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

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Chapter 5: *The ancient landmarks of the fathers* – maintaining old networks

In pursuit of a fleeing horseman

On a loose paper covering personal notes and letters from his friends and relatives Marcus Du Tour, lawyer and chamberlain of Stadholder William II, noted the following Latin poem:

The noble eagle begets soft doves
But his soul does never settle, (it is like a) fleeing horseman.
Oh, the noble father's honesty, virtue and splendor,
Are not inherited by birth, as has been proven many times.

The present times³⁸⁷

He added to this poem a Bible verse (Proverbs 22. 28): 'Remove not the ancient landmarks, which thy fathers have set'³⁸⁸. Du Tour's anxiety about the next generation can be read as a rather general lamentation about youth's unsteadiness and decadence. His own progeny, however, could hardly be characterized as idle 'soft doves'. His only son David was a man of great ambitions. Having acquired the title of baron he married into a wealthy Frisian family and made a career in provincial and, ultimately, national politics. After serving in the magistrate of his wife's Frisian hometown Hindeloopen he became a deputy in the States-General in The Hague and commissioner in the Frisian Court of Auditors.³⁸⁹ Obviously, his father's anxiety about his children's steadfastness and ambition had resulted in a disciplined upbringing which aimed at their preparation for a successful career.

Besides preparing his children for a life in his footsteps, Marcus Du Tour's eagerness to pass on old virtues had another dimension. Descending from French and Brabantine Protestant refugee families, he served as a member of the Council of

³⁸⁷ 'Aquila progenerat molles generosa columbas
Atque animus residat nullus avertus Eques
Ah! Patris et virtus probitas et candor honesti
Non est in natis/ tempora dicta probant.

tempora hodierna'

(Arch. Thys. 287: Stukken afkomstig van Marcus du Tour, lid van de Raad van Brabant)

³⁸⁸ 'En zet de oude Paalen niet te rugge, die uwe vaderen gemaakt hebben.' (Ibid.)

³⁸⁹ Repertorium van ambtsdragers en ambtenaren 1482-18-61

(<http://www.historici.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/Repertorium/app/personen/8309>), consulted on 7 february 2013.

Brabant in The Hague.³⁹⁰ Even though he belonged to the elite of the Dutch Republic, his social networks remained firmly rooted in the family and friendship circles of Southern migrants. His marriage to Sara de l' Empereur in 1655 connected the Southern families Van der Meulen and Du Tour to that of the famous Leiden Hebraist Constantijn de l'Empereur van Oppijck, himself born of Antwerp refugees in Germany.³⁹¹ With the exception of notable persons, such as Utrecht mayor Frederik Ruysch, the guest list to Du Tour's wedding reads like a who's who of the well-to-do Southern migrant families in Holland and Utrecht.³⁹² He acted as a lawyer and legal advisor to many of his Southern Netherlandish contacts and friends. Important merchant families, such as the brothers Johan and Christoffel Thijs were represented by Du Tour in several lawsuits concerning their investments in Hamburg. These contacts with his fellow Southerners proved of crucial importance for Du Tour's career and social life, and passing them on to his children seems to have been a major goal. The 'ancient landmarks' of the fathers had to be preserved and maintained, and the old networks that had mutually connected the old well-to-do Brabant families in the Dutch Republic for generations needed to be continued.

Many studies on migrant identities suggest that transferring memories of a distant 'homeland' to future generations is a difficult task. The bi- or multi-local ties to one or more places of origin are typically restricted to the first generation while the descendants of migrants do not share the interest in their parents' birth countries or regions.³⁹³ However, in the case of the early modern Netherlandish exiles who left during the Dutch Revolt a different pattern appears: the translocal networks that were built by the first generation and held together by memories and the consciousness of a common homeland remained intact for many generations and were sometimes even extended and reinforced by the children and grandchildren of

³⁹⁰ On the Council of Brabant under the Dutch generality: J. G. M. Sanders, Willem A. van Ham, *Noord-Brabant Tijdens de Republiek Der Verenigde Nederlanden, 1572-1795. Een institutionele handleiding*, Hilversum 1996; Robert Fruin, *Geschiedenis der staatsinstellingen in Nederland tot den val der Republiek* (2e bijgewerkte druk, The Hague 1922), pp. 268-269; W.M. Lindemann, Th.F. van Litsenburg, *Raad van Brabant: Brabant deel 1: Inleiding, inventarissen en bijlagen* ('s-Hertogenbosch 1981) pp. 5-15; J.Th. de Smit, 'Van een oud naar een nieuw project. Van Grote Raad van Mechelen naar Raad van Brabant', *Noordbrabants Historisch Jaarboek* 2 (1985), pp. 113-126.

³⁹¹ Marcus Du Tour's mother was Justina van der Meulen, daughter of the successful Antwerp merchant Andries van der Meulen (Arch. Thys. 286: Stukken van David du Tour en zijn vrouw Justina van der Meulen, ca. 1630-1650).

³⁹² Arch. Thys. 287.

³⁹³ Lucassen, 'Is Transnationalism Compatible with Assimilation?', p. 21.

the newcomers, who could easily build upon the contacts of their ancestors. These networks had a social as well as a spatial component: not only did they connect families and individuals from the same regions, but they also bridged wide geographical spaces in which future generations could easily move from one place to another. Descendants of Dutch migrants did not forget about their forefathers' former homes and were often able and willing to migrate between their birthplaces and other regions they could know only from their parents' stories. Merchant families, in particular, had a broad geographical outlook and often proved very flexible when relocation from one city or country to another proved necessary.

Newer studies on transnationalism and migration often argue that after the heyday of the modern nation state transnational migration decisively changed in character. Whereas the model of migration as a one-directional and linear movement from one place to another is said to have characterized migration movements in earlier periods, new communication technologies and the increasing opportunities to travel between states are believed to have changed the living conditions of modern migrants enormously. Instead of leaving the 'Old Country' behind and starting a new life abroad, migrants live more and more 'between' their birth countries and their new homes. In particular, members of labor-migrant diasporas, such as the numerous Mexicans in the Southwest of the United States, often relocate several times in their life from one side of the border to the other. But even those who permanently settle down in the new host society often keep close ties to their former homelands.³⁹⁴ To describe this condition Nina Glick Schiller and others have coined the term 'transmigrant', which stresses the connectedness to various places and spaces and the multidirectional nature of contemporary migrants' lives.³⁹⁵ As this chapter will show, 'transmigration' is not only a contemporary phenomenon but also one that preceded the modern nation state and shaped the situation of many early modern migrants as well. The early modern Netherlandish migration networks could

³⁹⁴ See e.g.: Stephen, Lynn, *Transborder Lives. Indigenous Oaxacans in Mexico, California, and Oregon*, Durham/NC 2007; Linda G. Basch, Nina Glick Schiller and Cristina Blanc Szanton, 'From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration' in: *Anthropology Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (January 1995), pp. 48-63; Michael Peter Smith, 'The Two faces of Transnational Citizenship', in: *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30, no. 6 (November 2007), pp. 1096-1116.

³⁹⁵ Basch, Glick Schiller and Blanc Szanton, 'From Immigrant to Transmigrant'. See also the various essays in: Linda G. Basch, Nina Glick Schiller and Cristina Blanc Szanton, *Nations Unbound. Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-states*, London 1994.

be classified as typical examples of such transmigrant diasporas. Even if their members were well integrated in their new places of residence, most migrants and their descendants did not totally reorient their lives towards the host society they lived in but remained connected to their old 'homes' or to other regions where their parents had stayed after their flight and often easily relocated from one place to another.³⁹⁶

As we will see in this chapter, to move onwards or relocate to earlier 'homes' to which previous migrant generations had fled was, however, not self-evident. The condition for doing so was the survival of memories and the social networks that connected the various exile abodes of the Netherlandish migrants. The knowledge about the past and about other points of intersection within the diasporic networks was transmitted to future generations and offered them a broadening of their geographical outlook and a wider spectrum of economic decisions and career opportunities. Many, like Marcus Du Tour, preserved their migrant outlook and tried to keep the memory of the ancestors alive and to pass it on to their children. Even though the 'fleeing horseman' whose unpredictable course Du Tour lamented did not return, the knowledge about the forefathers was of crucial importance for the next generations and offered them valuable opportunities.

At home, here and abroad

While most of the descendants of Netherlandish migrants who had left their homes during the early Revolt were firmly rooted in their new homes, their families' past also connected them to places and networks beyond their everyday social surroundings. Even after three or more generations people could easily move from one place to another if this proved necessary. While many families maintained a clearly defined geographical link between only two or three regions or towns, others kept moving through the entire geographical spectrum of the Netherlandish diaspora. The Balde family from the Ypres region, for instance, fled the Southern Netherlands around 1572 to Sandwich. In the 1580s, some family members migrated to Holland

³⁹⁶ Not all persons in the Netherlandish diaspora communities in England were refugees, but some also migrated to England or Germany after the period of persecutions and stayed there for some time for economic reasons. One of them was Gerard Schepens from Dordrecht who, at the age of sixteen, went to Norwich in 1573, where he later married Maria Mahiens, born of Flemish exiles. Around 1579, the couple moved to Dutch Republic and lived in various towns in Holland (GA Dordrecht, 85 Collectie Balen, inv. nr. 20).

and Frankenthal.³⁹⁷ Jacob Balde, who was born in England, used his English contacts when he became an elder in the Dutch Reformed Church in Frankenthal. In 1624, when Spanish troops had occupied the Southern German town, he travelled to London to raise money for the Frankenthal Reformed congregation. Franz Balde, Jacob's brother, moved on to Frankfurt in 1630, and Jacob himself went to Amsterdam in 1635.³⁹⁸ His son, Jacob Balde the Younger, became again a minister in Frankenthal but later moved to Thamen (now Uithoorn) in the classis of Utrecht where he died in 1653.³⁹⁹ The family remained spread over a wide range of places between England, the Dutch Republic and the Holy Roman Empire.⁴⁰⁰

While the various branches of the Balde family became increasingly comfortable in their new hometowns, they still maintained a wider social and geographical orientation: although many family members intermarried with locals from Frankfurt or Utrecht, marriages to other Southern Netherlandish families were contracted until the eighteenth century while descendants with spouses from abroad also kept moving along the old migration routes of their forefathers. Jacob Balde the Younger himself had married Anna Behaghel, a descendant of the famous Flemish merchant family from Frankfurt, and their only daughter Susanna Maria married into the old migrant family Van de Walle from Hanau.⁴⁰¹ The family ties between Utrecht, Holland and the family's various German exile towns were renewed again when in 1710 Hermanus van de Walle, Susanna Maria's son, married Sara Balde, his second cousin, in Amsterdam.⁴⁰² The Van de Walle, Behaghel and Balde families would maintain their mutual connections for centuries, and around 1700 some of their members established the firm Behaghel & Van de Walle as a multinational trading company that operated in England, Frankfurt and Amsterdam.⁴⁰³ Others, such as Jacob Balde the Younger, Hermanus van de Walle and his son Jacob, known as the 'Dordrecht pope,' became famous preachers in

³⁹⁷ Alexander Dietz, *Frankfurter Handelsgeschichte*, vol. 4, part 1, p. 52.

³⁹⁸ Grell, *Brethren in Christ*, pp. 246f.

³⁹⁹ NNWB, vol. 3, pp. 57f.

⁴⁰⁰ The children of Franz Balde, the brother of Jacob the Younger, most of whom married into other Netherlandish migrant families, moved to London, Amsterdam and Mannheim (Dietz, *Frankfurter Handelsgeschichte*, vol 4, part 1, p. 53).

⁴⁰¹ Didericus Gijsbertus van Epen, *Nederland's patriciaat*, vol. 38, 1952, p. 375.

⁴⁰² GA Dordrecht, 1074, inv. nr. 478: Testament van Hermanus van de Walle en Sara Balde.

⁴⁰³ Dietz, *Frankfurter Handelsgeschichte*, vol. 4, part 1, pp. 300f.

Frankenthal, Amsterdam and Dordrecht.⁴⁰⁴ Even though they belonged to the economic elites of their various hometowns, they did not inhabit only one 'home' but rather a multiplicity of spaces that had been explored by previous generations and in which they had important contacts on which they could rely.

The same pattern can be observed in numerous other migrant families. In the case of merchants continuous remigration was more the rule than the exception. The families De Bary, Campoing, Bartels and others, who centered their enterprises around Frankfurt, continued to migrate between Holland and the Main and Rhine region until the eighteenth century.⁴⁰⁵ Also the Boudaen Courten family, which descended from the textile merchant Guillaume Courten from Menen in Flanders, kept moving back and forth between London, Cologne, Hamburg, Middelburg and other towns for generations.⁴⁰⁶ During the persecution of heretics under the Duke of Alba, Guillaume Courten was incarcerated but managed to escape to England from where he built a trading network that would last for decades. His incarceration by the Habsburg authorities was commemorated in a silver tazza that depicted him as a prisoner behind bars and was preserved by his descendants for generations.⁴⁰⁷ After 1572, Courten relocated and settled down in Middelburg. His daughter Margarita, who lived in Rotterdam, went back to England after the death of her husband but sent her son Pieter to Middelburg to work in the Zeeland branch of the family business. Pieter's wife, Catharina Fourmenois, was born of Walloon refugees in Cologne. Apparently the family had not cut all its ties with the Southern Netherlands: at Pieter's and Catharina's wedding the invited guests came not only from Cologne and London but also from Antwerp.⁴⁰⁸ Even though many family members continued to move between England and the continent, they built close links with their new homes at the same time. Jacob Boudaen Courten became a

⁴⁰⁴ NNWB, vol. 9, p. 1274.

⁴⁰⁵ Dietz, *Frankfurter Handelsgeschichte*, vol. 4, part 1, pp. 116-122. See for the Lutheran Bartels family also: Lehnemann, *Historische Nachricht, Zuschrift* (unpaginated introduction).

⁴⁰⁶ Gerdien Wuestman, 'Het familjie boeckje van Pieter Boudaen Courten' (1594-1668) : memoires van een geportretteerde', in: *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 53 (2005), pp. 42-61; Grell, *Brethren in Christ*, p. 285.

⁴⁰⁷ Katie Heyning, 'Tazza voor de familie Courten', in: *Bulletin van de Vereniging Rembrandt*, vol. 20, nr. 2, (Summer 2010), p. 21.

⁴⁰⁸ Wuestman, 'Het familjie boeckje van Pieter Boudaen Courten', p. 53.

member of the Council of Brabant, and his second cousin married into an English noble family and settled in Bath.⁴⁰⁹



Tazza of the Courten family, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

While most of the merchant dynasties kept their transnational outlook and continued to migrate between the Netherlands, Britain and Germany for a long time, even those families which began to orient themselves towards their new dwelling places

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 57.

kept in touch with their old networks abroad. In the case of the Frankfurt Walloon merchant house Du Fay, for example, most of the members of the family remained in Frankfurt at least until the late eighteenth century. But still they maintained their old links to Holland and England as well as to other Netherlandish families in Germany, especially to the Haarlem merchant house Wendel.⁴¹⁰ In 1708, the connection between the two merchant families was reinforced through the marriage of Johann Martin du Fay and Rahel Wendel. The family also remained committed to the Walloon Reformed Church of Hanau and sent most of their sons to the Reformed Academy in Herborn that had been founded by the counts of Nassau after their conversion to Reformed Protestantism.⁴¹¹

For merchants who operated in international and interregional trade, geographical mobility was, of course, a matter of economic survival, and the transnational merchant networks often preceded the persecution of Protestants in the second half of the sixteenth century.⁴¹² This observation has led some scholars to the conclusion that the religious and political aspects of the mass migration from the Netherlands should not be exaggerated and that in many cases leaving one's hometown was a decision based purely on trade prospects.⁴¹³ Those families and individuals who continued to move from one place to another, however, represented not only merchants but people of many other professions. While textile workers, brewers and comparable occupational groups indeed were more likely to settle down permanently after having migrated once, in some cases entire colonies of Southern Netherlandish workers also continued to relocate, such as the Flemish textile

⁴¹⁰ Ruth Kohndorfer-Fries, *Diplomatie und Gelehrtenrepublik. Die Kontakte des französischen Gesandten Jacques Bongars*, Tübingen 2009, p. 138; Dietz, *Frankfurter Handelsgeschichte*, vol. 4, part 1, p. 315. One of the few family members who migrated to the Netherlands was Jacob du Fay, who lived as a merchant in Amsterdam until his death in 1691 (Ibid.). Also the various branches of the De Malapert family scattered between Amsterdam and Frankfurt stayed connected to each other for centuries. See: Franz Lerner, 'Malapert', in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 15 (1987), p. 723f. and Het Utrechts Archief, 204, inv. nr. 346; 348; 352.

⁴¹¹ Gottfried Zedler und Hans Sommer (eds.), *Die Matrikel der Hohen Schule und des Pädagogiums zu Herborn*, Wiesbaden 1908. (*Veröffentlichungen der Historischen Kommission für Nassau*, 5), pp. 115; 552.

⁴¹² Raymond Fagel, 'The Netherlandish Presence in England Before the Coming of the Stranger Churches, 1480-1560', in: Vigne and Littleton (eds) *From Strangers to Citizens*, pp. 7-16.

⁴¹³ See for a historiographical discussion of these issues: A. Thijs, *De historiografie over de 16de-eeuwse Zuid-Nederlandse emigratie*, of: *Het zelfbeeld van Vlaanderen en Nederland in het geding*, in: *Provinciale Commissie voor Geschiedenis en Volkskunde. Jaarboek 1995-1996*, pp. 55-71; Gustaaf Janssen, 'Verjaagd van Nederland: een overzicht van recent onderzoek over de Zuidnederlandse emigratie in de zestiende eeuw', in: *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 75, pp. 103-120.

workers who first fled to England and the Lower Rhine and later went to Holland.⁴¹⁴ We will see that among artisans, artists, clergymen or physicians continuous transmigration was almost as common as among merchants. In families and professional circles the networks of the previous generations were reproduced, and individuals kept moving along the old migration routes.

That these migration movements were not one-directional processes but rather took place in continuous loops is illustrated by the networks of painters and artisans between Frankenthal, Frankfurt and the Netherlands. Among the members of these networks the decision to relocate was often dictated by political and military events, such as the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, which affected Frankenthal at an early stage when the town was besieged by Spanish troops in 1621. The Ferein family, originally from the Southern Netherlands and active as silversmiths for generations, moved away from Frankenthal even before the Palatine was afflicted by the war. Immediately before Spinola's Palatine campaign in 1620 Hans Ferein and his family left Frankenthal for The Hague.⁴¹⁵ His son Hendrik, born in 1604, later re-migrated with his family to his birthplace and settled down there as an artisan in his father's trade in 1652. His descendants continued to work as silversmiths in Worms, Hanau and Frankenthal until the eighteenth century. They remained active in their Dutch Reformed congregations and often chose spouses of Southern Netherlandish descent.⁴¹⁶

Other families that migrated between the Netherlands and the exile towns abroad for generations included the painter dynasties Van der Borcht and Steenwyck.⁴¹⁷ Three generations of the Van der Borcht family moved between

⁴¹⁴ See e.g.: Leo Lucassen and Boudien de Vries, 'The Rise and Fall of a West European Textile-worker Migration System: Leiden, 1586-1700', in: Gérard Gayot and Philippe Minard (eds), *Les ouvriers qualifiés de l'industrie (XVIe-XXe siècle). Formation, emploi, migrations*, Lille 2001, pp. 23-42; Leo Lucassen and Boudien de Vries, 'Leiden als middelpunt van een Westeuropees textiel-migratiesysteem', in: *Tijdschrift voor sociale geschiedenis* 22 (2), pp. 138-167. An argument against the notion that economic considerations outweighed religious motivations of emigration can be seen in the fact that many Antwerp merchants who fled to Frankfurt in the 1560s moved back to their hometown when the rebels took it over. After the fall of Antwerp in 1585, they immediately returned to Frankfurt. See: Van Roosbroeck, *Emigranten*, p. 184.

⁴¹⁵ Walter Jarosch, 'Die Silberschmiede Ferein in Frankenthal, Worms und Hanau', in: Edgar J. Hürkey (ed.), *Kunst, Kommerz, Glaubenskampf. Frankenthal um 1600*, Worms 1995, p. 187.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 190f. For other Netherlandish gold- and silversmiths in Frankenthal see: Walter Jarosch, 'Frankenthaler Gold- und Silberschmiede des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts', in: Hürkey (ed.), *Kunst, Kommerz, Glaubenskampf*, pp. 175-186.

⁴¹⁷ See on the Netherlandish artists in Frankenthal, see: Martin Papenbrock, *Landschaften des Exils. Gillis van Coninxloo und die Frankenthaler Maler*, Weimar 2001 and the critical discussion of this work by

Brussels, Amsterdam and Frankenthal. While some of the descendants of the family became farmers in smaller Palatine villages, those who continued their fathers' craft never found a steady home. Their continuous migration was not always the result of a free choice: in order to find employment Hendrik van der Borch II went to London, but he returned to Holland and later to Frankenthal during the English Civil War. His son, Hendrik van der Borch III, worked as a court painter for the Electors Palatine but was dismissed after the Calvinist branch of the dynasty died out in 1685. When he wanted to return to Frankenthal in 1698, the town had been plundered during the War of the Palatine Succession, and all six houses the various branches of the Van der Borch family had possessed were burned down.⁴¹⁸ Unable to rebuild the family property he left for Friedrichsfeld to live with his daughter's family until 1731.

Just like the Van der Borchts, the painter family Steenwyck continued to roam between Germany, England and the Netherlands for generations. Hendrick van Steenwyck was born in Kampen and had settled down in Antwerp before the Dutch Revolt, but he was forced to flee to Aachen in 1570. When Antwerp was taken over by the rebels, he went back but had to leave again after the Habsburg victory over the town in 1585. The family moved to Frankfurt where Hendrick died in 1603. His son, Hendrick van Steenwyck II, moved back to the Netherlands and worked in London for a while where he met his future wife Susanna Gaspoel, born to refugees from Louvain. After their marriage they settled down in The Hague and later in Leiden where Hendrick died in 1649. His wife Susanna, who was also active as a painter, lived in Amsterdam until 1662.⁴¹⁹

The decisions to move on made seemingly so easily by all these families were almost invariably motivated by practical or economic considerations. Especially in the case of the merchant class but also among other professions, the

Nils Büttner (Nils Büttner, 'Landschaften des Exils? Anmerkungen zu Gillis van Coninxloo und zur Geschichte der flämischen Waldlandschaft aus Anlaß einer Neuerscheinung', in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 66 (2003), pp. 546-580.).

⁴¹⁸ Gunther Zehl, 'Die Frankenthaler Malerfamilie van der Borch', in: Hürkey (ed.), *Kunst, Kommerz, Glaubenskampf*, p. 147.

⁴¹⁹ Jeremy Howarth, 'The Steenwyck paintings, products of family enterprise', in: Koenraad Brosens, Leen Kelchtermans e.a. (eds.), *Family Ties. Art Production and Kinship Patterns in the Early Modern Low Countries*, Turnhout 2012, pp. 144-158; Marloes Huiskamp, *Gaspoel, Susanna*, in: *Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon van Nederland*. (<http://www.historici.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/DVN/lemmata/data/Gaspoel>, consulted on 5 April, 2013).

existence of old networks abroad was a valuable and often necessary key to economic success. As Oscar Gelderblom has shown, early modern merchants who participated in transnational trade were by definition ‘footloose’: Even before the Dutch Revolt many Netherlandish traders had often led highly mobile lives and easily migrated from one place to another. Gelderblom presents the decisions of individuals to migrate as purely motivated by economic interest and following a clear ‘cost-benefit calculus’.⁴²⁰ It is obvious that not only merchants but also individuals of other professions primarily moved hence and forth for economic reasons, once the war and the persecutions were over. Nevertheless, the high mobility that offered the descendants of the migrants invaluable career and trade opportunities depended on the knowledge and the memories of the previous generations that had been passed down to their children. The migration patterns of the aforementioned families clearly followed the migration routes of previous generations and benefitted from the networks that were built by the ancestors.

Maintaining ties

Of course, the opportunities the networks provided were dependent upon the maintenance of contacts. For many migrant families and individuals, especially those who do not seem to have been sure about where they would live in the future the attempts to keep in touch with old contacts and also to explore new networks were of crucial importance. The family of Antwerp physician Andreas de Bacher, for example, was eager to maintain their connections to friends and acquaintances abroad after they fled their hometown in the 1580s. De Bacher went to Halberstadt in the German Harz Mountains where he served as the medical attendant of the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. In 1608 the family moved to Utrecht and later to Leiden, but the contacts with their German exile abodes remained.⁴²¹ Andreas de Bacher encouraged his son Samuel to travel during his studies in Leiden and

⁴²⁰ Oscar Gelderblom, *Cities of Commerce. The Institutional Foundations of International Trade in the Low Countries, 1250-1650*, Princeton 2013, p. 201.

⁴²¹ Both Andreas and Samuel de Bacher frequently corresponded with Conrad Treffelinck from Halberstadt, Enghelhardt Adelphis and Johan Peparinus from Wolfenbüttel, the chancellor of the Brunswick-Lüneburg court, Nicolaas van der Willigen from Hamburg as well as with several merchants in Holland. (Arch. Thys. 154: Brieven ontvangen door Samuel de Bacher 1594-1617; Arch. Thys. 137: Brieven ingekomen bij Andreas de Bacher van Enghelhardt Adelphis en Johan Peparinus; Arch. Thys. 134, A1-L1: Brieven ingekomen bij Andreas de Bacher van Nicolaas van der Willigen).

provided him with a list of people he should meet when he was in Germany and whose acquaintance could be useful in the future. Even though he studied in Padua for a while, the routes along which Samuel de Bacher was sent by his father did not bring him to the typical destinations of the early modern European *grand tour*. Instead, he mainly traveled through those places where his family and many other refugees from Antwerp had stayed during their flight: Bremen, Hamburg, Stade and Halberstadt.⁴²²

During his travels Samuel reported news and brought messages and good wishes from his family's contacts back to Holland. The manner in which the acquaintance was maintained was amicable and signaled a certain intimacy, which often was nothing more than a gesture. Many of the people Samuel met were known to his family only by hearsay, which sometimes led to the embarrassing situation that his father had provided him with incorrect names and personal information. When Samuel was supposed to meet the physician Bartholomeus Verheij and his wife Dorijn in Bremen, for instance, he found out that

[h]is name was not Bartholomeus, but Balthasar Verheij and he is not married to Dorijn, but to Elisabeth Hedewig. Dorijn, however, is married to a bailiff, of whom they say he is a nobleman and she is also rich and well-off and they live together somewhere around Emberg. Even though I did not have much time to talk to them, they invited me as their guest and wanted to prove their friendship to me, but because I was in a hurry, I had to promise them to visit them again on my way back and have more conversations with them. Together they have had three children, of which two have died and one boy is still alive. They said that their brothers and sisters were all doing well. He [Balthasar Verheij] has his patients predominantly among the Netherlanders. The doctor also said that he thought about traveling to Holland shortly and if he would do so, he would also visit our father in Leiden. When I would return on my way back, he said he wanted to give me some messages for father to write him in more detail about everything [...].⁴²³

⁴²² In 1609 De Bacher went to Stade, and in 1615 he travelled via Bremen and Hamburg to Brunswick and Halberstadt (Arch. Thys. 153: Brieven ingekomen bij Samuel de Bacher van verschillende familieleden; Arch. Thys. 157: Brieven ontvangen door Philips de Bacher 1613-1649; Arch. Thys. 151. Reisbrieven van Samuel de Bacher aan zijn ouders. 1608-1611.). See on Samuel de Bacher also: *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Historisch Instituut te Rome 1921-2002*, 3d series, part 10, The Hague 1959, p. 122.

⁴²³ Arch. Thys. 157: Brieven ontvangen door Philips de Bacher 1613-1649 (1615): 'Hij heet niet Bartholomeus maer Balthasar Verheij en is getrouwd niet met Dorijn, maer met Elisabeth Hedewig ende Dorijn is getrouwt met eenen amptman, die sij seijden een edelman te zijn ende haer rijck ende wel ghestelt woonachtich omtrent Emberch, maer alsoo ick luttel off gheen tijt hadde, beslist geen langen discours met hun houden, zij wilden mij te gaste houden ende alle vriendtschap betoonen, maer overmits

Obviously, the De Bacher and the Verheij families hardly knew each other; Andreas de Bacher did not even remember their names. Yet even though they had possibly never met, they freely invited each other to their homes and did their best to show their interest in keeping in touch. Balthasar Verheij's statement that he would visit the De Bachers in Leiden probably did not say much about his intended travels but was rather a gesture to affirm their friendly contact. Because of the high rate of re- and transmigration of second- and third generation migrants, maintaining connections between the various local Netherlandish exile communities could be of vital interest.

Regular visits to friends and family abroad were no exception in the Netherlandish migrant networks. The most common occasions to see relatives who lived far away were marriages and, less happily, funerals.⁴²⁴ But those who could afford it also went abroad to visit their kinfolk without a specific occasion. The famous minister Johannes Elison, for example, was born in England and served the Netherlandish congregation in Norwich but continued to visit Holland and Zeeland. While most of his children stayed in England, and some married into English families; one son, Johannes the Younger, settled down as a merchant in Amsterdam and married Josina Backer in 1628. After that his parents had even more reasons to visit what was not exactly their homeland but a place they saw as their cultural point of reference. The famous portraits of him and his wife Maria Bockenolle by Rembrandt were made during such a visit to Amsterdam.⁴²⁵ The portraits were commissioned by their son in Amsterdam and kept at his house. After he and Josina Backer died childless, the paintings were taken to England by their brother-in-law Daniel Dover.

ick zoo haestede, hebbe moeten beloven, int weder doorreijssen te passe kommende, niet te laeten, weder nader te spreekken, zij hebben t'saemen drie kinderkens ghehad, waeraff twee ghestorven, derde een soontje noch levendt, zijden mij met hun andere broeders ende susters noch al wel te zijn. Hij heeft hier zijn meeste praktijkke bij de Nederlanders. De doctor seijde oock dat hij cort ook eens naer Hollant soude moeten reijssen, dan soude hij vader te Leijden oock besoecken, ende thans dat ick hier verder doorquam, wilde mij berichten aen vader met geven, om hem van alles goet bescheet te schrijven [...].'

⁴²⁴ See e.g. on the marriage between Francoys Thijs and Hedewich de Bacher and the difficulties for the relatives to be there on time: Arch Thys. 133 A4 : Brieven ingekomen bij Andreas de Bacher., especially the letters from Johan Thijs from 11 November 1598 and 8 February 1599. On the difficulties to attend funerals of friends and family members while living in the diaspora, see: Gelderblom, *Zuidnederlandse kooplieden*, p. 58.

⁴²⁵ Grell, *Calvinist exiles in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 71 (footnote 33.); A. Moore, 'The evidence of artistic contact between Norfolk and the Netherlands', in: Juliette Roding and Lex Herma van Voss, *The North Sea and Culture (1550-1800)*, Hilversum 1996, pp. 355-377, especially p. 366.

The stranger churches and the continuation of diasporic networks

The continuation of the old exile networks took place not only in informal circles but also in official institutions, such as the numerous stranger churches in England and on the continent as well as at the Councils of Brabant and Flanders in The Hague and Middelburg and the numerous chambers of rhetoric. Although all of these institutions gradually opened to people without a migration background during the seventeenth century, they retained their Southern Netherlandish identity and functioned as pivots on which the old exile networks hinged. Particularly the various migrant churches of Reformed, Lutheran and Mennonite signature had maintained a decisively translocal outlook from their earliest origins onwards. While the significance of the Reformed presbyterial-synodal church model for the genesis of a genuine Protestant exile identity has often been exaggerated by church historians, this form of organization did preserve the strong ties between the various local congregations and their mutual dependence. While the various Mennonite subconfessions quickly broke up into a multitude of sectarian branches, and the Lutherans outside the German princely territories drafted a number of different confessions of faith, the Reformed Church in the Netherlands agreed on a number of widely accepted doctrinal statements at an early stage and developed a common confessional identity and culture.⁴²⁶ These Calvinist stranger churches connected the commercial and manufacturing towns of England and the European continent with each other and provided the Reformed Netherlandish diaspora with a firm institutional basis. The local congregations outside the Netherlands remained oriented towards the 'motherland,' and the various local consistories and ministers in the Holy Roman Empire, Britain and Holland closely kept in touch with each other.⁴²⁷ The stranger churches in England held their own synods where mostly practical and organizational matters were discussed.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁶ On the numerous subdivisions within the Mennonite movement, see: Samme Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente en de oude gronden: geschiedenis van de dopersen in de Nederlanden 1531-1675*, Hilversum 2000. On the various Lutheran confessions of faith, see: Robert Kolb, *Confessing the Faith. Reformers Define the Church, 1530-1580*, St. Louis/MO 1991.

⁴²⁷ See e.g. the extensive source publication of the letters and minutes of the London Netherlandish Reformed congregation: Jan Hendrik Hessels (ed.), *Ecclesiae londino-batavae archivum ex autographis mandante Ecclesia londino-batava*, Cambridge 1889 II, pp. 552f. See also: W.P.C. Knuttel (ed.), *Acta der Particuliere Synoden van Zuid-Holland 1621-1700*, The Hague 1908-1916, part 2, pp. 399-403; Ruytinck, *Gheschiedenissen ende Handelingen*, pp. 108ff.

⁴²⁸ London Metropolitan Archives, CLC/180/MS10055: *Kerckelicke oeffeningen en instellingen der Nederlandscher Ghemeente tot Londen*, fol. 111rff.

The vast majority of the members of the stranger churches in England as well as in the German Empire were of Flemish and Brabantine descent, and there were only a few Hollanders among them. While people from the Southern Netherlands were also well represented in the Reformed Church in the Dutch Republic, the congregations in the 'homeland' gradually lost their old diasporic identity. Because of the close contacts with the stranger communities abroad and the communion with the Walloon churches at home, the Reformed Church in the Dutch Republic was, however, constantly reminded of its exile heritage. When we look at those individuals who were particularly sympathetic towards and concerned with the brothers abroad, it is hardly surprising that most of them had migrant backgrounds or had friends or spouses of Southern descent. While most of the ministers of the stranger churches in England were recruited from within the migrant communities, from the 1620s onwards it became more difficult to find able candidates. Those ministers in the Netherlands who were willing to leave for London and other towns were mostly descendants of migrants or had married into refugee families. Willem Thilenus, for example, who up grew in Zeeland but served as a minister at the London Austin Friars congregation for a while in the 1620s, was married to Maria de Fraeye from London, the granddaughter of Johan Radermacher.⁴²⁹ When a successor for Thilenus was sought in 1628, Franciscus Gomarus and some other Flemings in Holland recommended various candidates, and finally Timotheus van Vleteren, who was born in Sandwich but had grown up in Zeeland, was selected.⁴³⁰ While a few Hollanders also served the congregation in London during the seventeenth century, most of the ministers who were sent to England from the continent had links to the transnational Netherlandish diaspora. Only the church in Yarmouth had a traditional link with Zeeland and employed some young ministers from Walcheren and its neighboring islands.⁴³¹

Among the Reformed in Holland those church members who descended from migrant families were often more inclined to think in terms of an international Calvinist community than their native coreligionists. Persecuted Calvinists from other regions of Europe were regarded as brethren in the faith and were oftentimes

⁴²⁹ Keith L. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism. A History of English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Leiden 1983, p. 194.

⁴³⁰ Grell, *Calvinist Exiles in Tudor and Stuart England*, pp. 59f.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

generously helped and financially assisted. When the Reformed communities in the Upper Palatine and the Duchy of Jülich came under severe pressure in the 1620s and had to flee, funds were raised by Calvinist congregations all over Europe. Besides the wealthy Austin Friars congregation, which was especially generous in helping their persecuted fellow believers, the Amsterdam church was very active in campaigning for the good cause and even convinced the Synod of South Holland and the magistrate of Amsterdam to help. The linchpins of these charity initiatives were all merchants from Southern Netherlandish families, such as Daniel van den Ende, Daniel Dorville and Martin Hooftman. Due to their excellent connections within the international Calvinist exile networks these men were also commissioned to transfer the money to the refugees.⁴³²

Memories of past persecutions played a crucial role in the rhetoric that called for a common solidarity within the Reformed diaspora. The refugees who had fled the Upper Palatine to Nuremberg reminded their coreligionists in Holland and London of the exile fate of their own parents and grandparents. Their petition letters suggest that Utenhove's *Simplex et fidelis narratio* was still widely known as the hardships during the odyssey of the Netherlandish refugees along the North Sea coast in the winter of 1553/1554 were recalled.⁴³³ The exiled writers of the petition letters that were sent to the Netherlands seemed quite confident about the success of their cause. The fact that they lived far away from their benefactors and did not personally know them did not stop them from trusting the benevolence of the Dutch. As they saw it, they all belonged to the same family of godly brethren and were united by their common cause for which their forefathers had already suffered.⁴³⁴

In the diaspora churches outside the 'fatherland', Netherlandish identities were preserved for a long time. Ole Peter Grell has argued that from the second half of the seventeenth century onwards the descendants of the exiles were so well

⁴³² Grell, *Brethren in Christ*, pp. 231, 233.

⁴³³ Ibid., 199. The *Simplex et fidelis narratio* remained part of Reformed migrant memories until the eighteenth century and was for instance also extensively quoted in the chronicle of the Reformed church of Frankfurt (Institut für Stadtgeschichte Frankfurt am Main, Deutsch-Reformierte Gemeinde, inv.nr. 148: Mangon, Geschichte der beiden Gemeinden, fol. 45-90).

⁴³⁴ See also: *Copie van een sekeren Brief der Boven-Pfaltische ballinghen aan de E. E. Kercken-Raad der stad Leeuwarden*, Leeuwarden 1631; *Copie van een sekeren brief, geschreven door de verdruckte ballinghen, der Gereformeerde religie, in verscheyden quartieren van Duytslandt; aan de E. E. Kercken-Raad der stad Leeuwarden; ende door haer aan de respectieve gemeenten van Frieslandt*, Leeuwarden 1642.

integrated that as early as the 1650s the stranger church at Austin Friars mainly consisted of ‘English people of Dutch origin,’ and proficiency in the Dutch language decreased rapidly among the members of the congregation.⁴³⁵ The records of the London strangers church do indeed confirm such a process of ‘anglicization’; however, this trend did not lead to a decline of ‘Netherlandishness’ in the local diaspora community but actually stimulated efforts to remain mindful about its past and identity. While apparently from the 1650s onwards not all of the younger members spoke Dutch properly, the consistory and also the synod of the stranger churches in England were uncompromising about maintaining the Netherlandish character of the congregation. At a synodal meeting in 1655 the question was brought up regarding how young persons without enough active knowledge of Dutch could publicly confess their faith to become full church members. The option to do so in English was not even mentioned, and the synod discussed only the question ‘under which circumstances and conditions prospective members who do not have the courage or do not speak the Dutch language can make confession only before the consistory’.⁴³⁶ The representatives who were sent from London, Colchester, Norwich, Maidstone and Yarmouth unanimously decided that such persons did not have to appear before the entire congregation, but that it would be sufficient if they made their confession only to the minister or at least two members of the consistory.⁴³⁷

While there may have been quite a few cases of people who did not speak Dutch with confidence, virtually all of the church members must have understood their parents’ mother tongue well enough to at least follow the sermons which continued to be held in Dutch. Also many notes, letters and even large parts of the official records of the local congregation were still written in Dutch until far into the eighteenth century.⁴³⁸ Still, the increasing anglicization within the Netherlandish

⁴³⁵ Grell, *Calvinist Exiles in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 135.

⁴³⁶ London Metropolitan Archives, CLC/180/MS10055: *Kerckelicke oeffeningen en instellingen*, fol. 111r.: ‘Aencomende litmaten die de vrymoedicheit of de Nederlandsche tale niet en hebben, hoe en met wat bepalingen sullen mogen geexcuseert worden vande publyke Belydenis, wort gelaten inde discretie vanden Kerkenraet.’

⁴³⁷ Ibid., fol. 111v.: ‘Wort gestelt in de discretie van den kerkenraet, de Belydenis van een persoon die niet wel bekend is met de Duytsche tale, aen te nemen of voor den predicant alleen of met bywesen van een of twee ouderlingen.’

⁴³⁸ See e.g.: Ibid., fol. 119v. or: Hessels, *Archivum*, III, ns. 4020ff. The official church records, however, had switched from Dutch to English by the mid-seventeenth century (Grell, *Calvinist exiles in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 122.)

community was considered a problem. Already in the 1580s an Italian elder of the congregation, who also spoke Dutch, was employed as a schoolmaster. While in the late sixteenth century the main reason to employ a schoolmaster was that the members of Austin Friars wanted their children to have a Reformed education and to learn the catechism as well as important merchant skills such as arithmetic and accounting, by the early seventeenth century the focus had shifted to a good education in Dutch, something with which more and more children had difficulties. When the Dutch schoolmaster of Austin Friars died in 1642, the consistory tried to employ a schoolteacher from the 'homeland' and made some inquiries in Middelburg and Flushing even though there was an English schoolmaster available who was able to teach Dutch. In 1646, the consistory employed Andries Minet from Middelburg, a decision that would later turn out to be a financial disaster when Minet demanded vast amounts of money and even wanted the consistory to pay the debts he had incurred in London.⁴³⁹ Even if Minet was a great disappointment, many parents were willing to pay the high fees he asked to give their children good lessons in Dutch. Following Minet's departure the Dutch Church was therefore still willing to employ a Dutch schoolmaster. In 1682, the consistory asked minister Gerard van der Port, who was travelling to Holland, to look for a suitable candidate.⁴⁴⁰ Van der Port suggested Jan Blas and praised his talents as a teacher, organ player and cantor, and in 1683, Blas was called to London and employed as cantor-schoolmaster for the children of the Dutch Church.⁴⁴¹ Even if it is was not always easy, the Austin Friars community was thus willing to take much trouble to provide their children with an education in the language of their forefathers, and the Netherlandish identity of the congregation managed to be preserved for a long time.

In the stranger churches in the Holy Roman Empire the situation was similar, but the preservation of the Dutch and French languages depended on the local situation and also on the regional dialects that were spoken in the exile towns. In Emden for example, where the Low-German dialect was so similar to Dutch and where Calvinists dominated local politics, the immigrants were immediately

⁴³⁹ Ibid., pp. 155-158.

⁴⁴⁰ See: Hessels, *Archivum*, III, no. 3881, 3882, 3883.

⁴⁴¹ According to Ole Peter Grell, the Dutch Church gave up its attempts to find a suitable schoolmaster after the disappointing experience with Andries Minet (Grell, *Calvinist Exiles in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 160.). While indeed the position of Dutch schoolmaster seems to have been vacant between 1654 and the 1680s, Jan Blas was employed in 1683 (Hessels, *Archivum*, III, no. 3888.).

incorporated into the local Reformed church and never formed a distinct stranger church.⁴⁴² In general, the French stranger congregations in Germany preserved their mother tongue longer than did their Dutch sister churches, in most cases as long as they existed. At least until the late eighteenth century the Netherlandish Lutheran congregation of Frankfurt financially assisted their members in order to provide their children with French language courses.⁴⁴³ The Dutch language, by contrast, was so similar to German that it was often given up in the course of the seventeenth century. In a place like Frankenthal that was built up by migrants from the Netherlands, Dutch was spoken until the end of the seventeenth century, and the Reformed church records were kept in Dutch until 1689 when the town was pillaged by French soldiers and many church members left.⁴⁴⁴ In the Reformed stranger church of Frankfurt, the congregational records were kept in German as early as 1636, while its French sister congregation remained Francophone until 1916, a situation attributable to the huge Huguenot influx after 1685.⁴⁴⁵

In towns where the strangers had built strong religious and cultural links with their host society the Dutch language was sooner traded in for German than in cities where the migrants were not officially recognized. Such was the case in the Lutheran migrant church in Frankfurt, which was founded in 1566 by exiles from Antwerp. The foundation of this church owed much to the agency of a number of local Lutheran clerics, who wanted to help their coreligionists from Brabant. Already in the 1560s, minister Matthias Ritter asked the city council to engage Dutch- and French-speaking preachers not only to serve the Lutheran exiles but also to win the Reformed Netherlanders for the Augsburg confession. When the magistrate was unwilling to provide any financial support for this enterprise, Ritter himself, together with the converted Sephardi minister Cassiodorus da Reina from Antwerp, preached to the strangers, and the Ritter family would remain active as

⁴⁴² Schilling, *Niederländische Exulanten im 16. Jahrhundert*, p. 84.

⁴⁴³ Institut für Stadtgeschichte Frankfurt am Main, Niederl. Gemeinde Augsburg Confession I, inv.nr. 1026 (1797).

⁴⁴⁴ Alfred Hans Kuby, 'Gründe, Wege und Folgen der Gegenreformation in Kurpfalz unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Frankenthal', in: Edgar J. Hürkey, *Kunst, Kommerz, Glaubenskampf. Frankenthal um 1600*, Worms 1995, p. 25.

⁴⁴⁵ Hermann Dechent, *Kirchengeschichte von Frankfurt am Main seit der Reformation*, Leipzig/Frankfurt a. M. 1921, p. 46; Irene Dingel, *Abraham Mangon: Kurze doch wahrhaftige Beschreibung der Geschichte der Reformierten in Frankfurt, 1554-1712*, Leipzig 2004, p. 8.

ministers of the stranger church until the eighteenth century.⁴⁴⁶ While the congregation had given up the Dutch language in the early seventeenth century and the church records were kept in German from 1636 onwards, French sermons were still held in the eighteenth century. And even without the mother tongue of the ancestors, the Netherlandish identity of the church continued to be disseminated and preserved for centuries, in certain aspects even until the present. Every year on a Sunday when the new elders were elected the congregation held an annual commemorative service in which the hardships of the forefathers were commemorated.⁴⁴⁷ While we have seen that the congregation's chronicler, Johannes Lehnemann, asserted that most of the Netherlandish customs and traditions had been given up and were forgotten, the exile past in fact retained a greater presence than suggested in his *Historische Nachricht*.

The same complaint is found in the various historical writings of Austin Friars, written and compiled by minister Symeon Ruytinck from the late sixteenth century onwards and continued by his successor Caesar Calandrini after Ruytinck's death in 1621. Both authors complained that the members of the London church did not remember its past and origin very well. Ruytinck opened his history of the Netherlandish migrants in London with the following lines:

Histories are the living memory, for they remind the descendants of memorable things, which might die or already lay dead and buried because the length of time. Therefore I have desired to compile all things concerning our congregation that I thought to be memorable in one great book, lest they should be forgotten after all these years.⁴⁴⁸

It belonged to the rhetoric of historiographers like Lehnemann or Ruytinck to lament the oblivion that had befallen the past and the reasons that had brought the exiles abroad. However, these warnings should not be read as factual statements but rather as rhetorical exhortations to be mindful about the stranger churches' historical

⁴⁴⁶ Van Roosbroeck, *Emigranten*, p. 169.

⁴⁴⁷ Lehnemann, *Historische Nachricht*, unpaginated introduction.

⁴⁴⁸ 'Historien worden genoemt het leven van geheugenisse, omdat om datse de nacomelingen indarstig maken, de gedenkwaardighe saecken, die door langheyd des tijds dood ende begraven sijn, ofte versterven moghten. Hierom heb ik my verlustight in een groot boeck alles by een te vergaderen,, aengaende onse Ghemeente, dat my docht wetens ende ghedenckweerdich, op dat sulcx, door 't verloop van jaeren niet ganse vergeten en werde.' (London Metropolitan Archives, CLC/180/MS10055: *Kerckelicke oeffeningen en instellingen*, fol. 1r.).

identity. The migrants' descendants growing accommodation to their places of residence does not imply a lack of consciousness of their historical identity. They had preserved many aspects of their forefathers' religion and culture and still lived within the same networks they had inherited from their parents. The continuation of these networks did not take place automatically; it required the will of the church members to maintain them. Chronicles like Ruytinck's and Lehnemann's served the purpose of keeping the congregation members mindful of their past and committed to their community. While it is difficult to measure the direct impact of their writings on the historical consciousness of their coreligionists, the allegiance of the congregation members to their religious networks and circles remained stable.

Southern institutions in the Dutch Republic

Not only in the diaspora abroad but also in the Dutch Republic, old institutions preserved the networks of the exiled forefathers. The paradoxical situation that the Southerners were not really strangers in the Northern Netherlands gave the migrant organizations an ambiguous character. As we have seen in chapter 2, the Southern migrants contributed much to the patriotic discourses in the Republic, yet they differed in many respects from the 'natives' and were sometimes regarded as 'foreigners'. At the same time the Northern Netherlands increasingly became the cultural and geographical point of reference of the international Netherlandish diaspora. This paradoxical situation is reflected in the two Northern legal institutions that were responsible for the regions under States authority, the councils of Brabant and Flanders. The councils in exile exercised power over an imaginary cultural-geographical space that existed only in the past and, as some hoped, would do so again in the future. Even though these institutions claimed to be responsible for the two big Southern Provinces as a whole, only a small part of Flanders and Brabant was conquered by the States Army. The hybrid character of a Brabant law court outside the province of Brabant led to the unique situation that the council maintained laws that were made by the Habsburg enemy, so that all the legal reforms of the Archdukes in the South were also introduced in the States territory.⁴⁴⁹ While these two councils were later opened to Hollanders and Zeelanders, their

⁴⁴⁹ Fruin, *Geschiedenis der staatsinstellingen*, pp. 268-269; Lindemann and Van Litsenburg, *Raad van Brabant*, deel 1, pp. 5-15.

officeholders were traditionally Southerners, and until the 1620s they were among the few political institutions that were easily available for migrants in the North. As such, they remained pivotal centers of Southern elite circles.⁴⁵⁰

While the courts of Brabant and Flanders were not purely symbolic institutions and had indeed practical decisions to make in States territories, it is significant that they were located outside the regions for which they were responsible: the Court of Flanders in Middelburg and the Court of Brabant in The Hague. As institutions they preserved the idea that the Brabant and Flanders continued to belong to the Union of the Utrecht and that the claims on the homelands of the numerous refugees had not yet been given up. They provided career opportunities for lawyers and politicians of Southern descent and were the centers of Brabantine and Flemish networks in Holland and Zeeland.

Other organizations in which Southern networks were maintained in the Northern Provinces were the numerous Flemish and Brabantine chambers of rhetoric.⁴⁵¹ While in the first generation of refugees many rhetoricians from the South, including Joost van den Vondel and Frans Hals, had given up their alliances to the Southern chambers of rhetoric and joined local Holland rhetoricians, many exile Southern chambers continued to exist until the eighteenth century, be it with only a few members.⁴⁵² The themes on which these chambers composed songs, poems and plays often related to the status of their members as Southerners in the North and to the exile past. Especially in the chambers of Leiden and Haarlem, Southern themes continued to prevail, for example in the works of Jacob Duym, Jacob Celosse and Jacon van Zevencote, which I discussed in chapter 3. Even though the chambers of rhetoric no longer played a significant cultural role after 1700, the Leiden Flemish chamber existed at least until 1777, and the Flemish rhetoricians in

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ On the culture of rhetorician poetry in the Northern and Southern Netherlands, see e.g.: Arjan van Dixhoorn, *Lustige geesten. Rederijers in de Noordelijke Nederlanden (1480-1650)*, Amsterdam 2009; Anne-Laure van Bruaene, *Om beters wille. Rederijerskamers en de stedelijke cultuur in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden (1400-1650)*, Amsterdam 2008.

⁴⁵² F. C. van Boheemen and Th. C. J. van der Heijden, *Retoricaal memoriaal. Bronnen voor de geschiedenis van de Hollandse rederijerskamers van de middeleeuwen tot het begin van de achttiende eeuw*, Delft 1999; pp. 341, 380, 455, 493; F. C. van Boheemen and Th. C. J. van der Heijden, *Met minnen versaemt. De Hollandse rederijers vanaf de Middeleeuwen tot het begin van de achttiende eeuw. Bronnen en bronnenstudies*, Delft 1999; J. Briels, 'Reyn Genuecht. Zuidnederlandse kamers van Rhetorica in Noordnederland 1585-1630'. In: *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis bijzonderlijk van het oud hertogdom Brabant* 57 (1974), pp. 3-89; Mieke Smits-Veldt, 'Het Brabantse gezicht van de Amsterdamse rederijerskamer 'Het Wit Lavendel'', *De zeventiende eeuw* 8 (1992), pp. 160-166.

Haarlem also preserved their past for a long time.⁴⁵³ An important family in these circles were the Van Elstlands, whose ancestors had fled Menen in West Flanders after the public execution of a family member as a heretic in 1561. Until the eighteenth century, descendants of this Mennonite family belonged to the Flemish rhetoricians' chamber of Haarlem.⁴⁵⁴ In 1690 Jan van Elstland, who had moved to Batavia on Java, still wrote poems in which he mentioned Menen. While he often sentimentally referred to Haarlem as his home, he also depicted the West Flemish town as an idyllic place, and it serves as the rural setting of sometimes humorous plots.⁴⁵⁵ Even though the prestige of the rhetorician culture declined after 1650, it is telling that the Flemish and Brabant organizations continued to exist and served as places of conviviality where the notion of shared past united their members.⁴⁵⁶

As we have seen in chapter 3, migrants were able to build ties to their new host societies quite easily and used collective memories to redefine their social position among their neighbors. As this chapter shows, the migrants' participation and acculturation in their new homes did not necessarily inhibit their commitment to the old exile networks. The social contacts of the first generation were maintained and often actively reproduced by their children and grandchildren, be it in informal family, friendship or business networks or in official institutions. While a great number of descendants of migrants continued the transmigrant lives of their ancestors and constantly moved around through the various exile communities, others settled down after one or more generations. Through the close ties of the transnational Netherlandish diaspora or the local urban networks of Southerners in the Dutch Republic, however, those who did not migrate further continued to redeploy parts of the exile past.

⁴⁵³ Boheemen and Van der Heijden, *Rhetoricaal memoriaal*, p. 380.

⁴⁵⁴ Karel Bostoën, "Dat lyckent wel ongs dorp, seij arleveender boer en zag batavia..." Werk van Laurens van Els(t)land, zeventiende-eeuws Indisch-Nederlands dichter' in: *Indische letteren* 3 (1988), p. 204.

⁴⁵⁵ Karel Bostoën, *De van Elstland. Een Haarlems poëtengeslacht*, in: E.K. Grootes, *Haarlems Helicon. Literatuur en toneel te Haarlem vóór 1800*, Hilversum 1993, 128; See also: Laurens van Elstland, *Jan onder de deecken* (eds. Karel Bostoën, Marja Geesink en Mary Zijlstra), Leiden 2005, 3.

⁴⁵⁶ Van Dixhoorn, *Lustige geesten*, pp. 139f.