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Exile memories and the Dutch Revolt : the narrated diaspora, 1550 - 1750

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Citation

Müller, J. M. (2014, May 14). *Exile memories and the Dutch Revolt : the narrated diaspora, 1550 - 1750*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/25763>

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Issue Date: 2014-05-14

Chapter 2 - Recapturing the *patria*

Memory and the anticipation of the future

After the fierce strife between the armies of the Habsburgs and the United Provinces during the 1590s and the first years of the new century it became clear that the two sides had reached a stalemate. The prospects of a definitive victory for either side appeared hopeless.¹⁵³ Except for Southern refugees, who hoped for a reconquest of Flanders and Brabant many in the Northern camp had lost heart. Among those who still hoped for an imminent change in the military stalemate was Francois van Aerssen, the ambassador of the Dutch Republic in Paris, who had left Brussels with his parents in the 1580s. Even when it became apparent that France would not intervene in the conflict, Van Aerssen refused to give up his optimism and did not cease to repeat that ‘war and peace take turns like day and night’ and that the military situation could change unexpectedly.¹⁵⁴

Among the great numbers of refugees in the Northern Provinces there were many who refused to see the cities of Holland as their new home and give up their hope to return to the South. Antwerp merchant Johan Thijs had followed the military developments in the Netherlands and the Holy Roman Empire closely ever since he had left Antwerp after the capitulation of his home town to Farnese’s armies. In his letters to his brother-in-law Andreas de Bacher from the 1590s Thijs reported the latest news from the Low Countries and France and informed his kinsman about the situation in the Empire. His hopes for a return to Antwerp were directly connected to his political vision of the conflict: the Southern Netherlands had to be recaptured with the assistance of a broad alliance of German Protestant rulers. When enquiring into Spanish military actions in the Empire during the 1590s, he did not do so out of purely economic interest in the safety of trade routes but primarily because of the significance of the war in Germany for the cause of the Revolt.¹⁵⁵ Thijs considered the events in Germany of crucial importance for the situation in the Netherlands. Once the Spaniards had gone too far on German soil, he hopefully concluded one of his letters, the German princes would no longer remain patient: ‘And when the

¹⁵³ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 259f; Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567-1659*, Cambridge 1972.

¹⁵⁴ A. Th. van Deursen, *Maurits van Nassau. De winnaar die faalde*, Amsterdam 2000, p. 187.

¹⁵⁵ See: e.g.: Arch Thys. 133: A4: Brieven aan Andreas de Bacher. July 8, 1598 and February 16, 1599; Arch. Thys. 133: B1: March 17, 1599.

Protestants have moved to the battlefield, I am confident that they are willing to help the cause in our countries [...]'.¹⁵⁶

The notion of a united international Protestant alliance played a central role in Thijs's thinking about the war in the Netherlands. This perspective was typical for the network of Reformed Antwerp merchants in the Republic and the Empire. Since their departure from Brabant in the 1580s men like Anthoine 'l'Empereur, Daniel van der Meulen and Jacques della Faille had followed international politics closely, and in their view the Revolt was part of a broader, international conflict. When in 1588 the Spanish Armada was heading northwards, Van der Meulen and Della Faille were eager to receive the latest news about this campaign. Partly, their interest was due to their trading activities with England, but for them the stakes were higher than that: a victorious fleet would threaten not only Britain but soon also the Netherlands. Della Faille was right in his assumption that the Spanish Armies planned to prepare an invasion of England from Flemish soil, and he was well aware of the consequences of such an operation: the war would enter a new stage.¹⁵⁷ Two years earlier he had been concerned about the outbreak of civil war in the Empire when the war between the prince-bishop of Cologne and Imperial troops threatened to escalate, and there were rumors about the election of the Danish king as a counter candidate to Emperor Rudolf by the Protestant electors.¹⁵⁸ Like Della Faille and Thijs, Anthoine l'Empereur eagerly collected and reported international news: not only did he take notes about recent military actions in Central Europe and the Empire, but he also copied texts such as Henry IV's declaration of his conversion to Catholicism or pamphlets about the wars of his time.¹⁵⁹

That this interest in international news cannot solely be attributed to their economic interests is best illustrated by the letters from Johan Thijs to his brother-in-law Andreas de Bacher, who served the Duke of Brunswick as a medical attendant. To the physician De Bacher trading affairs were of little interest anyway, and we can clearly detect patterns in the correspondence that show the connection of

¹⁵⁶ Arch. Thys. 133: A4.: Brieven aan Andreas de Bacher. July 8, 1598: 'Ende ist dat de protestanten hebben haer moeten int velt begeben is mijn vertrouwen datse de saecken in dese landen voorts sullen helpen [...].'

¹⁵⁷ RAL, Archief Daniël van der Meulen, 96, inv. nr. 538, Brieven van Jacques della Faille, nr. 95-96; *June 10, 1588; nr. 98-99; July 4, 1588.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 55-56; *November 16, 1586.*

¹⁵⁹ Arch. Thys. 279: Stukken afkomstig van Anthoine 'l'Empereur: Nouvelles. (1593, 1596, 1606.)

recent news to the greater context of the Revolt and the expectations the refugees had of the future. In the period from 1596 until 1601 the letters are full of references to the war and the hope for international Protestant support in the Low Countries while the correspondence from 1601 onwards seems devoid of any mentions of war or politics. In 1596, Thijs expected an intervention of fifty English war ships and was hopeful that Elizabeth I could turn the tide in the Netherlands: he had heard the good news from Antwerp and expected the end of Habsburg rule in the South to be at hand: ‘In all of my days, I have never had more hope than now.’¹⁶⁰ During the following years his hope was built more on Protestant support from the Empire: even though he was concerned about Spanish raids in Cleves and elsewhere in Germany, the news about these events stimulated his optimism since these actions could stir the Germans up against the Spaniards and lead to a united Protestant front against Habsburg aggression:

We are greatly astonished by the enemy’s boldness that makes him vandalize the German soil in such a way. I reckon that he will not fare well in the end. We assume that this will cause their ruin and bring about a hope for peace. In our regions, they will have few chances, and in Brabant hope will not be given up. Therefore the princes in Germany will have to put them in their place. And if the Protestants will enter the battlefield, I trust that they will quickly help the cause in this country, since they are also clearly interested in what can be accomplished in one go. Therefore I ask you to tell me, what morale is among you. The Spaniard and his associates, who serve the Pope, think they accomplish great things, but they reckon without their host and we can fairly say that God is laughing at their plans.¹⁶¹

How closely Thijs’s hope for an international front against ‘the Spaniard’ was connected to his own wish to return to Antwerp is clearly expressed in his letters:

¹⁶⁰ Arch. Thys. 133: A3.: Brieven aan Andreas de Bacher. February 22, 1596: ‘Ick en heb mijn daegen geen beter moet gehad als nu.’

¹⁶¹ Arch. Thys. 133: A4.: Brieven aan Andreas de Bacher. February 8, 1599: ‘[...] ons verwondert seer de stouticheijt van den vijant dat hij den duytsen bodem soe derft beschadigen. Ick gisse dat het hem tot leste niet wel vergaen sal. Wij beelden ons in dat het een orsaeke sal wesen van haer verderfeniſ ende een hoope van eenen vrede, bij ons sullen sij luttel kanſ vinden, ende te brabant en begevense den verloren hoop niet, ergo de prinsen in Duytslant die sullense moeten weijsen waer sij te huijs horen. Ende ist dat de protestanten hebben haer moeten int velt begeven is mijn vertrouwen datse de saecken in dese landen voorts sullen helpen flits dewijl sij merkelijck mede geïnteresseerd sijn welck met eender moeijte geschieden kan. Daerom bidde ick U.L. sal mij believen eens te advijsen wat voor moet bij U.L. is, de spaniard ende geasoseerde die den paus dienen mijnen wonder aen te rechten maer sij rekenen sonder haeren weert men mach wel seggen dat godt haer raetslagen belacht.’

Our hope is that the war, which has endured for so long now, will soon be over and that at last we can return to Antwerp, the city of our fathers. Because the haughtiness of the Spaniard has already reached its climax and it seems that he who has afflicted all the world may now be afflicted himself and since the spring he has suffered harm and derision not only at Schenckenschans but also in Nijmegen.¹⁶²

Thijs's letters are full of such considerations until mentions of war and politics suddenly stop in the spring of 1601. While he had frequently expressed his hope once to return to his fatherland, Antwerp, since his departure from the Scheldt town, now he apparently had resigned and lost his confidence in a future in the South. On April 20, 1601, he wrote to De Bacher that although he had remained optimistic until the beginning of that year, he had now changed his mind:

But now I am in doubt and I start to question the (possibility of a coming) peace. Therefore I have resolved to buy a house here and to forget Antwerp.¹⁶³

After this letter and the self-imposed dictate to forget mentions of international politics and warfare become scarce, and Thijs's decision to concentrate on a future in Holland seems to inhibit his interest in the cause of the Revolt. Only at a few moments, when he dares to catch a new glimpse of hope, does he resume writing about the course of the war and his wish to return to the South though mostly in a tone of resignation: even if there is no reasonable chance, he writes, 'we still keenly desire to return to our fatherland'.¹⁶⁴

Until early in 1606, there was no change in Thijs's view of the Revolt. In the years between 1601 and 1606 he seems to have tried hard 'to forget Antwerp', a goal not completely met. The silence about the past in the South and the desire to return was suddenly interrupted in 1606. In January of that year, Thijs apparently

¹⁶² Arch. Thys. 133: B1: Brieven aan Andreas de Bacher. July 13, 1599: 'Onse hoope is dat wij haest een eynde hebben sullen hebben van dese swaere oorloge soe lange geduurt ende dat wij thans naer Antwerpen onse vaderlijcke stadt geraicken sullen want de grote hooffart van de Spaniaert is op het hoochste geweest ende t' schijnt dat die alle de werelt bedroefft heeft wel mocht bedroefft worden hij heeft sint het voorjaer passelijke schaede geleden ende spot, soe bij de Schenckenschans als bij Nimegen.'

¹⁶³ Arch. Thys. 133: B2: Brieven aan Andreas de Bacher. 20 april 1601: 'Maer nu sta ick in bedencken ende beginne te twijffelen aen de vrede. Soo dat ick geresolveerd heb alhier een huis te koopē ende Antwerpen te vergeten.'

¹⁶⁴ Arch. Thys. 133: B3: Brieven aan Andreas de Bacher. November 20, 1602: '[...] doch verlanct ons seer om weder in ons vaderlant te comen.'

suddenly regained his hope for a reversal of the course of events. In a letter to his brother-in-law he writes:

You give me back the hope that the chances may and can now turn quickly. I believe that finally we may well see a sudden change. For it has been a long time now and we get old – we get old and many of us die on the road because we still cannot enter the Promised Land.¹⁶⁵

In the same passage, Thijs again expresses his confidence in the ‘kings of France, England, Sweden and the princes of Germany’, who would no longer be willing to tolerate ‘the government of the Spaniards and Jesuits’.¹⁶⁶

The case of Johan Thijs seems to be typical for migrants of his generation who had left their homes in the Southern Netherlands and hoped for a return until the eve of the Twelve Years’ Truce. Particularly among the educated elite who had access to international news and media a well-defined consciousness about the causes and the perspectives of the war had emerged. This does not, of course, not imply that confessional and political consciousness determined all the decisions and actions of these people. As the correspondence of Thijs reveals, the wish to return to the South was prevailing. However, a return could not be envisaged at any costs but only once the Reformed faith had been reestablished and the ‘the haughtiness of the Spaniard’ broken.¹⁶⁷ When the Truce was announced in 1609, the Thijs family, like the majority of their fellow-Antwerpers in the North, did not attempt to go back. On the contrary, they tried to sell the property in the South - even if the profits such sales yielded were very low.¹⁶⁸ The only perspective Thijs and others could envisage for achieving a final return to Antwerp was a victory of the Republic’s Armies in alliance with other European Protestant forces. The vision of a united Protestant force against ‘the Spaniard’ was not based so much on deep-rooted confessional

¹⁶⁵ Arch. Thys. 133: C3: Brieven aan Andreas de Bacher. January 26, 1606: ‘U.L. geven mij moet dat de cansen sich wel haest wenden ende keren konde. Ick gelove wel datter entlijck wel ligtelijck een subite verandering comen mochte. Dan de tijt valt ons lanck wij worden oudt(.) oud ende veel sterven daer onder wech dat wij het belooffde land niet in konnen comen.’

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ This sheds new light on the findings of Oscar Gelderblom, who has studied refugees like Thijs first and foremost from an economic perspective. In Gelderblom’s view, the decisions of Thijs and other exiled Antwerp merchants were primarily dictated by economic considerations. However, as the correspondence of the Thijs family shows, not only religious commitment but also strong ties to what they perceived as their home played a crucial role in their deliberations about where to relocate and anticipate a possible future. See: Gelderblom, *Zuidnederlandse kooplieden*, pp. 74ff.

¹⁶⁸ Arch. Thys. 133: D1. Brieven aan Andreas de Bacher. December 14, 1606.

antagonism but rather originated in the hope to return to the South - something which could be achieved only with the assistance of fellow-minded allies.

As we have seen, the possibility that he would never return home again occurred relatively late to people like Thijs. At least until 1601, he considered himself as only a temporary resident of the Northern Netherlands, and even a few years later he was still open to idea of an imminent return. The memories of his lost home were directly channeled into the wish to return. In 1594, when he was still residing in Prussia, Thijs had written to a business partner, who had likewise left Antwerp after 1585:

We desire to live again in our father's town, from which we are far away since we have to wander as exiles through foreign countries for ten years now. And our children grow up, and I don't want them to grow up as strangers. I have often considered buying a house here and becoming a citizen, but thinking of our fatherland I have refrained from doing so.¹⁶⁹

As the correspondence of De Bacher, Della Faille and Johan Thijs shows, memories of the past and the anticipation of the future were connected to such an extent that giving up the hope to live in Antwerp once again made it necessary to forget the past. A form in which the past could be preserved in a closed and nostalgic way – devoid of direct political implications - could not yet be found: giving up hope implied oblivion and silence about the past.

'Hot' and 'cold' memory

Egyptologist Jan Assmann and political historian Charles S. Maier have introduced a conceptual distinction between 'hot' and 'cold' memory.¹⁷⁰ In a comparison between collective memories of the National Socialist terror and the crimes against humanity committed under Stalin Maier concludes that the latter had a less personally

¹⁶⁹ Johan Thijs, as quoted in: Gelderblom, *Zuidnederlandse kooplieden*, p. 182: 'Wy syn begerende dat wy onse vaders stede weder bewoonen moechten daer wy nu int tiende jaer uwyt syn ende in ons ballinckschap in vreemde landen hebben moeten wandelen. Ende onse kindekens worden meter tyt groet dewelcke ick niet gerne soude willen vervremden. Ick hebbe wel offermael voorgenomen hier een huys te koop ende de borgerschap te winnen, dan heb hetselve als ick op ons vaderland gedacht hebben noch ter tyt naegelaten.'

¹⁷⁰ Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, München 1992, pp. 66ff.; Charles S. Maier, 'Heißes und kaltes Gedächtnis: Über die politische Halbwertszeit von Nazismus und Kommunismus', in: *Transit. Europäische Revue (Das Gedächtnis des Jahrhunderts)* 22 (2002), pp. 153-165.

confronting impact while the former continually forced future generations to position themselves in regard to the Nazi atrocities.¹⁷¹ According to Maier, the cruelties of the Holocaust continued to force the question ‘What would I have done?’ and delivered a clear political message for the future. In contrast, the mass killings under the Stalinists did not contain such a clear message, as they were not perceived as explicitly directed against any particular minority. Unlike the ‘hot memory’ of the Holocaust that cried for a ‘never again’, their place in collective memory soon became ‘cold’ and ceased to motivate political action in the present and future.

While the implications of Maier’s coinage of these terms differ in many respects from the commemoration of flight and persecution of Southern Netherlandish migrants, his concepts may be helpful in understanding how migrant memories in the early-seventeenth century changed. For many refugees keeping alive the memory of their homeland served to anticipate a return and, in a published form, also to propagate a continuation of the war against the Habsburg forces in the South. These memories were not politically neutral but, to the contrary, cried for action. Once they saw that the military attempts to recapture their homes had failed, the migrants often became silent about their past. In many cases, it was only in the next generation that a new ‘cold’ form of memory came into being, and the past was retold without a direct call for action or a territorial claim. As chapter 4 of this book shows, the exile fate of their ancestors was a closed narrative that belonged to their past but lacked painful immediacy and direct political implications.

As the next section shows, the ‘hot memory’ that prevailed among the first migrant generation was clearly recognized by contemporaries, who tried to canalize such memories for political purposes. Many Southern writers and pamphleteers in the North realized that the hope for a future in Brabant and Flanders could be awakened only by keeping the past alive. By referring to the lost home in pamphlets and plays and integrating memories of dispersion and persecution into a historical narrative that proclaimed a ‘common fatherland’ of the inhabitants of all the seventeen provinces who were willing to fight for their freedom, they called for a continuation of the war and warned of a peace pact with the enemy that would lead

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

to definitive loss of the Southern territories. This use of memory was paralleled by other exiled groups from the Netherlands: while Protestant Southerners in the Dutch Republic called for recapturing their homes, Northern Catholics who had left for the Southern Netherlands also strove for a return of their lost homelands under the reign of the Catholic Church. Among the Holland Mission, which clandestinely operated in Holland and Utrecht, many missionaries were exiles from the Northern Provinces and were driven by the wish to win the North back for Catholic faith. As this chapter shows, the discourses in which Southern Protestant and the Northern Catholic exiles engaged to urge recovery of their lost homes were not exclusive but made use of the same motifs. Not only did their publications mirror and imitate each other's arguments, but they also directly reacted to claims of the opposite party and tried to counter them with arguments of their own.

Keeping the past alive

The year 1606 marked a crucial point in the formation of attitudes towards the past and the future of many Southern refugees in the Republic, and Johan Thijs was by no means the only one to catch a glimpse of hope for a possible recapture of the Southern cities. In May 1605, the States Armies under Maurice had launched a campaign against Antwerp that would be fended off easily but nevertheless reawakened the hopes of numerous Southerners and stirred the imagination of many: in Amsterdam and other Holland towns wagers were made about a coming conquest of Antwerp, and, as Johan Thijs's nephew Samuel de Bacher reports, people were ready to invest great fortunes in these bets.¹⁷² Rumors about the military actions on the Scheldt and even an victorious siege of Antwerp spread fast and remained persistent. De Bacher, who was critical enough to dismiss these rumors as mere cock-and-bull stories, was still excited about the idea of a coming defeat of the Habsburg regime in the South. Even if he noted that the stories could not be trusted, between 1605 and 1606 he repeatedly reported rumors of a Habsburg defeat and added that one ought to keep praying to God for a victory against the Spanish enemy.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Arch. Thys. 118: B1.: Brieven van Samuel de Bacher aan zijn zuster Hedwich de Bacher. May 24, 1605.

¹⁷³ See: e.g.: Ibid.; Arch. Thys. 118 B2: letter to Hedwich de Bacher from February 25, 1606.



Anonymous, *Mislukte aanslag op Antwerpen, 1605*,
Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

When in January 1606 Johan Thijs manifested new hope for a victory in the South, other Southern exiles tried to exploit the changing atmosphere by launching a propagandistic publication campaign.¹⁷⁴ On 1 January 1606, Southern nobleman Jacob Duym, who had fought during the siege of Antwerp and afterwards been imprisoned by Parma's troops, published his *Ghedenck-boeck*, a collection of six plays about the Revolt against the Habsburg regime, intended to make its readers aware of 'all the evils and the great mischief committed by the Spaniards and their associates' against the Netherlandish people.¹⁷⁵ Duym, who had settled in Leiden

¹⁷⁴ Judith Pollmann, 'No Man's Land. Reinventing Netherlandish Identities, 1585-1621', in: Robert Stein and Judith Pollmann (eds), *Networks, Regions and Nations. Shaping Identities in the Low Countries, 1300-1650*, Leiden 2010, p. 241-261, especially p. 254.

¹⁷⁵ Jacob Duym, *Een ghedenck-boeck, het welck ons leert aen al het quaet en den grooten moetwil van de Spaingnaerden en haren aenhanck ons aen-ghedaen te ghedencken. Ende de groote liefde ende trou vande Princen uyt den huysse van Nassau, aen ons betoont, eeuwelick te onthouden. Speel-wijs in dicht ghestelt*

after his release from captivity, believed it necessary to remind his fellow-countrymen of the past which he feared might otherwise easily sink into oblivion. Ten years earlier he and other fellow-Southerners had already warned that the memories of the war, especially in the South, were vanishing and that this amnesia prevented an adequate understanding of the present political situation. When the Leiden Chamber of Rhetoric *De Witte Acoleyen* ('The white columbine') announced the motto for an upcoming festivity in 1596, 'Voor een beveysde paeys, een rechte crijch te preisen is' ('Why a just war is to be praised over a crooked peace') the participants were asked to write verses, songs and plays on the topic of war and peace.¹⁷⁶ The members of the Flemish chamber of Leiden, *De Orange Lelie* ('The orange lily') were especially eager to spread their message that a coming peace treaty with the Habsburgs could not be trusted and that the war needed to be continued. Starting with Abraham who attacked and defeated the captors of his nephew Lot, they referred to a vast number of historical parallels. As they asserted, Moses and Joshua could never have entered the Promised Land without the use of force, and the kings David and Hezekiah were required to use force to defend that Land. In addition to biblical parallels the recent past was also evoked: the rhetoricians depicted the Peace of Augsburg and the Pacification of Ghent as failures that had been unable to prevent Catholic cruelties, and they reminded their audience of the events during the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre.¹⁷⁷ When Duym's *Ghedenck-boeck* was published in 1606, ten years later, it also contained one play with the title *Een bewys dat beter is eenen goeden Crijgh, dan eenen ghegheveysden peys* ('A proof that a good war is better than a crooked peace') that echoes the contributions of the 1596 festivities. This suggests that Duym's influence as the chairman of *De Orange Lelie* was crucial in 1596 and that he shaped the views of the other contributors.

door Jacob Dvym, Leiden 1606. On Duym, see: Johan Koppenol, *Jacob Duym en de Leidse rederijkers*, (http://www.neerlandistiek.nl/publish/articles/000010/article_print.html; consulted on 10 November 2013); Henk Duits, 'Om de eenheid en vrijheid van de gehele Nederlanden: Jacob Duym's 'Ghedenck-boeck' (1606) als politiek manifest', in: *Voortgang. Jaarboek voor de Neerlandistiek* 20 (2001), pp. 7-45.

¹⁷⁶ See: Johan Koppenol, *Leids Heelal. Het Loterijspel (1596) van Jan van Hout*, Hilversum 1998, pp. 94ff.

¹⁷⁷ *Den lust-hof van Rethorica, waer inne verhael ghedaen wordt, vande beschrijvinghen ende t'samenkomsten der Hollantscher Cameren vanden Reden-rijckers, binnen Leyden gheschiedt, den 26 Mey, des Iaers 1596. ende de volgende daghen, met het gene aldaer ghedaen, ende verhandelt is*, Leiden 1596, pp. 143f.

Duym was not the only author concerned about possible peace negotiations who tried to warn against them by referring to the war past. Another reconnection of the present situation of 1605/1606 to events in the late-sixteenth century was made in the renewed publication of Everard van Reyd's *Trouhertighe vermaninghe aen het Vereenichde Nederlandt* ('Faithful admonition of the United Netherlands') by Irenius Ammonius, a pseudonym of the publisher Johan van Sande.¹⁷⁸ Van Reyd, the famous chronicler of the Dutch Revolt, had tried to warn the his fellow-countrymen against entering a truce with the Habsburg Regime in the late 1590s by depicting the cruelties committed by the Spanish Armies and the House of Habsburg in the Netherlands, the Holy Roman Empire and other parts of Europe. All these events were proof that the Spaniard could never be trusted and that peace was no option – the atrocities committed by the enemy and his notorious treacherousness were evidence enough. Like the playwright Jacob Duym, Van Sande applied this message, originally dating from the turn of the century, to the present situation, in which alert observers were already able to anticipate the coming necessity of negotiations between the two warring parties.¹⁷⁹ Both Van Sande and Duym stressed the contrast between the 'free' and the 'overlorded' Netherlands: the Dutch Republic and the Southern Provinces under Habsburg rule. In their publications the authors presented themselves as 'lovers of freedom,' and the only place indication on Van Sande's pamphlet was 'buyten Antwerpen' ('outside Antwerp') to denote the Schelde town as occupied territory where the voice of freedom could not be raised.¹⁸⁰ Duym, who reenacted the fall of Antwerp in one of the six plays of the *Ghedenck-boeck*, addresses fellow-Southerner and member of the exiled council of Brabant, Lodewijk Meganck, in the preface and points to the 'overlorded' and 'desolate' state of Antwerp, which is sharply contrasted with its former bloom and with the prosperity and freedom of the Northern Provinces.¹⁸¹ In addition to keeping

¹⁷⁸ Irenius Ammonius (Johan van Sande), *Trouhertighe Vermaninghe aen het Vereenichde Nederlandt, om niet te luysteren na eenige ghestroyde ende versierde vreed-articulen, nu onlangs wtghegaen ende ghestroyt, ???*, 1605.

¹⁷⁹ See: Simon Groenveld, *Het Twaalfjarig Bestand 1609-1621. De jongelingsjaren van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden*, The Hague 2009, 35ff.; Simon Groenveld, *Unie, Bestand, Vrede. Drie fundamentele wetten van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden*, Hilversum 2009, pp. 94ff.

¹⁸⁰ Ammonius, *Trouhertighe Vermaninghe aen het Vereenichde Nederlandt*, A1. Such fictitious place indications were not uncommon in early modern pamphlets, but instead of choosing another town he deliberately signifies Antwerp as an overlorded city.

¹⁸¹ Jacob Duym, *Belegheringhe der stad Antwerpen by den Prince van Parma uyt crachte van sijne Conincklijke Majesteyt van Hispaignien, in den jaere 1584*, Leiden 1606, fol. A2ff.

the war past present in collective memory, Duym also tried to remind his public in the North that not all the Netherlands shared the same conditions and that the South was still in the hands of the enemy. By referring to traumatizing events during the war, he dramatized the imagined present state of the Southern Provinces and connected it to an image of the past many Northern readers were familiar with.¹⁸²

Exile and the reclaiming of the homeland

The need to recapture the lost ‘fatherland’ was felt not only by Protestant exiles in the Dutch Republic but also by Northern Catholics who had fled to the Southern Netherlands after the rebel takeover of their home provinces. Although the numbers of Protestant refugees during the Dutch Revolt greatly exceeded those of the Catholic migrants, the experience of exile was shared by adherents of virtually all confessions. As the writings of members of the various refugee groups show, there were more similarities than differences between the sentiments about losing one’s homeland and being forced to live in exile. Though, of course, not all Catholic refugees who left their hometowns for territories under Habsburg control subscribed to a clearly defined confessional identity, Catholics from Holland were well represented in the Society of Jesus and the Holland Mission, as the registers and necrologies of the Jesuit Order attest.¹⁸³ Among the men who entered the Holland Mission a sense of fighting for a spiritual reconquest of their homes was very vivid, and, as their necrologies suggest, they cherished this motive until late in their lives. The descriptions of the lives of Jesuits from Holland and other Protestant territories, written by their brethren, show rich evidence about the way in which these refugees narrated their lives and how they understood themselves and their situation.¹⁸⁴ A typical description of an exiled brother’s life is the necrology of Johannes Riserius

¹⁸² On the emerging memory canons of the revolt in the Dutch Republic and the Southern Netherlands, see forthcoming works of Jasper van der Steen and also: Jasper van der Steen, ‘Goed en fout in de Nederlandse Opstand’, in: *Holland. Historisch Tijdschrift* 43/2 (2011), pp. 82-97.

¹⁸³ See: Alfred Poncelet, *Nécrologe des jésuites de la Province Flandro-Belge*, Wetteren 1931; Alfred Poncelet, *Nécrologe des jésuites de la Province Gallo-Belge*, Louvain 1908. See also: Hans Peterse, ‘Leonardus Marius (1588-1652) und die katholische Mission in den Niederlanden’, in: Herman Selderhuis and Markus Wriedt (eds.), *Konfession, Migration Und Elitenbildung. Studien zur Theologenausbildung des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Leiden 2007, pp. 287-309 ; Janssen, ‘The Counter-Reformation of the Refugee’, J. Andriessen, *De Jezuiten en het samenhorighheidsbesef der Nederlanden*, Antwerp 1957, pp. 96f.

¹⁸⁴ See on this type of sources: Gerrit vanden Bosch, ‘Over de doden niets dan goeds. Zeventiende-eeuwse elogia en necrologia van jezuiteten in de Hollandse Zending als bronnen voor religieuze mentaliteitsgeschiedenis’, in: *Trajecta* 6 (1997), pp. 334–345.

from Amsterdam. Born in 1573 to Catholic parents, he lost his father at young age and was raised in the ‘true faith’ by his devout mother, whose description in the necrologies bears strong resemblance to the archetypical pious Catholic mother figure, Augustine’s mother Monica.¹⁸⁵ After suffering hatred and affliction at the hands of the new Protestant magistrate of Amsterdam, he fled with his mother to Emden, a place more famous for its numerous Protestant refugees. As the necrology suggests, mother and child were actively persecuted by the new regime but could escape, which appears as a rather implausible claim. Living in exile since his early youth, Riserius was guided by the wish to restore the ‘true Religion’ in Holland, his fatherland. ‘Having already seen the beginning of great dangers, pains and persecutions, which even grew larger, he became a member of the Holland Mission for forty years and was sent away to be trained as cleric’.¹⁸⁶ In the discourse of the newly awakened confessional zeal of the Holland Mission and the Jesuit Order the experience of exile and the wish to recatholicize the Northern Netherlands were closely linked: Northern exiles like Isidorus van der Ilen, Justus Diercx, Theodorus Kividt, Cornelius Vermeersch, Johannes van Gouda or Petrus den Hollander were highly praised for their efforts to fight for the True Church and their fatherland as well as for their often highly exaggerated successes in the conversion of heretics in the North.¹⁸⁷

The achievements in the conversion of Protestants by the members of the Holland Mission, who had returned to their former homelands as ‘internal exiles’, were the pride of the organization and were widely praised. Johannes Riserius, his biographer claimed, had on a single day converted twenty Calvinists, three Lutherans as well as fifty others, whose confessional affiliation was not entirely clear.¹⁸⁸ When the Jesuit Chronicler Albertus Miraeus published his *Elogia illustrium Belgii scriptorium* in 1602, he glorified the efforts of exiled writers who had boldly fought ‘the churches of the Manicheans, the Donatists and the Pelagians,

¹⁸⁵ KB Brussel, Afdeling handschriften, ms. 6485 Bibl. roy., fol.10r.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.: ‘Adeo jam cum in puero praelusum videtur periculis, laboribus, persecutionibus quibus jam grandior, ac Religiosus in missione hollandica per annos 40 et exportus et exercitus fuit.’

¹⁸⁷ For Van der Ilen, see: KB Brussel, Afdeling handschriften, ms. Bibl. roy. 6485, fol. 36r.; for Cromstrien: *ibid.*, fol. 207r.; for Diercx: *ibid.*, fol. 45r.; for Kividt: *ibid.*, fol. 92r.; for Vermeersch: *ibid.*, fol. 137r.; for Van Gouda: ms. Bibl. roy., 171; for Den Hollander: ms. Bibl. roy. 654, fol. 33.

¹⁸⁸ KB Brussel, Afdeling handschriften, ms. 6485 Bibl. roy., fol.10v.

nowadays to be known as Lutherans, Calvinists and Anabaptists'.¹⁸⁹ Clerics, who sought refuge for the sake of their faith were presented as exemplary believers, and their exertions for the Church were celebrated. Not only were their battles against heresy and the conversion of Protestants recalled but also their efforts for their fellow-exiles, whom they had provided with pastoral care in times of affliction. Petrus Cunerus, born in Zeeland and later active in Friesland from where he was banished by the new Protestant regime, was one of those who had remained not only loyal to the true religion and the King but who had also strengthened the faith of his exiled fellow-believers in Cologne.¹⁹⁰ The motif of the faithful refugee who had left his homelands for religion's sake had become an exemplary figure who could serve to propagate a new zeal for the Post-Tridentine Church.

Within this climate a remarkable medial constellation emerged that transferred the exemplary use of the religious exiles' fate between the antagonistic confessional camps and linked their situation to the most emblematic religious and political martyrs of the Revolt. In 1610, Louvain professor and widely acknowledged Neo-Latin playwright Nicolaus Vernulaeus published a play titled *Gorcomienses, sive fidei exilium* ('The Gorcumers, or: Faith in Exile') that bore strong thematic and intertextual connections to the work of Northern Protestant writers like Duym and Daniel Heinsius who had experienced exile themselves or come from Southern families.¹⁹¹ The play was printed in Cologne by Bernardus Gualteri, a Catholic publisher with close connections to Dutch Catholic printers and people who had experienced exile in Cologne.¹⁹² In this work, Vernulaeus depicted the fate of the martyrs of Gorcum, nineteen Catholic clerics who were killed by the Sea Beggars in 1572. The Gorcum martyrs served to illustrate the present situation in the Netherlands: not only had pious Catholics in Holland been killed and been forced to flee to Catholic territories, the 'true faith' itself was exiled from the Rebel

¹⁸⁹ Albertus Miraeus, *Elogia illustrium Belgii scriptorium, qui vel Ecclesiam Dei propugnerant, vel disciplinas illustrarunt*, Antwerp 1602, 84: 'Ut magnum illud Ecclesiae Manichaeos, donatistas & Pelagianos; sic nostra aetate Lutheranos, Calvinistes & Anabaptistes in Germania strenuè Canisius oppugnavit.' Petrus Canisius, to whom this passage refers, was not really an exile since he had left Nijmegen before Protestantism had become dominant. Nevertheless, he had to consider his home soil as occupied by heretics after 1591 when Catholic worship was outlawed.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 26f.

¹⁹¹ Nicolaus Vernulaeus, *Gorcomienses, sive fidei exilium*, Cologne 1610.

¹⁹² Paul Begheyn S.J., 'Uitgaven van jezuiten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden 1601-1650', in: *De zeventiende eeuw* 13(1991), p. 296.

provinces. In crucial passages of the play, a choir of banished Hollanders takes the stage, lamenting their fate and the fact that the natural bond between the Netherlands and the Catholic faith had been destroyed. The same motif had been employed in Daniel Heinsius' Latin drama *Auriacus, sive Libertas saucia* ('Orange, or: Injured freedom') from 1602 and Jacob Duym's vernacular adaption of the same material, *Het moordadich stuck van Balthasar Gerards, begaen aen den doorluchtighen Prince van Oraignen. 1584*, ('The murderous act of Baltasar Gerards, committed against the illustrious prince of Orange') which was included in the *Ghedenck-boeck*.¹⁹³ Heinsius too connected the figure of the martyr to the situation of exile: while Vernulaeus chose the martyrs of Gorcum, in the work of the two Protestant writers William of Orange is presented as a secular martyr. Instead of the emblematic figure of the *Fides exilium* ('Exiled Faith') the two Protestant playwrights stage the *Libertas saucia* ('Violated Freedom'). This choice shows the fundamental values of the discourses into which the three authors inscribe their works: while for Vernulaeus, the Catholic faith is intrinsically linked with the Netherlands, for Heinsius and Duym, the emblematic condensation of the roots and aims of the entire conflict is freedom, which has been violated and needs to be reconstituted.

The theme of exile constitutes an argumentative pattern crucial for the deliverance of the political message of the plays. The choirs of exiles are depicted as the characterizations of the true Netherlanders, who are exiled and estranged from their roots by the violence of foreigners. In Heinsius' and Duym's plays, Netherlandish freedom is abolished and replaced by Spanish tyranny: the innate sense of freedom of the exiled Flemish nobles is damaged, and they lament the loss of their old 'Vlaenderlandt':

Oh Flemish land, how long must you wait for your honor,
 instead of freedom you only taste oppression,
 and your enemy is always nearby.
 Even you, oh noble town of Ghent,
 how much you have to suffer, what tidings do you hear,

¹⁹³ Daniel Heinsius, *Auriacus, sive Libertas saucia*, Leiden 1602; Jacob Duym, *Het moordadich stuck van Balthasar Gerards, begaen aen den doorluchtighen Prince van Oraignen. 1584*, in: *Ghedenck-boeck*. See also: B.A. Vermaseren, 'Een onbekend drama over de H.H. Martelaren van Gorcum', in: *Bijdragen voor de provincie van de Minderbroeders in de Nederlanden* 3 (1951-1952), pp. 25-38.

your friends are chased away, you lost too much.
Fortunate are those who left,
And you will live with those who hate you most.
In the name of the Lord shall we be free
and you have to learn Spanish instead of Flemish.¹⁹⁴

Flanders is bereft of its old freedom and put under a foreign yoke. By marking the new order explicitly as foreign, the territories under Habsburg rule are depicted as estranged from their original identity: 'instead of Flemish' Flanders has 'to learn Spanish' now. The old 'Flemish' values, most notably the sense for freedom, can live on only in exile where the confession of 'God's word' is still possible.

The same argumentative strategy is employed in the Catholic counterpart of the two William of Orange-plays: here it is Holland that has lost its true identity, defined by unconditional loyalty to the Catholic faith and the King. After Holland is taken over by the heretics, the Calvinists, Lutherans and Mennonites, who worship Eribus, the God of darkness, the old natural bond with King and Church is broken.¹⁹⁵ As in Heinsius' and Duym's plays, the Netherlands are afflicted by an inquisition, presented as an allegorical personage. In *Gorcomienses*, the Spanish Inquisition of the two William of Orange-plays is turned into a 'Heretical Inquisition' installed by the cruel adherents of the new heresies.¹⁹⁶ Whereas the two Northern playwrights present the Spanish Inquisition as something foreign and opposed to Netherlandish values and traditions and installed by foreign powers, in Vernulaeus' work, the heretics also come from abroad, and they are inspired by foreign ideas: their goal is to destroy the Netherlands and install a foreign regime there.

The three plays, all from the first decade of the seventeenth century, use the theme of exile for the same function. Their aim is to show that the contemporary

¹⁹⁴ Jacob Duym, *Het moordadich stuck van Balthasar Gerards*, fol. C1r.:

'O Vlaenderlandt wat is u eer yet lang nakende,
In plaets van vrijheyd zult ghy dwanck zijn smakende,
En uwen vyand sal u altijt zijn omtrent,
En u noch boven al o edel stad van Gent,
Wat sult ghy lijden noch, wat sult ghy moeten horen:
U vrienden zijn verjaegt, ghy hebt te veel verloren.
Gheluckich zijn sy al die u verlaten eest,
Want ghy nu wonen sult met die u haten meest.
In vrijheyd sullen wy zijn inden naem des Heeren
En ghy sult nu in plaets van Vlaems, Spaens moeten leeren.'

¹⁹⁵ Vernulaeus, *Gorcomienses*, pp. 37f.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 34ff.

Netherlands are in a state of inversion: while the ‘true Netherlanders’, and with them the identity of the country itself, are forced into exile, the opposing parties in the struggle are identified as foreigners or at least forces who try to impose foreign policies. Depicting the fate of the exiles and linking their situation with well-known narratives about religious and political martyrdom become a powerful argumentative strategy to reclaim the provinces lost to the antagonizing camp.

‘Memoria magistra vita’

The necessity to remember the events of the past is emphasized in various ways in the plays and media employed by exiled writers in the period before and during the Twelve Years’ Truce. The entire *Ghedenck-boeck* was intended to keep the war past present in collective memory and to warn against a coming peace with the enemy, and other Southern exiled writers such as Willem Baudartius or Johannes Gysius also devoted their works to this project.¹⁹⁷ Although their works were published only after the conclusion of the Truce, the intention of the publications was clear: to remind the fellow-Netherlanders of the atrocities committed by the Spaniards and to point out that the struggle had not yet been completed, despite the twelve years of peace. The Southern Provinces were not yet free of the Habsburg rule, and thousands of Southern Protestants were still in exile in the Republic. The need to spread this message was considered so urgent that Baudartius’ *Morghen-Wecker der vrije Nederlantsche Provincien* (‘Wake-up call to the free Netherlandish Provinces’) was even adapted into a children’s book: *De Spieghel der jeugd* (‘The Mirror of the Youth’) that was frequently reprinted and reedited until far into the eighteenth century and also translated into French.¹⁹⁸ The fear that the people in the Northern Netherlands, especially the generations who had not lived through the war themselves, would soon forget about the experiences of their parents and settle for accepting the present state of division between North and South, haunted many of

¹⁹⁷ Willem Baudartius, *Morghen-Wecker der vrije Nederlantsche Provincien*, ‘Danswijck’ 1610; Johannes Gysius, *Oorsprong en voortgang der Nederlantscher beroerten ende ellendigheden: Waerin vertoont worden, de voornaemste tyrannijen, moorderijen, ende andere onmenshelijcke wreetheden, die onder het ghebiedt van Philips II, s.l., 1616.*

¹⁹⁸ Johannes Bouillet, *Spieghel der jeught, ofte korte Cronijck der Nederlantsche geschiedenssen*, Amsterdam 1614. For the numerous reeditions, see: Wolfgang Cilleßen, ‘Der *Spieghel der jeugd*. Ein Kinderbuch als Medium der Geschichtserinnerung in den Niederlanden (1614-1813)’, in: Hans Peterse (ed.), *Süß erscheint der Krieg den Unerfahrenen. Das Bild vom Krieg und die Utopie des Friedens in der frühen Neuzeit*, Göttingen 2004, pp. 51-134.

those who had left their homes in Flanders, Brabant and other Southern Provinces. The new media campaign of the first two decades of the seventeenth century was put into service to fight this threatening ‘sleep of oblivion’.¹⁹⁹ In the dedication to stadholder Maurits, Jacob Duym stated as a reason for his publication of the *Ghedenck-boeck*, that

it is highly lamentable that some youths cannot believe or at least not remember what their parents, their friends or their fatherland have suffered [...]. Therefore I have found it necessary to present a ‘memory-book’, wherein all people can see as clear as a mirror the bloodthirsty heart, the old hatred and the hidden evil plans the Spaniards and their adherents have borne, and still bear, towards the miserable Netherlands.²⁰⁰

In the *Ghedenck-boeck*, Duym not only presented a selection of notable events of war past that needed to be remembered but also constructed a vast ‘poetics of remembering’, a program to show memory itself as a necessary device to enable one to act prudently in the present because of having understood the past. The plots of the plays are often guided by the recollection of memories that show the protagonists the way through difficult situations. In *Een bewys dat beter is eenen goeden Crijgh, den eenen ghegheveynsden peys* the author introduces an allegorical personage, *Goeden Raed* (‘Faithful counsel’) who recalls the atrocities of the Spaniards whenever the Netherlanders’ memory is threatened by oblivion. When the States seem to tend towards a peace treaty with the enemy, ‘Faithful counsel’ points out the fate of the overlorded provinces in the South, which are cruelly oppressed by the Habsburgs. When his arguments fail to not convince, he recalls the massacre committed by Alba’s troops at Naarden in 1572.²⁰¹ In such events, the counsel shows, lies the true nature of the enemy; a lasting peace can never be established since the Spaniards would use it only to strengthen their own position and commit new cruelties in the Netherlands.

¹⁹⁹ Baudartius, *Morghen-Wecker der vrije Nederlantsche Provincien*, fol. 2r.

²⁰⁰ Duym, *Ghedenck-boeck*, preface, fol. *2v-r: ‘[...] tis grootelijcx te beclaghcn dat sommighe jonghers niet en konnen gheloooven oft immers niet en onthouden t’ gheen dat haer Ouders, Vrienden, oft haer Vaderland wedervaren is [...]. Heeft my daer om hoogh-noodich ghedocht een *Ghedenck-boeck*, alle menschen voor te stellen, daer sy soo claer als in eenen spiegel sullen mogen sien het bloeddorstich hert, den ouden haed, den heymelicken boosen raed, die de Spaignaerts ende haren aenhanck dees onse bedroefde Nederlanden gedraghen hebben, ende noch draghende zijn.’

²⁰¹ Duym, *Een bewys dat beter is eenen goeden Crijgh, den eenen gheveynsden peys*, fol. C4r-v, in: Duym, *Ghedenck-boeck*.

In the play about William of Orange, Duym shows an exemplary, heroic case of how memories of the past can be used to make sound judgments in the present. The Prince and his wife, Louise de Coligny, are presented as prudently guided by the recollections of the past. Their experience with the Spaniards and French Catholics has left them under no illusions about the risks of concluding a peace with the enemy. When a truce between the rebels and the Habsburg is proposed, Louise (or Lowisa) falls into a mood of anxiety:

The Prince

In times of war you are not fearful,
Why is it that you fear peace?

Lowisa

You should not be surprised about that,
Was it not a false peace, that fell from heaven
down upon me like a thunder?
Was it not peace that took away both my father and my spouse?
Was there ever a more solid peace,
than when Navarra married our king's daughter?
Does he, who fears peace, do wrong?
My father, who defended himself knightly,
and did not surrender to his enemy:
He is lying dead because of the peace, that led to his murder
and also my husband, Téligny, died by the peace.
And that is why I give the true vengeance to God.
O, we see a lot, which goes disguised as peace.²⁰²

²⁰² Duym, *Het moordadich stuck van Balthasar Gerards*, fol. F1v:

'Den Prins.

In d' oorlogh' en ziit ghy het vreesen niet ghewnt [sic],
Hoe naer vreeset ghy den peys?

Lowisa

Sulcx waer van my gheen wonder,
En wast den valschen peys niet, die snel als den donder,
Daer uyt den Hemel viel, en my quam over t' hooft,
Ben ick niet door den peys van Vaer en Man berooft?
Was daer oyt peys, daer elck op vaster mochte bouwen?
Als men Navarra sagh ons Coninx Dochter trouwen?
Doet hy oock qualick dan die hem voor peys verveert,
Miin vader die hem had so Ridderlijck verweert,
En voor den vyand oock en wilde geensins swichten:
Leyt hy daer niet door peys, en moord die sy doen stichten,
En mijn man Tillingni, door den peys oock dood bleef,
Daer ick d' oprechte wraeck nu miinen God af geef,
Och onder t' dexel van peys, men veel ghebeuren,, diel.'

The fate of her father, Admiral Louis de Coligny, and her first husband, Charles de T eligny, who were both killed during the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in Paris, have taught Louise that the idea of a secure peace was an illusion. The fact that this massacre, too, occurred during a formal state of peace between the Huguenots and the Catholic League has taught her that the enemies of Protestantism are not to be trusted. The message of the fervent pro-war plays of Duym is clear: the Dutch need to remember, and remembering can lead to only one conclusion: the need to continue the war and resist the temptation of accepting a 'crooked peace'. For him and many other Southern exiles in the Republic, the Southern Provinces, which still bore the yoke of the Spanish enemy, could not just be given up. Even if he himself could no longer carry arms to recapture his fatherland, he had to use his pen as a weapon and argue for the absolute necessity of remembering what had happened.

Remapping the Netherlands

The political and social world of first-generation Southern exiles like Duym, Thijs or Baudartius as well as of the Northern Catholics who joined the Holland Mission had changed dramatically within a few decades. They were born into a world in which the later divisions between the two new States and the various confessional camps were yet unknown, though not entirely unpredictable. Handling the new situation in exile proved to be a difficult challenge, and few people were willing to accept the new boundaries created by the Revolt. In the years before the Twelve Years' Truce, Southern exiles in the North became more conscious of the fact that the negotiation of an armistice or even a peace between the two parties would lead to a point of no return in the course of future events. Even among the exiled wealthy Antwerp merchants for whom geographical mobility had been a fact of life for generations the notion that their homeland would be lost to them forever had great effect. While this group has often been studied from an economic perspective and their motivation to leave Antwerp has often been explained by referring to the economic decline of the Scheldt town and the attractiveness of Amsterdam, we have seen that their wish to return persisted for a long time. Their personal letters, which often express a sense of nostalgia and grief about their lost homes, show that a future return to the South was not in the first instance a question of the economic circumstances in Antwerp but depended on the political and religious course of events: for Thijs and his family,

returning homewards would become an option only when their hometown would be 'liberated' and their confession of faith accepted.

For others, like minister Baudartius or war veteran Duym, things were even clearer: a return was not possible as long as the South was 'under the Spanish yoke'. Their aim was to spread this message among their fellow-countrymen and propagate a continuation of the war that could lead to an eventual liberation of the Southern Provinces. The motivation of many Northern Catholic exiles who became active in the Holland Mission was quite comparable: what they wanted to bring about was a 'spiritual' reconquest of their lost homes. The provinces they still regarded as their homelands were to be reconciled with the Old Faith. Instead of actively propagating to achieve this by military action, their strategy was to reconvert the heretics and strengthen local Catholic communities.²⁰³

In the first two decades of the seventeenth century, the Netherlands were remapped in many respects. For a great number of people, the conclusion of the Twelve Years' Truce would define their future destination for good, and the choice to live in one of the newly-emerging states had been made by most of the exiles in the years before the treaty became effective. For most of the wealthy Southern merchant families in Holland it became clear that they had to settle down in Amsterdam, Leiden and Haarlem and to sell their properties in Antwerp, even if real estate prices were not attractive in this period. For others, like Jacob Duym, the sense of belonging to their old homelands was so pressing that they moved to places in the border region where they could practice their Protestant faith across the border. Duym, even before the Truce was finally concluded, decided that his campaign to warn of the coming peace had failed, and in 1608 he settled down in Muisbroek, close to the fort of Lillo, an external bastion of the Republic, where

²⁰³ See for the strategies of the Holland Mission to uphold the sacramental system in the Republic: Christine Kooi, 'Paying off the sheriff. Strategies of Catholic toleration in Golden Age Holland', in: Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia and Henk van Nierop, *Calvinism and Religious Toleration the Dutch Golden Age*, Cambridge 2002, pp. 87-101.

Protestants from the surrounding countryside were able to attend Reformed services on Sunday.²⁰⁴

Exiles from both confessional and political camps continued refer to the united ‘Seventeen Netherlands’ as they had existed before the Revolt had split the various provinces apart. The ‘common homeland’ now existed only as an imaginary place in the past. In the various discourses about the past the division in the collective memories about the period before the war is easily detectable. For Catholics the attachment to the Old Faith was inherent to the Netherlands and was destroyed by heretics, who had invaded with their ideas from abroad. In the construction of the past as disseminated by Southern Protestant exiles in the North their old homelands had always been recognizable by their sense of liberty and the maintenance of the ‘word of God, as for example Duym tried to make clear, which of course implied that the ‘new’ character of the Reformation had to be concealed.²⁰⁵ By 1609, the two emerging Netherlandish states had become a ‘no man’s land’ in which both sides claimed authority over the past and in which great numbers of people from the opposing camps made claims about the unity of the various provinces, a unity that would never be established again.²⁰⁶

In the same year as the *Ghedenck-boeck*, Duym published yet another book, in which he spread his belligerent message: *Oudt Batavien nu ghenaeamt Holland*, published under the pseudonym Saxo Grammaticus of its co-author Petrus Scriverius.²⁰⁷ Scriverius, who had written an antiquarian work about the ancient Batavians who had presumably lived in the delta of the Rhine during the Roman occupation, had completed this book with a chronicle of the medieval counts of Holland as well as a history of the Dutch Revolt, both written by Duym. In his contribution to the work, Duym explicitly depicted the present state of the Netherlands as he saw it, and he did not miss any opportunity to point to the

²⁰⁴ Johan Koppenol, *Jacob Duym en de Leidse rederijkers*, in: *Neerlandistiek.nl. Wetenschappelijk tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, November 2001. (<http://www.neerlandistiek.nl/?000010>). See for the early modern phenomenon of *Auslauf*, the crossing of borders to attend religious services as an arrangement to avoid confessional conflicts: Benjamin Kaplan, *Divided by Faith. Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge/MA 2007, pp. 162ff.

²⁰⁵ Duym, *Het moordadich stuck van Balthasar Gerards*, fol. B4r.

²⁰⁶ See also: Pollmann, ‘No Man’s Land.’

²⁰⁷ Grammaticus, Saxo, *Oudt Batavien nu ghenaeamt Holland: hoe, ende in wat manieren, ende van wien Hollandt, Zeelandt, ende Vrieslandt eerst bewoont is gheweest*, Leiden 1606.

situation in the South, which was still overruled by foreigners. In the introduction to his chronicle of the Revolt, he explains the situation in the various provinces and divides them into two categories: under an image of the Court of Holland, he shows the coats of arms of all the 'free' provinces, while the 'overruled' provinces are listed under a depiction of the Court of Brussels. By making clear that the latter is the rightful political center of the Netherlands, he points to the provisional character of the Republic's present state.²⁰⁸ Whereas in The Hague a just government rules the free provinces and the South is still in the hands of strangers, the division between the two states can only be temporary: to restore the old Netherlands authority has to be reassigned to Brussels. This can, of course, be established only once the old seat of government is freed from the Spaniards. The depiction of the court of Brussels is accompanied with the following epigram:

This noble court does still exist
As it is depicted here,
and praised as a royal edifice.
Brussels, your name will be honored
When you will truly rule yourself.²⁰⁹

At present Brussels does not yet rule itself but is subjected to foreign rulers: to regain its old glory it has to restore its old power and free itself. The imagery of exile is skillfully applied to the political situation of the Netherlands as a whole: while freedom and justice prevail only under the rule of the Court of Holland, they are banished from the actual political center of the Netherlands, which is Brussels. Duym depicts the present state in the Netherlands as a highly paradoxical situation, in which the lawful authority is held only by a transitory organ exiled from its original destination.

As the cases of Duym, Thijs and many other exiles show, the commemoration of the war and the lost homeland were intrinsically connected with the call for what was perceived as a restoration of the old order, which was in fact a

²⁰⁸ *Oudt Batavien nu ghenaeamt Holland*, pp. 194, p. 196.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 194: 'Dit heerlijk Hoff, is noch in wesen,
Als dit hier staet ghefigureert,
Een Conincklijck ghebou ghepresen,
Bruessel u naem, daer door vereert,
Als ghy oprecht, u self regeert.'

highly imaginative construction. This way of remembering implied the anticipation of a changing future and the necessity to act. A new form of memory emerged among a younger generation, who had experienced the loss of their old homes at a young age or who had been born in the new host towns of their parents. Descendants of Southern Netherlandish migrants who were born in England or Germany also had a different outlook. Among them was Jacob Celosse, who succeeded Duym as the chairman of the Flemish rhetoricians chamber *De Orange Lelie*. Born in Sandwich in 1560, thirteen years after Duym, he had never lived in the homeland of his parents, and Leiden was his new home.²¹⁰ Under his direction, the Flemish chamber participated in the festivities during the celebration of the Twelve Years' Truce and contributed verses that praised the end of war, especially in Flanders. While Flanders is still called the 'fatherland' in these texts, the bond with the lost home is presented in a different light. Instead of sentimentally looking back, the migrants are warned against a nostalgia that could possibly lead to a return to the Southern Netherlands. Remigration to the homeland is presented as dangerous because of the threat of Catholicism in the South. The refugees are called to flee the Catholic 'beast' and remain steadfast in their faith and not to 'break the bond' with God:

But in this celebration,
oh fear your God, your Lord,
and flee the beast,
that violates His name the most.
And if you return
to the fatherland,
be mindful of the Divine creed
that is planted into you,
and do not let this truce
break the bond at any price,
and do not look back,
for this would be shameful and deeply sad.²¹¹

²¹⁰ J.J. Mak, 'Jacobus Celosse, factor van de Vlaamse kamer 'in liefde groeiende' te Leiden', in: *Jaarboek De Fonteyne* (1948), p. 95.

²¹¹ *Den Nederduytschen Helicon*, Alkmaar 1610, p. 280:

'Maer in dees feest // och vreest
U Godt, u Heer,
Vliedt doch het beest // 't welc meest
Schenkt Godes eer,
Neemt ghy den keer
Na 't Vaderlandt,
Denckt om Gods leer,
U ingheplant,

One generation later, the perspective towards the past in Flanders has changed even more drastically. In 1632, Jacob van Zevecote wrote two plays on the siege of Leiden that incorporated the same elements we have seen in Heinsius' and Duym's works and in which a choir of Flemish refugees also appeared. Van Zevecote, a former Augustinian monk, was born in Ghent in 1596 and in 1624 migrated to Leiden where he became a Calvinist. For him, it was immediately clear that his exile would not be temporary and with his conversion to Protestantism he had cut his ties to the past in Flanders. In his works the refugees have a different outlook than those in Vernulaeus', Heinsius' and Duym's plays. Instead of lamenting the loss of their homes, they praise their new home town and affirm their loyalty to Leiden. Addressing the 'virgin Leiden', they proclaim:

Readily shall I leave behind
the sweet Flemish air,
that brought me into this life,
as well as my all my people.
For you shall be my last drop blood,
which nourishes and keeps me alive,
as long as I can die as your citizen.²¹²

For five pages Leiden is praised while Flanders is addressed only occasionally. At the same time, the past of the Flemish refugees is presented as a victorious history: they sacrificed their wealth and left their country behind but were rewarded with a new home. While they first had to endure Spanish cruelties, they witnessed the downfall of their enemies during the relief of Leiden where they now could live in peace, 'delivered from bloodshed and Spanish tyranny'.²¹³

Laet dit bestandt // den bandt
Verbreken niet,
Wat men u biedt // en siet
Niet omme: want // 't waer schand
En ziel verdriet.'

²¹² Jacob van Zevecote, *Gedichten* (ed. Ph. Blommaert), Gent / Rotterdam 1840 , p. 233 (*Belech van Leyden*):

'Ick sal de soete Vlaemsche locht,
Die my in 't leven heeft gebrocht,
En al mijn volck gewillich derven,
Voor u sal sijn het leste bloet,
Dat my bewaert en leven doet
Is 't dat ick mach uw borger sterven.'
'Daer wy verlost van moordery,

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 232:

The outlook of most refugees of the second generation had changed: the immediacy of their parents' sense of the past had vanished and made room for a rather 'cold memory' that no longer called for action but told them who they were in their new host societies. This way of remembering did not necessarily diminish the importance of the past but led to a form of commemoration that provided the descendants with a narrative about themselves, which also allowed them to relate to their new neighbors in different ways. The waning of an immediate 'hot memory' did not imply oblivion but a change in the meanings and functions of exile memories.

En van de Spaensche tyranny
Met ruste sullen mogen leven [...].'