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La Lotharingie en question
Identités, oppositions, intégration

Lotharingische Identitäten
im Spannungsfeld
zwischen integrativen
und partikularen Kräften

Actes des
14es JOURNÉES LOTHARINGIENNES

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édités par Michel MARGUE et Hérold PETTIAU

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Lotharingia in Burgundian times: an identity?

Introduction

One of the most elaborate manifestations of the Burgundian theatre state took place in the city of Trier, during the meeting in the autumn of 1473 between Charles the Bold, fourth and last duke of the dynasty of Burgundy-Valois, and emperor Frederick III. Attended by the bishops of Liège and Utrecht, Charles regarded this the ideal moment to show off Burgundian wealth and splendour. The surviving sources mention that he spent an amount of nearly 40,000 lb for the material for the robes of more then 1000 courtiers that belonged his retinue. Duke John of Cleves and 24 other leading courtiers received clothes embroidered with gold, the herald of the order of the Golden Fleece and 52 others received short crimson robes etc. etc. The cortege on the other side was not less remarkable, however. Here the archbishops of Mainz and Trier, a captive Ottoman prince and a large group of imperial princes attended. Emperor and Duke met outside the city of Trier and together they entered town, in order to discuss serious subjects[1]. The pompous opening conflicts with the unworthy end of the negotiations. On November 25 the Emperor rose early and left the town by boat without taking leave of Charles. The duke was taken completely by surprise. The Burgundian ambassador Peter von Hagenbach followed Frederic's ship in a rowing boat begging the emperor to please wait for a moment. The emperor nearly succumbed but eventually he left, leaving Hagenbach and the duke behind, devastated and humiliated.

Among historians, the Trier conference is most famous because of the fact that it was a complete failure, and not just because of the untidy final protocol. Especially one of the aims of Charles the Bold has drawn the attention, his ambition to turn his lands into a kingdom, which should be called 'Friesland', but which in a territorial sense bears a close resemblance to the tenth-century duchy of Lower Lotharingia. Though for Charles an issue of secondary importance, his ambition to establish a kingdom has haunted minds of modern historians. Some related the project to the birth of the Belgian nation. Here, they thought, elements of a

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[1] VAUGHAN, Richard, Charles the Bold. The last Valois duke of Burgundy, Woodbridge 2002, p. 140-150.

common identity manifested themselves for the first time. Charles' plan was in line with one of the major administrative ideologies and the official traditions of legitimization, but was the Lower Lotharingian area in the fifteenth century homogeneous enough, in a political, economic, cultural sense, to generate a shared identity among the subjects? That is the central question I want to pose in this paper. In other words: was Lower Lotharingia as an idea or as a reality solid enough to inspire Charles the Bold, or were polity and identity so much fragmented by disintegrating forces, that we should consider Charles' plan to be an effort of legitimation?

It is notoriously difficult to give sound definitions for concepts like 'collective identity', or 'nation' and this is not the place to start the discussion anew. Most authors would agree that a nation is formed by a political element – a state, or the ambition to create it – and a cultural element. Let us stick with the rather broad definition of a nation phrased by Adrian Hastings: 'A large human community, at once cultural and political[2]'. Of course, symbols, ideals, concrete structures are necessary to substantiate this 'imagined community', for instance a shared, well-defined territory, shared political institutions and shared economic interests, or, on a more cultural level a common name for the territory and its inhabitants, a shared culture, and especially a deep feeling of comradeship towards one's fellow-citizens. In actual practice, therefore, the quest for the nation boils down to the question if a political, an institutional or especially a cultural homogeneity existed inside a given territory[3]. In the present paper I want to discuss the measure of homogeneity that existed in the Kingdom envisaged in 1473. Before I can do so, I should turn towards the plan itself and its interpretation by modern historians.

I. The 1473 plan

The territory that was under discussion when both princes met in Trier in 1473 is elucidated in different sources. Most elaborate, interesting and credible is the description given by the so-called *Kattendijke chronicle*, dating from c. 1490. In translation:

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[2] Hastings, Adrian, The construction of nationhood. Ethnicity, religion and nationalism, Cambridge / New York 1997, p. 3, 14, 25.

[3] Llobera, Josep R. The god of modernity. The development of nationalism in Western Europe, Oxford 1994, p. 4; Schlesinger, Walter. Die Entstehung der Nationen. Gedanken zu einem Forschungsprogramm, in: Aspekte der Nationenbildung im Mittelalter, Nationes 1, ed. by Helmut Beumann, Werner Schröder, Sigmaringen 1979, p. 11-62, here p. 57 f.; Hastings, Construction (footnote 2), p. 2 f.

The emperor would allow Charles to have him crowned him king of two king-doms. The first kingdom should be Friesland, Lotharingia, Brabant, Holland, Zeeland, Limbourg, Namur, Guelders, Hainault, Cleves, Mark, margrave of the Holy Empire of Antwerp, the church of Liège, the church of Cambrai, and the church of Utrecht. The other kingdom should be high Burgundy, Savoie, Lor-raine, Piemont, Vaudemont, Luxembourg, the church of St. Steven in Lorraine, the church of Toul, and the church of Verdun. Furthermore, Charles would issue new laws for all these lands. He should also receive a new seal and a new coat of arms[4].

Apparently, it was a well thought-out plan, for we are not just informed about the geographical extent of the kingdom, but also about the application of a general legislation and the creation of new symbols of state. Charles had a brand-new coat of arms designed for the new creation: a golden lion rampant bearing a cross of St.-Andrew on a field of azure. Furthermore, new money should be minted and a new seal made – probably carrying the same emblems. In the plan, the creation of two different kingdoms is anticipated: Friesland and Burgundy; together they would cover the whole stretch between North Sea and Mediterranean, more or less reconstructing the Carolingian Middle Kingdom. The territorial extent of both Kingdoms is indicated on map I. The proposed kingdom of Burgundy refers to the *royaume burgundo-provençal* of the ninth century, but that needs not concern us here, as we will concentrate on the northern Kingdom[5].

The name of the northern kingdom, Friesland, is remarkable. As successor to the counts of Holland, Charles the Bold carried the title of Friesland, not the royal title however, but the humble indication as 'Lord of Friesland'. Still, the kingdom was well known in the fifteenth century as well, for it was considered to be one of the famous *XVII royaumes chretiens*. The name and fame of the Frisian kings had survived in *Chansons de geste* and in the Holland historiographical tradition, copies of which were available in the Burgundian library and it is

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4   Johan Huyssen van Kattendijke-kroniek. Die historie of die cronicke van Hollant, van Zeelant ende van Vrieslant ende van den Stichte van Utrecht, ed. by Antheun Janse / Ingrid Biesheuvel, The Hague 2005, fol. 551v-552r. The quotation can be com-pared with the one cited by: Jongkees, A.G., Charles le Téméraire et la souveraineté. Quelques considérations, in: Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden 95 (1980), p. 315-334, here p. 332 n. 54. Here are mentioned: Fries-land, Lotharingia, Brabant, Holland, Zeeland, Limburg, Namur, Guelders, Hainault, Cleves, Malines, Antwerp, Liège, Cambray, Utrecht, High-Burgundy, Savoie, Lorraine, Utemond, Vaudemont, Luxemburg, the church of Scheenem, the church of van Thum, the church of Vierdon.

5   Lacaze, Yvon, Le rôle des traditions dans la genèse d'un sentiment national au xvᵉ siècle. La Bourgogne de Philippe le Bon, in: Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes 129 (1971), p. 303-385, here p. 309-316.

probably this circumstance that was the reason for the Burgundian duke – or his administration – to opt for this name[6]. The royal title of Friesland deliberately connected the new Kingdom to legendary kings like Radboud and Gondeboud, who had been beaten by Pippin, who in his turn, by the way, was considered to be one of the ancestors of Charles the Bold. Still, in a territorial sense, the use of the name 'Friesland' is strange. The extent of Friesland in earlier times was disputed. According to some, it stretched from the river to the river Weser, others thought it was much larger and included the town of Lübeck. All agreed however, that it covered the coastal regions of the North Sea, a region clearly deviant from that depicted in the territorial description of the 1473-kingdom, for it covered neither Brabant, nor Hainaut, nor the whole region between the rivers Maas and Rhine[7]. It is therefore no coincidence, that later, around the turn of the sixteenth century, the kingdom envisaged was associated with a completely different historical entity: the kingdom of Lotharingia. The well-informed chronicler Philip Wielant (1441/1442-1526) wrote in his *Antiquitez de Flandre* (ca. 1500) about the Trier-meeting:

Le ducq Charles consentist d'estre roy de Lottrice, et voulust retenir icelluy royaulme, disant qu'il y avoit droit et tiltre, parce qu'il en estoit venu et descendu et qu'il tenoit et possessoit la pluspart de terres qui avoient esté à icelluy rayaulme, et entraitta avecq l'Empereur Frédérique et furent à ce faire toutes préparations prestes, mais l'Empereur lui faillist[8].

Exactly, the kingdom of Lotharingia far better corresponds to the projected kingdom than Friesland. It had been erected in 895 by Emperor Arnulf of Carinthia for his bastard son Zwentibold. After five troublesome years, Zwentibold died and the kingdom was abolished. It survived for a few decades as a semi-autonomous duchy inside the Empire, but it was deprived of its independence with the death of Giselbert in 939 and subjected to the Empire. Two decades later it was split in a northern part, Lower Lotharingia, and a southern part, Upper

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[6] JONGKEES, A.G., Het koninkrijk Friesland in de vijftiende eeuw, Groningen / Batavia 1946; JONGKEES, A.G., Bourgondië en de Friese Vrijheid, in: De vrije Fries 41 (1953), p. 63-78; LACAZE, Le rôle des traditions (footnote 5), p. 351-357; BREUKER, Philippus Hildebrand / JANSE, Antheun, Beelden, in: Negen eeuwen Friesland-Holland. Geschiedenis van een haat-liefdeverhouding, ed. by Philippus Hildebrand BREUKER / Antheun JANSE, Leeuwarden / Zutphen 1997, p. 9-66, here p. 20 f.

[7] LACAZE, Le rôle des traditions (footnote 5), p. 352 f..

[8] Filips WIELANT, Recueil des antiquités de Flandre (Recueil des chroniques de Flandre) ed. by Joseph-Jan DE SMET, 4 vols, Brussels 1837-1865, IV, p. 7-442, here p. 52; Compare Adrien DE BUT, Chronique (Chroniques relatives à l'histoire de la Belgique sous la domination des ducs de Bourgogne), ed. by J. KERVYN DE LETTENHOVE, 3 vols, Brussels 1870-1873, I, p. 387; for the date of the Antiquitez: MONBALLYU, J. Een autograaf van Phelips Wielant (1441-1520), in: Lias 10 (1983), p. 165-175, here p. 167.

Lotharingia. From the eleventh century onwards, the importance of Lower Lotharingia as a political entity was undermined by the growing power of the regional principalities it encompassed, and its political meaning subsequently became very limited, perhaps we should say negligible. At the diet of Schwäbisch Hall in 1190 the state of affairs was formalised, when duke Godefroid III of Lower Lotharingia had died and the sphere of influence of his son Henri I was formally limited to his own principality, the duchy of Brabant. There were still some minor prerogatives attached to the title, but in the following century these became more and more attached to the Brabant ducal title – which was, by the way, a derivation of the Lower Lotharingian one[9]. From 1430 onwards, the dukes of Burgundy carried the Lower Lotharingian ducal title as successors to the Brabant dukes.

During the fifteenth century, not just the duchy of Lower Lotharingia, but also the kingdom of Lotharingia was popular among Burgundian diplomats. One of the most explicit in a longer series of references is written in an administrative mandate for the Burgundian envoy Antoine Haneron. It specifies that the frontiers of the Kingdom of Lotharingia had been formed by the rivers Scheldt and Rhine. The bishopric of Utrecht – which more or less coincided with Friesland – was also considered to be part of Lower Lotharingia, even if it was essentially located on the northern side of the river Rhine:

L'on treuve par anciennes cronicques que l'Empire ne souloit s'extendre que jusques à Rin, et entre le Rin et le royaume de France estoit ung royaume scitué entre l'Escault et le Rin et entre Bourgoigne et la mer de Frize, ouquel royaume sont trois eglises metropolitanes, assavoir Maiance, Treves et Cou-logne, et les cathedrales qui s'ensuyvent: Mex, Toul, Verdun, Cambray, Liège et Utrecht; et à cause de Lothaire premier roy fut ledit royaume appellé Lothier mais [...] ledit royaume fut tout desseuré, et vint la plus part à l'Empire où elle est encores de present[10].

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9   The most important dignity attached to the Lotharingian title was the margravate of Antwerp. In the fifteenth century, this, and other prerogatives were effectively incorporated in the Brabant title. See: BONENFANT, Paul / BONENFANT-FEYTMANS, Anne-Marie, Du duché de Brabant au duché de Brabant, in: Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire 46 (1968), p. 1129-1165, here p. 1131-1133; DESPY, Georges, La fonction ducale en Basse-Lotharingie de 900 à 1100, in: Revue du Nord 48 (1966), p. 107-109; LARET-KAYSER, Arlette, La fonction et les pouvoirs ducaux en Basse Lotharingie au XIᵉ siècle, in: Publications de la Section historique de l'Institut G.D. de Luxembourg 95 (1981), p. 133-152.

10   STEIN, Henri, Un diplomate Bourguignon du XVᵉ siècle: Antoine Haneron, in: Bibli-othèque de l'École des Chartes 98 (1937), p. 283-346, here p. 318. These initiatives fit into a long series of attempts to make Philip the Good King, or even Roman-King. Compare: EHM, Petra, Burgund und das Reich. Spätmittelalterliche Aussenpolitik am Beispiel der Regierung Karls des Kühnen (1465-1477) (Pariser historische Studien,

When we return to the Friesland kingdom projected in 1473, it is clear that this is not a mirror image of the kingdom of Lotharingia as projected by the Burgundian diplomats a few years before. The bishoprics of Toul and Verdun, for instance, were in 1473 not planned to belong to the northern, but to the southern kingdom of Burgundy. The territory envisaged by Charles and his interlocutors, far better matched that of Lower Lotharingia, the northern duchy that resulted from the division of Lotharingia in 959 – Upper Lotharingia was added to the kingdom of Burgundy. Still, on closer investigation even Lower Lotharingia doesn't fit in completely, for many white-spots are visible, especially in the region between the rivers Maas and Rhine. Most remarkable is the fact that the territory of the prince bishopric of Cologne is not included. Without any doubt, the reason for this is the fact that Charles was dependant on the support of the German electors. This is confirmed by the fact that the prince-bishoprics of Mainz and Trier, and the Palatinate of the Rhine – which probably should have belonged to the southern Kingdom – are not mentioned in the plan as well.

If we confront the proposed kingdom of Friesland with the political reality of 1473, it is clear that all the principalities mentioned in the *Kattendijke* chronicle were in one way or another subjected – or at least related to Charles the Bold. In 1467 his father had left him many principalities situated inside the Lower Lotharingian area: Namur, Brabant (and Antwerp), Limburg, Hainault, Holland and Zeeland and Luxemburg. A few years later Charles had added the duchy of Guelders. Furthermore he functioned as a warden for the prince-bishoprics of Liège, Cambray and Utrecht. Most remarkable are the references of Cleves and Mark, these were not actually controlled by Charles, but were governed by dynasties that were closely related to the Burgundian house.

II. State of research

When considering the state of research with regard to the homogeneity of the Lower Lotharingian area, or the survival of a common identity in the fifteenth century, we should bear in mind that most modern scholars address the territory of the 'Seventeen provinces', that manifested itself during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and not that of Lower Lotharingia. Even if there are obvious similarities between both territories, their character differs fundamentally. The region between the rivers Maas and Rhine did not belong to the Seventeen Provinces; on the southwestern side, the counties of Flanders and Artois, that by no means formed part of Lower Lotharingia, did belong to the Seventeen

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61), München 2002, p. 118-120; Stein, Robert, Recht und Territorium. Die lotharingischen Ambitionen Philipps des Guten, in: Zeitschrift für historische Forschung 24 (1997), p. 481-508.

Provinces. The territory had shifted, so to say, to the west, leaving out the eastern parts of Lower Lotharingia and adding Flanders and Artois, that formed part of the French Kingdom[11].

An exception in this respect is *Lotharingien als historischer Raum*, published in 1997, by the German historian Thomas Bauer. Bauer investigated the cultural continuity, the measure to which the short-lived Kingdom of Lotharingia lived on as a consistent cultural area in the next centuries. Inhabited by Frisians, Franks, Alemans and Walloons, Lotharingia was ethnically and linguistically divers, for various Latino-Romance and Germanic dialects were spoken. Still, on the basis of the territorialism of bishoprics and prince-bishoprics, the attached foundation legends and the worship of saints, Bauer adduces that the Kingdom of Lotharingia in the High Middle Ages was characterized by a clear cultural and mental homogeneity. In that time Lotharingia existed not just as a polity, but also as a mental concept:

Die lotharingische Eigenständigkeit, Sonderheit sowie Zusammengehörigkeit im Bewusstsein, zogen sich wie ein Leitfaden durch die Jahrhunderte[12].

Bauer just makes an exception for the northern parts, the coastal area of the Northern Low Countries, that, even though situated inside the Lotharingian territory, cherished an identity of its own, based on ethnic and cultural foundations[13]. Should we assume that this 'Eigenständigkeit' of the Kingdom of Lotharingia was transferred to the Duchy of Lower Lotharingia, and still existed in Burgundian times? Did the *status-aparte* of the northern part, 'Friesland', live on?

An indirect answer to the last-mentioned question may be found in literature on Dutch history. In order to legitimize the modern state of the Netherlands, or at least to provide it with old roots, the unity of the 'Seventeen provinces' has been discussed vividly. According to the Dutch interpretation, a contrast existed between the northern and the southern parts of the Low Countries, which

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[11] See for instance the article by Frank G. Hirschmann, who discusses in his 'Landesbewußtsein im Westen des Reiches?' three different areas: the Low Countries, Rhineland and Upper Lotharingia: HIRSCHMANN, Frank G., Landesbewußtsein im Westen des Reiches? Die Niederlande, die Rheinlande und Lothringen, in: Spätmittelalterliches Landesbewußtsein in Deutschland (Vorträge und Forschungen, 61), ed. by Matthias WERNER, Ostfildern 2005, p. 223-264.

[12] BAUER, Thomas, Lotharingien als Historischer Raum (Rheinisches Archiv, 136), Cologne / Weimar / Vienna 1997; compare: PARISSE, Michel, Lotharingia, in: The New Cambridge Medieval History III, c. 900-c. 1024, ed. by Timothy REUTER, Cambridge 1999, p. 310-327, here p. 312. Bernd Schneidmüller indicates that the character of the Lotharingian concept changed drastically during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: SCHNEIDMÜLLER, Bernd, Regnum und ducatus. Identität und Integration in der lotharingischen Geschichte des 9. bis 11. Jahrhunderts, in: Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter 51 (1987), p. 81-114, here p. 103, 111.

[13] BAUER, Lotharingien (footnote 12), p. 642-666.

appears to be in line with the exceptional status that Thomas Bauer attached to the Friesland-region with regard to Lotharingia. To illustrate this view we can quote the Leiden historian Robert Fruin (1823-1899), who discussed the division of the Low Countries in a northern (Dutch) and a southern (Belgian) part (the so called 'scheuring'):

It was not a transitory misunderstanding that brought about the rift, it was a deeply rooted difference between the northern and the southern Netherlands, expressed in descent, in national character, in history, in religion, in government and in general social circumstances[14].

In fact, this view is also at the basis of the convictions of for instance Jonathan Israel, worded in his fist-thick bestseller *The Dutch Republic*[15]. However, in a recent publication Judith Pollmann demonstrates that a mental division between the northern and southern Netherlands only appeared in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, when the southern Low Countries were a humble province of the Spanish king and the northern Low Countries developed into a politically independent economic world power. Pollmann shows that, even if the unity of the Low Countries remained an ideal, it was poisoned with growing mutual distrust during the seventeenth century, based on differing religious, social and political assumptions. The 'others' were considered to be errant souls, traitors to the Roman Church or to the ideals of the Revolt[16].

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Henri Pirenne developed a point of view that was more or less literally at right angles to the Dutch interpretation – and to Bauer's that is[17]. In 1900 he published for the first time his central thesis with regard to the Low Countries in a paper printed and reprinted under the title of *La nation belge*, a point of view that he later used as a central line of reasoning in the famous *Histoire de Belgique*. According to him, the dukes of Burgundy had united two groups of principalities that had been in a process of growing together for a long time: on the one hand the 'French' county of Flanders, on the other hand the 'German' duchy of Lower Lotharingia.

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[14] Fruin, Robert, Tien jaren uit den Tachtigjarigen oorlog, 1588-1598, Amsterdam 1861, p. 440.

[15] Israel, Jonathan I., The Dutch Republic. Its rise, greatness, and fall, 1477-1806, Oxford 1998, see for instance p. 57.

[16] Pollmann, Judith, No man's land. Reinventing Netherlandish identities, 1585-1621, in: Networks, regions and nations. Shaping identities in the Low Countries, 1300-1650, ed. by Robert Stein / Judith Pollmann (Studies in medieval and reformation traditions, 149), Leiden 2010, p. 241-261.

[17] For a general overview of the Belgian historiography with regard to the Burgundian dukes: Carlier, Philippe, Contribution à l'étude de l'unification Bourguignonne dans l'historiographie nationale Belge de 1830 à 1914, in: Revue belge d'histoire contemporaine 16 (1985), p. 1-24, here p. 17.

Ce morceau de la France qu'était la Flandre et ce morceau de l'Allemagne qu'était la Lotharingie allaient par un mouvement continu s'arracher l'un et l'autre aux États dont ils relevaient, pour se réunir enfin, sous le sceptre de la maison de Bourgogne, en un nouvel État dont la Hollande et la Belgique de nos jours sont les descendantes directes[18].

In fact, he assumed, the Burgundian dukes just united in a political sense what in reality formed a unity in the heart:

Comme État, les Pays-Bas remontent aux ducs de Bourgogne, mais avant les ducs il y avait déjà un peuple des Pays-Bas[19].

Despite their bilingual character and the political divisions, Pirenne argued, the Low Countries had a common civilization in the late Middle Ages. The character of this civilization was, he thought, intellectual, and it was reinforced by economic solidarity. The resulting identity was characterized by a sentiment of belonging nor to the Holy Roman Empire, nor to the kingdom of France.

But Pirenne did not consider the Lower Lotharingian part of the Low Countries to be a homogeneous entity, for it was divided in an eastern en a western part. The western parts – especially Flanders, Brabant, Hainault, Holland and Zeeland – were joined as the consequence of a more or less natural development during the first decades of the fifteenth century; the expansion to the east, to the contrary took place a century later and it was the result of conquest:

This assemblage of seventeen provinces, then, half Romanic and half Germanic, which constituted the Burgundian state at its completion, was composed of two clearly distinct groups of territories, The first, lying in the basins of the Meuse and the Scheldt, and extending along the North Sea west of the Zuyder Zee, was formed during the reign of Philip the Good, by virtue of a long historic evolution and without encountering serious opposition, except in the territory of Liège ... The second, on the contrary, a necessary aggrandizement of the Burgundian possessions, was the result of a war of conquest, and was built up only by means of violent annexations[20].

But still, he argued, it was only obvious that Philip the Good, and later Charles the Bold referred to Lotharingia, when considering a general name for their possessions, for this concept suited their purposes best:

Ses domaines ne couvraient-ils pas d'ailleurs la plus grande partie du royaume de Lotharingie, et, à cinq cent ans d'intervalle, n'apparaissait-il pas comme successeur de Lothaire II et de Zwentibold?

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[18] Pirenne, Henri, La nation belge, Brussels 1900, p. 3.

[19] Pirenne, La nation belge (footnote 18), p. 4.

[20] Pirenne, Henri, The formation and constitution of the Burgundian state (fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), in: American historical review 14 (1909), p. 477-502, here p. 493.

Or, again:

The memory of the ancient kingdom of Lorraine certainly haunted his (Philip's) mind and the mind of his principal councillors, and inspired him with the ambition to obtain a royal title[21].

In sum, Pirenne's approach of Lower Lotharingia is characterized by three elements. First, it formed one of the two constituent parts of the 'Seventeen Provinces', and its inhabitants constituted, together with the Flemish, the people of the Low Countries. Secondly, Lower Lotharingia itself was divided into an eastern and a western part. Thirdly, the dukes of Burgundy tried to use its ideological reverberation to legitimize and constitute their possessions, especially *vis-à-vis* the Empire.

During the following decades, Pirenne's view was put into perspective from three sides. The Dutch historian Johan Huizinga, not less famous than Pirenne, approached the issue in an extensive paper about the previous history of the national consciousness in the Low Countries. He concluded, that in the Low Countries the necessary conditions failed for the development of an awareness to belong to a larger community than the principalities[22]. This is confirmed by scholars' recent insights, that the awareness of a general identity embracing the Seventeen Provinces as an entity was phrased by the spin doctors surrounding William of Orange in the second half of the sixteenth century and subsequently spread by pamphlets[23]. Secondly, it appears that especially in the fourteenth century, but sometimes much earlier, vivid identities were attached to these principalities like Liège, Brabant, Guelders, and Holland, all situated within the Lower Lotharingian area[24]. Besides, there were the local identities, attached to hometowns, regions or even to some of the local institutions[25]. It is obvious that

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[21] PIRENNE, The formation and constitution (footnote 20), p. 493 f.

[22] HUIZINGA, Johan, Uit de voorgeschiedenis van ons nationaal besef, in: HUIZINGA, Johan, Verzamelde werken, 10 vol. Haarlem 1948, II, 97-160, here p. 154.

[23] POLLMANN, No man's land (footnote 16).

[24] LEJEUNE, Jean, Liège et son pays. Naissance d'une patrie (XIIIᵉ-XIVᵉ siècles) (Bibliothèque de la Faculté de philosophie et lettres de l'Université de Liège, 112), Liège 1948, p. 467-525; STEIN, Robert, Politiek en historiografie. Het ontstaansmilieu van Brabantse kronieken in de eerste helft van de vijftiende eeuw (Miscellanea Neerlandica 10), Leuven 1994, p. 267-274; NOORDZIJ, G.A. Gelre. Dynastie, land en identiteit in de late middeleeuwen (Werken uitgegeven door Gelre, 59), Hilversum 2009, passim; TILMANS, Karin, De ontwikkeling van een vaderland-begrip in de laat-middeleeuwse en vroeg-moderne geschiedschrijving van de Nederlanden, in: Vaderland. Een geschiedenis vanaf de vijftiende eeuw tot 1940, ed. by Nicolas Cornelis Ferdinand VAN SAS, Amsterdam 1999, p. 7-53, here p. 13-35; compare: HIRSCHMANN, Landesbewußtsein im Westen des Reiches? (Footnote 11).

[25] See for the Bruges example: BOOGAART, Thomas A., An ethnography of late medieval Bruges. Evolution of the corporate milieu, 1280-1349 (Mellen studies in geography 11), Lewiston / Queenston / Lampeter 2004, p. 42-48.

these regional and local identities interfere with a possible Lotharingian identity. Finally the Brussels historian Paul Bonenfant formulated a last relativisation to Pirenne's views. He brought forward that just a few isolated references to the Lotharingian tradition in Burgundian times have survived. Furthermore, he proved that the political reference to Lotharingia during the fifteenth century was not introduced by the Burgundian duke or by his bureaucrats, but by one of the Emperor's heralds[26]. We may ask ourselves therefore, if the dukes of Burgundy actually were obsessed by a Lotharingian dream.

This brings us back to the initial question: was the unity, the homogeneity of Lower Lotharingia solid enough in the fifteenth century to generate a common feeling, to create nation, and subsequently to serve as a backcloth for the ambitions of Charles the Bold?

III. The Lower Lotharingian tradition in the late Middle Ages

As I mentioned before, the dukes of Brabant carried the Lower Lotharingian title from the early twelfth century onwards. Even if this title was formally dismantled in the course of the twelfth century, for the dukes of Brabant the 'Lotharingian tradition' remained an important guiding principle in their political ambition; Lower Lotharingia became a kind of ideal[27]. Subsequent dukes used the concept to enlarge their sphere of influence to the east, most often in cooperation with the Emperors. In 1257 Henry III was appointed as the Emperor's substitute in the Lower Lotharingian area, and in 1292 his son John I. The importance of the Lower Lotharingian ideal was boosted in the years 1283-1288, when duke John I of Brabant became involved in the Limburg war of succession, gained victory at the famous battle of Worringen, near the river Rhine (1288), and subsequently added the ducal title of Limburg to those of Lower Lotharingia and Brabant. In reality, the ducal title of Limburg was, like the Brabant one, just a derivation of the Lower Lotharingian title[28]. When the famous Antwerp town clerk Jan van Boendale (†1351) writes in his *Brabantsche Yeesten* about the

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[26] Huizinga, Johan, Burgund. Eine Krise des romanisch-germanischen Verhältnisses, in: Huizinga, Johan, Verzamelde werken (footnote 22), II, p. 238-265, here p. 246-248; Bonenfant, Paul, État bourguignon et Lotharingie, in: Académie royale de Belgique. Bulletin de la Classe des lettres et des sciences morales, 5th series, vol. 41 (1955), p. 266-282.

[27] Werner, Matthias, Der Herzog von Lothringen in salischer Zeit, in: Die Salier und das Reich, Band I, Salier, Adel und Reichsverfassung, ed. by Stefan Weinfurter, Sigmaringen 1991, p. 367-473, indicates that the political importance of Lower Lotharingia dwindled during the eleventh century.

[28] The close connection of the Limburg claims and the ducal title of Lower Lotharingia was stressed in contemporary historiography. See in this regard especially *Chronica de*

prelude to the battle of Worringen, he emphasizes the status of John as duke of Lower Lotharingia, for his adversaries 'conspired against the duke of Lotharingia' ('Te gader swoeren ghemeenlike, / Ieghen den hertoghe van Lothrike')[29].

In their capacity as dukes of Limburg and Lower Lotharingia, the Brabantine dukes were entitled to the so called *Geleitrecht*, the right to accompany and protect travellers in the region between the rivers Maas and Rhine, later evolving in the *Landfrieden*[30]. The *Geleitrecht* was frequently excercised by the dukes of Brabant during the fourteenth century, and according to Jan van Boendale, it was the immediate cause for the battle of Worringen, for he tells us about the citizens of Cologne and some noblemen approaching duke John with the request to punish the robber barons in the castle of Worringen, because he was obliged to do so if he wanted to act as duke of Limburg:

And they asked the duke, if he would besiege the castle of Woeringen with them, which then was situated in the bishop's territory of Cologne, for the merchants and pilgrims lost their possessions, and many suffered from the raiders living at the castle. [They said that], whoever wanted to be duke of Limburg, was obliged to do so.	*Ende baden den hertoghe dat* *Hi met hem Woronc belaghe,* *Dat doen in dien daghe* *Onder den bisscop van Coelne stoet,* *Want die coepmanne haer goet* *Ende die pelgrimme daer verloren,* *Ende dat meneghen groten toren* *Ghesciede, ten selven daghen,* *Van rovers, die opt huus laghen,* *Ende, wie oec hertoghe soude wesen* *Van Lymborch, dat hi te desen* *Van rechte ware ghebonden*[31].

origine ducum Brabantiae, from c. 1300 (MGH SS, 25), ed. by J. Heller, Hannover 1880, p. 405-413.

[29] Boendale, Jan van, Die Brabantsche Yeesten of rijmkronijk van Brabant, ed. by J.F. Willems / J.H. Bormans, 7 books in 3 vols, Brussels 1839-1867, IV, vs. 1268-70; compare vs. 1426.

[30] Rotthoff-Kraus, Claudia, Die politische Rolle der Landfriedenseinungen zwischen Maas und Rhein in der zweiten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts, Aachen 1990, p. 13; Angermeier, Heinz, Königtum und Landfriede im deutschen Spätmittelalter, München 1966, p. 60-62; Janssen, Wilhelm, Die niederrheinischen Territorien im Spätmittelalter. Politische Geschichte und Verfassungsentwicklung 1300-1500, in: Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter 64 (2000), p. 45-167, here p. 88; Grunzweig, Armand, Le grand duc du Ponant, in: Le Moyen Âge 62 (1956), p. 119-163, here p. 141 n. 58; Avonds, Piet, Brabant en de slag bij Woeringen. Mythe en werkelijkheid, in: Avonds, Piet / Janssens, J.D, Brabant en de slag bij Woeringen (1288), Brussels 1989, p. 15-99, here p. 43-46 and passim; Avonds, P., Brabant en Limburg 1100-1403, in: Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden II, Haarlem 1982, p. 452-482, here p. 460-473.

[31] Boendale, Brabantsche Yeesten (footnote 29), IV, vs. 1364-1375. Compare IV, vs. 1376-1384.

This privilege was frequently referred to during the fourteenth century, for instance by duke Wenceslas of Brabant (1356-1383), who tried to enforce his power in the Maas-Rhine area, acting as duke of Lower Lotharingia and as vicar imperial, only to be defeated humiliatingly at Baesweiler in 1371.

The Brabant dukes made an opportunistic use of the Lotharingian title, just like their Burgundian descendants would do more than a century later, and especially Charles the Bold in 1473. This does by no account imply that Brabant and the Maas-Rhine-region were considered, a politically inseparable entity, a homogeneous area, or a moral unity. This is shown clearly by another passage in the *Brabantsche Yeesten*, when Boendale discusses the war of his hero, the formidable duke John III, against seventeen neighbouring princes. Among these seventeen, the *Oestheren*, the neighbouring lords living on the eastern side of Brabant, across the river Maas but clearly inside the Lower Lotharingian area, were John's most determined adversaries. This is explainable, Boendale says, because

Everyone who ever lived on the other side of the river Maas hated Brabant, because they envy with all their heart, and they will always envy, the duke's wealth and his country's trade and industry, which they can't match over there. That is very hard for them … *You Oestheren, know that you better not wake the Lion because, when you did so in the past, he has always taken a large part from your own lands.*	*Al dat ye over Mase sat* *Was Brabande oec ghehat;* *Want si van herten beniden* *(Ende selen doen tallen tiden)* *Des hertoghe grote rijchede,* *Ende sijns lants neringhe mede,* *Des si niet en hebben daer,* *Dat hem is harde swaer …* *Ghi oestheren, weet wel dat,* *Ghi liet den leu slapen bat* *Ende ghien laet hem raste hebben, …* *Want ghien noit en wecket, tote nu,* *Hi en trac een groot morseel van u*[32].

As we will see later, the inhabitants of Brussels also considered the *Oestheren* and their subjects not to be compatriots, but foreigners. From the late fourteenth century onwards, especially in the decades following the death of duke Wenceslas (1383), Brabant distanced itself more and more from the Maas-Rhine-region. This may have been caused by two circumstances. One is the growing tension between the duchy of Brabant on the one hand and the dukes of Guelders and Jülich on the other hand, especially over the Brabant duke's ambition to maintain the *Landfriede* in a region that the both other dukes also considered as their own sphere of influence, a polarization that would result in Brabant's defeat at the battlefield of Baesweiler I mentioned before, followed by an endless series

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[32] BOENDALE, Brabantsche Yeesten (footnote 29), V, vs. 2069-2096.

of wars, especially between Brabant and Guelders. Far more important was a second development, which changed the political scene in the Lower Lotharingian area completely: the establishment of a massive political union in its western parts, or in fact we should say in the Low Countries, for the county of Flanders was at the nucleus of this development, strongly interwoven with the rise of Burgundian power[33].

IV. Growing political antagonism

From the 1360s onwards, Louis of Male, count of Flanders, Wenceslas, duke of Brabant and Albrecht count of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland repeatedly concluded agreements of mutual political, military and economic assistance, in part at their own initiative, in part at the request of their towns. In fact they confirmed with these agreements a long-time development, that the most important principalities in the West, Flanders, Brabant, Hainault, Holland, Zeeland and later Artois gradually approached each other. In the 1380s three important events took place. In 1384 Philip the Bold succeeded his father in Law, as count of Flanders. One year later, the so-called double-marriage took place, when his son and daughter married the son and daughter of Albert of Bavaria, count of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland. Finally, in 1387, the childless duchess Jeanne of Brabant recognized Philip's wife as her successor. Now a structural political collaboration of the western Low Countries under the Burgundian guidance was a given, even if the formal establishment of a dynastic union only took place in the years 1425-1433 due to dynastic and political coincidence[34]. Impressive though it may be, the Burgundian unification formed by no means a reconstruction of Lower Lotharingia. Even if the Burgundian dukes dominated substantial parts of Lower Lotharingia by 1433, their power concentrated on the western side and the eastern parts remained independent. And, as I mentioned before, the county of Flanders formed in a political, and economic respect the heart of the Burgundian union, and this was not situated in Lower Lotharingia, but in the Kingdom of France instead.

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[33] A comparable attitude can be found in the counts of Holland's view with regard to Friesland. See for instance: Mol, J.A., Graaf Willem IV, De Hollands-Friese oorlog van 1344/1345 en de Friese kloosters, in: Negen eeuwen Friesland-Holland. Geschiedenis van een haat-liefdeverhouding, ed. by Philippus Hildebrand Breuker / Antheun Janse, Leeuwarden / Zutphen 1997, p. 94-108, here p. 94 f.

[34] See: Stein, Robert, De affaire van Borselen en de consolidatie van de Bourgondische macht in de Nederlanden, in: Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden 124 (2009), p. 3-29.

In reaction to the political unification in the west, the principalities in the east of the Lower Lotharingian area distanced themselves, most often referring to their links with the Empire. This development was most obvious, when the area under discussion became a pawn in the struggle for power between Bourguignons and Armagnacs over France. Aiming against the Burgundian accumulation of power, Louis of Orleans (1392-1407), leader of the Armagnac party, in the period 1398-1406, established a counter-union. For this he used the trusted method of feudalism: he functioned as liege lord for the regional nobility, he established so-called money fiefs, he bought, threatened and negotiated. Louis especially aimed at principalities situated in the western parts of the Empire using the political tendency inside the principalities, and profiting from the growing distrust against the Burgundian in the Empire itself. The extension of his power is depicted on map II. Between 1398 and 1402 he subordinated Guelders, Jülich and Luxembourg, thus more or less creating a buffer zone in the eastern parts of the Lower Lotharingian area. Especially the enfeoffment of Guelders is interesting, because it fits neatly into the long antagonism that had developed between Brabant and Guelders in the fourteenth century, but it also is the prelude to the close association between France and Guelders in the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries[35]. Aside from these large principalities, many minor lords, originating from the Maas-Rhine-region joined the Armagnac alliance, like the lord of Heinsberg, the lords of Mörs, Reifferscheidt, Kronenbourg etc. On December 1st 1404, the towns of the prince-bishopric of Liège concluded a treaty with Louis, against their prince-elect, Johan of Bavaria, son of Albert of Bavaria[36]. It is the bishopric of Liège that became the battleground later on, resulting in a sounding victory by the 'Burgundian' forces at Othée in 1408, but at that moment, Louis of Orléans himself had met his death at the hands of assassins under the order of John the Fearless.

The reaction to the Burgundian threat in the principalities and lordships on the eastern side of the Lower Lotharingian area was twofold: they strengthened their cooperation on a regional basis and they tried to establish international alliances, most often with the Empire or the Rhineland. In the Empire they found interested partners, for the Burgundian ('French') expansion was regarded with mistrust. An example is the interference of Philip the Good in the appointment of a new bishop in Utrecht in 1455-1456. The bishop of Utrecht was not just head of the diocese, but also secular ruler of two extensive principalities in the

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[35] Schoos, Jean, Der Machtkampf zwischen Burgund und Orleans unter den Herzögen Philipp dem Kühnen, Johann Ohnefurcht von Burgund und Ludwig von Orleans, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Auseinandersetzung im deutsch-französischen Grenzraum, in: Publications de la section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal de Luxembourg 75, Luxemburg 1956; Minder, Arthur, La rivalité Orléans-Bourgogne dans la principauté de Liège, Liège 1973.

[36] Minder, La rivalité Orléans-Bourgogne (footnote 35), p. 51-55.

central and northeastern Low Countries: the Nedersticht and the Oversticht. In 1455 bishop Rudolph of Diepholt died. Philip the Good wanted to appoint his bastard son David of Burgundy on the Utrecht see. His ambitions collided with those of the inhabitants of this prince-bishopric, both in the Nedersticht and the Oversticht, who rejected his candidate and elected Gijsbrecht of Brederode. The subsequent Burgundian military action threatened the liberties, not only of Nedersticht and Oversticht, but also of the Frisian lands in the north, the inhabitants felt so threatened, that they agreed a new regional peace (*landvrede*) and started negotiations with the Emperor, asserting that they were faithful subjects of the Empire and asking him to warrant their freedom. At the same time, the nobility and towns of the Oversticht asked and received support of the bishops of Münster and Osnabrück. In vain; Gijsbrecht occupied the see till his death in 1496.

A comparable league was agreed between the town of Groningen and the surrounding Frisian lands in the 1470s, when Charles the Bold increased pressure on the northern Low Countries[37]. At the same time resistance against Burgundian power grew in Liège and the Maas-Rhine region as well[38]. In Liège the resistance resulted in a full-scale insurrection, that was only put down with the draconic destruction of the towns of Dinant and Liège. Reasoning along the line 'the enemies of my enemy are my friends', the duchy of Guelders even turned to the kingdom of France for help.

Is it surprising that the inhabitants of the eastern provinces considered the institutions, introduced by the Burgundian dukes as instruments of sheer tyranny, erected to reduce them to slavery? Telling is the outburst of the Guelders' historiographer Willem van Berchen, who characterized the Parliament of Malines as 'an abominable, strange idol … in which poor men are shamefully persecuted by godless Picards'[39]. The hostile attitude of the eastern principalities is illustrated by the events happening in the months following the death of Charles the Bold in 1477. A few years before, the Burgundians had subjected the northern and eastern provinces and introduced new institutions based on the Burgundian example. Now, when the news of Charles' unexpected defeat and death became known, the Nedersticht and Oversticht 'Schive' was abolished. In Guelders, the civil servants that had reorganized the regional institutions had to flee for their life[40]. This is a striking contrast to the attitude of the subjects

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[37] VRIES, Oebele, Het Heilige Roomse Rijk en de Friese vrijheid, Fryske Akademy 663, Leeuwarden 1986, p. 72-84; ALBERTS, Wiebe Jappe, De Middeleeuwen, staatkundig beschouwd, in: Geschiedenis van Overijssel, ed. by Bernard Hendrik SLICHER VAN BATH, Deventer 1970, p. 61-69, here p. 67.

[38] JANSSEN, Die niederrheinischen Territorien (footnote 30), p. 115-126.

[39] NOORDZIJ, Aart, Against Burgundy. The appeal of Germany in the duchy of Guelders, in: Networks, Regions and nations (footnote 16), p. 111-129.

[40] GROUSTRA-WERDEKKER, Aafje H., Bourgondisering van het hertogdom Gelre vóór het tractaat van Venlo 1473-1543, in: Publication du Centre européen d'études

of the Burgundian dukes, who more and more valued the new courts, and used them in an increasing degree[41].

The political antagonism between the eastern and the western parts of the Lower Lotharingian area during the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries can be summarized by the attitude of the towns *vis-à-vis* the Burgundian house, as indicated on map III. It shows the attitude of the most important towns with regard to a possible succession of the Burgundian dukes to the ducal or count's throne or to Burgundian involvement in regional government. This is an important indication, for in most principalities, the towns were the major political force in the Estates. It is clear that the attitude in the western towns differed radically from that of the eastern towns. In general the towns of the west favoured the Burgundian succession, while the eastern towns were opposed to it.

In short, when Charles the Bold referred to a Friesland kingdom in 1473, he had a territory in mind that had been divided by endemic warfare for at least a century in an eastern and a western sphere. It was only a few months before the Trier meeting that Charles conquered the duchy of Guelders. The roots of the existing antagonism may partly be of economic nature.

V. Economy

The division of the Lower Lotharingian area in a western and an eastern sphere was partly the result of economic development, as Henri Pirenne has shown: the provinces in the west joined forces for economic reasons, in order to safeguard the interests of the merchant elites. Expansion to the east and the north was necessary 'to make the Zuyder Zee a Burgundian lake', which was in the interest of both the princes and the merchants. The inhabitants of the eastern regions were less convinced of the necessity to create a Burgundian lake[42].

The economic growing-apart of the west and the east becomes clear from the 14th century onwards, when merchants from Brabant and Holland more and more oriented themselves on the south-western parts of the Low Countries, on the Flemish economic powerhouse. The towns on the eastern side of the

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bourguignonnes 36 (1996), p. 89-115; ALBERTS, De Middeleeuwen, staatkundig beschouwd (footnote 37), p. 66.

[41] SCHEPPER, Hugo de, De eenheid van de Nederlanden onder Karel V. Mythe of werkelijkheid?, in: Jaime SALEH: excellerende excellentie. Liber amicorum, ed. by Nancy S. VAN DER WAL / Valdemar F. MARCHA, Amsterdam 2002, p. 175-188.

[42] PIRENNE, The formation and constitution of the Burgundian state (footnote 20), p. 486-488, 491-493; compare: SICKING, Louis, Zeemacht en onmacht. Maritieme politiek in de Nederlanden 1488-1558 (Bijdragen tot de Nederlandse marinegeschiedenis 7), Amsterdam / 's-Gravenhage 1998, p. 147-151.

Lower Lotharingian area remained in close connection with the towns in the Holy Roman Empire. This development can be illustrated on the basis of the attitude of the Holland and Zeeland towns with regard to the Hanseatic league. In 1371, the Holland and Zeeland towns were partner in the peace of Stralsund that the Hanseatic league agreed with the Danish king Waldemar. During the first decades of the fifteenth century, especially the Holland merchants started to trade with the Baltic on their own account, often competition with the Hanseatic towns. In the years 1438-1441 things had so much changed, that the Holland towns were involved in a war against the same Hanseatic league over the trade in the Baltic[43]. The new orientation of the western towns was confirmed by the monetary union that was concluded in 1433, in which Flanders, Hainault, Holland, Zeeland and Brabant participated. The principalities in the east did not, and it was only around the year 1500 that the eastern provinces tried to join the monetary union, in vain: they were rejected by the provinces that already participated in it[44]. Contrary to the towns in the west, those in the east remained active in the Hanseatic network until the sixteenth century. The IJssel-towns, Deventer, Zwolle and Kampen, that participated in the Hanseatic league, often functioned as an intermediary between both networks. The Hanseatic league was in decline however, for the structure of trade was changing fundamentally. New discoveries and the growing economic importance of the national states asked for new commercial initiatives. It appears that the towns of the western Low Countries were better positioned to address this challenge than those of the east[45]. Only Guelders' economy remained closely attached to the growth of prosperity in the West by means of the intensive trade-network along the rivers Rhine and Maas.

The economic and social differentiation between the eastern and the western parts of the Lower Lotharingian area is confirmed by the available demographic data. By 1470, in the western parts of the area, c. 30-45% of the inhabitants

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[43] JANSMA, T.S., Philippe le Bon et la guerre hollando-wende (1438-1441), in: T.S. JANSMA, Tekst en uitleg, The Hague 1974, 72-91; SEIFERT, Dieter, Kompagnons und Konkurrenten. Holland und die Hanse im späten Mittelalter (Quellen und darstellungen zur hansischen Geschichte, NF 43), Cologne / Weimar / Vienna 1997, passim; WESTSTRATE, Job, In het kielzog van moderne markten. Handel en scheepvaart op de Rijn, Waal en IJssel, ca. 1360-1560 (Middeleeuwse studies en bronnen, 113), Hilversum 2008, p. 26-52.

[44] STEIN, Robert, Stände und Staat in den Niederlanden, in: Europa im späten Mittelalter. Politik – Gesellschaft – Kultur (Historische Zeitschrift. Beiheft 40), ed. by Rainer Christoph SCHWINGES / Christian HESSE / Peter MORAW, München 2006, p. 205-235, here p. 224-229; WELLENS, Robert, Les États Généraux des Pays-Bas des origines à la fin du règne de Philippe le Beau (1464-1506) (Anciens pays et assemblées d'Etats 64), Heule 1974, p. 412 and n. 213.

[45] WESTSTRATE, In het kielzog van moderne markten (footnote 43), p. 47 f.

lived in towns; in the eastern parts, in Limburg and Luxemburg this was only 6-12%. It is remarkable that the substance of the economic was already phrased in the first half of the fourteenth century by Jan van Boendale, in the passage of the *Brabantsche Yeesten*, I quoted before. Here he emphasizes the contrast in prosperity between Brabant and the Maas-Rhine-region. His argument is essentially an economic one: the trade and industry of Brabant are unmatched in the region between the rivers Meuse and Rhine. We must assume that Boendale had a keen eye in this respect. Anyway, we may conclude that the Lower Lotharingian area did not exist as an economic entity in Burgundian times. It appears that the eastern and western parts of the area were drifting apart in the fifteenth century.

VI. Names

In a certain sense, the political developments, the lack of a political unity in the Low Countries is mirrored in the nomenclature used for the Lower Lotharingian area. As Alastair Duke has shown in a recent paper, in Early Modern Times there were more than ten different names for the Low Countries as a political entity, ranging from classical names like *Gallia* or *Belgica*, to geographical names, like *Niderland* or *Pays Bas*, to generic names like *Brabantia* or *Flandria*. By the way, the indication 'Lotharingia' itself is lacking as an indication for the Low Countries, even if it was still in use as one of the more encompassing titles of the Burgudian-Habsburg house. The same goes for the indication 'Friesland', the name Charles proposed for his new kingdom, which was used to indicate parts of the Northern Netherlands, but not as a generic name for the Low Countries[46].

The sparse mentionings of 'The Netherlands', or variations, dating from before the fifteenth century, generally refer to a geographical area, more or less corresponding to Lower Lotharingia. In 1052 a first mentioning of it appears as *in inferioribus partibus*. *Partes inferiore*' and related expressions, later *Nederland* or *Niderland* subsequently became the indications for Lower Lotharingia in later times. The oldest references may have had a concrete connotation, referring to an existing Lower Lotharingian polity, but that can hardly be the case for references dating from the thirteenth century, when the duchy of Lower Lotharingia lost its political meaning. Then the references were most often related to a geographical area, depicting the most northwestern part of the Empire, situated

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[46] DUKE, Alastair, The elusive Netherlands. The question of national identity in the Early Modern Low Countries on the eve of the Revolt, in: Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden 119 (2004), p. 10-38, here p. 11-22, 38.

on both sides of the river Rhine, downstream from Cologne[47]. In the fourteenth and fifteenth century, the frontier of the area designated as 'the Netherlands' was moving northwest, further downstream the river Rhine. In the fourteenth century Cologne was most often considered to belong to the Low Countries, but no longer in the fifteenth century[48].

The unification of the western Low Countries by the dukes of Burgundy gradually resulted in a further narrowing of the area indicated as 'the Netherlands'. It was more and more politicized, as it were. This can be illustrated on the basis of the *Deutsche Reichstagsakten*. In a letter dating from 1434, for instance, Emperor Sigismund announced that he has summoned Philip the Good to be obedient to the Empire. After all, he argues, Philip has appropriated many principalities in the Low Countries that belonged to the Empire 'sich … vieler an das Reich gefallenen Herrschaften in den Niederlanden bemächtigt habe'. At this moment the Emperor still considered the Burgundian lands to form just a part of a larger territory[49]. Changes became obvious in 1477, when Maximilian of Habsburg married Mary of Burgundy. From the point of view of the Habsburg monarchy, having its homelands in the Austrian regions, it was logical to regard their possessions in the Low Countries as the *Niedererbländer*, or *vnsser Niderlannd*[50]. Especially from the years 1488 onwards, when the Low Countries' towns revolted against the Habsburg government, the name of the Netherlands became politicized. *Niderland* now referred to the principalities in Habsburg possession, more or less identical to those owned by Philip the Good half a century before, and no longer to a larger geographical area. In 1503 for instance, Maximilian wrote about a taxation allowed by the Estates of Brabant and the surrounding principalities, situated *in dieselben Niderland*[51]. It comes as no surprise that the territory indicated as 'The Netherlands' had shifted to the west: it included Flanders and Artois, and excluded the eastern parts of the Low Countries.

VII. Culture

If there was in 1473 no political or economic unity in the Lower Lotharingian area, no generally accepted common name for it, did it than at least form a cultural entity? Most scholars would consider language to be one of the most important

[47] MEISEN, Karl, Niederland und Oberland, in: Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter 15, 16 (1950-1951), p. 417-464.

[48] MEISEN, Niederland und Oberland (footnote 47), p. 454-456.

[49] www.Regesta-imperii.de regest 10.532.

[50] DUKE, The elusive Netherlands (footnote 46); www.Regesta-imperii.de regest 17.767.

[51] www.Regesta-imperii.de regest 17.521.

'objective' elements that make up a common culture – or a shared identity. When David Abulafia, for instance, approaches the concept of cultural frontier, he virtually equates culture with language[52]. Most medieval writers would agree with this point of view. In the middle of the twelfth century, Bernard, bishop of St. Davids in Wales characterized a nation as 'A people distinct by language, laws, habits, modes of judgement and customs[53].' It is obvious that there was no homogeneity in the Lower Lotharingian area in a linguistic respect, where different mother tongues were spoken: a Latin-Romance one in the southern parts and a group of Germanic dialects – originally Frisian-ingveonic, Saxon and Frankish – in the northern and eastern parts[54].

Nevertheless, it is questionable if the diversity of languages in the Lower Lotharingian area was a hindrance for the development of a common identity, for it is clear that during the late Middle Ages an intense cultural exchange existed between towns north and south of the Romance-Germanic language border[55]. This is in line with the modern views developed by scholars dealing on a more general level with medieval and early modern identities: though language forms one of the characteristics that people use to distinguish themselves, it is, depending on the circumstances, often only of a moderate importance[56].

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[52] ABULAFIA, David, Introduction: Seven types of ambiguity, c. 1100-c. 1500, in: Medieval frontiers: Concepts and practices, ed. by David ABULAFIA / Nora BEREND, Aldershot 2002, p. 19-35, here p. 24-29.

[53] HASTINGS, The construction of nationhood (footnote 2), p. 17; HIRSCHMANN, Landesbewußtsein im Westen des Reiches? (footnote 11), p. 239-241.

[54] The linear language frontier that divides Europe nowadays in a Germanic and a Romance part, appears to be a myth, a creation, perhaps even an invention, of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in the slipstream of the development of the modern nation-state; things were far less clear-cut in the Middle Ages. Then a broad area of transition existed, even if the larger towns often were either focussed on the Romance or on the Germanic language. Compare GRAUWE, Luc de, Westfrankisch: bestaat dat? Over Westfrankisch en Oudnederlands in het oud-theodiske variëteitencontinuüm, in: Quod vulgo dicitur. Studien zum Altniederländischen (Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik 57), ed. by Willy PIJNENBURG, Arend QUAK / Tanneke SCHOONHEIM, Amsterdam 2003, p. 93-111; for the language frontier in general, see: LAMARCQ, Danny / ROGGE, Marc, De taalgrens van de oude tot de nieuwe Belgen, Leuven 1996, p. 10; WILLEMYNS, Roland / DANIËLS, Willem, Het verhaal van het Vlaams. Geschiedenis van het Nederlands in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden, Antwerpen 2003, p. 47, 83-87.

[55] STEIN, Robert, The urban network in the Low Countries. A cultural approach, in: Networks, regions and nations (footnote 16), p. 43-71.

[56] DAVIES, Robert Rees, The peoples of Britain and Ireland, 1100-1400. IV. Language and historical mythology, Transactions of the Royal historical society 6th series, 7 (1997), p. 1-24, here p. 1; Interesting is the view of Joep Leerssen, who brings forward that the language question in late-medieval times especially arose in the relation between

But there is more, much more to culture then just language. One of the few examples of a religious organisation that was particular to an area that more or less covered Lower Lotharingia is the monastic reform movement of the Modern Devotion, which started in the IJssel-region and later spread over the Low Countries and the northern parts of the Empire. Recent literature however, has shown that the Modern Devotion fitted in a much broader movement of observantism, and further research in its character and spread is necessary[57].

There are other indications, however, that a cultural difference existed between the western and the eastern parts of Lower Lotharingia. In another publication I have demonstrated that an urban cultural network developed in the south-western parts of the Low Countries and northern France from (at least) the twelfth century onwards. The towns of Tournai and Arras more or less formed its heart, but gradually it expanded over the whole of the western Low Countries: Flanders, Hainault, Brabant, Zeeland and Holland. It had a rationale of its own, and it did not coincide with the existing formal areas of political, clerical or linguistic character. The only more generic characteristic that can be found is, that it resembled in the beginning an existing commercial network, that was maintained especially by cloth merchants; later on it spread over a rather broad zone with a high level of urbanization[58].

In the fifteenth century, this urban network had expanded over the western parts of the Low Countries. One of the most explicit expressions is formed by the Chambers of rhetoric. The first Chambers probably developed in the French-speaking regions of Artois and Hainault in the second decade of the fifteenth century. In the 1440s they appeared in Bruges and Ghent and in a few smaller towns in the county of Flanders, and a short time later in the duchy of Brabant. Around 1480 new Chambers were erected further to the north, in the counties of Zeeland and Holland. From there the spread of the Chambers gradually expanded further to the northeast, but it is evident that the density

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the government and its subjects: LEERSSEN, Joep, Medieval heteronomy, modern nationalism: Language assertion between Liège and Maastricht, 14th-20th century, in: Revue Belge d'histoire comtemporaine 34 (2004), p. 581-593.

[57] MOL, J.A., Epiloog: De Moderne Devotie en de vernieuwing van het kloosterlandschap in Nederland, in: Monastiek observantisme en Moderne Devotie in de noordelijke Nederlanden, ed. by Hildo VAN ENGEN / Gerrit VERHOEVEN (Middeleeuwse studies en bronnen, 110), Hilversum 2008; VAN DIJK, Rudolf Th. M., Kirchliches Reform-klima in der zweiten Hälfte des fünfzehnten Jahrhunders. Zur Buchkultur im nieder-ländisch-deutschen Raum, in: Humanistische Buchkultur. Deutsch-Niederländische Kontakte im Spätmittelalter (1450-1520) ed. by Jos M.M. HERMANS / Robert PETERS (Niederlande-Studien, 14), Münster / Hamburg 1997, p. 37-63.

[58] STEIN, The urban network in the Low Countries (footnote 55).

in the western parts remained far greater[59]. They formed a network, playing an important role in an intensive cultural exchange, next to the urban archer guilds. At irregular moments they contested each other at so called *landjuwelen*, meetings with various kinds of manifestations and competitions, the subjects ranging from celebratory entries to shooting the crossbow and the performance of stage plays[60]. At the Malines game of 1493, organized by Philip the Fair, Chambers from towns in Brabant, Flanders, and Holland made an appearance; the same applies to the Antwerp *landjuweel* of 1496, organized by one of the Antwerp Chambers[61].

Was there a comparable cultural development, or even a countermovement in the east? At the present state of research it is difficult to answer this question for sure. Still, on a far more intellectual-elitist level, a close cultural cooperation developed in the northern and eastern parts of the Lower Lotharingian area, that more or less excluded the western parts. In the second half of the fifteenth century, a group of humanistic intellectuals formed a network, that extended over the towns of Deventer, Groningen, Zutphen, and the adjoining regions of Germany, Westphalia, Münster, Cologne etc, but which had virtually no links to the western provinces[62].

A second illustration of the existence of the cultural cohesion – or the lack of it – is closely related to the network of humanists just mentioned, but forming its western counterpart. It concerns the origin of the students, especially at Leuven University, in the second half of the fifteenth century. In the early fifteenth century, higher education in the Lower Lotharingian area became a burning issue. Usually, inquisitive youths went to the universities of Cologne, Paris or Orléans, but due to the political and military tension in northern France and in the region between the rivers Maas and Rhine, these universities were no longer a tempting prospect for many students. The first initiative for a solution is to be located in the town of Leuven itself. In 1418 the magistrate contracted a few learned scholars to teach at the local chapter school connected to the church

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[59] BRUAENE, Anne-Laure van, Om beters wille. Rederijkerskamers en de stedelijke cultuur in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden (1400-1650), Amsterdam 2008, p. 42-50; DIXHOORN, Arjan van, Lustige geesten. Rederijkers en hun Kamers in het publieke leven van de noordelijke Nederlanden in de vijftiende, zestiende en zeventiende eeuw, s. l. 2004, p. 69 f.

[60] STEIN, The urban network in the Low Countries (footnote 55).

[61] Data from the unpublished thesis version of, BRUAENE Anne-Laure van, Om beters wille. Rederijkerskamers en de stedelijke cultuur in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden (1400-1650), Ghent 2003-2005, III, p. 360 f.

[62] LAAN, A.H. van der, Anatomie van een taal. Rudolphus Agricola en Antonius Liber aan de wieg van het humanistische Latijn in de Lage Landen (1469-1485), Groningen 1998, p. 1-4.

of St. Peter[63]. A few years later, duke John IV of Brabant started to support the project, and in consultation with the chapter and the Leuven magistrate, he addressed a petition to pope Martin V. The petition itself is lost, but large parts of it are entered into the papal bull of foundation dated 9 December 1425. This applies to the following quotation:

In the duchy of Brabant … and also in the bishoprics of Liège, Cambrai, Utrecht, Terwaan and Tournai, there are many well known and famous localities, flowering because of their devout population and their material wellbeing. In spite of this, there is no locality where they can attend a *studium generale* in the *artes*[64].

It is understandable that the bishoprics are indicated and not the principalities; after all it was a request to the pope. But still, the list is remarkable, for it concerns virtually all the bishoprics of the Low Countries, roughly corresponding to the political territory of the Low Countries one century later –Arras should be added – but none of the bishoprics outside the Low Countries. The enumeration as such is an indication that the Lower Lotharingian space was not a point of reference, for then the bishoprics of Terwaan and Tournai should have been omitted as being situated in France, outside the frontiers of Lower Lotharingia. In theory, the petition could have referred to the bishopric of Cologne as well, for it covered an important part of the Maas-Rhine-region, but its omission is comprehensible, because the metropolis had its own university.

Principality	Percentage of students
Brabant	35
Flanders	19
Hainault and Tournai	9.6
Holland	14.8
Zeeland	6.5
Namur	1.2
Liège (prince bishopric)	4.9
Luxemburg	0.7
North-eastern Low Countries	3.9
Low Countries	**94.8**
Outside Low Countries	**5.2**

TABLE I. Country of origin of students at Leuven University, 1485-1527[65].

[63] NELISSEN, Marc / ROEGIERS, Jan / VAN MINGROOT, Erik, De stichtingsbul van de Leuvense universiteit 1425-1914, Leuven 2000, p. 69-75.
[64] NELISSEN, ROEGIERS / VAN MINGROOT, De stichtingsbul (footnote 63), p. 2.
[65] De universiteit te Leuven, 1425-1985 (footnote 66), p. 54.

Leuven University proved to be an immediate success. It resulted in an explosive growth of the number of students from the Low Countries with approximately 300 percent[66]. At the height of its popularity, in the 1470s, Leuven University registered the impressive number of ca. 500 students per year, even if just a small minority of them actually finished their studies. Due to difficulties with the sources we can't establish the origin of the students for the second and third quarter of the fifteenth century, but we can do so for a later period (see table I). Of course, one may object that up to 25% of the students were not listed in this documentation, but still the numbers in table III are revealing: Leuven was far more a 'Burgundian university' than a 'Lotharingian university'. If we take the political boundaries as a point of departure, an overwhelming majority of the students originated from Brabant, Flanders, Hainault, Holland and Zeeland, the provinces indicated as the core provinces of the Low Countries: 84%, to which a substantial number from the prince-bishopric of Liège can be added. 19% of the students originated from Flanders, which didn't belong to Lower Lotharingia at all. The number of students from the northeastern parts of the Low Countries – which can be seen as part of the Lower Lotharingian area – is negligible. The same applies for the students from foreign countries. In the light of these numbers, it is understandable that the students of Leuven University were divided in four nations: Brabant, Flanders, Holland and 'Gallia'[67].

It is interesting to compare the Leuven data to those available for Cologne in the same period (Table II)[68] A detailed comparison is impossible, for the Cologne data are not organized by principalities, as the case is in Leuven, but by bishopric. A first conclusion is that Cologne was considerably more cosmopolite than Leuven. Students came from all over the Empire, even if a great many of them originated from Cologne itself. Still more than a quarter of the students originated from the Low Countries; especially for students from the Liège and Utrecht dioceses, Cologne University obviously was a viable alternative. Is the west-east division of the Low Countries, that was apparent in the case of Leuven University, visible here as well? For the southern Low Countries that is clearly the case: from the densely populated bishoprics of Tournai an Cambrai nearly no-one went to Cologne, Terwaan is not even mentioned. Among students from Liège, Colgone was rather popular as an *alma mater*. For the northern parts of the Low Countries things are more complicated, for the bishopric of Utrecht stretched the Lower Lotharingian area from east to west. For Friesland and

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[66] SCHWINGES, Rainer Christoph, Deutsche Universitätsbesucher im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. Studien zur Sozialgeschichte des alten Reiches, in: Beiträge zur Sozial- und Verfassungsgeschichte des Alten Reiches 6, Stuttgart 1986.

[67] De universiteit te Leuven, Leuven 1976, p. 96; compare: De universiteit te Leuven, 1425-1985, Fasti academici 1, Leuven 1986, p. 36.

[68] Compare SCHWINGES, Deutsche Universitätsbesucher im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert (footnote 65), p. 234-244, 255 f.

Groningen some more detailed data are available. It appears that until 1455, students from Friesland visited both Cologne and Leuven in comparable numbers, but later, Leuven gained the upper hand. Students from the province of Groningen, however, preferred Cologne until ca. 1530. Further research should reveal if students from the counties of Holland and Zeeland, both situated in the bishopric of Utrecht, preferred Leuven above Cologne[69].

Bishopric	Percentage of students
Liège	9.3
Tournai	0.2
Cambrai	0.5
Utrecht	17.8
Low Countries	27.8
Cologne (diocese and town)	30.3
Munster	5.0
Others	36.9
Outside Low Countries	72,2

TABLE II. Diocese of origin of students at Cologne University, 1486-1525[70].

Even if the available data have to be approached with caution, both universities appear to underline the assumption expressed before, that the eastern and western parts of the Lower Lotharingian area belonged to different cultural circles, the inhabitants of the western parts being more inclined towards Leuven, those of the eastern parts more toward Cologne. This is confirmed by the existence of the 'humanist network' mentioned before, in which the university of Cologne played an important role.

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[69] Zijlstra, Samme, Het geleerde Friesland – een mythe? Universiteit en maatschappij in Friesland en Stad en Lande ca. 1380-1650 (Fryske histoaryske rige 13), Leeuwarden 1996, p. 12 f.; Heimann, Heinz-Dieter, Die niederländisch-westfälische Nachbarschaft im späten Mittelalter. Politische Distanz versus Wirtschaftsverbund und kulturelle Dynamik, in: Humanistische Buchkultur. Deutsch-Niederländische Kontakte im Spätmittelalter (1450-1520) ed. by Jos. M.M. Hermans / Robert Peters (Niederlande-Studien 14), Münster Hamburg 1997, p. 19-36, here p. 34; Ridder-Symoens, Hilde de, Internationalismus versus Nationalismus an Universitäten um 1500 nach zumeist südniederländischen Quellen, in: Europa 1500. Integrationsprozesse im Widerstreit: Staaten, Regionen, Personenverbände, Christenheit, ed. by Ferdinand Seibt / Winfried Eberhard, Stuttgart 1987, p. 397-414, here p. 402.
[70] Keussen, Hermann, Die Matrikel der Universität Köln, vol. 1, 1389-1475, Bonn 1928, p. 170*-171*.

VIII. Fellow citizens

Even if a clear political, economic and cultural distinction existed between the eastern and the western parts of the Low Countries, it is still possible that the people living in the Lower Lotharingian area considered themselves to be fellow-citizens. In part, this kind of identities are to a large degree formed by the political and military realities, by the fact that the state demanded – and received – the loyalty of its subjects in case of growing political tension or war, indicated who should be considered the enemy and the reasons why he should be hated. But still, there appear also some more general feelings of hostility, even inside the Lower Lotharingian area. This can be illustrated on the basis of the Brabant attitude with regard to the people living in the Maas-Rijn-region.

In the passage of the *Brabantsche Yeesten* quoted above, Jan van Boendale articulated his conviction that the poor people living on the eastern side of the river Maas were envious of the richness of the Brabanters, expressing their jealousy in hostile conduct. The enmity hinted at by Boendale can also be found in the continuation to this work that was written one century later (c. 1440) by a humble anonymous author. He describes the difficulties taking place in Brabant in 1421. What happened? In one of the most fascinating confrontations between prince and subjects, the Brabant duke John IV was deposed by his own subjects, headed by the town of Leuven and later Brussels. Of course, duke John was not amused. He left Brussels and asked his friends, most of them lords from the Maas-Rhine-region, for help. Most prominent among them was the Lord of Heinsberg, an important seigneur in the area between the rivers Maas and Rhine. Together they invaded Brabant and arrived in Brussels. But then things went terribly wrong for the poor duke and his friends. The local guilds took up their arms and flags and marched off to the Grand Place. This was not what the invaders had expected. Duke John hurried to the Grand Place and assured the assembled guilds that everything was under control and that there was no need to worry. But, I quote our source:

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The common men of Brussels were not satisfied, because the foreigners walked in the street with their swords in their hands. And when they sat down in the Swine-house (probably a pub), they said that they wanted to become rich and then move out of Brabant. They also said that they wanted to kill many Brabanters, then they would have the rich widows, their children and their wealth at their disposal. And because of this remarkable story, the common men were very disturbed.

Die ghemeinte, soe wi eer seeden
Van Bruessele was qualijc te vreden,
Om dat die vreemde, verstaet die dinghen,
Gaste, op der straten ghinghen
Met haren sweerden in de hant,
Ende als si saten, si u bekant,
Int Swijns huus, spraken si moedichlike:
Si meinden alle te werden rike,
Eer sij souden, alsoe si seiden,
Uten lande van Brabant sceiden.
Ooc seiden si dat men soude rive
Vele Brabanters ontcommeren van den live.
Dan souden si hebben hier ende ghindre
Die rike weduwe ende haer kindre,
Ende haer goet; ende mids desen
Vreemden gheveerten, soe es gheresen
Die ghemeinte ende verstormt zeere[71].

In the end, John's friends were arrested by the Brussels mob, some of them were beheaded, most imprisoned and the duke was forced to seal yet another constitution. But that does not concern us here. To us, it is important that the invaders, originating from the Maas-Rhine-area were considered not to be compatriots but dangerous strangers.

The longstanding political antagonism between Brabant and Guelders was referred to earlier in the present paper. Of course, the long series of marauding expeditions reflected on the feeling of the inhabitants of Brabant. A curious example of the inarticulate enmity of the Brabant people with regard to Guelders was shown at a snowmen-contest in Brussels in the winter of 1510-1511. On and off, Brabant and Guelders had been in war for over a century, a war most often characterized by series of raids in each other's territories, executed from the castles at the borders. In 1507, one of these robber castles, Poederooien, governed by a feared captain named Sneewind, had been seized by the Habsburg troops. In the extremely cold winter of 1510-1511 a large snowmen-contest took

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[71] BOENDALE, Brabantsche Yeesten (footnote 29), VII, vs. 11733-11749.

place in Brussel, with hundreds of snowmen. One of these depicted the terrible Sneewind, who shitted himself, while sitting in his castle[72].

Things were not different on the other side of the border. Interesting is the account written by the Burgundian historiographer Georges Chastellain about the (most often) Picard soldiers that crossed Gelre when on military campaign to Deventer in 1456. A frightening scenario is depicted for those who were dressed according to the French customs:

Le pays de Guelres, pays ennemy (...), là où les routiers et mauvais garchons du pays se tenoient par grandes multitudes comme brigans, couppoient gorges et destroussoient gens et ne donnoient espargne de mort à nul, là où il trouvoient puissans; espécialement ceux que trouvoient portans robbes ou pourpoins de la façon françoise[73].

On closer investigation, we may ask ourselves if Chastellain's account is more illustrative for the hostility of the people of Guelders, or for the perception of the Burgundian subjects, but still there are many examples of the deep-felt enmity of the Guelders people against 'Burgundy'. 'Burgundy' was associated with tyranny, slavery en centralisation. In a reaction to the Burgundian threat, people from Guelders remembered their affiliation with Germany, the land of independence, privileges and freedom[74].

More to the north a comparable attitude can be found, with regard to the Frisian people. According to the Hollanders, Friesland formed a part of their country, that was not yet reduced to obedience. Time and again, the counts of Holland tried to put the words into action and time and again they met with the fierce resistance of the Frisian farmers, and often their campaigns were as spectacular as they were unsuccessful, for most parts of Friesland remained independent until the sixteenth century. The lord-less character of Frisian society met with aversion and distrust among the people from the western Low Countries. In 1396, Duke Albrecht of Bavaria, count of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland, wanted to undertake a campaign to Friesland, in order to reduce these rebellious subjects to obedience. He addressed the Estates of Hainault, in order to obtain an aid for his campaign, saying:

Vous sçavez par droit que les Frisons doivent estre subgets à nous, et ils nous sont très-inobédiens et rebelles à nous et à nostre haultesse et seignourie, comme gens sans loy et sans foy[75].

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[72] PLEIJ, Herman, De sneeuwpoppen van 1511. Stadscultuur in de late middeleeuwen, Amsterdam 1988, p. 294-295, p. 360 vs. 101-104.

[73] CHASTELLAIN, Georges, Oeuvres de Georges Chastellain, ed. by M. KERVYN DE LETTENHOVE, 8 vols., Brussels 1863-1866, III, p. 170 f.

[74] NOORDZIJ, Against Burgundy (footnote 39).

[75] VERBIJ-SCHILLINGS, Jeanne, Het beeld van de Friezen in de Hollandse geschied-schrijving van de vijftiende eeuw, in: Negen eeuwen Friesland-Holland. (footnote 6), p. 109-119, here p. 110 and note 16.

Later this would develop into a true character assassination, not just by writers stemming from Holland, but also by their colleagues from neighbouring Flanders, Zeeland and Brabant. The Frisians were considered to be ungodly traitors, inglorious, stupid and ill mannered. With their disobedient behavior they disturbed the order of things, as determined by God[76].

The Frisians themselves saw things in a different way, of course: they wanted to remain free, undisturbed by the interference of the count of Holland. As their ultimate defence, they brought forward a charter called the *Karelsprivilege*, a *falsum* probably drawn up in the late 13th century. According to this charter Charlemagne himself had allowed the Frisians their eternal freedom by way of thanks for their help in the conquest of Saxony. The *Karelsprivilege* was still highly esteemed in the fifteenth century, for vernacular rhyme-versions have survived, and even a fragment of a Frisian freedom song, based on it. In 1479 Emperor Frederick III was asked to confirm it[77].

Conclusion

After a long death agony, the duchy of Lower Lotharingia definitively succumbed as a political entity in 1190, eroded from within by the emerging dynastic principalities. However, its recollection remained, partly as a subdivision of the Empire, partly as one of the feudal titles of the dukes of the Brabant, later Burgundian house. Did this recollection mirror the survival of an overarching identity, a cultural, political or economic homogeneity in the Lower Lotharingian area? Thomas Bauer assumed that a Lotharingia identity survived well into the High Middle Ages. For the Later Middle Ages, the answer to this question must be negative, for the regional dynasties had not just undermined the political unity, but also its mental and cultural unity. The principalities and localities inside the

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[76] See: JANSE, Antheun, Graaf Willem II van Holland en de Friese vrijheidslegende, in: Negen eeuwen Friesland-Holland (footnote 6), p. 77-86; ANROOIJ, Wim van, Friezen in de Lancelotcompilatie, vijanden van koning Arthur, in: Negen eeuwen Friesland-Holland (footnote 6), p. 87-93; VERBIJ-SCHILLINGS, Het beeld van de Friezen (footnote 6). Unreliability is also the reproach by the Burgundian partisans *vis-à-vis* the towns of Dinant and Liège following the sack of both towns in 1465: THIRY, Claude, Les poèmes de langue française relatifs aux sacs de Dinant et de Liège 1466-1468, in: Liège et Bourgogne (Les congrès et colloques de l'Université de Liège 66), Liège 1972, p. 101-127, here p. 102.

[77] VRIES, Het Heilige Roomse Rijk (footnote 37), 21-25; JANSE, Antheun, De waarheid van een falsum. Op zoek naar de politieke context van het Karelsprivilege, in: De vrije Fries 71 (1991), p. 7-28; SMITHUIS, Justine, The imagined community of Frisia in the late Middle Ages, in: Networks, regions and nations (footnote 16), p. 73-89.

area each displayed a growing self-awareness and new economic developments had changed the scene completely.

Even if they did not cover the whole of the Lower Lotharingian area, overarching, that is over-regional, connections existed in the Lower Lotharingian area in the Late Middle Ages. Traditionally, scholars assume that a rift existed between the Northern and the Southern Low Countries, as a herald of the developments to come: the emergence of the Republic – later the Netherlands – and the Spanish (or Austrian) Low Countries – later Belgium. In fact, this appears just to be a back-projection of the situation in the modern period. The aim of this article has been to show that inside the Lower Lotharingian area two major political, economic and cultural spheres developed. One in the West and one, far less homogeneous, in the East. There was a great discrepancy between east and west with regard to demographic, economic and especially cultural coherence. The differences also appeared in the political sphere, in a growing hostility between both parts. During the fifteenth century, the rupture between the western and the eastern parts of 'Lower Lotharingia' was far more important than that between the northern and southern parts.

The divergence between east and west became more prominent especially from the last quarter of the fourteenth century onwards, when Brabant, Holland and Zeeland gradually turned away from the Empire and more and more explicitly chose the side of the Burgundian house, that thus developed a personal union, a political and especially an economic superpower in the western parts of the Lower Lotharingian area. In the situation at that moment, it was impossible to ignore its existence. The obvious choice *against* the Burgundian extension of power was to lean closer to the Holy Roman Empire, where a clear aversion existed against the 'French' dukes of Burgundy. A possible coherence in the eastern parts of the area need further research, but it appears that we can best consider it to be a reaction against the threat, the aggression of the west.
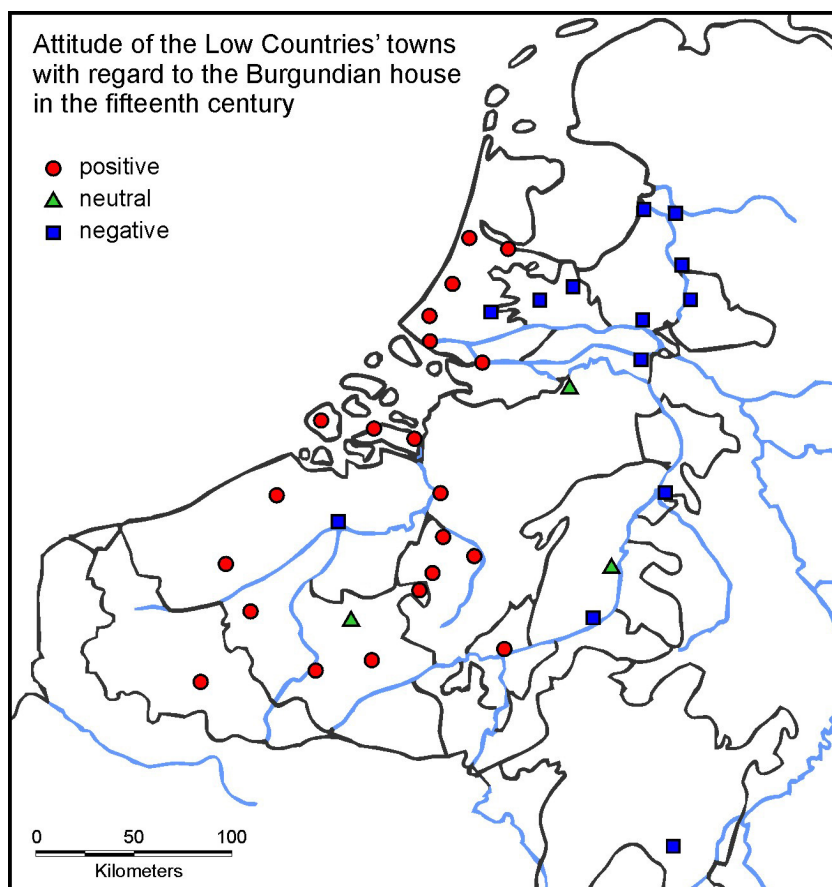
When we reconstruct the kingdom of Friesland that Charles the Bold proposed in 1473 with the actual political situation, it clearly represents Charles' position in the northwestern parts of the Empire. In this sense, the kingdom-to-be represented a reality, but only a reality that came into being just a few years before. Except for the feudal titles of Charles himself, there were no binding factors. He used old templates, by attaching the anachronistic but legendary name of Friesland to the just as legendary and anachronistic territory of Lower Lotharingia. The nature of the new kingdom was ambivalent at best, it was a legend, a dream, not a reality anymore in the fifteenth century. When Charles died in 1477 the rift became obvious, and when the Lower Lotharingian territory burst into pieces, the Lotharingian proved to be just a fata morgana, in the real world it was replaced by a far more tangible political and cultural reality of the Low Countries.
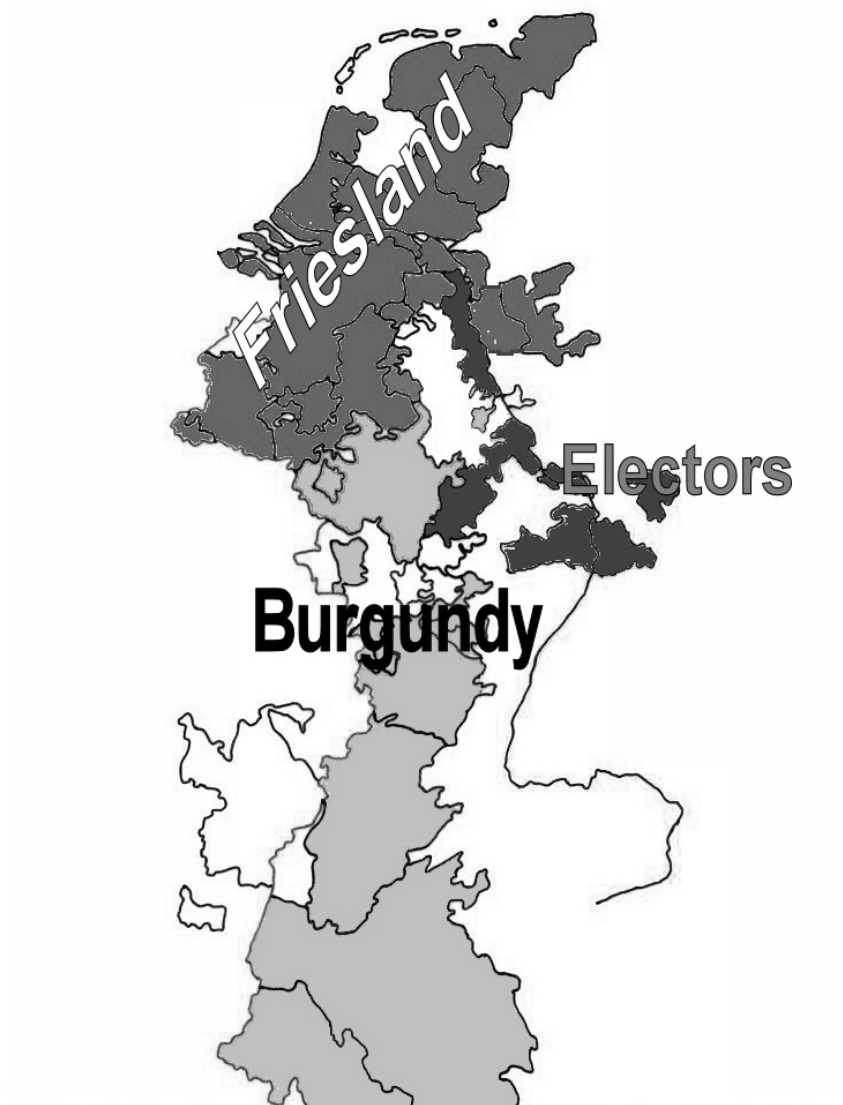
Map I.   Extension of the proposed kingdoms of Friesland and Burgundy in
          1473.
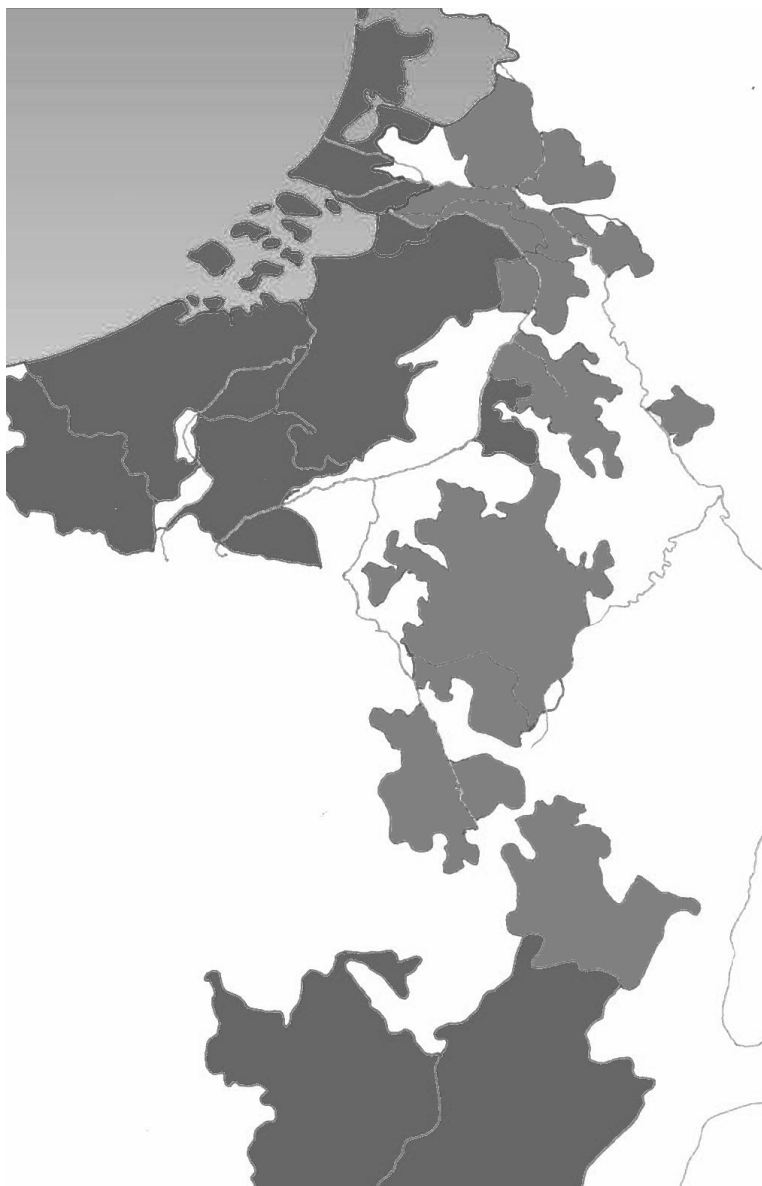
Map II. Extension of the spheres of influence of the Bourguignons and Armagnacs (ca. 1400). Simplified version.

Attitude of the Low Countries' towns
with regard to the Burgundian house
in the fifteenth century

● positive
▲ neutral
■ negative

0   50   100
Kilometers

MAP III.   Attitude of the Low Countries' towns with regard
to the Burgundian house in the fifteenth century.