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Memory wars in the Low Countries, 1566-1700

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CHAPTER 5

STAKEHOLDERS

From the beginning of the seventeenth century, Dutch authors had been complaining that the Dutch no longer remembered their rebellion against the Habsburg overlord. Such complaints often served as justifications for politicised narratives about the past, which – under the guise of history – could be used to support the argument that war was better than peace. But aside from the rhetorical purposes of these complaints, in the course of the century, concerns that the Revolt was disappearing from living memory became increasingly valid. In 1621 the king of Spain and the Dutch Republic resumed the war. By that time there were few people alive who had been born before the outbreak of the Revolt in 1566. In 1621, surviving witnesses were in their sixties and seventies. Younger people had learned about the origins of the Revolt not from their own experience but from stories told by others. Apart from the extinction of living witnesses of the beginning of the war, the war also continuously changed character, which affected the way people looked back to the origins of the conflict.¹ Geoffrey Parker concluded that for the South ‘the Revolt of the Netherlands had come to an end in 1609.’² Similarly, Jonathan Israel speaks of ‘the second Spanish-Dutch war’ in the period 1621-1648.³ By 1621, a reconciliation between North and South had become less and less realistic, and the conflict was no longer the complicated domestic civil war it once was. It became increasingly a conflict between two states: the Northern and Southern Netherlands, and – certainly once the Thirty Years’ War had broken out – one that was fought out not only on Netherlandish soil but also in other parts of Europe and across the globe.⁴ These two developments could lead us to expect that after 1621, memories of the sixteenth-century origins of the conflict became less relevant, socially and politically.

The story of an exceptionally late example of a surviving witness, however, seems to indicate just the opposite. One of the last examples of living memory is the story of an 118-year-old man who visited Amsterdam in 1659. In 1660, the annual chronicle *Holland*

¹ Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, p. 15.

² *Ibid.*, p. 266.

³ Jonathan I. Israel, ‘A Conflict of Empires: Spain and the Netherlands 1618-1648’, *Past and Present* 76:1 (1977), p. 34.

⁴ Simon Groenveld et al., *De Tachtigjarige Oorlog*, p. 241.

Mercury [*Hollantze Mercurius*] reported on this visit.⁵ His name was Jan Ottele, and he claimed to have been born in Huy in the prince-bishopric of Liège on 27 September 1542.⁶ Leaving aside whether Ottele really was born in that year, contemporary people's fascination for this supercentenarian is well evidenced. His story also featured in a published chronicle of the city of Rotterdam, where Ottele had supposedly been living for some time. According to this account, Ottele 'enjoyed his memory and senses very well, spoke four languages, still had good hearing and sight, and a mouth full of new teeth, he was still a good walker, and ate with relish old salted meat.'⁷ In a time when most people died before reaching the age of sixty, stories about ancient men and women were quite popular.⁸ Yet, the focus on Ottele's personal experience of the early stages of the Revolt suggests that the interest in his life story cannot be attributed only to the early modern fascination for old people. His story was special because Ottele was probably the longest surviving witness of the outbreak of the Revolt. The stories about Ottele recount that he had been a student at the University of Louvain in the 1560s. As a guide to the duke of Alba, who had arrived in the Low Countries in 1567, Ottele had witnessed the execution of the counts of Egmont and Horne in 1568. Ultimately, for unknown reasons, he left the Habsburg Netherlands and went to the province of Holland in the part of the Low Countries

⁵ *Hollantze Mercurius, vervattende het Vervolgh van de eerste Thien Boecken, der Voornaemste Geschiedenissen in Christenryck zijnde dit het Eerst Deel van 't jaer 1660* (1660), p. 32.

⁶ Johann Adam Weber covered the 1658 Nuremberg visit of Jan Ottele in his *Hundert Quellen der von allerhand Materien handlenden Unterredungs-Kunst: darinnen so wol nützlich-curiose, als nachdenckliche u. zu d. Lesers sonderbarer Belustigung gereichende Exempel enthalten* (Nuremberg: Michael und Johann Friderich Endtern, 1676), pp. 335-336; see also: Erasmus Francisci, *Das eröffnete Lust-Haus der Ober- und Nieder-Welt: bey Mehrmaliger Unterredung vor diesmal so wol von der Natur, Welt, Himmel und dem Gestirn insgemein ... allen Natur- Kunst- und Tugen- Liebenden Augen zu beliediger Ergetzung* (Nuremberg: Wolfgang Moritz Endter und Johann Andreas Sel. erben, 1676), p. 1372.

⁷ S. Lois, *Cronycke ofte korte waere beschryvinge der stad Rotterdam, beschreeven door S. Lois, en beginnende van den jaere 1270 tot den jaere 1671...* (The Hague: O. en P. Van Thol, 1746), p. 157: 'hy hadde syn Memory en Verstant noch seer wel / sprack vierderhande Talen / en hadde syn Gehoor en Gesicht seer wel / en syn Mont vol nieuwe Tandem / was noch wel ter been / at noch met goede smaect out gesouten Vlees'.

⁸ See for example: Johann Georg Leuckfeld, *Kurtze historische Nachricht von 79 gelehrten Männern und berühmten Theologen, welch das 80 bis 90te Jahr ihres Alters erlebt* (Groningen, 1723); anonymous, *Nauwkeurige aantekeningen van eenige hondert personen, van allerley rang, die over hondert jaren geleefd hebben, waar onder vele geleerde geweest zijn: beschryvende hun zomtyds zeldzaam leven, gedrag, en afkomst op een korte en nette wyze: opgetelt volgens 't A,B,C. het geen van een yder met nut en vermaak zal kunnen gelezen worden* (Leeuwarden: Abraham Ferwerda, 1752); see also: Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2004), pp. 38-39; about life expectancy in early modern Europe, see: Mark Konnert, *Early Modern Europe. The Age of Religious War, 1559-1715* (Toronto: Higher Education University of Toronto Press, 2008), p. 22; Jan Luiten van Zanden and Tine De Moor, 'Mensen en economie in de Gouden Eeuw', *Leidschrift* 23:2 (2008), pp. 17-18.

that successfully continued its rebellion: the Dutch Republic, where he became a schoolmaster and attained a great age.⁹

The story of Ottele is, of course, exceptional. We might expect that by the period from 1621 to the end of the war in 1648 the increasing remoteness in time and the changing political circumstances would have rendered the early stages of the conflict less useful as historical frame of reference. But this is not what happened. Throughout the Low Countries, people were keenly aware that they were fighting a war that had begun in the sixteenth century. Two examples, one from the North and one from the South, can illustrate the perceived relevance of the Revolt in 1621. During this year, Reformed clergyman Johannes Fenacolijs who lived in Maassluis published a Dutch translation of Augustine's *City of God*. On 17 April 1621, he dedicated his work to the States General,

on which day it was forty-nine years ago, that the city of Brielle was liberated from the Spanish yoke in the name of the most serene Prince William, prince of Orange, your princely grace, father and father of the commonwealth [...] as a memorable example for all Christian princes.¹⁰

Fenacolijs belonged to the faction of clergymen in the North who bitterly opposed peace with Spain. The ordeals that Netherlanders had suffered during Alba's governorship reminded him of what the Republic was fighting for. And for Fenacolijs the fight was still very much a fight against tyrannical and papist Spain.

Southerners also saw 1621 as a resumption of an old war. Catholic propagandist Richard Verstegan observed in 1621 that 'now' seven of the Netherlands have rebelled and ten have continued to show 'proper allegiance.'¹¹ When Verstegan wrote his text, the political situation in the Low Countries was changing on several levels: the Truce ended, Philip IV ascended the Spanish throne, Archduke Albert died and the war between North

⁹ Anonymous, *Jan Ottele (27-09-1542 / -) Op 118 jarige leeftijd bij zijn bezoek aan Amsterdam op 2 augustus 1659*, Stadsarchief Amsterdam, collectie tekeningen en prenten, inv. 10097-010097016660; engraver Lukas Schnitzer depicted Jan Ottele on the old man's visit to Nuremberg in 1657, see: Lukas Schnitzer, 'Johann Ottele (von Hohe)' (1657), Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, inv. A 15572;

¹⁰ Johannes Fenacolijs, 'Opdracht' in: Augustinus, *Van de stad Gods* (Delft: Adriaen Gerritsz, 1621), dedication: 'ten welcke dage over negen ende veertich jaren, de Stadt van den Briel, in den name des Aller-Doorluchtichsten Prince Guiljelmi, Prince van Orangien, uwe Vorstel. Gen., vader, ende de selve oock des gemeenen lants vader, hoochloff. gedachtenisse, van het jock der Spanjaerden bevrijt is geweest [...] tot een gedenckweerdich exempel van alle Christene Princen.'

¹¹ Verstegan, *De spiegel der Nederlandsche elenden*, p. 21: 'behoorlycke gehoorsaemheyf'.

and South was resumed.¹² Verstegan did not take for granted the security of the recatholicised Southern Netherlands and still entertained hopes of an ultimate reconciliation between North and South under Habsburg. He felt that defeating the heretics was the only way to realise this objective and to restore order in the Low Countries.

Fenacolijs and Verstegan, each from his own perspective, hence framed the war as a conflict with sixteenth-century origins. The war was seen as the continuation of a rebellion that had begun in the previous century, and much of the old war rhetoric continued to be used. This chapter will address the question why the sixteenth-century origins of the Revolt remained such a relevant frame of reference for people on both sides of the North-South divide after 1621. It will further elaborate on the interplay between two themes that recur throughout this study: first, that existent dominant storylines about the Revolt provided a seemingly inexhaustible source of authority and prestige for individuals and interest groups; and second, that the continuing political usage of the sixteenth-century past in contemporary discussions about war and peace strengthened the canonical status of narratives about the Revolt and vice versa: that the canonical status of memories of the Revolt ensured their continued political potential. We will ask who stood to gain from recycling these narratives, and what was at stake in doing so.

Reputations and possessions

The cultural importance Netherlanders attached to memories of the Revolt allowed the conflict to remain a political and legal frame of reference, for example to buttress property claims. The demolished Culemborg palace, discussed in chapter 1, exemplifies how people used war memories to argue for the restitution of lost property. Floris I of Culemborg – one of the authors of the petition to Margaret of Parma in 1566 – died in 1598. He had never been able to reclaim the confiscated family property in Brussels or acquire any substantial recompense for all the damages that his family had suffered. In 1611, the late count's son Floris II submitted a request to the States General of the Dutch Republic, asking compensation for damaged property especially in Culemborg and Wittem.¹³ In the text he emphasised that his father had been 'one of the first, who on peril of goods and blood has offered his helping hand for the maintenance of the freedom and the privileges of these

¹² Van Zuilen, 'The Politics of Dividing the Nation?', pp. 63, 67, 74; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 410-420.

¹³ Voet van Oudheusden, *Historische Beschryvinge van Culemborg* I, pp. 263-265; see also: *Resolutiën der Staten-Generaal Nieuwe Reeks 1610-1670. Eerste deel 1610-1612*, edited by A.Th. van Deursen (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 14 September 1611, p. 476.

lands against the Spanish tyranny'.¹⁴ On 18 February 1614, the States General granted him some concessions.¹⁵ A few years later, in 1619, the United Provinces and the Habsburg Netherlands were exploring the possibilities for extending the Twelve Years' Truce. Again, Floris II submitted a request, with particular attention to his family's property claims in Brussels. Assuring them of his devoted service, he respectfully urged the delegates in the States General to take his interests to heart in their future dealings with the enemy in the South. Count Floris wanted compensation for the confiscation and destruction of his family's palace in Brussels where, after all, 'the first fundamentals were laid for our victory and triumph'.¹⁶ His request for assistance was not unreasonable. Article fifteen of the Truce had ordered that:

If the fiscall on either side, shall have solde any goods or lands confiscated; they, to whom they ought to pertaine, by virtue of this present treatie, shall be bound to content themselves with the interest of the price thereof [...] which shal be paide unto them yearely during the Truce, by them that holde and possesse the same; or else it shal be lawful for them to adresse themselves unto the heritage it selfe that hath bin sold.¹⁷

The Archdukes Albert and Isabella had given the site of the demolished Culemborg Palace to the Discalced Carmelites, and it was not in the power of the regime to temporarily rescind the confiscation. So for the duration of the Truce, Count Floris claimed to be entitled to the interest of the property to be paid by the Discalced friars.¹⁸ Yet Floris did not rely solely on legal arguments in his address to the Dutch federal government. Instead, he

¹⁴ Voet van Oudheusden, *Historische Beschryvinge van Culemborg* I, p. 264: 'een van de Eerste, die mit pericule van goet en bloet de hand geboden heeft omme te maintineren de Vryheyt ende Privilegien deser Landen jegens de Spaensche Tyrannie'.

¹⁵ *Resolutiën der Staten-Generaal Nieuwe Reeks 1610-1670. Tweede deel 1613-1616*, edited by A.Th. van Deursen (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1984), p. 206.

¹⁶ Gelders Archief, 0370: Heren en graven van Culemborg, 6579: Stukken betreffende de pogingen van graaf Floris II om door tusschenkomst van de Staten-Generaal restitutie te krijgen van zijn erf te Brussel en de baronie Withem, met vergoeding der schade, 1919, 1635: 'Alwaer d'eerst fundamenten geleijt zijn van onse Victorie ende Triumphe'.

¹⁷ *Articles, of a treatie of truce. Made and concluded in the towne and citie of Antvverp, the 9. of April 1609. betweene the commissioners of the most excellent Princes, Arch-dukes Albert and Isabella Clara Eugenia, as well in the name of the Catholicke Kings Maiestie, as in their owne. Together with the commissioners and deputies the renowned Lords, the Estates Generall of the Vnited Prouinces of the Low-countrys* (London: George Potter and Nicholas Bourne, 1609), f. b4r.

¹⁸ For a concise explanation of the property clauses in the Twelve Years' Truce, see Groenveld, *Unie – Bestand – Vrede*, pp. 109-110.

made a historical appeal. In a short statement addressed to the States General he outlined the history of the house in order to convince his audience that his father had played an important role in the liberation of the land and that they should therefore help him in his efforts:

In the year 1566 the principal nobles of the Netherlands assembled in the house of the lord the count of Culemborg's lord father of honourable memory in order to consider as good and loyal vassals – seeing the great troubles of the common land's unrest, bloodshed and other calamity [...] – how these troubles and calamities could be soothed, which is why they presented a request to the duchess of Parma, governor of the Netherlands.¹⁹

It is unclear whether the States General did indeed try to help Count Floris. In the 1670s, after King Charles II of Spain finally decreed that the Culemborg family should be compensated, the chamber of the county of Culemborg wrote an overview of the past attempts at restitution and tried to account for the failed efforts in the 1610s. They hypothesized that Count Floris could not claim his property within the timeframe of the Truce.²⁰ This is conceivable as his request to the States General dates from 1619, only two years before the war was resumed and the truce expired.

By 1648, when the Treaty of Munster in the Peace of Westphalia adopted most of the property clauses of the Twelve Years' Truce, Floris II had died.²¹ Once again, however, people could lay claims to confiscated property. These claims were dealt with by a new agency established in 1654, the *Chambre de mi-partie*, whose members consisted of legal representatives from North and South.²² In its quest for compensation of damages, the administration of Culemborg had an agent act on behalf of their master: the great-great-grandson of Floris I, Count Henry Wolrad of Waldeck, who as a three-year-old had become

¹⁹ Gelders Archief, 0370: Heren en graven van Culemborg, 6579: 'Alsoo mids Jaere 1566. die voornaemste Edelen van de Nederlanden te Huijse vandes Heere Grave van Culenborchs Heer Vader looffel gedacht. binnen Brussel, zijn vergadert geweest om als goede en getrouwe Vassals – siende voor oogs, die groote swaricheden van gemeene landts onruste, bloedsortinge, en andere onheijls, [...] is naederhant in effect daerop zijn gevolcht, te beraetslaege hoe deselven swarigheden ende onheyls souden kunnen worden versoedet, gelijk sij dan tot sulcks eijnde Requeste aen de Hertoginne van Parma [...] Gouvernante van voorsz. Nederlanden hebben gepresenteert.'

²⁰ Gelders Archief, 0370: Heren en graven van Culemborg, inv. 6582, Stukken betreffende de geslaagde pogingen van graaf Georg Friedrich om schadevergoeding te krijgen voor het geconfisqueerde en verwoeste huis te Brussel, 1674, 1675.

²¹ For a comparison of the agreements in the Twelve Years' Truce and the Peace of Munster, see: Groenveld, *Unie – Bestand – Vrede*, p. 154.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 154-155.

count of Culemborg in 1645. On 14 February 1654, the council of Culemborg wrote to this agent Fierenschatz that ‘We have recently been informed by the lord baillif of Wittem, that the king’s fiscal has given his advice regarding the restitution of the house of Culemborg and that it touched our lord contrarily’.²³ This was a disappointment, but the council did not give up. According to them, the failed attempt at restitution simply meant that further material had to be collected to make the dossier more convincing:

It is such that not only his grace Count Floris I of honourable memory, not long after the confiscation of his houses and its dependencies, committed his deputy to retrieve possession, as can be seen from the attachment A, but also his grace Count Floris the Second has presented memoria B to the States General around the time of the Truce between the crown of Spain and the United Provinces and strongly urged for its restitution.²⁴

This material could further strengthen their case. In the same letter, the council complained that Fierenschatz was difficult to contact. They would have liked to have had ‘an extract or copy of the fiscal’s advice, to better serve them of advice’ and they implored the agent ‘to correspond more diligently with us and provide further information about this and other cases’.²⁵ Now they had heard the news from the bailiff of Wittem. Another attempt to convince the fiscal was without effect, and in December 1654 Agent Fierenschatz proposed to take it up with the *Chambre de mi-partie*, which had just begun its work.²⁶ Although the case was brought to the *Chambre de mi-partie*, I have found no evidence of a judgement in the Culemborg case. It is clear, though, that it took until 1674 for the Culemborg lobby to

²³ The Culemborg council to Agent Fierenschatz, 14 February 1654, Gelders Archief, 0370: Heren en graven van Culemborg, inv. 6580: ‘Stukken betreffende de pogingen restitutie te krijgen van het Culemborgsche huis te Brussel, 1651-1654’ ‘Wy sijn onlanxx verwittigt door dheere Drossart van Wittem, als dat den Koninks fiscael syn advis aengaende de Restitutie van het huys van Culenborch soude gegeven heben ende ‘tselve onsen gen. Heere contrarie geraken syn’.

²⁴ The Culemborg council to Agent Fierenschatz, 14 February 1654, Gelders Archief, 0370, inv. 6580: ‘Stukken betreffende de pogingen restitutie te krijgen van het Culemborgsche huis te Brussel, 1651-1654’: ‘t is nu sulx dat niet alleen syn gen. grave Floris I loff.mem. niet langh nae de confiscatie van syn huysingen ende dependantien van dien, deszelfs Casteleyn gecommiteert heeft om de possessie derselver wederom aen te vaarden, gelick uyt de bylagh A. te sien is, maer heeft oock syn gen. grave Floris den 2. het memoria lit B omtrent den tyt van Treves tusschen de Croon Spanien ende de Vereenighde provintien, aen de heeren Staten Generaal gepresenteert, ende voorsz restitutie ten hoogsten geurgeert’.

²⁵ *Ibid.*: ‘souden wenschen voor gehad te hebben een extract ofte Copye van des fiscaels advis, om te beter te connen dienen van advis ende bericht, gelick U.E. hier mede versoeken voorstaen wat neerstiger met ons te correspondeeren, ende dese ende andere processen te dienen van naerder bericht’.

²⁶ Agent Fierenschatz to the baillif of Wittem, 11 december 1654, Gelders Archief, 0370, inv. 6580.

succeed. In that year the count of Culemborg obtained from the States of Brabant an annuity of five thousand guilders.²⁷ In 1732, 164 years after the 1568 demolition, the debt was redeemed for a lump sum of one hundred thousand guilders.²⁸ The persistent efforts of the Culemborg family reveal that successive generations of counts of Culemborg had a vested interest in keeping alive their memory of their palace's demolition and adjusted their rhetoric to the existent dominant storylines to argue their case.

The Culemborg family was not the only family with a vested interest in keeping alive memories of the Revolt. In December 1633 Isabella died, and she was succeeded by Philip IV's brother, the cardinal-infante Ferdinand of Austria. One pamphleteer placed him in the Habsburg dynastic history, calling the new governor that 'brave Ferdinand who is fair like the Philips, bold and bellicose like the Charleses under which these provinces had been so flourishing.'²⁹ Here the author remained vague deliberately, not referring to Charles V and Philip II but to 'the Charleses' and 'the Philips'. He evoked the memory of previous Habsburg lords of the Netherlands as well as Burgundian rulers such as Philip I 'the Fair' of Castile (1478-1506) and Charles 'the Bold' of Burgundy (1433-1477), underlining the long-term continuity in the dynastic succession. On 4 November 1634, Ferdinand arrived in Brussels. The sky was clouded and rain was expected, but none fell when the cardinal-infante arrived. According to lawyer and historian Jules Chifflet, the journey from Milan had gone so smoothly 'it seemed that God led his people and his army, like he did that of Israel.'³⁰

On his arrival in the Low Countries, Ferdinand toured the cities of the Southern Netherlands. For the occasion of the Joyous Entries of the new governor-general in 1634-35, nobleman Jan van Marnix wrote a manuscript history and political treatise of the Netherlandish troubles in Latin, which is also testimony to the importance noble families

²⁷ Brieven aan den drost van Witthem, Johan Wilhelm van Schwartzenberg, belast met een missie naar Brussel om het Culemborgsche huis te reclameren, 1651-1654, Gelders Archief, 0370, inv. 6581.

²⁸ Voet van Oudheusden, *Historische Beschryvinge van Culemborg* I, p. 380.

²⁹ Cited by Sabbe, *Brabant in 't Verweer*, p. 199, from: anonymous, *Responce d'un bon vassal du Roy catholique aux manifestes publez par le Roy de France touchant la guerre par luy declare contre la couronne d'Espagne, au mois de Juin de la présente année M.D.XXXV* (1635): 'brave Ferdinand qui est bon et beau comme les Philippes, hardy en belliqueux comme les Charles soubz lesquels autrefois ces Provinces ont été si fleurissantes'; anonymous, *De grausaem straf over 't hertoghdom van Brabant voor-seyde door den propheet Ioel, de welcke den Heere, door soo veele traensuchtige ende den Vrede toeseeggende, als t'vast op hem betrouwt* (1635), KBR 'Recueil des pièces relatives aux Pays-Bas', S II 5060 A. nr 45.

³⁰ J.J. Chifflet, *Le voyage du prince Don Fernande, infant d'Espagne, cardinal, Depuis le douzième d'Avril de l'an 1632. qu'il partit de Madrid pour Barcelone avec le Roy Philippe IV. son frere, jusques au jour de son entrée en la ville de Bruxelles le quatrième du mois de Novembre de l'an 1634* (Antwerp: Jean Cnobbaert, 1634), p. 195: 'il sembloit que Dieu conduisoit ses gens & son armée, comme il fit celle d'Israel'.

attached to their past.³¹ In his dedication, he stated that ‘it is appropriate that someone not only defends the dignity of his prince by lances and swords; this must also be done by words and arguments’.³² The text probably served at least partly to cleanse the Marnix family record; two of Jan’s uncles had been rebels. One of them, Philip, had even been among William of Orange’s closest confidants. Despite these blotches on the family record, Jan van Marnix prided himself on his devotion to the house of Austria, a devotion ‘instilled and passed down through my forefathers’.³³ The uncles were erased from the record. Marnix was annoyed by ‘the many untruths that some authors have hatefully and deceitfully spread to the advantage of the Netherlandish rebels, as a result of which an ignorant people is easily dragged along unless someone provides a reply in writing.’³⁴ In the introduction to the first part of his tract the author remarked that

I believe that there is no one among you, best among the Netherlanders, who does not look forward to peace. After the endless misery of the wars that have caused our sorrow, I am not surprised to find people who desire peace, of whatever kind.³⁵

Expressing his wish that the Republic would return under the authority of its rightful overlord, Philip IV, Marnix voiced his expectation that under the cardinal-infante ‘heresy, with the Revolt as its daughter’ would soon be defeated.³⁶ Subsequently, he entered into a compact discussion of the Revolt’s origins, which reflected the dominant government-endorsed South Netherlandish view of the conflict. He attributed all troubles to the

³¹ Jan van Marnix, ‘Rerum Belgicarum politica consideratio, in qua tutissimum, atque unicum ad quietem iter Hollandis esse ostenditur, si Regi suo, Regi Catholico (a quo defecerunt) Fide, & Obsequio iterum sese subiiciant’ (1635), Biblioteca Nacional de España MSS 2828. The manuscript is accessible online at http://bibliotecadigitalhispanica.bne.es:80/webclient/DeliveryManager?pid=3427297&custom_att_2=simple_view_er [accessed 13 May 2013]. References will be to this source; Nele Verhenne translated the manuscript in her MA thesis. I largely followed this translation. It can be consulted in the University Library of Ghent, BIB.GTH.029459: Jan van Marnix and Nele Verhenne, ‘Rerum belgicarum politica consideratio’ (Ghent, 1994). The thesis is also accessible online at http://lib.ugent.be/fulltxt/RUG01/000/891/236/RUG01-000891236_2011_0001_AC.pdf [accessed 13 May 2013].

³² Jan van Marnix, ‘Rerum’, p. vii: ‘Non solum hastis, et gladius sui quemque principus tueri dignitatem par est: verum etiam scriptis, et rationibus idipsum exequi’. With thanks to Verena Demoed for helping me with the Latin translations.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. vii: ‘innatum [...] mihi, et a maioribus traditum’.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. viii: ‘Cumque modo animadverterim plurimas falsitates in favorem contumacium Belgii populorum a nonnullis scriptoribus invidiose, ac maligne spargi, quibus ignarum vulgus in corem facile traheretur, nisi quis iis scripto reponeret’.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xxvii: ‘Neminem vestrum esse existimo, (Belgarum optimi) qui pacem non anhelet: neque miror aliquos reperiri qui desiderent eam, etiam qualemcumque, post infinitas bellorum miserias quibus hoc nostrum prohdolor.’

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. xxx-xxxi: ‘Sic igitur unicum fratrem Philippi colite, ut a vobis unice coli se Philippus sentiat: sic novo huic regimini nobilissimo, praestantissimoque constantissimi obsequii nervum adiungite, ut Ferdinandi auspiciis universo Belgio prostratam haeresim cum rebellione filia quamprimum videre liceat.’

Hollanders ‘among whom the rebellion first surfaced’.³⁷ Since this was a bit far-fetched, he qualified the statement by adding that he understood ‘Hollanders’ to refer to ‘all Netherlandish provinces that refuse to obey his Catholic royal highness [...] since today their name terrifies many people, like the Goths in previous times’.³⁸ According to Marnix, the war was a disgrace for several reasons. First of all, the Dutch Republic was a state born out of violence against the rightful lord. Secondly, the heretical behaviour of the rebels violated both divine and human law. Thirdly, the grievances of the rebels were unfounded and served merely as pretexts to realize their selfish ambitions. Finally, although the rebels blamed Philip II for the troubles, the king had been one of the best rulers the Netherlands had ever known.

Marnix particularly rejected the way in which Northerners had begun to seek the legitimacy of their revolutionary political agenda in the history of the Revolt. He criticised the use of the past in the present. Hollanders were always raking up old troubles in their publications:

In my opinion it is ludicrous, even harmful and dangerous, to stick to old customs in the business of the present day, or to trade in the entire present way of life for that of the ancients! By no means was everything better with the ancestors, our time also has honourable things and features to be imitated by the descendants.³⁹

He ended with the advice: ‘one should not always look at what was done in the old days, but also to what is to be done today; one must not look at how people might have been in the past, but how they are now.’⁴⁰ Jan van Marnix clearly abhorred the continued usage in the Republic of politically motivated references to the rebellion.

As we have seen, elites in both the Northern and Southern Netherlands derived status from their conduct during the Revolt. Having chosen the ‘right’ side in times of extreme adversity yielded dividends long after the actual hero had died. His or her family continued to share in the glory but only for as long as the memory was kept alive. The

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2: ‘apud quos rebellio primo caput extulit’.

³⁸ *Ibid.*: ‘omnes Confoederatos Inferioris Germaniae regiae-catholicae maiestati obsequi renuentes [...] ut pote quorum nomen hodie, sicut olim Gotthorum, (e) plerisque hominibus terrorem incutit’.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 68: ‘Quam inquam, ridiculum, adeoque noxium, et impossibile, in negociis huius aevi antiquos plane retinere mores, seu praesentis vitae modulum omnem a veteribus mutuari? Haudquaquam omnia apud priores meliora, sed nostra quoque aetas multa laudis, et artium imitanda posteris tulit.’

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71: ‘nec quid olim factum fuerit, semper inspicundum est, sed quid hodie faciendum: nec qualis quisque aliquando fuerit, sed qualis quisque modo sit attendendum.’

previous chapters have already shown that the house of Orange is a good example of this phenomenon. On the death of his half-brother Maurice in 1625, Frederick Henry became the prince of Orange and succeeded as stadholder. He played a pivotal role in turning his family into a princely dynasty with an international allure.⁴¹ This was important because he had not only himself to consider. Unlike Maurice, he had a son: William II.⁴² In the house of Orange's transmission of dynastic identity, the Revolt continued to play a crucial role as can be exemplified by the Act of *Survivance* of 1631. During that year, the States of Holland and Zeeland gave the *Survivance* – i.e. the right to succeed his father – to William, something Frederick Henry had been very eager to achieve as it was the nearest any prince of Orange at the time could come to securing the non-hereditary stadholderate for his offspring.⁴³ The survivance meant that after the death of Frederick Henry, William would be appointed stadholder. In the motivation of their decision, the States referred to the house of Orange's war record. They granted the survivance in consideration of

the good, faithful and pleasant services, out of special affection, done by the late serene highborn prince and lord, lord William, prince of Orange, count of Nassau etc., furthermore by [...] Maurice [...] and [...] Frederick Henry [...] for many years in many and many kinds of burdens and dangers.⁴⁴

They also expressed their desire that William II, 'following the examples and footsteps of his lord grandfather, uncle, and father [...] will equally provide them with good services.'⁴⁵ The *Survivance* was essential for the dynastic aspirations of the Orange family in the Dutch Republic because it created the appearance of the stadholderate as a hereditary office. It is important to note that the Oranges were not only passive recipients; they also

⁴¹ Olaf Mörke, 'De hofcultuur van het huis Oranje-Nassau in de zeventiende eeuw', in: Peter te Boekhorst, Peter Burke, Willem Frijhoff, eds., *Cultuur en maatschappij in Nederland, 1500-1850* (Meppel: Boom, 1992), p. 55.

⁴² Pieter Geyl, *Oranje en Stuart* (Utrecht: A. Oosthoek, 1939), p. 2; Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *1650. Bevochten eendracht* (The Hague: Sdu Uitgevers, 1999), pp. 98-102.

⁴³ Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik*, pp. 349-351; see also: Frijhoff and Spies, *1650*, p. 98.

⁴⁴ *Copie wt de Resolvtien ghenomen byde Heeren Staten van Hollant ende West-Vriesland / ende byde Heeren Staten van Zeelandt / in hare respectie Vergaderinghe / onlangs Staetsghewijse gehouden / aengaende het defereren van de Survivance ende successie van het stad-houder / gouverneur / Capiteynscha ende Admiraelschap Generael / van Hollandt / Zeelandt ende West-Vrieslandt / aenden Jongsten Heere Prince Wilhelm, gebooren Prince van Orangien* (The Hague: Ludolph Breeckevelt, 1631), f. a2v: 'de goede getrouwe ende aenghename diensten / uyt sonderlinghe affectie / by H.L.M. den Doorluchtighen hooghgebooren Furst ende Heere / Heere Wilhelm, Prince van Orangien / Grave van Nassau etc. mitsgaders van [...] Mauriti [...] ende [...] Frederick Hendrick [...] veele jaren lang in veele ende menichvuldige sware lasten ende periculen.'

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 'volghende de exempelen ende voetstappen van sijne Heeren Grootvader / Oom / ende Vader [...] insghelijcx goede diensten sullen mogen bewesen worden'.

needed to play an active part during the formal conferral. According to an official account, on 24 April the deputies of the States went on a visit to Frederick Henry to formally offer him, as guardian of his son, the *Survivance*. The prince, ‘accepting the [offer], has thanked the lords States very much for the honour bestowed upon his son and declared to exhort him at all occasions and seek to enable him to do these lands all possible service, following in the footsteps of his forebears.’⁴⁶ Subsequently, the group of delegates went to the prince’s wife Amalia, and the ritual was repeated.⁴⁷

There are clear signs that Frederick Henry and Amalia raised their son with a sense of tradition. The teacher of William II and professor of theology in Leiden, André Rivet, wrote a *Fürstenspiegel* for the young prince, which he published in 1642 and in which he explained the importance of the past. The *Instruction of the Christian Prince* [*Instruction du prince chrestien*], which takes the form of a dialogue between a *directeur* and his princely pupil, is foremost an outline of the prince’s duties towards God.⁴⁸ Apart from biblical exempla, however, the secular past was also an important frame of reference. According to Rivet, ‘memory is the chest that guards the acquired treasure’ and he understood ‘memory’ to

consist not only of that which happened to one’s self, or the things one has seen; but also, and more importantly, the things that happened in the centuries that have preceded us. That is the function of reading history [...] It is necessary that a doctor recognise the cause of a malady before he tries to cure it.⁴⁹

William II grew up in a dynasty that keenly preserved memories of its glorious role in Dutch history for purposes of exploiting that legacy when the need of doing so arose. A case in point is Amalia’s commission of a monumental memorial to her husband Frederick Henry who died in 1647. This memorial was to adorn the central hall of her summer retreat Huis ten Bosch near The Hague. Although originally intended to exhibit paintings of

⁴⁶ Ibid., f. a4r: ‘de selve aannemende / de hoochgemelte Heeren States hoochlijck voor de eere aen sijnen soone bewesen / heeft bedanckt / ende verklaert den selven by alle occasien te sullen vermanen ende soecken bequaem te maecken / omme de Landen / volgende de voetstappen van sijne voorsaten / alle moghelijcke dienst te doen’.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Matthijs Wieldraaijer, ‘Onderwijs aan het Oranjehof in de 17^{de} eeuw’, *Holland* 41 (2009), p. 80.

⁴⁹ André Rivet, *Instruction du prince chrestien. Par Dialogues, Entre un jeune Prince, & son directeur* (Leiden: Ian Maire, 1642), pp. 246-247: ‘La memoire est le coffre qui garde le thresor acquis [...]; elle se remplit non seulement de ce qu’on à fait soy mesme, ou de ce qu’on a veu; mais aussi, & pour le plus, de ce qui s’est passé es siecles qui nous ont precedé. A quoy sert la lecture de l’Histoire [...] Il faut qu’un medecin cognoisse bien la caude d’une maladie, devant que guerir.’

European rulers, including William of Orange, Maurice and Frederick Henry, the *Oranjezaal* (as the hall was known) came to eulogise Frederick Henry, illustrating the historical ties between the house of Orange and the United Provinces. Amalia commissioned the decorations to eternalise the glories of her husband.⁵⁰

Courtier and poet Constantijn Huygens the Elder was charged with the supervision of the project.⁵¹ On 23 April 1651, Jacob Jordaens, who was also involved, wrote to Huygens to explain what he had in mind for the central decorative theme in the hall, the *Triumph of Frederick Henry*. The figure of Frederick Henry would feature in the centre of the piece, sitting in a chariot ‘as a Cesar or Alexander’ high above the other figures, foregrounded by a red cloak over his harness.⁵² On the rearing horse in the right corner sits William II, fully equipped as an army general. Jordaens referred to the past glories of the house of Orange through the golden statues of the former stadholders William the Silent and Maurice, ‘placed at both sides of the work, on pedestals, in bronzed figures of copper, the prince [Frederick Henry] riding in between’, as the artist explained to Huygens.⁵³ The representation of the predecessors of Frederick Henry in gold and in front of columns served to delineate the mythical and powerful status these stadholders had acquired. Painter Cesar van Everdingen was responsible for the *Allegory of the Birth of Frederick Henry*. On this painting we see Pallas Athena rocking the child on her shield while Mars offers the young prince a spear. Behind Athena in the shade of a provisional canopy of gold threaded cloth, held up by flying putti, we see William of Orange, Frederick Henry’s father, a reminder of the prince’s illustrious descent.⁵⁴

Despite all its splendour and emphases on continuity, the Orange Hall was built at a time of dynastic uncertainty. The dynasty’s future depended on Frederick Henry’s son William II, yet he was childless. Furthermore, the Peace of Westphalia, signed in 1648, threatened the house of Orange’s position. As early as 1643, this situation had become a matter of discussion. Frisian stadholder William Frederick of Nassau wrote in his diary about a conversation he had with a French exile, Henry d’Escars de Saint-Bonnet, lord of

⁵⁰ Hanna Peter-Raupp, *Die Ikonographie des Oranjezaal* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1980), pp. 8-28.

⁵¹ Maurits Sabbe, ‘Constantijn Huygens en Zuid-Nederland’, in: *De Moretussen en hun kring. Verspreide opstellen* (Antwerp: V. Resselers, 1928), p. 93.

⁵² Jacob Jordaens to Constantijn Huygens, 23 April 1651, *De Briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens, 1608-1697*, edited by Jacob Adolf Worp, 6 vols., (s-Gravenhage: M. Nijhoff, 1911), vol. 5, p. 85: ‘als eenen Cesar of Alexander’.

⁵³ *Ibid.*: ‘stelle over wedersyden van het werck, op pedestaelen, in gebronste figureen van koper, den Prince daertusschen door rijdende.’

⁵⁴ Peter-Raupp, *Die Ikonographie*, p. 30.

Saint-Ibar during a ride from Haarlem to Amsterdam on 30 November 1643. Saint-Ibar told him ‘that his highness [William II] or the house of Nassau should never bring down the house of Austria entirely, because as long as they [the Habsburgs] held power, his highness and his house would be honoured and loved here in the land.’⁵⁵ A few years later, on 12 July 1648, the Frisian stadholder William Frederick of Nassau discussed the Peace of Westphalia with the dowager princess of Orange, Amalia. He lambasted the regents who wanted to scale down the army and diminish the powers of the house of Orange. Drawing an analogy with the troubles during the Twelve Years’ Truce, William Frederick equated the pro-peace faction to ‘those Arminians’. ‘They engaged in the same intrigues that anno 1618 were begun against Prince Maurice in the time of Oldenbarnevelt’, the Frisian stadholder wrote in his diary.⁵⁶ Their ultimate goal was to ‘break the power and diminish the authority of his highness’. Amalia allegedly replied that she was indeed much discontented with ‘those of Holland’ and with the general lack of gratitude towards the Orange dynasty.⁵⁷ Cornelis van Aerssen, lord of Sommelsdijck confided on 3 October 1648 to William Frederick that ‘if the house of Nassau were to be stripped of its lustre and assets, in the course of time the name of his highness and his forebears who are so renowned and have so much merit would all be forgotten, and the honour, credit and respect that the house of Orange had in these lands would be wholly obscured.’⁵⁸ This was an interesting perspective. According to Van Aerssen, it was not the memory of the past deeds of the house of Orange that justified its privileged constitutional position; it was the continued political influence of the dynasty that ensured that memories of the past were kept alive. The continued circulation of these memories simply mirrored the political status of the Orange dynasty. Another indication of the concern for keeping alive the memory was a painting by Pieter Nason, commissioned by William Frederick and his wife Albertine Agnes in 1663. The painting portrayed four generations of princes of Orange: William I,

⁵⁵ Willem Frederick of Nassau, *Gloria parenti. Dagboeken van Willem Frederik, stadhouder van Friesland, Groningen en Drenthe, 1643-1649, 1651-1654*, edited by J. Visser and G.N. van der Plaats (The Hague: Nederlands Historisch Genootschap, 1995), p. 36: ‘dat S.H. of het huys van Nassau noit behoorden het huys van Oostenrijk heel onder te brengen, want soolang alsoe macht hadden, soude S.H. en sijn huys hier in’t lant geert ende gelieft worden uyt vrese van de Spagniarz.’

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 539.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* Similarly, Amalia of Solms communicated to an envoy from Brandenburg that the continuation of the war was best for the Orange dynasty, see: Herbert H. Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625-1672* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 220.

⁵⁸ William Frederick of Nassau, *Gloria parenti*, edited by Visser and Van der Plaats, p. 563: ‘als het huys Nassau ontbloom wierde van alle die luister en middelen, soo solde mitdertijt de naem van S.H. en sijner voorsaeten, die in dit landt soo beroempt en soo veel gemeriteert hadden, gantz vergeten worden, en die eer, credijt en respect die het huys Orangiën in dese landen gehadt heeft en beseten soo menigen tijt, soude gantz verduistert worden.’

Maurice, Frederick Henry and William II. William III was added later to the composition. The depicted scene was entirely imaginary as William II and William III were not even born at the time of William of Orange's death.⁵⁹ Since Nason created a virtual reality he could take liberties with the facts, omitting Philip William from the historical line of succession.

By the end of Frederick Henry's life, the prospects of the Orange dynasty were so insecure that those next in line were scrupulously observing all that happened at the Orange court. William Frederick of Nassau became very interested in the legal arrangements regarding the succession, hoping that one day he might succeed William II and become stadholder in all seven provinces of the Union. His diary gives invaluable insider views into court life at The Hague from someone who had access to the prince of Orange and who, as a fellow count of Nassau, commented on dynastic matters. It appears from the large number of anecdotal entries in the diary that both the Orange stadholders of Holland, Zeeland and the other provinces and the Nassau stadholders of Friesland were instilled with a keen dynastic awareness and sense of history. An example is a conversation between Amalia of Solms and her son William II on 20 October 1646. When Amalia asked her son whether he sided with the Spanish or with the French, he answered: 'neither, but if I were to choose a side, I would rather be French, because they did not kill my grandfather and four of my uncles.'⁶⁰ The uncles to which William referred probably included Louis (1538-1574), Adolph (1540-1568) and Henry (1550-1574). Together with the only surviving brother Jan they were depicted by the studio of Wybrand Symonsz de Geest around 1650. The painting was commissioned by Jan's grandson John Maurice of Nassau-Siegen who intended it for his newly built *Mauritshuis* in The Hague, next to the Inner Court.⁶¹ The princess of Orange replied to her son's reason for preferring the French over the Spanish: 'The French also did that', with the St Bartholomew Day massacre and the death of William II's great-grandfather and Huguenot leader Gaspar de Coligny in mind. 'It is true', William retorted, 'but it was through the Spanish faction and the supporters of Guise'. Mother and son could

⁵⁹ Stevens, *Shades of Orange*, pp. 18-19; Susan Broomhall and Jacqueline Van Gent, 'Introduction', in: Susan Broomhall and Jacqueline Van Gent, eds., *Governing Masculinities in the Early Modern Period: Regulating Selves and Others* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p. 1.

⁶⁰ William Frederick of Nassau, *Gloria parenti*, edited by Visser and Van der Plaats, p. 191: 'gheen van beyde, maer als ick yetwess soude sijn, soo wass ick liever Frans, want die hebben mij geen grootvaeder en 4 oomen omgebracht.'

⁶¹ Stevens, *Shades of Orange*, p. 3.

not agree, and when William angered Amalia by accusing her of giving credence to ‘old fools’ the conversation ended.⁶²

The Frisian stadholder was preoccupied with the dynasty’s position in the Republic and often fell back on the past deeds of his forebears to buttress his family’s status. In a conversation with Amalia in 1647, William Frederick fawned on her, pointing to the inextricable links between the Orange dynasty and the Republic. But he also took great pleasure in what Amalia had to say:

We spoke of the interest of our house, why it should always seek the best for this land and that no one had reason to think otherwise or to have a different opinion [...] I exalted his highness’ [William II] house very much, its merit to this land, by the late Prince William, and Prince Maurice and the uncles and spoke not of ourselves [i.e. of the house of Nassau-Dietz], but her highness [Amalia] herself spoke of that, that there were other Nassaus who also shed their blood in service to this land.⁶³

Although this conversation may very well have happened, the rhetorical style of this diary entry suggests that William Frederick used Amalia to voice his own dynastic pride.⁶⁴ A few years later, in 1649, William Frederick recalled that Prince William was about to be appointed count of Holland in 1584 and given supreme sovereignty in that province but owing to his premature death the procedure was never completed by the States. In 1649, the count still mourned this lost opportunity.⁶⁵

⁶² William Frederick of Nassau, *Gloria parendi*, edited by Visser and Van der Plaat, pp. 191-192: ‘H.H. seide, de Fransen hebben het oock gedaen. ’t Is waer, seide prins Wilhelm, maer het was door de Spaensche factie en Guisiaenen.’

⁶³ *Ibid.*, VI, p. 138: ‘Op ’t lest spraecken wij van het interest van onss huys, waerom datselfde alletijt ’t beste van dit landt behoort te soecken en dat niemantz reden had om anders te dencken ofte opinie te hebben [...] Ick exalteerde S.H. huys seer, wat het gemeriteert had aen dit landt door prins Wilhelm saliger en prins Mauritz en de oomen en sprack niet van ons, doch H.H. sprack selfs daerof, datter noch andere van Nassau waeren geweest, die haer bloedt oock verstorst hadden gehad tot dienst van dit landt.’

⁶⁴ See also: Geert H. Janssen, *Princely Power in the Dutch Republic: Patronage and William Frederick of Nassau (1613-64)* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), pp. 92-95.

⁶⁵ Herbert H. Rowen, *The Princes of Orange: The Stadholders in the Dutch Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 27-30; Mörke, *Willem van Oranje*, pp. 253-254; Herman Kampinga, *De opvattingen over onze oudere vaderlandsche geschiedenis bij de Hollandsche historici der XVIe en XVIIe eeuw* (Utrecht: Hes, 1980), p. 118; Willem Frederick of Nassau, *Gloria parendi*, edited by Visser and Van der Plaat, p. 319: ‘Prins Mauritz had sich kunnen souverain maecken, doch hij wilde niet uyt oorsaeck dat hem Bernevelt het had verweeten, oock omdat hij al te grooten diener van ’t landt iss. Prins Wilhelm had het eer hij storf, doch die van Amsterdam hielden ’t alleen op, omdat se het qualijck geschreven hadden, en ondertuschen wierdt prins Wilhelm vermoordt door een espioen op S.H. anteschambre’.

Supporting the war in the South

This chapter has shown that some people had a vested interest in keeping alive their memories of the Revolt. The selection above, however, is insufficient to explain why the Revolt continued to remain relevant even for those who had less to gain personally by recalling the past. The persistent political potency of the Revolt after 1621 can be explained partly by the continued war effort. Successive Habsburg rulers Philip II, Philip III and Philip IV were unwilling to part with their Low Countries because, as Laura Manzano Baena has shown, compliance with rebel demands would severely damage their reputation. They feared that a surrender of sovereignty – if at all legally possible – would undermine their future bargaining position in peace negotiations.⁶⁶ The Twelve Years' Truce, which had confirmed the United Provinces as 'free countreys, prouinces and estates, whereunto they [Philip III and the Archdukes] pretend not any right or title of soueraignty' had been a very painful concession to the Dutch that was not to be repeated.⁶⁷ Habsburg political culture, hence, complicated the give-and-take that was necessary for successful peace negotiations. This is not to say, however, that people in the Southern Netherlands did not contemplate the possibility of peace. After the disastrous Habsburg losses in the period 1629-32, including the cities of Den Bosch and Maastricht, Archduchess Isabella convened the States General and together they initiated peace negotiations. In this political context, court historiographer Erycius Puteanus wrote a tract entitled *Statera belli & pacis* in which he balanced the virtues of war and peace and argued in favour of ending the war.⁶⁸ In his text, Puteanus argued that it was best for the South Netherlandish population and the Habsburg dynasty to relinquish control over the rebel territories. 'This war', Puteanus argued, 'and specifically this Netherlandish [war], cannot be carried out without pillage, murder, fire, and destruction'.⁶⁹ The war was 'antiquated' and 'without the fruit of victory has lost its bloom'.⁷⁰ He briefly explored the possibility that 'the misery exceeds the cause of the war, and the damages are greater than the justice' and, he pondered, 'considering that

⁶⁶ Manzano Baena, *Conflicting Words*, pp. 108-109, 127.

⁶⁷ *Articles, of a treatie of truce*, f. b1r; Israel, 'A Conflict of Empires', p. 36; Vermeir, 'Oorloghsvloeck en Vredens Zegen', p. 3.

⁶⁸ Erycius Puteanus, *Statera belli & pacis cum stateris aliis eam expendentibus, nec non iudiciis aliquot clarorum virorum in Batavia* (Cosmopoli: apud Batavum, patriae libertatis & pacis amantissimum, 1633); the Dutch translation will be cited: Erycius Puteanus, *Des Oorlogs ende Vredes Waeg-schale waer inne den Treves door Konincklijke aen-leydinghe tusschen de Konincklijke ende Vereenigde Provincien, in handelinge zijnde, wert over-wogen* (The Hague: Isaac Burghoorn, 1633).

⁶⁹ Puteanus, *Des Oorlogs ende Vredes Waeg-schale*, f. a3v: 'Desen Oorlog / ende principelijck desen Nederlandtschen / en kan niet sonder rooven / moorden / branden / ende verwoesten uyt-ghevoert werden'.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, f. a2v: 'den Krijgh selfs om dat sy ghedyurt heeft den tijt van tsestich jaren ende meer / verouderd / ende sonder vrucht van Victorie / heeft sijne bloeme verloren.'

after sixty years of war there is no ceasefire, when will there be peace?’⁷¹ With his tract, Puteanus caused a political stir among pro-war Southern government officials who did not appreciate the author’s meddlesome interference in the peace process and who, especially, disliked his argument that the South should throw in the towel.⁷²

In general, however, the Habsburgs could count on considerable support from Southern elites. As we have seen, this support relied on a historical narrative which portrayed the dynasty as the best guarantor of peace and prosperity. Another example of this phenomenon is Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand of Austria’s arrival in the Low Countries as the new governor in 1634. At his entry into Brussels on 4 November 1634, Ferdinand was advised not to appear as a cardinal because people had a dislike for these princes of the church.⁷³ Hence, the cardinal-infante did not wear religious attire and carried the sword of his popular paternal great-grandfather Emperor Charles V. In Ghent, where the new governor was welcomed on 28 January 1635, past and present were intertwined in a virtual reality. The Arcus Caroli on the Vrijdagmarkt is a case in point.⁷⁴ The upper-front side of the arch depicted the previous lords of the Netherlands in a scene in heaven (Figure 15). An allegorical virgin personifying the Low Countries implores Charles V to appoint the cardinal-infante governor of the land. Next to the emperor we can see his son Philip II, Archduke Albert, granddaughter Isabella and great-grandson Philip IV, who indeed passes the staff of office to his younger brother Ferdinand.⁷⁵ Just beneath this scene was another painting in which Charles V rides out together with Ferdinand. Inspired by the exhortation of Aeneas to his son Ascanius, Charles tells Ferdinand: ‘Grandson, learn from my power’,

⁷¹ Ibid., f. a3v: ‘de Ellende de oorsake vanden Oorloghe over-treft / ende dat de schade groeter is als het recht’; ‘Ist dat naer tsestigh jaren Oorlogens gheen en stil-standt van Wapenen en is / wanneer sal het dan eens werden?’

⁷² Peter Bayle, ‘Puteanus (Erycius)’, in: Peter Bayle, ed., *The Dictionary Historical and Critical of Mr. Peter Bayle. The Second Edition* (London: printed for D. Midwinter et al., 1737), p. 794; W. Mander, *Erycius Puteanus: humanist en geleerde (1574-1646)* (Venlo: Goltziusmuseum, 1974), p. 4; see for instance also a letter from Constantijn Huygens the Elder to Erycius Puteanus, 23 February 1634, in: *De briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens (1608-1687)* I 1608-1634, edited by J.A. Worp (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1911), p. 445.

⁷³ W. Waterschoot, ‘Eenheid van kerk en staat bij de intrede van kardinaal-infant Ferdinand’, *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 5 (1989), p. 27.

⁷⁴ Guilielmus Becanus, *Serenissimi principis Ferdinandi Hispaniarum infantis S.R.E. cardinalis triumphalis introitus in Flandriae metropolim Gandavum* (Antwerp: J. Meursius, 1636), plate 19.

⁷⁵ According to Carl van de Velde and Hans Vlieghe, not Albert but Philip III was part of this exalted assembly: Carl van de Velde and Hans Vlieghe, *Stadsversieringen te Gent in 1635 voor de Blijde Intrede van de Kardinaal-Infant* (Ghent: Stad Gent, 1969), p. 60. Yet Philip III had never been overlord of the Netherlandish provinces because his father Philip II had given them to his daughter Isabella and her husband Albert in 1598. That is why it is probably Albert who is depicted in this scene.

exhorting him to follow his example.⁷⁶ A clearer underlining of Ferdinand's relation to the celebrated emperor is hard to imagine. It illustrates the importance local authorities attached to their new governor. The cardinal-infante was the first local Habsburg overlord since Albert died in 1621, during which interim period, as we have seen in chapter 4, the country had been close to a new revolt.⁷⁷



Figure 15. Upper stories of the Arcus Caroli, Rijkmuseum, RP-P-OB-76.440.

⁷⁶ Becanus, *Serenissimi principis Ferdinandi*, plate 19: 'Disce nepos virtutem ex me'; Vergil, *Aeneid*, translated by Theodore C. Williams (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1910), 12.435; see also: Van de Velde and Vlieghe, *Stadsversieringen te Gent in 1635*, p. 51.

⁷⁷ See also Vermeir, *In staat van oorlog*, p. 317.

Ferdinand arrived in the Low Countries when the Thirty Years' War was in full swing. What began in 1618 as a religious war and a conflict about the balance of power within the Holy Roman Empire, in the 1620s and 30s turned into a European conflict in which the old political enmity between Habsburg and Bourbon played an important part. Before his arrival and inauguration as governor-general, Ferdinand defeated the army of the Swedish king – an ally of France – at the Battle of Nördlingen on 6 September 1634.⁷⁸ The first minister of Louis XIII of France, Cardinal Richelieu, feared that German Protestant princes would pull out of the conflict and that the loss of these allies would weaken the French position against Spain. Due to the Swedish losses of 1634, the Habsburg Empire now fully surrounded France. To prevent the country from becoming a vulnerable enclave in Habsburg Europe, France negotiated a treaty of mutual assistance with the Dutch Republic in which both countries agreed to invade the Southern Netherlands. The aim of this treaty was to drive away the Spaniards and to establish a federal Southern state. In 1635, these plans were put into action in a coordinated attack on the Habsburg Netherlands.⁷⁹ The armies ravaged the countryside and, in June, sacked the Brabant city of Tienen. Subsequently, they made preparations for besieging Leuven.

South Netherlandish propagandists condemned the French and North Netherlandish aggression and in their writings sought to incite the population's hatred of the two enemies.⁸⁰ Although the recent events provided sufficient material to do so, the Revolt appeared as an important frame of reference too. Where in 1632 memories of the sixteenth-century troubles served to pacify the population and disarm the noble troublemakers, in many of the publications of 1635 these memories were actively deployed to stir up people against the invading enemies. It is not entirely clear who wrote the pamphlets in 1635. Maurits Sabbe has found that some were produced by rhetoricians (members of local chambers of rhetoric) in several South Netherlandish cities.⁸¹ Publishing in the vernacular Dutch or French as opposed to the learned Latin, the authors of these pamphlets probably had a relatively broad readership in mind. It is likely that the pamphlets were spread by local chambers of rhetoric who often maintained close contacts with other

⁷⁸ Randall Lesaffer, *Defensor pacis Hispanicae: de Kardinaal-Infant, de Zuidelijke Nederlanden en de Europese politiek van Spanje: van Nördlingen tot Breda (1634-1637)* (Heule: UGA, 1994), p. 61.

⁷⁹ Vermeir, *In staat van oorlog*, pp. 111-113.

⁸⁰ He explains that the pamphlets were neglected for so long because of their lack of artistic appeal: Sabbe, *Brabant in't verweer* (Antwerp: V. Ressler, 1933), p. 14.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 289; Randall Lesaffer, 'Defensive Warfare, Prevention and Hegemony. The Justifications for the Franco-Spanish War of 1635 (Part I)', *Journal of the History of International Law* 8:1 (2006), p. 95.

chambers in neighbouring cities and regions.⁸² About fifty satirical pamphlets dealing with the 1635 invasion survive in the royal library in Brussels.⁸³

The Southern authors of these pamphlets drew historical parallels to strengthen their condemnation of the enemies. One pamphleteer referred to the fact that in 1582, the French king Henry III had allowed his youngest brother Francis, duke of Anjou to assume lordship over the Netherlands and help William of Orange in his fight against his rightful overlord. In 1635, Louis XIII was doing practically the same thing by sending his best army officers to the Low Countries. The message was: trust neither the French nor the Dutch.⁸⁴ In discussions about the military aggression of 1635, other authors referred to the duke of Alba, whose legacy was problematic in the South and who did not enjoy a good reputation.⁸⁵ In a pamphlet that justified the South's past loyalty to Habsburg, the author stated that:

The duke of Alba rightfully took the scourge in his hand somewhat, for he was sent to punish the land [...] the duke of Alba was right indeed, because we had acted against justice and reason.⁸⁶

The anonymous author compared Alba's cruelties with those of the Dutch. Note the author's use of the first person plural pronoun 'we' in his confession that the Southern Netherlands deserved Alba's retribution. The Spanish might have been cruel, but at least they had a natural right to act as they did in the Netherlands. Looking at the painful past and ascribing at least part of the blame to oneself was a rhetorical strategy to denounce the behaviour of France and the Republic and establish one's own constancy towards Habsburg. Although Spain's policies during the early stages of the Revolt had not been praiseworthy, they were legal, which was more than the enemies could claim.

⁸² Karel Porteman and Mieke B. Smits-Veldt, *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen: geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur, 1560-1700* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2008), p. 498.

⁸³ Recueil des pièces relatives aux Pays-Bas, KBR, II 5.060.

⁸⁴ Anonymous, *Den Nederlantschen Phaeton, Duc d'Alencon, Lowys de Bourbon met den Prince van Oraingien, hoe sy hebben willen sitten inden waeghen van Spaignien, hebben in blaecken en branden gestelt onse Nederlanden* (1635), f. a4r.

⁸⁵ Judith Pollmann and Monica Stensland, 'Alba's Reputation in the Early Modern Low Countries', in: Maurits Ebben, Margriet Lacy-Bruijn and Rolof van Hövell tot Westerfliet, eds., *Alba: General and Servant to the Crown* (Rotterdam: Karwansaray, 2013), pp. 321-322.

⁸⁶ Anonymous, *Afbeeldinghe van den courtoisen Franschen ende ghenadighen broeders-aert. Gheschildert met het onnoosel bloedt der borghers van Thienen* (Wenen: Hendrick van Thienen, 1635), p. 6: 'Duc d'Alve namp met recht de roey wat inde handt / Want hy ghesonden was tot straffe van het landt. / [...] Duc d'Alf had wat ghelijck / want tegen recht en reden / [...] soo waren wy ghetreden'.

Similar observations can be made about other pamphlets, such as in *Rhyme in Honour of the Virgin of Leuven* [*Rym-dicht ter eeren die maeght Loven*]. Members of the chamber of rhetoric ‘the Rose’ wrote the text that was published in Brussels. The author commemorated the heroic past of Leuven, looking back to 1541 when troops from Guelders besieged the city. They were driven off notably by the university students. In 1572, the city surrendered to the beggar army: a painful episode but, as the author explained: ‘of two evils, one has to choose the best’. The author betrayed a lack of historical knowledge when he wrote that the ruling prince of Orange in 1572 had been Maurice. Of course, William of Orange had been the belligerent.⁸⁷ In the margins the author noted that during the early 1580s, Antwerp, Mechelen, Brussels and Tienen had been Calvinist republics, implicitly celebrating Leuven’s constancy. The enumeration of the enemy threats that Leuven had been exposed to in the past served as a proud reminder that the city had had to resist enemy forces multiple times. The next episode in the historical narrative was 1583: when French troops threatened the population, an event about which ‘one reads in books’ and which was also known as the French Fury.⁸⁸ This was a popular episode to evoke in 1635 because the cooperation between the rebels and France during Anjou’s governorship mirrored the joint Franco-Dutch attack of 1635. A contemporary chronicler copied a song that was sung in 1635: ‘hey there, monsieur, you are going too far, just like you did in the year eighty-three. But then, too, you missed your target’.⁸⁹

In the South, the invasion of 1635 by the French and Dutch armies fuelled a new kind of political memory practice that relied less than before on religious content. The story of the Revolt was told, Counter-Reformation-style, as a struggle between good native Catholics and evil foreign heretics. In 1635, other methods of targeting enemies abroad complemented this religious reading of the past. As we have seen in the Northern Netherlands at the beginning of the seventeenth century, stories of shared victimhood could bring together people from different regions, confessions and political preferences. The large-scale invasion in 1635 motivated Southern authors also to portray Southerners as a suffering people and to draw parallels with the past in order to mobilise the population against the enemies. This gave a whole new dimension to the ways in which anxiety about

⁸⁷ Anonymous, *Rym-dicht ter eeren die maeght Loven daerinne verhaelt wordt alle het ghene datter ghepasseert is t'zedert het Jaer 1542. tot het Jaer 1635. aengaende die troubelen aldaer gheschiet* (Brussels: Anthoni Mercans, 1635), f. a1r: ‘van twee quae / moetmen het beste kiesen’.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, f. a1r: ‘leestmen in boecken’.

⁸⁹ Anonymous, ‘Chronycke van Nederlant, 1523-1636’, KBR, MS 10245-6, 161v: ‘holla monsieur holla, ghy maecket al te groff Ghelijck ghy hebt gedaen, int iaer tachtentigh drij Maer gy sloecht daer oock mis’.

the war could be voiced. The author of an important manuscript chronicle of which numerous copies survive to the present day, Joannes Jacquinet, gleaned his information largely from the pamphlets discussed here and observed that ‘the destruction of Tienen was the ruin of the inhabitants of the city. But it benefitted the land, because the Hollanders and the French could now for a long time be slandered [for these misdeeds].’⁹⁰ To give an example, in *Tears of Peace* [*Vrede traenen*], an anonymous author, probably a Southerner, addressed the Northern pro-war faction and in just a few pages retold the sequence of canonical episodes that was popular in the North. But he interpreted the episodes in an entirely different way.⁹¹ The religious persecutions of the 1560s had perhaps not been the best way to solve the problem of heresy, according to the author, yet he wondered by what right did the rebel heretics claim to possess religious freedom. Philip II had after all pledged to defend the true Catholic faith, and, at an even more basic level, ‘what prince allows such a thing, where do you see such things occurring?’⁹² The author continued that if indeed the church needed to be reformed, ‘how much longer does it take? Shortly you will teach something else, and deform that which was reformed.’⁹³ To continue, not the duke of Alba, who was sent by the legitimate overlord Philip, but Prince William of Orange was the villain because the prince acted out of only selfish greed and jealousy of others. The sequence continued, but the message was already clear: only on the terms of Ferdinand could a durable peace be concluded, and it was in the best interest of Northerners to cease their rebellion and return under the authority of Habsburg.

In another pamphlet published anonymously after the siege of Leuven, and entitled *The breakfast of Leuven* [*Den ombyt van Loven*], this renewed interest in the recent past also becomes clear. The author wrote that French and Dutch soldiers saw Leuven as their ‘breakfast’. Brussels was to be ‘lunch’, and Antwerp ‘supper’.⁹⁴ After the gruesome fury of

⁹⁰ Joannes Jacquinet, ‘Historie der Nederlanden onder de Regering van Albertus en Isabella, Philippus IV en Karel II: 1612 tot 1683, met bijgevoegde portretten’, KBR, MS 15938, f. 49v: ‘Dese destructie van Tienen was de bederffenis vande ingesetenen der stadt. Maer twas de welvaert vant lant, want de Hollanders en Francoisen sauden langhen tyt daerby hebben konnen gespyts worden.’; Jacquinet was right. In his religious history of the world, Cornelius Hazart, for instance devoted attention to the early stages of the Revolt and then jumped to 1635: Cornelius Hazart, *Kerckelycke historie van de gheheele wereldt, namelyck vande voorgaende ende teghenwoordighe eeuw* III (Antwerp: Michiel Cnobbaert, 1669), pp. 245-246.

⁹¹ Anonymous, *Vrede traenen, dat zijn: naakt-vertoonde clachten over de blindelingse verachte Vreede, met bewijs vande schaede by alle Oorloghen in Nederlandt gheleden* (1635).

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 4: ‘Wat Vorst laet sullicks toe / waer siet ghy sullicks gheschien’.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 5: ‘hoe lang duert het doch? stracx gaet hy anders leeren / En’t geen gereformeert was weder deformereren’.

⁹⁴ Sabbe, *Brabant in’t verweer*, p. 272.

Tienen and the deplorable siege of Leuven, the author posed the following rhetorical question:

Thou stock of the Anti-Christ
 Is that the relief from the Spanish yoke
 That thou awaits?
 That the Spanish yoke is allegedly too tough
 People now see that differently
 By all the French wanton deception
 And robbing Hollanders.⁹⁵

This anonymous author disparaged the heretical nature of the Hollanders, but more importantly, he denounced their hypocrisy in deriving national pride from collective suffering. In 1635, Hollanders were guilty of the same atrocities as the Spanish had been in the sixteenth century. In much the same way that Northerners had adopted the Black Legend to vilify Spaniards, Southern authors now blackened the Dutch enemy. And for decades to come, people in the South celebrated the memory of their governor Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand as the victor of 1635, for instance during the centenary of Antwerp's liberation by Alexander Farnese in 1685.⁹⁶

Considering that Southerners suffered from Northern violence long before 1635, enemy cruelties cannot be the only explanation for the growing interest in non-confessional history. Perhaps it became a bit more complicated to attribute all atrocities to heretics since the French enemy was Catholic and headed by the 'Most Christian King'. Cruelty stories in news about the Thirty Years' War also played an important role. The epic sack of Magdeburg in 1631, for instance, made a deep impression in Protestant and Catholic Europe alike, and it premediated the sack of Tienen in 1635.⁹⁷ In the 1635-corpus of pamphlets about the Franco-Dutch invasion, the Magdeburg episode is mentioned several times as a frame of reference. Finally, as the years passed, memories of the beginning of the

⁹⁵ Anonymous, *Den ombyt van Loven ofte van de belegeringer der Stadt van Loven / door den Hollandtschen ende Franschen Legher* (1635), p. 3: 'Ghy Anti-Christ gheslachte / Is dat 't verlos van 't Spaensche jock / Dat ghy van u doet wachten? / Dat Spaensche jock te swaer sou zyn / Dat zietmen nu wel anders / Aen al dat dertel Franschen schyn / en roovers van Hollanders.'

⁹⁶ Anthony Creel, 'Bondich verhaal van Anthony Creel outste helbardier van 't edelmogende collegie admiraliteitj binnen Amsterdam', (1685), KBR, MS 18991-92, f. 66r.

⁹⁷ Hans Medick and Pamela Selwyn, 'Historical Event and Contemporary Experience: the Capture and Destruction of Magdeburg in 1631', *History Workshop Journal* 52 (2001), pp. 23-25.

Revolt may have lost some of their sharp edges. Just as in the North, the generation that had consciously witnessed the iconoclastic furies of 1566 and the duke of Alba's subsequent governorship had begun to die out. Whereas in the North this gave rise to the fear that the Revolt would be forgotten, in the Southern Netherlands no such anxiety existed, and it seems that it simply became less complicated to remember the war as a conflict between two states rather than as a domestic civil war in which Netherlanders had fought one another.

On 24 June 1635, Infante Ferdinand formally answered the French king's declaration of war.⁹⁸ With references to Philip II's successful negotiation of the Peace of Vervins in 1598, Ferdinand wrote about Philip IV's condemnation of the French aid to the rebels in the North and the value he attributed to his epithet of 'Most Catholic King'.⁹⁹ In light of the aggressive stance of France and the French king's justification of the war, the chief-president of the Privy Council Pieter Roose ordered theologian Cornelius Jansenius to write a tract to denounce the French participation in the Protestant alliance during the Thirty Years' War.¹⁰⁰ Jansenius published the text in September 1635, and it was spread in the Habsburg Netherlands but also in England and the Dutch Republic.¹⁰¹ In line with the government viewpoint, Jansenius condemned Richelieu's perceived opportunism and the French government's attempt to justify its alliance with the Dutch Republic by claiming that the war between the Dutch Republic and Spain was not a religious war. He wrote that

it seems to me [...] that the common people of France convince themselves that the war of Germany [the Thirty Years' War], and still less, that of the Low Countries [the Revolt], is not a war of religion; and that it is only about some difficulties concerning the governance, and the state, in which the king of France wants to participate without embroiling himself in matters of religion.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ *Declaration de son Alteze touchant la guerre contre la couronne de France* (Brussels: Hubert Anthoine Velpius, 1635).

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. a2r-a3r.

¹⁰⁰ Cornelius Jansenius, *Mars Gallicus: seu de iustitia armorum et foederum regis Galliae libri duo* (1635); the French edition will be cited: Cornelius Jansenius, *Le mars françois ou La guerre de France, en laquelle sont examinées les raisons de la justice pretendue des armes et des alliances du roi de France* (1637).

¹⁰¹ Richard Pauli-Stravius to Francesco Barberini, 3 April 1636, in: *Correspondance de Jansénius*, edited by Jean Orcibal (Louvain: Bureaux de la Revue, 1947), p. 604.

¹⁰² Jansenius, *Le mars françois*, pp. 244-245: 'Il me semble [...] que le menu peuple de France se persuade, que la guerre d'Allemagne, & moins encore, celle des Païs-Bas, n'est pas une guerre de Religion; & qu'il s'y agit seulement de quelques difficultés touchant la Police, & l'Estat, ausquelles le Roi de France veut prendre part, sans se mêler du fait de Religion.'

Jansenius stressed, however, that ‘the entire war of the States [the Dutch Republic] against the king of Spain is a war of religion, in its beginning, progress and in its end.’¹⁰³ This was an important point to underline, as we can see from the conclusion Jansenius drew subsequently:

As a result, it is not permitted to support them [the Dutch] by alliances nor by assistance. These truths were so manifest that they cannot be disavowed but by the Machiavellists, who make religion serve the state, the spirit serve the body, and eternity serve temporality.¹⁰⁴

To prove his point that the Revolt was a war of religion, Jansenius invoked historical evidence. The war began, he argued, when Protestants from abroad, notably Lutherans and Calvinists, started spreading their hateful doctrines and began publishing remonstrations in which they called for freedom of religion.¹⁰⁵ In 1566, the Iconoclastic Furies broke out during which heretics broke

the images, the crosses, the altars, the baptisteries, the tabernacles in which the Holy Sacrament was kept, the organs, the sees, the chapels, the pulpits, the chandeliers, the missals, the calices, the ampullas, the thuribles and, and other ornaments used by the church.¹⁰⁶

In Antwerp,

the Calvinist Emanuel van Meteren, who has himself been a witness of these sacrileges, and who talks about it without interest of religion has wanted to pass the history to posterity. He says that on the first night, people behaved with such fury, that by twelve hours of the evening there was no chapel that was not broken;

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 244: ‘Toute la guerre des Estats contre le Roi d’Espagne, est une guerre de Religion, en son commencement en son progrès, & en sa fin.’

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*: ‘Par consequent il n’est pas permis de la renforcer par alliances ni par secours. Ces verités étant si manifestes, qu’elles ne peuvent être desavouées que par les Machiavellistes, qui font servir la Religion à l’Estat, l’ame au corps, & l’éternité au temps’.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 245-247

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 247-248: ‘les images, les Croix, les Autels, les Baptisteres, les Tabernacles, où reposoit le S. Sacrament, les Orgues, les Sieges, les Chapelles, les Chaires, les Chandeliers, les Missels, les Calices, les Burettes, les Encensoirs, & autres ornements servants à l’usage de l’Eglise’

not an altar than was not knocked down; not an image that was not torn, in this beautiful church of our Lady.¹⁰⁷

These crimes had led Philip II to send the duke of Alba to the Low Countries, in order to bring all heretics to justice.¹⁰⁸ Jansenius also pointed to the vices of heretics in general and of Dutch heretics in particular. He found that French Catholics accused Huguenots of disloyalty to their natural lord. Jansenius used this piece of information to draw a parallel between France and the Low Countries. ‘The Huguenots and those of Rochelle’, he wrote, ‘are rebels to their king: the Hollanders, too, rebel against their king; they have obeyed without difficulty his grandfather and great-grandfather [Philip II and Charles V]; they have not denied that he [Philip IV] succeeded legitimately’.¹⁰⁹ Again, he used historical evidence to make this point: ‘Each member of their faction, from the day of its birth to the year of the truce, has tended to no other thing than to violating [agreements], and to damage them, and to mocking the contracts by which they pledged themselves to tolerate the ancient religion.’¹¹⁰ Jansenius argued that despite concluding the Pacification of Ghent in 1576, even in that very city the heretics subsequently ‘chased ecclesiastics, pillaged monasteries and counteracted multiple articles of that peace’.¹¹¹ Similarly, in Antwerp the inhabitants proclaimed a ‘Peace of Religion’ in 1578, which allowed both Catholics and Protestants to profess their faith. Yet, Calvinists violated this agreement and ‘when they became stronger, they overthrew the Catholics.’¹¹²

Authorities in the Southern Netherlands continued to oppose the rebels in the North. But from Puteanus’ tract as well as from the fact the government felt it was necessary to publish a response, we can deduce that the continuation of the war was a matter of debate. For the Spanish king, in any case, the war with France from 1635 onwards and closer to home the 1640 revolts in Catalonia and Portugal seriously undermined his

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 249: ‘Emanuel de Metere Calviniste, qui a este lui même témoin de ces sacrileges, & qui en parle sans interest de Religion; en a voulu laisser l’histoire à la posterité. Car il dit que la premiere nuit, on se porta avec tant de furie, qu’avant les douze heures du soir il n’y eut pas une Chapelle, qui ne fut rompue; pas un Autel, qui ne fut abbatu; pas une image, qui ne fut brisée, dans cette belle Eglise de notre Dame’.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 250.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 314: ‘les Huguenots & les Rochelois sont rebelles à leur Roi: les Hollandois le sont aussi au leur; ils ont obei sans difficulté à son aieul & bisaieul; ils n’ont jamais nié, qu’il ne leur ait succédé legitimement’.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 357: ‘Toute leur faction ne tend à autre chose depuis le jour de sa naissance, jusques à l’année de la Trêve, qu’à la persecuter, & à l’estreindre, & qu’à se mocquer des contracts, par lesquels ils s’obligeoient de souffrir l’ancienne Religion.’

¹¹¹ Ibid.: ‘ils chasserent les Ecclesiastiques, ils pillerent les Monasteres, & firent contre plusieurs articles de cette Paix’.

¹¹² Ibid.: ‘quand ils se virent les plus forts, ils mirent à bas les Catholiques.’

ability to fight the Dutch Republic. In the early 1640s, therefore, Philip IV began to sue for peace.

Opposing peace in the North

In the Dutch Republic, popular anti-Spanish narratives seriously obstructed peace-making efforts. References to the Revolt after 1621 continued to be used as before, namely by anti-peace lobbyists to thwart efforts for a lasting peace. Opponents of peace deployed references to the past to keep alive the idea of Spanish unreliability and cruelty and to argue that the war should be continued. We have already seen in chapter 2 that peace negotiations could be topics of discussion in which memories of the Revolt, particularly of its origins, played an important role. From then on, each time a peace was mooted, we see a surge in pamphlets arguing for or against peace with strikingly similar sequences of references to the Revolt as supporting evidence.

Of course, we could dismiss the use of appeals to the public memory of the Revolt as a commercial strategy to sell more books, pamphlets and prints, yet this explanation does not get us much further. Even if references to the Revolt were used to sell more books, that would not rule out the possibility – indeed, it would even support the hypothesis – that these references were expected to appeal to large sections of the population. Whether the political motivation behind the evocation of the past was genuine is in many ways immaterial. It is more relevant to ask why the Revolt remained relevant politically and commercially even though the people who had actually witnessed the events were dying out.

The ongoing war, and especially the recurring discussions about peace negotiations, can explain in part the survival of memories of the Revolt. I can give three brief examples of how the history of the conflict was deployed in the discussions about war and peace at three different stages in the period 1621–48: the recommencement of the war in 1621, political rapprochements between the Republic and the Habsburg overlord in the 1630s, and the period leading up to the Peace of Westphalia in the 1640s.¹¹³ In 1621, an anonymous author argued that ‘to be sure, peace would be have been music in our ears should it have come from another side than the king of Spain, Jesuits and creatures of the

¹¹³ In the Knuttel collection in the National Library of the Netherlands, for instance, these surges are clearly discernible: W.P.C. Knuttel, *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling berustende in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek* 1:2 (Utrecht: HES Publishers, 1978).

pope'.¹¹⁴ 'Never', the author claims, 'have the Spaniards made any agreement with any potentates other than with a double agenda'.¹¹⁵ To support this statement he used as 'example' the Pacification of Ghent (1576) and the Spanish Armada (1588), concluding that 'when we thought we could trust them [the Spaniards], they proceeded to deceive us.'¹¹⁶ Another anonymous opponent of peace in 1621 gave the history of the Revolt in a nutshell, covering in fewer than sixty pages the Inquisition (referring to 'Pieter Bor in the third book of *The Origins of the Netherlandish Troubles*'), the establishment of new dioceses, the religious persecutions and the petition of the nobility to Margaret of Parma.¹¹⁷

In a similar pamphlet published a decade later by an opponent of peace in 1630, entitled *Clear Sign, that the United Netherlands should not negotiate a ceasefire with the enemy* [*Klare aenwijsinge, dat de Vereenighde Nederlanden, gheen treves met den vyandt dienen te maecken*], the anonymous author rejected the thought of negotiating a peace. He did so by referring to the 1560s, 1570s and 1580s to prove the unreliability of Spanish rulers.¹¹⁸ 'And who is so ignorant', the author asked rhetorically, 'that he does not know that most of the lords who currently sit in yonder government, partial enemies of our state, yes of the Netherlands in general or the privileges, rights, laws, and wealth in particular, are hispanicised and Jesuitic persons?'¹¹⁹ He continued by noting that

after all, we have found in the year 1584 [sic] that the Walloon provinces committed perjury, and must up to this day be held as disloyal and dishonourable breakers of pacts, because not only did they unfaithfully break the solemnly concluded and sworn contract in Ghent [Pacification of Ghent] and the subsequent Union under the confederated provinces [Union of Utrecht], they also concluded a

¹¹⁴ Anonymous, *Het lof vanden oorloghe boven den Spaenschen peys* (The Hague: Aert Meuris, 1621), f. b3v: 'Voorwaer de Peys ware ons wel een melodye als sy ons van een ander zijde quame dan van den Coninck van Spaengien, Iesuiten ende creaturen vanden Paus.'

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, f. b3v: 'Nimmermeer en hebben de Spaengjaerts accort met eenige Potentaten gemaect dan met een dobbel verstant'.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*: 'Als wy haer best meenden te betrouwen, doe wierden wy aldereerst bedroghen.'

¹¹⁷ Anonymous, *Aen-merckinge op de propositie vanden ambassadeur Peckius. Inhoudende een kort verhael vande wreedtheyd ende bedriegerije vanden Spaenschen koning ende zynen Raed aen dese landen bewesen, ende de rechtvaerdigheyd van onsen oorlogh daer tegen* (Amsterdam: Marten Jansz Brandt, 1621), p. 10: 'Pieter Bor in het derde Boeck van den oorsprongh der Nederlandsche beroerten'.

¹¹⁸ Anonymous, *Klare aenwijsinge, dat de Vereenighde Nederlanden, gheen treves met den vyandt dienen te maecken* (1630), Knuttel 4014.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, f. b2v: 'Ende wie isser onder ons soo slecht / die niet en weet dat het meestendeel van de Heeren die tegenwoordigh ginder in Regierige siten / partiale vyanden van onsen Staet / jae van de Nederlanden in't Generael offer haerder Privilegien / Rechten / Wetten / en Welvaert in't bysonder / voorts Gespaignioliserde ende Jesuijtsche personen zijn?'

new contract with the prince of Parma [the reconciliation treaties of Alexander Farnese] against us.¹²⁰

To further shock his readers, the author mentioned

all the murdering, hanging, burning, beheading, strangling, and drowning that happened here in the Netherlands since the year sixty-six, to an estimated eighty thousand people, and that the light of the Gospel in that time was extinguished throughout the land: as well as that the duke of Alba with his Spanish army had come into the land, and did such great malice, that all good hearts tremble when they think of it.¹²¹

Multiple publications published around 1630 dealt with the duplicity of Spanish rulers in peace negotiations during the 1570s, 1580s and 1590s.¹²² The anti-peace lobby was a powerful movement, but we must not forget that it was an *opposition* movement and that there was substantial public support for peace negotiations. The most powerful province of the Republic, Holland, pushed for peace, and one anonymous author arguing in its favour abhorred the bellicose language of the war faction, stating that ‘the peace is vox populi and vox Dei. And, surely, it is about time after approximately eighty years of war.’¹²³

¹²⁰ Ibid.: ‘Wy hebben immers oock in ’t Jaer 1584 bevonden dat alle de Walsche Provintien haer hoofd aen meyneedigheyt hebben gebonden / ende by ons voor ontrou ende erlose Verbondt-breeckers tot op esen huysigen dagh moeten gehouden worden / want sy en hebben niet alleen haer Contract tot Gent solemnelijck met ons gemaect en beswooren / mitsgaders de naerder Unie onder de gesamentlijcke Provintien opgerecht / troulooselijck gebroken / maer noch daerenboven met den Prins van Parma een nieu Contract gemaect tegen ons’.

¹²¹ Ibid., f. e2v: ‘Alle het moorden / hangen / branden / onthoofden / wurgen en verdrincken dat hier in Nederlandt ‘tzedert het jaer ses-en-sestich ter saecke van de Religie heeft omtgegaen / het welcke geschat wort op wel tachtigh duysent Menschen / Mitsgaders dat het licht des Evangeliums in die tijt wederom door ’t gantsche Landt wiert uytgeblust: Als oock dat Duc d’Alba met syn Spaensch Leger hier in ’t Landt is gekomen / ende soo groote moetwil heeft bedreven / dat alle goede herten daer over schricken als sy daer aen gedencken’.

¹²² See for instance also: anonymous, *Tractaet tegens pays, treves, en onderhandelinge met den Koningh van Spaignien: waer inne meest alles, wat den propooste van dien bygebracht kan werden, verhandelt wert* (The Hague: Aert Meuris, 1629), Knuttel 3918, ff. d1v-d4v; anonymous, *Redenen, waeromme dat de Vereenighde Nederlanden, geensints eenighe vrede met den Koningh van Spaignien kunnen, mogen, noch behooren te maecken: Zijnde het tweede deel van ’t Tractaet tegens Pays, Treves, en Onderhandelinge met den Koningh van Spaignien* (The Hague: Aert Meuris, 1630).

¹²³ Anonymous, *Montstopping aende vrede-haters* (Leiden: Cornelis Maertensz van Schie, 1647), f. a2r: ‘De Vrede is vox populi ende vox Dei. Ende seecker ’tis wel eens tijt na ontrent 80. Jaren Oorlogh.’; this pamphlet was a reaction to: anonymous, *Spaensche triumphhe, over haer onlanghs bekomen victorien in de Gheuniederde Nederlanden. / By Een lief-hebber des vaderlandts. L.G.I.M* (1647).

Nevertheless, discontent was rife. When a peace was in the making at Munster in the 1640s, another protester wrote about the Netherlands' 'troubled intestines'.¹²⁴ In this pamphlet, a personification of the Netherlands addressed its inhabitants and said that 'in the beginning there was one heart, one soul, one will, God's honour, the maintenance of the religion, privileges, freedoms, and the damage inflicted on the Spaniard'.¹²⁵ The author had the Netherlands argue that by entering into peace negotiations with the Spanish king, the authorities were risking everything the Dutch had been fighting for. By using the past as a mirror, this danger could be averted. 'Note the experience', the author urged his readers, 'in all times, in your century, in all histories, see it, prevent it, before you feel it.'¹²⁶ Unfortunately, 'all memories, previous experience, [and] warnings appear to be in vain. The Trojan horse, the great monster of Munster must be drawn in'.¹²⁷ Warning his readers, the author gave the following advice: 'Do not forget the terrible tyranny, of the duke of Alba, the unceasing persecutions, Inquisition in Spain, in the Netherlands, up until this day'.¹²⁸

With similar concerns about peace, in the 1641 printer Cornelis van der Plasse published *The Spanish Tyranny in the Netherlands* [*De Spaensche tiranye gheschiet in Nederlant*], a text which had already seen editions in various forms from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Van der Plasse wrote in his address to the city magistrate of Amsterdam that he had decided to print this work and dedicate it to the city, 'since you yourselves on the one hand, and your fore-fathers on the other, have opposed and hindered the mentioned furies and inhuman cruelties, besides the violation of the privileges, and have risked goods and blood for that cause'.¹²⁹ Another example is Amsterdam printer Otto Smient, who published in 1643 a new edition of the Beggar Songbook. 'Dear patriots and supporters of our flourishing and honourable Republic', Smient addressed his readers, 'I

¹²⁴ Anonymous, *Nederlants beroerde ingewanden, over de laetste tijdinge, van de Munstersche vrede handelinge* (1647).

¹²⁵ Ibid., f. a3r: 'Inden begin / wast een herte een ziele / een wille. Godts eere/ de maintentie van de Religie / privilegien / vryheden / afbreucke van de Spangiaert.'

¹²⁶ Ibid., f. b1r: 'Siet de ervarentheyt / in alle tijden / in uwe eeuwe / in alle Historien / siet het / voorkomt het / eer ghy't voelt'.

¹²⁷ Ibid., f. a3v: 'Doch alle memorien / voorgaende ervarentheyt / waerschouwingen / mogen niet helpen. Het troaensche paert / het groote Munsters Monster moet ingehaelt'.

¹²⁸ Ibid., f. b3v: 'Vergeet niet de grouwelijcke tijrannye / van Duc d'Alba / de continuele vervolginghe / Inquisitie in Spaengien / in Neerlant / tot op desen dagh'.

¹²⁹ Anonymous, *De Spaensche tiranye gheschiet in Nederlant* (Amsterdam: wed. Cornelis Lodewijcksz vander Plasse, 1641), f*3v: 'alsoo uwe E.E. eensdeels / andersdeels uwer E.E. Voor-vaderen dese voorsz heftighe furien ende onmenschelijcke wreedheden / neffens de verbreckinghe vande Privilegien hebben teghen ghestaen ende verhindert / ende goedt en bloedt daer voren ghewaeght'.

observe not only from old but also young people of our united Netherlands, how agreeable it has been for them to sing and read the first edition of the Beggar Songbook'.¹³⁰ Popular demand, he claimed, had driven him to bring a new edition on the market. Smient further motivated his decision to publish a new edition by pointing out that 'the young right from childhood, should learn it like the A B C so that they could know the tyrannical and inhuman way in which the Spanish king has had the Netherlands ruled, under the policies of the bloodhound the duke of Alba'.¹³¹ To render his exhortation more appealing, Smient added that he had 'regularly heard from his grandfather, who has experienced and seen the sad tragedy, whose father was condemned by the duke of Alba to be burnt in Vlissingen because of his religion, but by divine assistance escaped the duke's bloodthirsty hand.'¹³² By 1643, the Revolt had become part of an ever more distant past. It was not Smient himself, but his great-grandfather who had experienced the duke of Alba's persecutions. Still, the distance in time does not seem to have lessened the political potency of this reference.

The widespread appropriation of the legacy of 'ancestors' who lived at the time of the Revolt shows that descendants considered the conflict as part of their personal or family identity but also very much as part of a Netherlandish identity. It is easy to go along with the rhetoric of early modern people and believe that they wrote their historical texts from a sense of tradition, to preserve 'the' memory of 'the' past. But this explanation ignores an important development. For appeals to preserve the memory of the Revolt in the Republic demonstrate strikingly that in the eyes of many the war had become a defining feature of Dutch identity and in that capacity a constitutive part of Dutch culture. A peace was, therefore, not simply a peace: it was also a threat to Dutch identity. There are numerous examples of how the Revolt had become part of Dutch culture in the seventeenth century. In the 1620s, for instance, the Zeeland poet Simon van Beaumont casually mentioned the duke of Alba in a poem about the capricious nature of mankind. One of the strophes dealt

¹³⁰ *Het tweede deel, van't Geuse liet-boeck, bevattende al de gheschiedenisse, ende den oorspronck van de Nederlandsche oorloghe* (Amsterdam: Otto Barentsz Smient, c. 1643), f. a2r: 'Lieve Patriotten ende Voorstanders van onse bloeyende ende Loffelijcke Republijcke; ick bemerckende niet alleen aen de Oude maer oock aen de Jonghe Liedten van onse vereenichde Nederlanden, hoe aenghenaem dat het is geweest voor haer alle in't singhen ende lesen van het eerste deel van 't Geuse Liet-Boeck'.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, f. a2r: 'de leught van longhs op behoorde als het A:B:C te leeren, om datse konnen weten, hoe tyrannich ende onmenscheelijck den Spaneschen Koninck heeft laten Regeeren inde Nederlanden, onder het beleyt van den Bloedthont Duc d'Alba',

¹³² *Ibid.*, ff. a2r-v: 'dat ick meenichmael van mijn Groot-Vader heb hooren vertrecken, die de droevige Tragedie beleeft ende ghesien heeft, wiens Vader door d'Alba om 't ghelooft ten vuere binnen Vlissinghen veroordeelt was, maer door een God'lijcke hulp sijn bloetdorstige hant ontkomen is.'

with a hoodlum, wearing a modish hat adorned by a panache: ‘That windbag who prances the street, who with a knife on his buckle always talks about fighting, and speaks so much of his valour, as if he had defeated the duke of Alba on the field of battle’.¹³³ Another example of this phenomenon and of the Revolt as cultural entertainment can be found in the Old Maze in Amsterdam. Marijke Spies has shown that early modern sightseers, coming from outside the city or just enjoying an excursion from home, visited this pleasure garden. Around 1625, a local innkeeper constructed the maze, the function of which could be roughly compared to that of a modern theme park.¹³⁴ In 1645, the owner of the theme park published a booklet describing the main attractions, which visitors could buy as a souvenir.¹³⁵ One of the most noteworthy attractions was a fountain around which stood several statues made of stone or marble representing important historical figures. The selection of statues reflected the political developments of the time, and throughout the seventeenth century statues were added to the collection. Among them was for instance the exotic effigy of a Chinese man and some kind of freak show: Eva Vliegen ‘who, people say, had not eaten for thirty-two years.’¹³⁶ The text explained why these historical figures were part of the maze: ‘Since the memory of people is transient, and since they forget like a dream what they just saw due to other things crossing their path, old renowned men have erected effigies [...] of that which they have wanted to preserve for posterity.’¹³⁷ One of these effigies was the duke of Alba. He was described in the booklet as ‘the foremost cause of the Netherlandish troubles’.

Conclusion

Historians are right to observe that the Revolt consisted of many different conflicts, not always evolving around similar issues, but we must also acknowledge that for

¹³³ Simon van Beaumont, ‘Grillen. Aen den achtbaren, geleerden, Heer Petrus Scriverius’, in *Zeevsche nachtegael ende des selfs dryderley gesang: Geheel anders inder vvaerheyt verthoont, als de selve voor desen by sommige uyt enckel mis-verstant verkeerdelyck is gheoordeelt. Door verscheyden treffelijcke Zeeusche Poëten by een ghebracht; ende verciert met Copere Plaeten II* (Middelburg: Ian Pietersz vande Venne, 1623), p. 6: Dien snorcker die soo breedt gaet swaeyen over straet, / Die mettet mes op sy altijt van vechten praet, / En van sijn vromicheyt soo wonder veel vertelt, / Als of hy had Ducdalf gheslagen uytet velt?’.

¹³⁴ Marijke Spies, ‘De Amsterdamse doolhoven - Populair cultureel vermaak in de zeventiende eeuw,’ *Literatuur: tijdschrift over Nederlandse letterkunde* 2 (2001), p. 71.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. a1v-a2r.

¹³⁶ Anonymous, *Verklaringe van treffelijcke konstighe wercken [...]. Alles in den Ouden Dool-hof, tot Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Crispijn vander Pas, c. 1645), f. a1v.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, f. a2r: ‘Alsoo de memori by den Menschen vergancklijck is, ende de Menschen door andere voorvallende dinghen het geene dat sy dadelijck gesien hebben, als eenen droom syn vergetende, soo hebben de Oude beroemde Mannen laeten beeltenissen oprechten [...]; het geene sy voor de nakomelingen wilden bewaert hebben’.

contemporary Netherlanders the sixteenth-century framing of the Revolt had caught on very well. So well, that even when the conflict could no longer be seen as a civil war, it continued to evoke sixteenth-century associations. This was partly the result of the intense political exploitation of the past in the period leading up to 1621, both in the Dutch Republic and the Habsburg Netherlands. Public memories of Revolt became necessary knowledge for being a 'good' Netherlander. And the two sets of canonical memories in North and South supported very different ideas about what it was to be a good Netherlander.

In the long term, this interplay between memory and identity in both North and South remained very important for individuals. As the case of anti-peace propaganda in the North has shown, recalling the Revolt in opposition to peace consolidated the canon's status as an anti-peace narrative, and frequent references to the conflict increased its relevance in society, even for those who did not share that particular political agenda. After 1621 we increasingly see that the Revolt became an important part of Dutch and South Netherlandish culture. Examples are the maze in Amsterdam or the cursory references to evil Hollanders in the South that do not at first sight seem to serve specific political purposes. In the next chapter, we will see how the appropriation of memories of the Revolt continued after the war ended in 1648.