

Religious Pragmatism and the Ideology of Patriotism: the contributions of William of Orange to the Revolt of the Netherlands 1568-1576¹

Abstract:

When William of Orange became the leader of the Revolt against the regime of Alba in 1568, he faced an uphill struggle. Internationally he was isolated as a political pariah, while he singularly lacked the financial and military resources to resist Philip II's government in the Low Countries. In a bid to rally both Catholics and Protestants to his cause, he promoted, as best he could, the principle of freedom of conscience. Though contemporary sectarian hatreds often rendered this difficult to realise in practice, his continual efforts to uphold this principle contributed in the long term to the development of the relatively tolerant nature of the United Provinces. For the same reason, Orange and his propagandists tirelessly sought to legitimise their armed struggle as a patriotic war against the Spanish 'tyrant'. To do so, they forged the concept of the seventeen provinces as a 'common fatherland', a notion that had previously evoked little resonance. As a result, Orange has perhaps a better claim than many national leaders to the honorific title of the 'father of the fatherland'.

Since the early nineteenth century, the Dutch have looked upon 1568 as marking the start of what they call the Eighty Years War. This inaugurated the struggle that only ended in 1648 when Spain belatedly accepted the independence of the United Provinces, the first new nation state to emerge in western Europe. But long before 1648 the Dutch had emerged as a commercial superpower with outposts in the Caribbean, the East Indies, Brazil and Japan. You would have to have been a prophet with remarkable clairvoyance to have foreseen such an outcome in May 1568 when William of Orange's younger brother Louis of Nassau invaded the far north of the Low Countries and, a few months later, William of Orange led an impressively large mercenary army across the Maas into Brabant.

Yet by the end of 1568 it looked as though these campaigns would be relegated to a footnote of history. Louis of Nassau's success proved very short lived and

he only escaped capture by the Duke of Alba, Philip II's governor in the Habsburg Netherlands, by the skin of his teeth. William's own invasion also ended dismally. Few Netherlanders rallied to his cause and when he ran out of money after a few weeks, his army simply disintegrated. The Prince himself had to withdraw across the French border into Picardy, on the run from his creditors.

After the debacle of 1568, it seemed unlikely that William would ever again find the means to challenge the government Alba in Brussels. There seemed little prospect of William finding international support. After all, he was in the eyes of many a political pariah, having been banished and deprived of his possessions for having led an armed rebellion against his rightful King. The German Lutheran princes, who might perhaps have been expected to be sympathetic to a high-ranking German-born noble, were chary of involvement lest they undermine the Peace of Augsburg. After the turmoil of the 1540s and early 1550s, that settlement of 1555 had brought a measure of stability in the Holy Roman Empire. Moreover, William's associations with the French Huguenots and the Dutch Calvinists alarmed rather than reassured the Lutheran princes, who disparaged such allies as 'sacramentarians'.² These Calvinists were doubly damned in their eyes not only on account of their erroneous teaching about the real presence but also because they had been involved in the iconoclastic riots that had swept the Low Countries in 1566 and in the subsequent armed insurrections. William, whose estates in the Habsburg Netherlands had been confiscated, could of course draw upon the resources of his dynastic lands of Nassau-Dillenburg, but these were really quite modest for the Nassau family played second fiddle in the region to the Lutheran rulers of Saxony and Hesse. William's relations with these rulers was further complicated because of his marital difficulties with his second wife Anna of Saxony whose uncles and guardians were the Elector of Saxony and Philip of Hesse, the two most powerful Lutheran princes in the Empire.³ And while

some English Protestants might sympathise with their co-religionists in the Low Countries, and therefore with the cause of William of Orange, the Queen herself felt no such inclination. In her eyes those who supported William were guilty of rebellion against their anointed sovereign lord and she had no time for rebels. She had also no wish to be sucked into a conflict with Spain which, at that stage, posed less of a threat to England than Valois France. William found more sympathy from the French Calvinist Huguenots, but they were locked into a life-or-death struggle with the Catholic Guise faction while Catherine de Medici was as anxious as Queen Elizabeth to avoid being drawn into a war with Spain. In December 1568 the French king, Charles IX, therefore ordered William, whose army had retreated across the French border in disarray, to leave the country forthwith.⁴

It looked then by the late autumn of 1568 as though William's grand scheme to overthrow Alba's government had ended in a dismal failure. Militarily, this was the case. But in respect of Dutch rebel ideology, the years between William's invasion of 1568 and 1572 when the Revolt first gained a foothold in the Low Countries proved formative. It was then that William and his circle articulated the reasons why they had taken up arms. This Orangist propaganda came through incessant repetition to leave an abiding mark on the DNA of the new state – the United Provinces – that eventually emerged. Of course, in 1568 not even the most sanguine of William's supporters could have conceived of political independence. It was not until the autumn of 1575 that the provincial states in the rebel parts considered forsaking the King⁵ and the rebel States General only formally and finally repudiated his authority in 1581.

From 1568 when William first took up arms his strategy was determined by two concerns. He needed first to convince a hardnosed and sceptical international audience that his cause was credible and legitimate and, therefore, worth supporting. Secondly, he had to persuade not only the Protestant Netherlanders

who had fled abroad to escape Alba's regime but also their Catholic compatriots, who of course still constituted by far the great majority of the inhabitants of the Low Countries, to place their trust in his leadership. Neither concern was easy to achieve and William never wholly succeeded in achieving these twin objectives.

In April 1567 William decided to quit the Netherlands and to 'retire' to his hereditary lands of Nassau-Dillenburg in what is now North Rhine-Westphalia. Since February when he had refused the demand of the Regent Margaret of Parma to renew his oath of loyalty to Philip II, he had felt under threat. By the spring he dared not linger any longer in the country. On 22 April that year he wrote to Philip II to say he was resigning all his offices and by early May he reached the safety of Dillenburg.⁶ When Alba arrived in Brussels to take up his post a few months later, William, like other nobles, made polite noises of welcome to the new captain general,⁷ but Alba snubbed him. Any hope of a rapprochement vanished when on 19 January 1568 Alba charged William with rebellion. William felt obliged to respond and this prompted the first of several Orangist salvoes to be published that year.

If William were ever to gain the ear of European rulers, it was imperative that he should refute the charge of being a rebel. Initially, he protested against the judicial proceedings that had been begun against him in Brussels. But after Alba had set up the Council of Troubles to prosecute the thousands of those involved in the disorders of 1566, had kidnapped his own son in February 1568 and later that same summer executed the foremost nobles in the Low Countries, the counts of Egmont and Hoorne, he felt he had no choice but to take up arms, not least to redeem his honour and, hopefully, to recover his confiscated lands.⁸ With the arrest of Egmont and Hoorne in September 1567 and the death early in 1568 of the 'great Beggar', as Hendrik van Brederode, who had headed the

opposition in 1566, was known, William became the only viable leader of the opposition to Alba.

William next accused Alba of being a tyrant because he had violated the provincial and local privileges on which the 'constitution' and prosperity of the Low Countries rested. Alba had perjured, so he claimed, the oath taken by the King to uphold these when he was inaugurated in 1549.⁹ By trampling on the privileges, which collectively constituted a contract that governed relations between the ruler and the inferior powers and by forcing so many Netherlanders, Catholics as well as Protestants, to seek refuge abroad, Alba had acted as a brutal tyrant. By bringing ruin to the Low Countries, Alba, so William claimed, had done Philip II a terrible disservice. In this way, Orangist pamphleteers sought to strip the Duke's regime of its legitimacy and so justify their armed resistance. Their message was clear: it was Alba and his Spanish henchmen, not William and his supporters, who should be condemned, and this conclusion was also driven home in satirical prints of 1569 which denounced Alba's arrogance and cruelty.¹⁰ William felt called to deliver the inhabitants of the Low Countries from the 'horrible tyranny and a wretched slavery' which Alba had imposed.

At the same time, the propaganda and commissions issued by William and the Dutch rebels always scrupulously acknowledged the King's authority. In 1568 William's army fought under a banner with the motto '*pro lege, pro grege et pro rege*' (i.e. for the law, the people and the king').¹¹ From 1570 the Prince began to issue orders in his capacity as the *king's* lieutenant for Holland and Zeeland, conveniently overlooking his decision taken a few years earlier to resign his offices.¹² Those holding office in the towns that defected to the rebels were required to take an oath of loyalty to the King 'under my lord the Prince'.¹³ This need to emphasise the king's authority explains why the *Wilhelmus*, which was written around 1568-70, contains the initially puzzling

declaration that William had '*always honoured the King of Spain*'.¹⁴

Sometimes the affirmation of loyalty rang especially hollow. When the new, and manifestly, Protestant university of Leiden was inaugurated in 1575, its foundation charter carried the king's seal in his capacity as the count of Holland, an office he held until the rebels dismissed his authority in 1581.¹⁵ By systematically and ceaselessly repeating the mantra that William and his supporters only opposed Alba's regime and not the King, they tried to lend the Revolt a veneer of respectability. This made it easier to seek international support for the regime that, against the odds, was slowly taking root in Holland and Zeeland after 1572.

As well as rebutting the charge of being a rebel against his rightful prince, William had to persuade Netherlanders, both Protestants and especially Catholics to accept his leadership. The last thing William wanted to do was to turn his invasion of 1568 into a Protestant crusade. But given the religious passions of the time, it was difficult to contain the sectarian violence. In 1568 many Catholics were still shell-shocked by the wholesale desecration of their churches and religious houses at the hands of Calvinists in the summer and autumn of 1566. To make matters worse, the Sea Beggars who operated in the Channel and the North Sea after 1568 as privateers under the commission of William as a sovereign prince, were imbued with a fierce hatred of anything smacking of 'popery'. In the Flemish countryside diehard gangs of Protestant desperadoes still operated.¹⁶ They dealt mercilessly with any priest who fell into their clutches as they sought to avenge the many executions carried out by Alba's Council of Troubles, nicknamed the Council of Blood. The rebel armies themselves contributed to the confessional violence. Troops under William's nominal command killed more than a score of clergy at Roermond when they briefly seized that town in 1572¹⁷ and the Sea Beggar captain Lumey, whom

William appointed as the governor of South Holland, hanged nineteen priests and religious at Den Briel in July that same year.¹⁸

Long before 1572 William knew just how difficult it was to keep the peace in communities riven by religious hatreds. While still in his mid-twenties he got a taste, perhaps for the first time, of sectarian violence while in Paris in the summer of 1559. He was there as a hostage to guarantee the implementation of the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis between the Habsburg and Valois dynasties. Paris was then a tinderbox with Catholic preachers inciting their hearers against the Calvinist heretics then making their presence felt in the capital.¹⁹ The French king Henry II was, like Philip II, eager to use the end of hostilities to eradicate heresy from the country. He was therefore outraged when the judges in the Parlement refused to register his edicts against the heretics and he had the ringleaders arrested. William was aware of this for he mentioned it in a letter written in June 1559.²⁰ There is a story told in William's *Apology* published long after in 1581 – in response to Philip II's decision to outlaw him - about a conversation between the French king and William that was said to have occurred in 1559.²¹ Apparently, Henry II, supposing William was privy to plans then being hatched to eliminate heresy in France and the Low Countries broached the subject. William, we are told, did not let on that he knew nothing of such plans; instead he listened with growing dismay as he considered the suffering of the victims. If we are to believe the *Apology* – and here I think the ghost writers of the *Apology* probably embellished the record – William resolved from then on to drive 'this Spanish vermin' from the Low Countries.

In Paris William had been a spectator, but as the Prince of the tiny, but crucially sovereign, enclave of Orange in southern France, he struggled to keep order in a community bitterly divided by religion.²² Here he found himself between a rock and a hard place. He could not disregard the influence of the papacy established in nearby Avignon, for not only did Pius IV resolutely support the Catholic

party, he also, unfortunately for William, had a hotline to the Habsburg government in Brussels. Yet, neither could the Prince overlook the concessions made after 1560 by the French monarchy to the Calvinist Huguenots, who were strongly entrenched in the Vaucluse. When therefore in 1563 William granted the Protestants of Orange a measure of religious toleration, he could plausibly claim that he was acting under duress. Yet, his edict urging his subjects in Orange to live together, '*as brothers, friends and fellow citizens*' probably reflected his own eirenic aspirations.²³

In July 1566 William went as governor to Antwerp in an attempt to keep order there following the open-air Calvinist services that had attracted huge audiences. Though unable to forestall the iconoclastic riots there, he did broker a short-lived religious agreement which permitted both Calvinists and Lutherans to build places of worship. The following year William helped avert a bloodbath between the Calvinists and their opponents in the streets of that metropolis. From his time in Antwerp, he would have realised that although the Calvinists in the southern Netherlands were a formidable force, they were nevertheless a minority and unlikely to prevail on their own. Therefore, when William decided to take up arms against Alba, he knew that a narrowly-based Calvinist agenda was unlikely to succeed.

William's own religious outlook is hard to determine. Until he withdrew from the Low Countries in April 1567, he had conducted himself in public as a conventional Catholic, going to mass and having the children born to him by Anna of Saxony baptised according to the rites of the old Church.²⁴ As the provincial governor of Holland, he enforced the anti-heresy legislation dutifully.²⁵

In religious matters William was a pragmatist. In the principality of Orange, he granted limited religious freedom to his Calvinist subjects there rather than forfeit his overlordship to some Huguenot interloper.²⁶ His outlook stands in

marked contrast to the principled Catholicism of Philip II, who stated in 1565 that he would rather lose a hundred thousand lives than alter his religious policy.²⁷ William questioned the common assumption that strict religious uniformity was essential for law and order. In 1561 he expressed his admiration for the easy-going religious policy of the duke of Cleves whose subjects reputedly had the freedom to act in religion ‘*as they wanted*’.²⁸ This remark reminds us that many of the nobility in the Low Countries had close ties with German princes. They were therefore aware that in the Empire Catholic uniformity no longer prevailed after 1555 and that, unlike the Netherlands, religious dissidents were now rarely put to death.²⁹ Within the Council of State, William made no secret of his disapproval of rulers who denied their subjects freedom of conscience.³⁰ One counsellor apparently suffered a heart attack on hearing William’s blunt affirmation of religious toleration.³¹

For the rest of his life he remained committed to the principle of freedom of conscience. In the instructions he issued to the governors and captains whom he commissioned to seize towns in the Low Countries from November 1570 onwards, William made it abundantly clear that while the Protestants should be free to worship as they wanted, the Catholic inhabitants were to enjoy the same freedom, at least until other arrangements had been put in place.³²

William wanted both Catholics and Protestants to reach some sort of *modus vivendi*. A German Protestant advised William in 1572 that the best way to gain support was to abolish all the anti-heresy legislation and let everyone profess the religion of his choice, be that Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist or even Mennonite.³³ In an ideal world that would have been William’s own preference and initially the provincial states of Holland declared that both Catholicism and Reformed Protestantism were to be tolerated,³⁴ but the States apparently rescinded that permission a few months later.³⁵ They did so because religious hatreds made it difficult to share public space. Nonetheless in 1573 William still

made freedom of conscience one of his three conditions for peace, the others being the restoration of the privileges and the departure of Spanish soldiers.³⁶

William recognised that many 'patriotic' Catholics also detested the regime of Alba and he did what he could to keep their support. But the counter-propaganda of Alba and Brussels which coupled loyalty to Philip II with Catholicism inevitably worked to the disadvantage of Catholics in the rebel-controlled areas. It became increasingly difficult for William to remain even-handed, especially as in the early stages of the Revolt, such international support as William did find, came from the Calvinist rulers in the Palatinate and from the French Huguenots. Limited financial help also came from the diaspora of Calvinist congregations set up by Netherlanders fleeing from Alba. These fugitives had settled in the German Rhineland, Emden in East Friesland and south east England. These congregations provided William with a ready-made spy network. Thanks to feedback received from their contacts within the Low Countries, these stranger congregations could pass on intelligence about the situation in a particular town and provide a modicum of financial assistance – though William was often exasperated by their tardy and stingy contributions.³⁷ By 1572 there may have been as many as 20,000 Netherlanders spread across south east England, chiefly in London but there were also communities in East Anglia, Kent and as far west as Southampton.³⁸

It was perhaps then only to be expected that William, two of whose brothers were Calvinists, and surrounded as he was by Calvinist advisers, should come closer to the Reformed church; at some point in the autumn of 1573, he became a professed member of that church.³⁹ He was however no zealot and, on that account, incurred the scorn of a Calvinist hardliner like Petrus Dathenus who outraged the Prince by accusing him publicly of having no religious faith.⁴⁰ His letters show that in times of adversity, he took comfort from his confidence that the Lord's will would be done. Shortly before the surrender of Haarlem which

the Spanish had been besieging for six months, William called for a day of fasting and prayer to ward off God's wrath.⁴¹ After that town surrendered to the Spanish army, William wrote to one demoralised Calvinist captain that he remained convinced that, no matter the reverses, the Revolt was a righteous cause and that the Lord would therefore sustain it. To the fainthearted who said the Revolt was doomed unless the rebels could ally with some great foreign power, he replied that before he had taken up arms, he had forged just such a strong alliance '*with the most supreme Potentate of potentates*', that is the Lord.⁴² Of course, we cannot be certain whether it was William or his secretary who composed such letters, but confidence in God's providence is a recurrent theme in his letters.

As I said, William was a consistent advocate for religious toleration. He objected strongly to Lumey's mistreatment of Catholic clergy and, as soon as the Prince felt sufficiently strongly established in Holland, he dismissed the governor from his post and placed him under arrest. He was also worried lest the Calvinist consistories, in their zeal to exercise Christian discipline in their congregations, should themselves tyrannise over consciences and indeed critics of the Reformed church spoke darkly of the Genevan inquisition. William also insisted that ministers and consistories should be subordinate to the civil power. In the instructions given to those he empowered to seize individual towns in the early 1570's, he expressly forbade any preacher, whatever his confession, to exercise his office until he had first been cleared by the magistrates, by no means all of whom would have been Calvinists.⁴³

Originally William had been hostile to the Anabaptists, perhaps better known as Mennonites. When Mennonites asked him in 1566 to grant them the same freedom of worship in Antwerp as the Lutherans and Calvinists there enjoyed, he seems to have ignored their request and he excluded them from the religious peace he published for his jurisdiction of Breda.⁴⁴ But this changed: in 1572 he

was pleased to receive contributions from Mennonites who supported ‘*the common Christian cause*’ as he called the Revolt.⁴⁵ The Prince was also prepared to assist Mennonites in need. In May 1573 he responded sympathetically to a petition from a widow, whose brother and son Alba had condemned to be burnt alive in 1571 as Anabaptists and he instructed his officers to help her in any way they could to recover her possessions.⁴⁶ When a little later Mennonites in Zeeland petitioned William to be exempted from the obligation to take an oath, to which they had conscientious objections, he spoke up for them despite the opposition of the Calvinist ministers and he rebuked the town magistrates for harassing law-abiding Mennonites.⁴⁷

Foreign observers of the United Provinces were later astonished by the degree of religious pluriformity there. Though in reality, this toleration was more limited than is often supposed and varied from province to province, the relatively peaceful co-existence of Calvinists, Catholics, Mennonites, Lutherans and sundry other sects, especially in Holland, was remarkable.⁴⁸

By the time the United Provinces emerged in the late sixteenth century, the phenomenon of Dutch toleration had come to be regarded as a fundamental trait of the Republic. In part this may be attributed to the commercial priorities of the Dutch: they were reluctant to erect barriers that might deter foreign artisans and merchants, whatever their faith. After Spain recovered control of the southern Netherlands in the 1580’s, probably in excess of 100,000 people emigrated from there to the Republic. While many were staunch Protestants, others were economic migrants, enticed by the higher wages in Holland.⁴⁹ The Dutch Golden Age owes much to the skills, capital and manpower of these incomers.

When we seek to explain the religious pluriformity of the United Provinces, we should not forget that the Calvinist church, though highly privileged, never became, and in a sense never aspired to be, a state church established by law like the Anglican Church. No Act of Uniformity required the inhabitants of the

United Provinces to attend Calvinist church services. Certainly, there were career and social advantages to becoming a member of the Reformed church, but these only became apparent once the future of the newly independent state was assured. And though the Calvinist ministers were prepared to baptise any child whatever the faith of their parents, only those who had made profession of their faith and submitted to the discipline of the consistory were allowed to sit at the Lord's Table. So, two categories of church-goers attended Reformed services: alongside those known as 'well-wishers' or 'sympathisers' there were the communicant members who had made public profession of their faith and had submitted themselves to the discipline of the consistory but only a quite small minority of the inhabitants took that last step.⁵⁰ In 1587 the provincial states of Holland tartly reminded the Reformed ministers, who had come to whinge, how generously they had been treated seeing as the Calvinists then made up only one-tenth of the population.⁵¹

So Dutch toleration can be traced to various sources, to the absence of a church established by law, to the commercial priorities of Dutch merchants, and to the aversion among the public at large, which had recently experienced the harshest and most prolonged repression of any country in western Europe, to blatant religious persecution.⁵² Significantly, when the States of Holland decided in 1596 to donate a stained glass window to the parish church of Gouda, they chose one that celebrated the triumph of the Freedom of Conscience.

Not the least achievement of William and his publicists in the years after 1567 was to persuade Netherlanders that the conflict in which they were engaged was a great patriotic war, waged primarily to uphold the traditional privileges or liberties of the provinces and the towns against 'Spanish' tyranny. From William's perspective, this narrative had the immense advantage of providing an umbrella under which Netherlanders of different confessions could shelter. But such a comprehensive patriotic rhetoric may well have resonated less

strongly than one might suppose. The notion of the Low Countries as a unified fatherland was far from being firmly established in the mid-sixteenth century.⁵³ Constitutionally, the Habsburg Low Countries was a dynastic union of largely autonomous provinces – commonly thought to number seventeen though historians still argue about how this number was arrived at.⁵⁴ After 1477 when Mary of Burgundy married into the house of Habsburg this dynasty gave it a semblance of political unity. It was then the prince – not geography, language or culture – that gave this motley collection of provinces its fragile coherence. The north-eastern provinces were only incorporated in 1543 under Philip II's father, Charles V. And this prince was not, it should be noted, a king: he was duke of Brabant, count of Flanders, lord of Friesland etc. and his status varied accordingly. For this reason, William pointedly refused to recognise Philip II as his King. In his *Apology* he stated '*I only recognise him as a Duke and a Count, whose power is limited according to our privileges, which he swore to observe at his inauguration*'.⁵⁵ Insofar as people conceived of a fatherland, they thought of their native town or province. The local urban or provincial privileges ceaselessly championed in rebel propaganda in fact inhibited the concept of a unitary state. The best known of these privileges was the so-called Joyous Entry of 1356 for the duchy of Brabant. This permitted subjects to withdraw their obedience if the prince acted unconstitutionally but it pertained only to that province.⁵⁶ In that respect it lacked the sweep of the English Magna Carta. The autonomy of the provinces persisted until the end of the ancien régime; the construction of unitary Dutch and Belgian states had to wait until the nineteenth century.

Nor was there any universally agreed collective name for the provinces making up these territories. It was variously described as 'Lower Burgundy', 'the hereditary lands [of the Habsburgs]', 'the seventeen provinces', 'Flanders', the 'Low Countries' or the 'Netherlands'. Rulers and their officials might refer enigmatically to the 'lands on this side' or those 'on the other', depending on

whether they were writing from within the Low Countries or outside.⁵⁷ According to scholars who research the growth of national identities, pre-industrial societies developed what they call '*durable cultural communities*' before they become full-blown nations.⁵⁸ But in the case of the Low Countries the formation of such communities was hindered and complicated by the co-existence of two quite distinct linguistic cultures, one being francophone, the other Dutch-speaking and also by the competing claims of both the Valois and the Habsburg dynasties to superiority over the region.

Charles V's state-building and the clarification in 1548 of the constitutional relationship between the Holy Roman Empire and the Habsburg Netherlands certainly strengthened the idea of the Low Countries as a political and juridical unit. But the perception of the Low Countries as a single fatherland to which individuals felt some sort of bond seems only to have dawned in the 1550's and then among the Protestants who had fled abroad to escape persecution. From their vantage point in London or wherever it was easier to get the bigger picture and to feel some emotional attachment to what they began to call '*our whole Netherlands*'.⁵⁹ In 1566 those who opposed the religious policy of Philip II began to speak about their concern for the well-being of the '*whole*' or '*common*' Netherlands. Later that year William was insisting that everyone, 'be they old or young' should do everything in their power to help '*la patrie*'.⁶⁰

After 1568 William's letters, commissions and pamphlets teem with allusions to '*your beloved fatherland*' and to the '*whole*' or '*common*' Netherlands. In parallel, the rebels ceaselessly promoted a vehemently anti-Spanish agenda. Ever since the 100 Years' War, the French had been the arch-enemy of the Habsburg-Burgundian Low Countries, but the arrival of Spanish soldiers in the later stages of the Habsburg-Valois wars and above all the 10,000 tercios who accompanied Alba in 1567 spawned another bogey-man. This was the arrogant and untrustworthy Spaniard whose covetous eyes were fixed upon the

prosperous Netherlands. Much of this ill-feeling came from the billeting of Spanish soldiers on the civilian population. Since these, unlike the German mercenaries, could not return home at the end of campaigning season, their impact was greater.

You get a flavour of the strident hispanophobia at the onset of the Revolt from the language William used in the many appeals he made in the spring of 1572 to urge the townspeople of Holland to join the Revolt. These were told not be gulled by worthless Spanish promises, but William also warned them that if, however, their resolve to resist Alba weakened, they could expect nothing but the

‘miserable and everlasting perdition of yourselves, your women and children, and all your possessions and goods, indeed of the whole fatherland for all time. Anyone of good sense can easily judge the Spaniards’ inhumane bloodthirstiness, their duplicity, perfidy and deceit together with the ancient hatred and envy which they have borne in their hearts against the entire Netherlands for many years’.

He implored them not to spurn the opportunity he was offering them so that, with God’s grace, they could obtain their own deliverance. If they persevered, they could exchange the

*‘bloodthirsty cruelty of the Spanish tyrant ... for a lasting prosperity, and ensure the well-being and salvation of your whole fatherland’.*⁶¹

Spain’s ill-repute was compounded by the Netherlanders’ obsession with the Spanish Inquisition. The spectre of this inquisition had haunted the imagination of Protestant Europe since the 1540’s but it flared up with renewed intensity in the Low Countries in 1566. Lurid reports circulated that the Franciscans had compiled a sinister ‘blood book’ containing the names of suspected Protestants and lukewarm Catholics. In fact, the Spanish Inquisition never operated in the

Low Countries, but that did not matter, and ‘fake-news’ about its barbarous practices became a staple in rebel propaganda.

In the summer of 1576, the Revolt entered a new phase. Until then the fighting had been largely confined to Holland and Zeeland and their coastal waters. That all changed in 1576 when the Spanish army, that had just forced Zierikzee to surrender, mutinied, and marched south threatening Brabant and Flanders. In the absence of a Spanish governor-general – Requesens had died suddenly in March 1576 and his successor did not arrive for another eight months – authority devolved on the Council of State, which took it upon itself to outlaw the Spanish mutineers. These, feeling isolated in an increasingly hostile country, fell back on Antwerp, then the largest or second largest city north of the Alps. To fill vacuum left by Requesens’ death, the provincial states of Brabant took the initiative. It summoned the States General and opened peace negotiations with the rebels that had been broken off in the previous year. These were now resumed and swiftly concluded with the signing of a peace - the so-called Pacification of Ghent - at the end of October. Those who negotiated the terms of this peace were driven by one overriding imperative, to rid the Low Countries of the Spanish soldiers. In November the isolated Spanish garrison in the castle there successfully confronted the troops engaged by the States General. On the strength of this victory, the Spanish soldiers proceeded to plunder the city for the next few days. As a result of this confrontation, known as the Spanish Fury, as many as 2500 inhabitants may have perished and several hundred houses destroyed by fire, including the magnificent Renaissance townhall completed barely twenty years earlier.⁶²

These events quite transformed the military situation. Whereas in the summer of 1576, it looked as if the Spanish army might drive a wedge between the rebels in Holland and Zeeland, the initiative now passed to them. In the next two years, Haarlem and Amsterdam negotiated agreements with William and the

States of Holland. For much of the next decade, Brabant, Flanders and the Walloon provinces became the battle ground while the towns of Holland and Zeeland that had borne the brunt were largely spared.

With the upsurge of hispanophobia across the Low Countries, William's vision of the conflict as a patriotic war acquired renewed credibility. For the next three years anti-Spanish hate-speech was universal. One Spanish councillor reported from Brussels in October 1576 that '*what attracts everyone is the common good of the fatherland, this is the big thing*'.⁶³ Another contemporary Catholic royalist observed sarcastically that whoever bad-mouthed the Spaniards or praised William was likely to be hailed as a clever fellow who cherished the public good and his country's liberty.⁶⁴

William now identified himself completely with the Low Countries. Whereas in the early 1570s he had spoken of his mission to deliver '*the poor Netherlands*' from Spanish tyranny and restore these to their accustomed liberty, in the letters he wrote during 1576, he now referred to '*our poor country*' and '*our Fatherland*'. To emphasise his wish to be regarded as a Netherlander (rather than a German), he changed the way he signed off his letters to the States and the Council of State in the autumn of 1576. He now concluded these with the valedictory formula '*your well-beloved friend and fellow countryman, at your service*',⁶⁵ and he continued to use it for the next three years.⁶⁶

It was at this time too that we hear of a party called the '*bons patriots*' in Brabant.⁶⁷ Until the start of the civil wars in France, a '*Patriot*' had simply meant a fellow countryman, but there it also came to mean someone who loved his country. Nevertheless '*patriot*' in this new sense did not catch on there: the French had no need because they already called such a person *bon 'francoys*', (a good Frenchman).⁶⁸ But in the multi-cultural Low Countries, there was simply no French equivalent for the Dutch '*nederlander*' (Netherlander). The sobriquet '*patriot*' could be bestowed on anyone irrespective of whether he came from

Flanders or Hainaut. The country name 'Pays-Bas' also failed to produce either a name for the inhabitants of the Low Countries, or a suitable adjective. Here, therefore the party label '*patriot*' conveniently supplied a semantic lacuna. For the Catholic supporters of William in the southern provinces, the nickname '*patriot*' was a godsend. Hitherto the rebels had been called 'Beggars', but that name was repugnant to Catholics on account of its associations with the Calvinists' onslaught on the churches in 1566 and the persecution of monks and priests in Holland and Zeeland after 1572. From the Low Countries, this new meaning of 'patriot' spread into other European languages. Significantly, in both English and German the earliest usages of '*patriot*' in the sense of who one stands ready to defend his country are closely associated with the Low Countries. This patriotic rhetoric was transmitted in the reports of English and German diplomats on the wars, the translations of Dutch and French pamphlets about the Revolt and, perhaps too, by English and German soldiers fighting in the Low Countries' wars.⁶⁹

Between 1572 and 1576 the foundations for the embryonic state was laid. It was an uphill struggle. It was one thing to smash altars, kill isolated priests and to sing songs vilifying Spaniards, it was quite another to establish a political and administrative infrastructure capable of sustaining a prolonged war, let alone a new state. The military situation confronting William in October 1572 when he came to Holland, as he told his brother, '*to make his grave there*'⁷⁰ was hardly encouraging. Alba had quickly extinguished attempts to incite revolts in Wallonia, Flanders and Brabant and resistance in Friesland was crumbling. By December that year the rebels might control a dozen towns in Holland and a handful in Zeeland but Amsterdam and Middelburg, the two major towns, still eluded them. Alba responded by sending his son, Don Fadrique to punish the rebels. Having sacked Zutphen and Naarden, Fadrique turned his attention to Haarlem, the second town in Holland. After a brutal siege lasting nearly seven

months, it surrendered, but the exhausted Spanish had to abandon their attempt to take Alkmaar.

The military situation was more finely balanced than one might have supposed. When it came to pitched battles, for example at Jemmingen and Mook, between the armies of the rebels and the Spanish tercios, there was little doubt as to the superiority of the latter. Until the summer of 1576 the Spanish army largely controlled the countryside of Holland and Zeeland. In the autumn of 1575, it looked indeed as though the Spanish might even re-capture Dordrecht and south Holland.⁷¹ Yet, while the Spaniards dominated the countryside, they were less successful in bringing the towns to heel. They eventually recaptured Haarlem, but they were thwarted at Alkmaar and Leiden, and failed to relieve Middelburg, and on the Zuiderzee and in the waters around Zeeland, the rebels had the upper hand.

In the reaction to the ‘Spanish Fury’ in Antwerp it looked for a time as if William’s hopes that all the Low Countries would be delivered from ‘Spanish tyranny’ were within reach. In early November 1576 the loyal provinces joined Holland and Zeeland in demanding the withdrawal of the Spanish army. William briefly found himself the hero of the hour, being received, according to one observer, in Brussels in September 1577 as ‘*if he were a messiah*’.⁷² In May 1580 Spanish soldiers even withdrew from the Low Countries and did not return for over two years. But of course, it was not to be. When they returned, the Low Countries were already separating into two blocs, the loyalist Union of Arras and the rebel Union of Utrecht. In 1581 the latter formally foreswore the authority of Philip II. The frontiers between the rival Unions continued to fluctuate for some time until in 1609 a Twelve Years’ Truce was concluded and then finally in 1648 Spain, 80 years after the start of the conflict, recognised the independence of the seven northern provinces at the Peace of Munster. By that

time of course, the United Provinces already had become an economic world power while Dutch culture was entering its Golden Age.

The defence of Holland and Zeeland between 1572-1576 has been described as William's 'finest hour'.⁷³ Rightly so. It was his moderate religious policies, his perseverance in the face of military reverses, his encouragement to beleaguered towns and his conviction that, despite appearances, the Low Countries constituted a common fatherland that somehow kept the show on the road. What he sought was liberty of conscience, the restoration of the privileges or liberties and the removal of the Spanish troops. These became his 'red lines' in any negotiations with the enemy. To a remarkable extent, he succeeded in realising these in the nascent United Netherlands that had emerged by 1579. As early as 1571 William was hailed as 'the father of the fatherland'⁷⁴ but it is his achievements in the following years that fully justify this tribute that fittingly appears on his mausoleum in Delft. His enemies tacitly agreed; that is why they sought to murder him. Several attempts were made to eliminate him and, of course, Balthasar Gérard finally succeeded in July 1584 when William was shot in Delft in what Lisa Jardine has called 'the first assassination of a head of state with a handgun'.⁷⁵ But what might well have been a fatal blow to the Revolt ten years earlier had rather less consequence in 1584 than might have been anticipated. Though the future of the United Provinces then still hung in the balance – Antwerp capitulated to Farnese in 1585 and Sluis in 1587 – the decision of Philip II to divert his attention to England and France gave a reprieve to the Dutch rebels, who with English support, succeeded in turning the tide from 1590.

¹ An earlier version of this paper was given to the Winchester Historical Association in December 2018. This paper draws extensively on William of Orange's correspondence much of which was published in the nineteenth

century, but I have chosen to cite the digital edition of his letters because it can be consulted online and is much more comprehensive.

[<http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/vwo>] This edition also provides cross references where letters have already been published. Citations follow the style recommended by the website: so, the name of correspondent, then the recipient, the date of the letter and its unique number.

² For the pejorative use of ‘sacramentarians’ by German Lutherans to describe Reformed Protestants see Orange to the German captains serving in Charles IX’s army, March 1569, no. 9033.

³ See Femke Deen, *Anna van Saksen. Verstoten bruid van Willem van Oranje* (Amsterdam 2018).

⁴ Charles IX to Orange, 11 December 1568, no. 10886.

⁵ When negotiations between the two sides broke down in the autumn of 1575, the rebels considered renouncing Philip II’s authority, in J.M.B.C. Kervijn de Lettenhove, (ed.), *Relations politiques des Pays-Bas et de l’Angleterre sous le règne de Philippe II* 11 vols (Brussels, 1882-1900), VII, 590-94.

⁶ Orange to Philip II, [22] April 1567, no.1521.

⁷ Orange to Alba, 8 September 1567, no. 10884.

⁸ See K.W. Swart, ‘Wat bewoog Willem van Oranje de strijd tegen de Spaanse overheersing aan te binden’, *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*’ 99 (1984/4), pp. 554-72.

⁹ ‘De Verantwoordinge des princen van Oraengien’ in M.G. Schenk (ed.) *Prins Willem van Oranje: Geschriften van 1568*, (Amsterdam, 1933) pp. 23-81.

¹⁰ For the engraving known as ‘The Throne of Alba’ see D.R. Horst, *De opstand in zwart-wit. Propagandaprenten uit de Nederlandse Opstand 1566-1584*, (Zutphen, 2005), pp. 84-90 and A. Sawyer, ‘The Tyranny of Alva: the creation and development of a Dutch patriotic icon’, *De zeventiende eeuw* 19 (2003/2), pp. 118-211).

¹¹ E. Pouillet (ed) *Correspondance du Cardinal de Granvelle, 1565-1586* 12 vols, (Brussels 1877-96), III, 350; O. Mörke, *Wilhelm von Oranien (1533-1584). Fürst und “Väter” der Republik* (Stüttgart, 2007), p. 140; J.P.W.A. Smit, *De legervlaggen uit den aanvang van den 80-jarigen oorlog* (Assen, 1938), pp. 18-20; <https://dutchrevolt.leiden.edu/dutch/spreuken>. 20-02-19.

¹² See Orange’s Commission to Herman de Ruyter, 25 November 1570, no.12646. See also nos. 6960, 10787, 10567.

¹³ Orange to Herman de Ruyter, 24 November 1570 no 12647.

¹⁴ *Het Geuzen liedboek naar de oude drukken uit de nalatenschap van E.T. Kuiper*, ed. P. Leendertz 2 vols., (Zutphen, 1924-25) I, 97.

¹⁵ W. Otterspeer *Het Bolwerk van de vrijheid. De Leidse Universiteit in heden en verleden* (Leiden, 2008), p. 29. I am obliged to Anton van der Lem for tracking this charter down.

¹⁶ M.Backhouse, ‘Dokumenten betreffende de godsdienststroebelen in het Westkwartier: Jan Camerlynck en tien zijner gezellen voor de Iepersche

vierschaar (1568-1569), *Bulletin de la Commission royale d'histoire* 138 (1972), pp. 79-381; A. Lottin, *La Révolte des Gueux en Flandre, Artois et Hainaut* (Lillers, 2007), ch. 8.

¹⁷ P.Th. van Beuningen, *Wilhelmus Lindanus als inquisiteur en bisschop. Bijdrage tot zijn biografie (1525-1576)*, (Assen, 1966), pp. 394-5.

¹⁸ É. de Moreau, *Histoire de l'Église en Belgique V L'Église des Pays-Bas 1559-1633* (Brussels, 1952), pp. 185-89.

¹⁹ B.B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross. Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford, 1991), ch.3.

²⁰ Orange to Granvelle, 27 June 1559, no. 6874.

²¹ *Apologie de Guillaume de Nassau (...) contre l'édit de proscription publié en 1580 par Philippe II* ed. A. Lacroix (Brussels, 1858), pp. 88-89. Historians are divided as to what weight to attach to the account in the *Apology*. While some dismiss it as a cock-and-bull story, others think it is not implausible.

²² M. Venard, *Réforme protestante, réforme catholique dans la province d'Avignon au XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1993), pp. 461-70; Joseph de la Pise, *Tableau de l'histoire des princes et principauté d'Orange* (The Hague, 1640), pp. 273-306.

²³ Orange to the consuls and inhabitants of Orange, 28 August 1563, no. 12000.

²⁴ F. Strada, *De thien eerste boecken der Nederlandsche Oorloge* (Amsterdam, 1646), p. 224.

²⁵ His correspondence with Margaret of Parma while he was a provincial governor refers on several occasions to measures taken against religious dissidents there.

²⁶ He defended his decision to issue an edict of toleration for Orange in August 1563 on these grounds to the papacy and Margaret of Parma.

²⁷ L.P. Gachard (ed.) *Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas* 6 vols (Brussels, 1848-1936), I, 346-47. The King's opinion was probably known to William in 1566, see G. Groen van Prinsterer (ed.) *Archives ou correspondance inédite de la maison d'Orange-Nassau* 1st series (8 vols, Leiden, 1835-47), II, 439-40.

²⁸ L.P. Gachard (ed.) *Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche, duchesse de Parme avec Philippe II*, 3 vols, (Brussels, 1867-81), II, 38-9.

²⁹ For the numbers of Protestants executed across Europe see W. Monter, 'Heresy executions in Reformation Europe, 1520-1565' in O.P. Grell and R. Scribner (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance in Reformation Europe, 1520-1565* (Cambridge 1996), p. 49.

³⁰ See F. Postma, 'Prefigurations of the Future? The views on the boundaries of church and state of William of Orange and Viglius van Aytta (1565-1566)' in Alasdair A. MacDonald and Arend H. Huussen (eds.), *Scholarly environments: centres of learning and institutional contexts, 1560-1960* (Leuven, 2004), pp. 15-31.

³¹ G. Brandt, *Historie der reformatie en andre kerkelyke geschiedenissen in en ontrent de Nederlanden* 4 vols (Amsterdam 1671-1704), I, 269.

³² Orange to Herman de Ruyter, 25 November 1570, no.12647; see also Orange's instructions to Bernhard van Mérode, 4 December 1570 no 10525 and to Sonoy 20 April 1572 no. 10063.

³³ Charles de Meyere to Orange, 27 April 1572 no.10781.

³⁴ P. Bor, *Oorsprongk, begin en vervolgh der Nederlandsche oorlogen*, 4 vols, (Amsterdam, 1679-84), I, 389.

³⁵ The States suspended public Catholic services in the spring of 1573, but because the resolutions of that body for 1571-74 have been lost, the precise date is unknown, see *Dagboek van Broeder Wouter Jacobsz. I.H. van Eeghen* (ed.) 2 vols. (Groningen, 1959-60), I, 249 n.5.

³⁶ Orange to Johann von Nassau, 4/5 February 1573, no. 5798 and Orange to Louis of Nassau, 17 June 1573, no. 4497.

³⁷ E.g. De correspondentie van Willem van Oranje, nos. 10070, 2359, 3288, 4763, 6977, 3010, 3017, 3055.

³⁸ For the supporting evidence see A. Duke, 'Eavesdropping on the Correspondence between the Strangers, chiefly in Norwich, and their families in the Low Countries' *Dutch Crossing* 38 (2014/2), p. 128 endnote 2.

³⁹ K.W. Swart, *William of Orange and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1572-84* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 38-41. A letter written late in 1573 stated that Orange had become a professed member of the Reformed Church, A.A. van Schelven,

‘Emden in niederländischer Beleuchtung aus dem Jahre 1573’ *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst und vaterländische Altertümer zu Emden* 20 (1920), p.182.

⁴⁰ Orange to the citizens of Ghent, 31 July 1579 no. 4676; Orange to Dathenus, 27 September 1579 no. 1286.

⁴¹ Orange to the inhabitants of Holland and Zeeland 19 June 1573, no. 6908.

⁴² Orange to Sonoy and others, 9 August 1573, no. 3395.

⁴³ See Orange’s instructions to those appointed as town governors, 24 November 1570, no. 8073.

⁴⁴ Orange to the inhabitants of Breda, 5 September 1566 no. 10273.

⁴⁵ Orange to Pieter Willems Bogaert, 5 May 1572, no. 9572. On 27 July 1572. Orange acknowledged receiving 1060 guilders from the Mennonites.

⁴⁶ Orange to Adriaentje Adriaensdr, 5 May 1573, no. 2836; for the trial and execution of her Mennonite relatives in 1571 see K. Slootmans, ‘Verhoren van wederdopers te Klundert gevangen genomen 5 augustus 1571’. *Oudheidkundige kring ‘De Ghulden Roos’ Roosendaal Jaarboek* 13 1953 pp. 11-44 and *Jaarboek* 14 (1954), pp. 11-31.

⁴⁷ Orange to the Mennonites at Middelburg, 26 January 1577, no. 10445. See also, G. Brandt, *Historie der Reformatie*, I, 586-90.

⁴⁸ *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age* R. Po-Chia and H. van Nierop (eds.) (Cambridge, 2002).

⁴⁹ Estimates vary. J. Briels, *Zuid-Nederlanders in de Republiek 1572-1630. Een demografische en cultuurhistorische studie* (Sint-Niklaas, 1987) p. 220 has suggested as many as 150,000, of whom 124,000 went to the towns of Holland and Zeeland, but because of the mobility of the immigrants, some may have been double-counted.

⁵⁰ A. Th. Van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen. Kerk en kerkvolk ten tijde van Maurits en Oldenbarnvelt*, Assen, 1974), ch. 7 and 8; A. Duke, 'The Ambivalent Face of Calvinism in the Netherlands, 1561-1618' in M. Prestwich (ed.) *International Calvinism 1541-1715* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 113, 130-33.

⁵¹ P. Bor, *Oorsprongk, begin en vervolgh*, II, 976.

⁵² A. Duke, 'The "Inquisition and the Repression of Religious Dissent in the Habsburg Netherlands 1521-1566', in J. Pollmann and A. Spicer (eds.) *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Farnham, 2008), pp. 100-02.

⁵³ A. Duke, 'In defence of the Common Fatherland: Patriotism and Liberty in the Low Countries, 1555-1576' in J. Pollmann and A. Spicer (eds.), *Dissident Identities* pp. 57-76.

⁵⁴ R. Stein, 'Seventeen: the multiplicity of a unity in the Low Countries' in J. Boulton and J. Veenstra (eds), *The Ideology of Burgundy. The Promotion of national consciousness, 1364-1565* (Leiden, 2006), pp. 223-85; A. Duke, 'The Elusive Netherlands: The Question of National Identity in the Early Modern Low Countries on the Eve of the Revolt' in *Dissident Identities*, pp. 32-35.

⁵⁵ *Apologie de Guillaume de Nassau*, p. 78.

⁵⁶ Orange advised the States General in their negotiations with Don John of Austria to have the safeguards implicit in the Brabant privilege extended to all the provinces. See Orange to the States General, 1 February 1577 no. 8117.

During peace negotiations in 1579 between Spain and the States General, brokered by the Holy Roman emperor, the rebels raised this issue again, P. Bor, *Oorsprongk, begin en vervolgh*, 56.

⁵⁷ For the many collective names for the Low Countries see the appendices in Duke, 'The Elusive Netherlands' in *Dissident Identities*, pp. 52-55.

⁵⁸ A.D. Smith, 'The Origins of Nations' in G. Eley and R.G. Suny (eds.) *Becoming National. A Reader*, (New York-Oxford, 1996), p. 109.

⁵⁹ M. Micron, *De Christelicke Ordinancien der Nederlatscher Ghemeinten te Londen (1554)* ed. W.F. Dankbaar (The Hague, 1956), p. 37 ; S.J. Lenselink, *De nederlandse psalmberijmingen van de Souterliedekens tot Datheen* (Assen, 1959), p. 370, 515.

⁶⁰ *Archives ou correspondance inédite de la maison d'Orange-Nassau*, II, 431.

This memorandum may have been drafted when the Prince addressed the States of Holland at Schoonhoven.

⁶¹ Orange to the magistrates and inhabitants of Enkhuizen, 5 May 1572, no. 7608.

⁶² The Spanish Fury was not, as is sometimes supposed, a straightforward case of mutinous troops sacking Antwerp to compensate for arrears of pay so much as plunder by Spanish soldiers after they had defeated troops recruited by the

States of Brabant, see E. Rooms, 'Een nieuwe visie op de gebertenissen die geleid hebben tot de Spaanse Furie te Antwerpen op 4 november 1576'

Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis, 54 (1971), pp. 31-55. I am indebted to Guido Marnef for drawing my attention to this important article.

⁶³ *Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas*, IV, 422.

⁶⁴ Renon de France, *Histoire des Troubles des Pay-Bas* Ch. Piot (ed.) 3 vols (Brussels, 1886-91), II, 56.

⁶⁵ E.g. Orange to the States of Brabant, Flanders and Hainaut, 3 October 1576, no.8308 and Orange to the Council of State, 29 October 1576, no. 6975.

⁶⁶ Swart, *William of Orange and the Revolt of the Netherlands*, p. 173 n.71.

⁶⁷ The earliest usage known to me occurs in a letter of Michiel de Backere to Orange 11 December 1576, no. 6054.

⁶⁸ Miriam Yardeni who trawled through the pamphlet literature in search of patriotic languages found only six cases between 1565 and 1597, see her *La Conscience nationale en France pendant les guerres de religion (1559-1598)* (Leuven-Paris, 1971) pp. 138, 147, 151, 152, 172-3, 329 n.37.

⁶⁹ For example, 'patriot' first occurs in the title of Johann Fischart's German translation of the French pamphlet *Le Vray Patriot aux Bons Patriots* (1579) USTC 670733 and, in English, in a report of 8 June 1577 about the political sympathies of Frederick Perronet de Champagny, Granvelle's brother, *Oxford English Dictionary* s.v. 'patriot'.

⁷⁰ Orange to Johann von Nassau, 18 October 1572, no. 5200.

⁷¹ For a bleak assessment of the rebels' position in the autumn of 1575 see *Relations politiques des Pays-Bas et de l'Angleterre* VII, 557; 567-69; 572-73; 581-82; 587-79; 589.

⁷² G. Parker, *The Imprudent King: a new life of Philip II* (New Haven, 2014) p. 245.

⁷³ Swart, *William of Orange and the Revolt of the Netherlands*, p. 29.

⁷⁴ *Texts concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands* E.H.Kossmann and A.F. Mellink (eds.) (Cambridge, 1974), p. 92 n. 11.

⁷⁵ L. Jardine, *The awful end of Prince William the Silent. The First Assassination of a Head of State with a Handgun* (London, 2005).