Tijden*' is one of the most meticulously kept diaries of the sixteenth century. Its author, Marcus van Vaernewijck, was a moderate Catholic from a patrician family in Ghent. In 1566, he was an overseer of the corn staples, an important position in the city government. He held the office of alderman in 1568. Between 1566 and

1568, he recorded events in his hometown, including the news that reached Ghent, and reflected on its veracity and sources. The diary abounds with news from France.

42. Cornelis (1516–1567) and Philip van Campene (before 1548–after 1585) \*\*\*

Cornelis en Philip van Campene, *Dagboek van Cornelis en Philip van Campene behelzende het verhaal der merkwaardigste gebeurtenissen, voorgevallen te Gent sedert het begin der godsdienstberoerten tot den 5en april 1571*, ed. F. de Potter (Ghent: Annoot-Braeckman, 1870, reprint 2001).

Cornelis en Philip van Campene, *Vlaemsche kronijk, of dagregister van al het gene gedenckweerdig voorgevallen is, binnen de stad Gent, sedert den 15 july 1566 tot 15 junij 1585*, ed. Ph. Blommaert (Ghent: L. Hebbelynck, 1839).

This chronicle was written by the Catholic brothers Cornelis and Philip van Campene, who lived in Ghent. Cornelis was a cloth-merchant; Philip was a lawyer and barrister in the Council of Flanders. Cornelis had started writing a chronicle; when he died late 1567, Philip took over. The chronicle is a good source to identify the various ways in which news reached the citizens of Ghent. The brothers often recorded the spread of news tidings and rumours in Ghent. They wrote about oral news, but also recorded various news media such as sermons, pamphlets, processions, and letters. They also mention censorship, describing the measures taken against those who spread tidings that were not to the city council's taste. Philip recorded many tidings about the religious troubles in France, especially about Condé and wrote in favour of the French Catholics.

## 2.10 Groningen

43. Johan Julsing (1545–after 1594) \*\*\*\*

Johan Julsing, *Het geheime dagboek van de Groninger stadssecretaris Johan Julsing*, ed. Jan van der Broek (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2006).

Johan Julsing wrote his 'secret diary' in Latin, French, Dutch, and Spanish, sprinkled with quotations in Greek and Hebrew. The Classical World was his main frame of reference. As a Protestant secretary of the Catholic city council of Groningen, he sought to keep his thoughts private in his journal. From 1565 to 1568 he studied Law in Orléans, which explains his good knowledge of French geography. His job consisted of making notes on civil and legal matters, drawing up draft letters and acts, dispatching mail and keeping the archive of the city council. This gave him the opportunity to follow the news on a daily basis. In 1591 his wife left for Emden; he followed her in 1594. He strongly advocated rule by a foreign sovereign. After Anjou and Leicester, he put his hopes on Henry of Navarre, whom he greatly admired. His records of foreign news, most of it from France, are very detailed.

### 2.11 *Groningen/Travel Journal*

#### 44. Frederik Coenders van Helpen (1541–1618) \*\*

Frederik Coenders van Helpen, 'Reisjournaal van jhr. Frederik Coenders van Helpen', ed. H.O. Feith and J.A. Feith, *Bijdragen en mededeelingen van het Historisch Genootschap*, XIV (1893), pp. 114–226.

This travel journal of a Groningen nobleman from a Protestant family mentions some affairs in France—when he traveled there in 1572—and sometimes mentions France in the 1580s, without offering any specific opinions on the political situation.

### 2.12 *Haarlem*

#### 45. Willem Janszoon Verwer (c. 1533–after 1580) \*

Willem Janszoon Verwer, *Memoriaelbouck. Dagboek van gebeurtenissen te Haarlem van 1572–1581*, ed. J.J. Temminck (Haarlem: Schuyt, 1973).

Diary of a Catholic draper's son and council member of Haarlem. Verwer focuses almost exclusively on local events, with much attention to the siege of 1572–1573 by the Spanish army. It has some interesting remarks on the reliability of news and on 'public opinion'.

### 2.13 *'s-Hertogenbosch*

#### 46. Anonymus Nun \*\*

*Kroniek eener kloosterzuster van het voormalig Bossche klooster "Mariënborg" over de troebelen te 's-Hertogenbosch e.e. in de jaren 1566–1575*, ed. H. van Alfen ('s-Hertogenbosch: Provinciaal Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen in Noord-Brabant, 1931).

This chronicle describes the events that happened in 's-Hertogenbosch during the first years of the Dutch Revolt. It was written by a nun from the Mariënborg convent, who added her own comments to the news she heard, including news from France.

### 2.14 *Hoorn*

#### 47. Theodorus Velius (1572–1630) \*

Theodorus Velius, *Kroniek van Hoorn*, eds. Jan Plekker, Rob Resoort and Ben Leek (2 vols., Hoorn: Publicatiestichting Bas Baltus, 2007)

Velius was a physician, historian, poet, and member of the city council in Hoorn. In 1605 his 'Chronicle of the city of Hoorn, 1535–1600', was published. It does not contain any references to the wars in France. It is, however, useful for his descriptions of the exchange of news and the gathering of information in and around Hoorn.

### 2.15 *Middelburg*

#### 48. Pieter Joossen (before 1566–1626) \*

Pieter Joossen, 'De kroniek van Pieter Joossen Altijt Recht Hout', ed. R. Fruin, *Archief. Mededelingen van het Koninklijk Zeeuwsch Genootschap der Wetenschappen* (1909), pp. 65–96.

Chronicle of the events that took place in Middelburg between 1566 and 1570, written around 1602 by a Middelburg carpenter. Joossen only recorded local news, and does not comment on events in France.

### 2.16 *Tournai*

49. Pasquier de le Barre (c. 1500–1568) \*\*

Pasquier de le Barre, *Mémoires de Pasquier de le Barre et de Nicolas Soldoyer pour servir à l'histoire de Tournai, 1565–1570*, ed. Alex. Pinchart (2 vols., Brussels and The Hague: Heussner and Nijhoff, 1859–1865).

Pasquier de le Barre was a magistrate in Tournai, known for his leniency towards Protestantism. He was condemned and executed by the Council of Troubles in 1568. His chronicle contains interesting comparisons between the political situation in the Netherlands and France in 1565–1567.

### 2.17 *Ypres*

50. Augustijn van Hernighem (c. 1540–after 1617) \*\*

Augustijn van Hernighem, *Eerste bouck van beschryfvinghe van alle gheschiedenesse (1562–1572)*, ed. A.L.E. Verheyden (Brussels: Société d'Histoire du Protestantisme Belge, 1978).

Augustijn van Hernighem, a corn inspector/administrator in Ypres, kept a diary from 1562 to 1592. The first part, from 1562 to 1572, was published and edited in 1978. Initially, Van Hernighem mentioned few foreign news events, but from 1567 onwards, he began to record the troubles in France in greater detail, particularly troop movements and tidings about Condé.

## 3 Holy Roman Empire

### 3.1 *Cologne*

51. Hermann von Weinsberg (1518–1597) \*\*\*\*

Herman von Weinsberg, *Die autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen Hermann Weinsbergs*. Digitale Gesamtausgabe: <http://www.weinsberg.uni-bonn.de>.

The Cologne city councillor and wine merchant Hermann von Weinsberg was one of the most prolific diarists of sixteenth-century Europe. His *Liber Juventutis* (1518–1578) was written in retrospect, while his *Liber Senectutis* (1578–1588) and his *Liber Decripitudinis* (1588–1597) were written on an almost daily basis. He meticulously noted the (international) news that reached Cologne, recording various media such as hearsay, pamphlets, songs and poems. The troubles in the Netherlands and in France feature prominently in his accounts.



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- Moded, Hermannus, *Apologie ofte verantwoordinghe teghens de calumnien ende valsche beschuldighen ghestroeyet tot lasteringhe des h. evangellii door de vianden der christelijker religie* (Emden: [Coornhert-drukkerij], 1567), USTC 408110.
- Neüwe zeittung. In welcher Kürztlich, ordentlich vnd warhafftiglich, nach aller vmstendigkeit erzelet wird, was sich in der berhümbten Kauffstadt Antorff zwischen den 18. vnd 28. Augusti dieses 1566. Jars in Religi ...* ([Strasbourg: Thiebold Berger], 1566), USTC 676989.
- Newes from Vienna the 5. day of August. 1566. of the strong towne and castell of Tula in Hungary xi. myles beyond the river Danubius, which was cruelly assaulted by the great*

- Turke, but nowe by Gods mighty working relieved, the sayd Turks marveilouslye discomfited and overthrowen* (London: John Awdely, 1566), USTC 506449.
- Neue Zeittung aus Antdorf wie es den zwoelfften Augusti dar gestanden und zugetragen hatt* (Wittenberg: s.n., 1566), USTC 677332.
- Neue Zeitung von eroberung und verlust der beder vestungen Guila und Ziget in Ungern 1566* (Nürnberg: Valentin Geißler, [1566]), USTC 677522.
- Oprecht ende warachtich verhael, vande aenslaghen ende heymelijcke verbonden ende conspiratien ghemaect teghens den coninck van Vranckrijck ende Polen, waeruut sijn doot ghevolcht is* (Delft: Bruyn Harmansz Schinckel, 1589), USTC 422696.
- Pérussis, Louis de, *Die hystorie van der orloghen gheschiedt in Vranckrijck in Provençen ende tgraefschap van Venayscin, tusschen de catholycke ende diemen noempt Hughenoyesen, int jaer M.D.LXII* (Antwerp; Antonius Thielens, 1564), USTC 402992.
- Petit, Jean-François Le, *Cinquante six sonnets, à hault, puissant etc. prince Maurice d'Orange* (Haarlem: Gillis Rooman, 1592), USTC 4361.
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- Pourtraict et description du massacre proditoirement commis au cabinet et par l'auctorite du roy pendant les estats a Blois en la personne de Henry de Lorraine, magnanime duc de Guise* ([Bruxelles: Rutger Velpius, 1589]), USTC 63827.
- Propositio super morte Guisiani cardinalis, in congregatione consistoriali prolata Romae 27.02.1589. Proposition faite par nostre saint pere le pape* (Lyon [=Bruxelles]: Jean Pillehotte [=Rutgerus Velpius], 1589), USTC 413971.
- Recueil des choses advenues en Anvers, touchant le fait de la Religion, en l'an M.D.LXVI* ([Antwerp]: s.n., [1566]), USTC 4039.
- Regretz et souspirs lamentables de la France, sur le trespas de tres-haut et tres-valeureux seigneur, monseigneur le duc de Guyse* ([Douai: veuve Jacques Boscard], 1589), USTC 10931.
- Relacion de los galeones y otro navios, que van en la felicissima armada de que es captian general el duque de Medina Sidonia* (Lisboa: António Álvares, 1588), USTC 345804.
- Remonstrance faite au roy par madame de Nemours* (Bruxelles: Rutger Velpius, 1589), USTC 16150.
- Richardot, François, *Het sermoon vande beelden teghen die beeldtschenders, ghedaan te Armentiers* (Leuven: Jan Boogaerts, 1567), USTC 407656.
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- Roemische practicken und frucht der saulischen hochzeit des Koenigs von Nawarren und des Koenigs von Franckreich schwester zu Pariß im Augstmonat des vergangen 72.*

- jars gehalten eines moerderischen spitzbubens wie man alle Evangelische Christen nit allein in Franckreich und Niderland sonder auch in Engelland und Teutschland außrotten soll einem Fratzoesischen gesanten in hoch Burgund zugeschrieben. Anno 1572. Im December. Auß lateinischer sprach in das Teütsch gebracht (Kampen: s.n., 1573), USTC 689596.
- Ronsard, Pierre de, *Le rosier des chansons nouvelles. Tant de l'amour, que de la guerre, contenant la pluspart les heureuses victoires obtenues en Auvergne & ailleurs* (Lyon, [Benoît Rigaud], 1580), USTC 59747.
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- Sommier *discours des justes causes et raisons qu'ont constraint les estats generaux des Pais Bas de pourveoir à leur deffence contre le seigneur don Jehan d'Austrice* (Antwerp: Willem Silvius, 1577), USTC 4082.
- Stubbes, John, *The discoverie of a gaping gulf whereinto England is like to be swallowed by another French marriage, if the Lord forbid not the banes, by letting her Majestie see the sin and punishment thereof* (London: Hugh Singleton for William Page, 1579), USTC 508892.
- Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estats de ces Pays Bas* (Orléans: Eloi Gibier and Saturnin Hotot, 1576), USTC 15353.
- Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas assemblez en la ville de Bruxelles* (Paris: pour Jean de Lastre, 1577), USTC 13145.
- Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas assemblez en la ville de Bruxelles* (Paris: pour Jean de Lastre et Jacques Lucet, 1577), USTC 29514.
- Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas assemblez en la ville de Bruxelles* (Lyon: Michel Jove et Jean Pillehotte, 1577), USTC 11419.
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- Traicté de la paix faicte, conclue et arrestee entre les estatz de ces Pays Bas assemblez en la ville de Bruxelles* (Rouen: pour Martin Le Mégissier, 1577), USTC 2589.
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- Waerhaffte tijding uuth Vranckrijck, van den coninck van Navarren, ende den prince van Parma, *twelck geschieden is tuschen den achtienden, ende nyegentien den aprilis, anno 1592 biss op den 16en may* (Deventer: Simon Steenberch (I), 1592), USTC 423055.
- Walsingham, Francis, *Copije eenes seyndtbriefs aen coninghinne Elizabeth, vervatende int corte de moort die binnen Parijs in de Navareesche bruyloft is gheschiet* ([Delft]: Aelbrecht Hendrickz, [1572]), USTC 428454.
- Warachtich verhael, int corte, van tghene datter ... gebeurt is, te Vassy, als ... de hertoch van Guise daer deur passeerde (Antwerp: J. Mollijns, [1562]), USTC 409392.
- Warachtighe relatie, overslach ende inhout der krijchs-rustinghe ofte Armade die Philippus van Spaignien op de Rivire by Lisbon te samen heeft laten brengen (Delft: Aelbrecht Hendricksz (erst Gottfried von Kempen), Köln, 1588), USTC 422589.
- Warhaffte kurtze beschreibung wie der newgemacht religion fried zu Pariß angenommen die 63.artickel am Parlament von wort zu wort verlesen und publiciert volgendt von Koeniglicher Mayestet welche in irem Koeniglichen ornat und habit, persoendlich gesessen und sampt den fuernembsten hoechsten officirs der kron Franckreich den 14. May diß 1576. jars mit dem ayd bestettigt worden ([Nürnberg: Nikolaus Knorr], 1576), USTC 704977.
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