

NETHERLANDISH CULTURE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

SEUH

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NETHERLANDISH CULTURE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY
Urban Perspectives

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BREPOLS

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HABSBURG POLITICAL CULTURE AND ANTWERP DEFIANT

Pacification Strategies of Governors-General during the Dutch Revolt (1566–1586)

Violet SOEN
KU Leuven

Famously, in August 1585, Habsburg Governor-General Alexander Farnese faced the delicate task of restoring peace and order in conquered Antwerp. Until then, the port at the river Scheldt had been a crucial target in his military campaign to reconquer the insurgent Calvinist Republics in Flanders and Brabant for the King of Spain, but soon it turned into a major test case for his policy of Habsburg restoration and Catholic reform. Recently, Guido Marnef has described how Farnese realized his mission to install a new political and religious order in rebellious Antwerp, and how this policy yielded the ambivalent result of a large-scale emigration and an internal re-catholicization.¹ Accordingly, this present contribution aims at putting the better-known strategy of Farnese towards Antwerp into a long-term perspective of Habsburg political culture during the Dutch Revolt.² As will be argued, the city of Antwerp defiant constituted, for two decades, the testing arena for Habsburg pacification strategies, by which the governors-general pursued a two-track policy of repression and reconciliation.

¹ Guido Marnef, 'Reconquering a Rebellious City: Alessandro Farnese and the Siege and Recatholicization of Antwerp', in *Alessandro Farnese and the Low Countries*, ed. by Krista De Jonge (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming). Abbreviations of archives: Archivo de los Duques de Alba, Palacio de Liria, Spain, Madrid (ADA); Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels (AGR), Papiers de l'État et de l'Audience (PEA); Archivo General de Simancas, Simancas (AGS), Estado (E), Secretarías Provinciales (SP), and Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas Segunda Época (CMC 2aE); British Library, London (BLL); Biblioteca Francisco de Zabálburu, Madrid (BFZM); Instituto Valencia de Don Juan, Madrid (IVDJ); Koninklijke Bibliotheek/Bibliothèque Royale Albert I, Brussels (KBR), Livres Précieux (LP); and Stadsarchief Antwerpen (SAA). Abbreviations of editions: *Epistolario del III Duque de Alba, Don Fernando Álvarez de Toledo*, ed. by Duque de Berwick y Alba, 3 vols (Madrid: Diana, 1952) (EA); *Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas publiée d'après les originaux conservés dans les Archives royales de Simancas*, ed. by L. P. Gachard and L. Lefèvre, 6 vols (Brussels: Hayez, 1848–1936) (CPhII); W. P. C. Knuttel, *Catalogus van de pamflettenverzameling berustende in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek* (The Hague: Algemeene Landsdrukkerij, 1889) (K.).

² Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, 2nd edn (London: Penguin Books, 1985) and Graham Darby, *The Origins and Development of the Dutch Revolt* (London: Routledge, 2001). On the historiography of the Dutch Revolt: J. W. Smit, 'The Present Position of Studies Regarding the Revolt of the Netherlands', *Britain and the Netherlands*, v, ed. by John Selwyn Bromley and Ernst Heinrich Kossmann (London: Chatto & Windus, 1960), pp. 11–28; Henk van Nierop, 'Alva's Throne: Making Sense of the Revolt of the Netherlands', in *The Origins*, ed. by Darby (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 29–47; Laura Cruz, 'The 80 Years' Question: The Dutch Revolt in Historical Perspective', *History Compass*, 5 (2007), pp. 914–34; Judith Pollmann, 'Internationalisering en de Nederlandse Opstand', *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review*, 124 (2009), pp. 515–35; and Cruz, 'Reworking the Grand Narrative: A Review of Recent Books on the Dutch Revolt', *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review*, 125 (2010), pp. 29–38.

Although Peter Arnade has brilliantly described the political culture of the insurgents in this hazardous civil war, much less is known about its Habsburg or loyalist counterpart.³ And while the 'Netherlandish culture' of the sixteenth century became influenced by the strife of the dissatisfied factions, it also was determined by that of their rulers. This does not imply that all Habsburg governors-general adopted a clear-cut and untailored form of pacification towards rebel cities. Rather, this chapter argues that the governors-general Margaret of Parma, the Duke of Alba, and Alexander Farnese continuously reassessed their strategies for pacification between 1566 and 1586. By comparing the Habsburg means and measures for restoring peace and order in Antwerp during the first two decades of the Revolt in the Netherlands, it will become clear that the governors-general tried to learn lessons from the experiences of their predecessors and from the corresponding reactions of the Antwerp citizens. As such, concrete attempts at reconciliation differed significantly, even over the limited time span of twenty years.

Antwerp Defiant

The clash between Antwerp and Philip II in the latter half of the sixteenth century was not a unique event in the history of the Low Countries. Since the late Middle Ages, conflicts between rich, powerful cities and their rulers occurred at an impressive rhythm in this highly urbanized region.⁴ Antwerp engaged in a power struggle similar to that of its neighbouring cities, even though violent conflict with the overlord remained absent for relatively long periods. At the end of the fifteenth century, the city had profited from the decision of the Habsburg Maximilian of Austria to favour the Antwerp harbour over that of rebel Bruges. Thanks to this privileged relationship, the city asserted itself as the major commercial city in Northern Europe throughout the sixteenth century. But, as Guy Wells has argued, even before the Dutch Revolt systematic frictions occurred between the Antwerp magistrate and the governors-general regarding jurisdiction, commerce, and the organization of urban government. Flirting with notions of civic republicanism, the city magistrate protested repeatedly against initiatives of the central government to limit local power.⁵ Yet the Reformation would evolve into the biggest apple of discord. While the central government opted for the rapid repression of heterodoxy in Antwerp, the harbour city continued to house important Lutheran, Anabaptist, and later Calvinist networks, chiefly in

3 Peter Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts & Civic Patriots: The Political Culture of the Dutch Revolt* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008); and Violet Soen, *Vredehandel. Adellijke en Habsburgse verzoeningspogingen tijdens de Nederlandse Opstand (1564–1581)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

4 *Cities and the Rise of States in Europe A.D. 1000 to 1800*, ed. by Wim Blockmans and Charles Tilly (Boulder: Westview, 1994), pp. 218–50; Blockmans, 'Alternatives to Monarchical Centralization: The Great Tradition of Revolt in Flanders and Brabant', in *Republiken und Republikanismus im Europa der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. by Helmut Koenigsberger (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1988), pp. 145–54; Marc Boone and Maarten Prak, 'Patricians and Burghers: The Great and the Little Tradition of Urban Revolt in the Low Countries', in *A Miracle Mirrored: The Dutch Republic in European Perspective*, ed. by Karel Davids and Jan Lucassen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 99–134; and Jelle Haemers and Jan Dumolyn, 'Patterns of Urban Rebellion in Medieval Flanders', *Journal of Medieval History*, 31 (2005), 369–93.

5 Guy Edward Wells, 'Antwerp and the Government of Philip II: 1555–1567' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Cornell University, 1982). See also María Rodríguez-Salado, 'Amor, menosprecio y motines: Felipe II y las ciudades de los Países Bajos antes de la Revolución', in *Ciudades en conflicto (siglos XVI–XVIII)*, ed. by José Ignacio Fortea and Juan Eloy Gelabert (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de cultura y turismo, 2008), pp. 181–219.

underground communities, but also publicly among foreign tradesmen.⁶ Marnef and, more recently, Victoria Christman, have insisted on the fact that the Antwerp magistrate often oscillated between religious toleration and repression. Employing the argument that the presence of Protestant tradesmen was necessary for the welfare of the port, the magistrate successfully acquired local exceptions to the general anti-heresy legislation.⁷

While the Dutch Revolt was a conflict long in the making, only from 1566 onwards did the political and religious tensions between Antwerp and Philip II clash violently. In a nutshell, the story goes as follows. With the Iconoclastic Fury in the summer of 1566, Protestants seized the opportunity to make themselves visible within the city walls. They obtained a conditional permission from the city governor, William Prince of Orange, to profess their religion publicly. Still, voluntary Calvinist armies were defeated near Antwerp in March 1567; thereafter the Prince of Orange left the city in order to meet with his relatives in the Holy Roman Empire. Quickly, the Habsburg party restored the exclusive position of Catholicism, imposing a garrison and the construction of a citadel. This 'Spanish' citadel served as an operating base for royal troops in the campaign against the insurgents in Holland and Zeeland led by William of Orange from April 1572 onwards. Unpaid and mutinying royal soldiers sacked Antwerp on 4 November 1576, an event better known as the Spanish Fury.⁸ Gradually the port city became the seat of government of the States-General, defiant towards Habsburg rule on the basis of their single-handedly concluded Pacification of Ghent (8 November 1576). Once again, the Prince of Orange tried to implement a policy of toleration by twice promulgating for Antwerp a religious peace (in 1578 and 1579). Nevertheless, Catholicism came to be forbidden by 1581 and a Calvinist Republic was progressively installed. After a long and painful siege from July 1584 onwards, the insurgent city had to accept royal authority; it capitulated on 17 August 1585.⁹ The Dutch Revolt brought twenty years of unrest — with successive alternation between loyalist and insurgent regimes, and between exclusive Catholicism and Calvinism — to Antwerp, with a temporary religious peace in between.¹⁰

6 In particular, see Marnef, *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation: Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis, 1550–1577*, Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science Series: CXIV. 1 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996). See also the just published Victoria Christman, *Pragmatic Toleration: The Politics of Religious Heterodoxy in Early Reformation Antwerp 1515–1555*, Changing Perspectives on Early Modern Europe (Rochester NY: University of Rochester Press, 2015).

7 Marnef, 'Tussen tolerantie en repressie: Protestanten en religieuze dissidenten te Antwerpen in de zestiende eeuw', in *Minderheden in West-Europese steden (zestiende-twintigste eeuw)*, ed. by Hugo Soly and Alfons K. L., Thijs, Belgisch Historisch Instituut te Rome, Bibliotheek: XXXIV (Brussels: Belgisch historisch instituut te Rome, 1995), pp. 189–213.

8 Etienne Rooms, 'Een nieuwe visie op de gebeurtenissen die geleid hebben tot de Spaanse Furie te Antwerpen 4 november 1576', *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* (1971), pp. 31–56; Gustaaf Janssens, 'Servitium en andere militaire lasten, belangrijke elementen voor de Brabantse loyale oppositie tegen de Spaanse landvoogden', in *Mensen in oorlogstijd*, ed. by Fernand Vanhemelryck and others (Brussels: UFSAL, Centrum voor Brabantse Geschiedenis, 1988), pp. 25–55; Amanda Pipkin, 'They Were Not Humans, But Devils in Human Bodies: Depiction of Sexual Violence and Spanish Tyranny as a Means of Fostering Identity in the Dutch Republic', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 13 (2009), pp. 229–64; and Pipkin, 'Every Woman's Fear: Stories of Rape and Dutch Identity in the Golden Age', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 122 (2009), pp. 290–305.

9 Rob Van Roosbroeck, *Het Wonderjaar te Antwerpen (1566–1567). Inleiding tot de studie der godsdienstonlusten van den Beeldenstorm af (1566) tot de inneming der stad door Alexander Farnese (1585)* (Antwerp and Leuven: De Sikkel, 1930). The account by Marnef is more nuanced and accurate, however.

10 Marnef, 'Multiconfessionalism in a Commercial Metropolis: The case of 16th-Century Antwerp', in *A Companion to Multiconfessionalism in the Early Modern World*, ed. by Thomas Safley (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 75–97; and Marnef, 'The Process of Political Change under the Calvinist Republic in Antwerp (1577–1585)', in *Des villes en révolte: Les Républiques urbaines aux Pays-Bas et en France pendant la deuxième moitié du 16^e siècle*, ed. by Monique Weis (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), pp. 25–33.

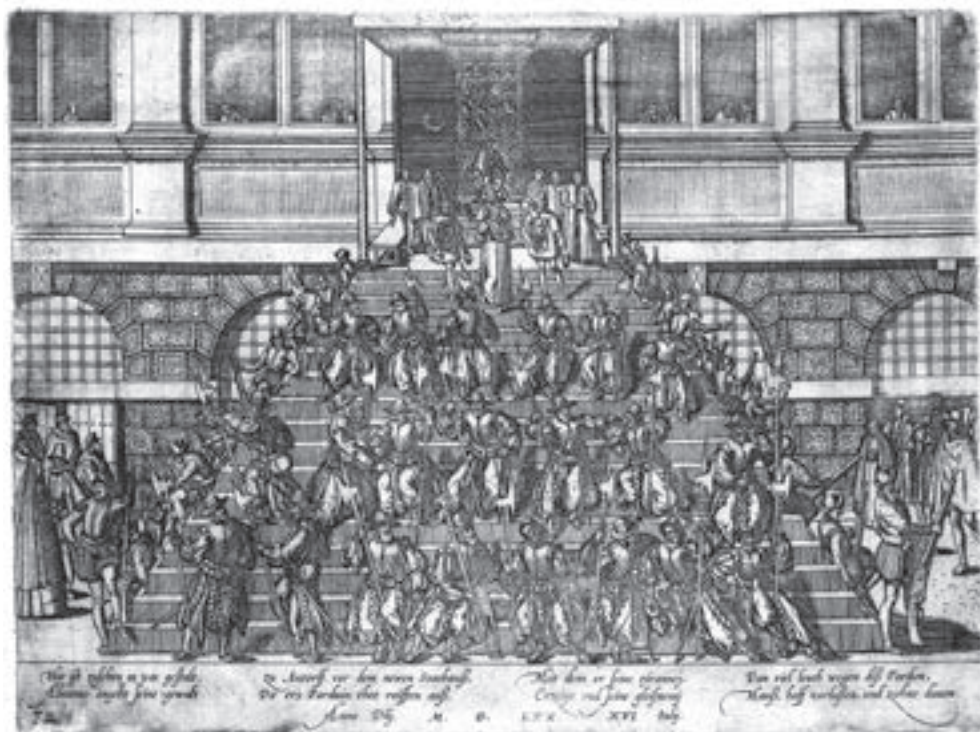


Fig. 1: Frans Hogenberg, Promulgation of the General Pardon in Antwerp on the 16th of July 1570. KU Leuven, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Bijzondere Collecties – © Bruno Vandermeulen

At first glance, the case of Antwerp during the Dutch Revolt confirms the classic pattern of urban revolt and its repression by rulers in the Netherlands. Previously the dukes of Burgundy, aiming to control their rich urban competitors, did not hesitate to punish city revolts harshly. Occasionally they even proceeded to an exemplary destruction of minor cities to discourage further rebellion. Wim Blockmans and Marc Boone have discerned a ‘Burgundian scenario’ in this repression of urban revolts. That script of repression included a wide range of punishments such as the removal of privileges; the dismantlement of symbolic urban spaces; ritual ceremonies of punishment (known as the *amendes honorables*); and the imposition of financial measures and fines.¹¹ Recently, Peter Arnade unravelled how these Burgundian agendas of princely centralization continued in the Habsburg repression of cities during the Dutch Revolt. As such, the repression in Antwerp under the regime of King Philip II echoed this Burgundian scenario, as each political reorganization by the loyalist party aimed at diminishing the aspirations of self-government included in the privileges. The additional military troops and, especially, the construction of a citadel were aimed to contain Antwerp under Habsburg control by modifying the urban space of

¹¹ Boone, ‘Destroying and Reconstructing the City: The Inculcation and Arrogation of Princely Power in the Burgundian-Habsburg Netherlands (14th–16th Centuries)’, in *The Propagation of Power in the Medieval West: Selected Proceedings of the International Conference, Groningen, 20–23 November 1996*, ed. by Martin Gosman and others, Mediaevalia Groningana: xxiii (Groningen: Forsten, 1997), pp. 1–33; Blockmans, ‘La répression de révoltes urbaines comme méthode de centralisation dans les Pays-Bas bourguignons’, in *Milan et les États bourguignons: Deux ensembles politiques princiers entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance (xiv^e–xv^e siècles)*, ed. by Jean-Marie Cauchies, Publications du Centre européen d’études bourguignonnes: xxviii (Basel: Centre européen d’études bourguignonnes, 1988), pp. 5–9.

the metropolis. After its capitulation in 1585, the city had to pay a heavy fine and had to finance the reconstruction of the citadel (if the war continued, which it did). Nevertheless, the old Burgundian scenario of harsh punishment yielded contradictory effects during the Dutch Revolt: the repression and repeated sacking of rebel cities as well as mutinies by royal troops fuelled rebellion instead of pacifying it. This has led Peter Arnade to argue that continued civic resistance and outrage over the repression was gradually framed as a legitimated fight for 'freedom' against the triad of 'Spanish soldiers, Furies, and King'.¹²

The Burgundian scenario of repression only provides part of the story, however. The on-going struggle for the position of Catholicism and Protestantism in society introduces another aspect, in which the legacy of Emperor Charles V became pivotal. Philip II cherished the wish of his father to maintain the Netherlands as exclusively Catholic.¹³ The King of Spain refused to accept settlements like the Augsburg religious peace for the Seventeen Provinces, and did not hesitate to repeat this to imperial envoys.¹⁴ Similarly, the King was not at all convinced of the efficacy of the bi-confessional agreements of the French King (the so-called *édits de pacification*) for restoring peace.¹⁵ Philip II had consciously evaluated the results of these 'edicts of toleration': both after the legal accommodations of the 1562 *édit de Janvier* and the 1563 *édit d'Amboise*, religious violence spread again, particularly at the Pyrenean frontier with Spain.¹⁶ Therefore, in 1565 Philip dispatched his French consort Elisabeth de Valois to convince her mother and her brother (the King of France) that the decrees of the Council of Trent were the solution, and that bi-confessional agreements were not.¹⁷ For Philip II, France gradually became the example of how *not* to do things, and he often alleged that the kings of France had made things worse by granting Protestants some rights of worship. It is noteworthy that Philip II persisted in this strand of

12 Arnade, *Beggars*, esp. Chapter 7: 'Spanish Furies: Sieges, Sacks, and the City Defiant', pp. 212–50; and Boone, 'The Dutch Revolt and the Medieval Tradition of Urban Dissent', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 11 (2007), pp. 351–75. See also Marnef, 'The Towns and the Revolt', in *The Origins*, ed. by Darby (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 84–106; and James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic: War, Finance, and Politics in Holland, 1572–1588* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). For a historiographical survey on the repression of cities during the Dutch Revolt, see Soen, '¿Más allá de la leyenda negra? León van der Essen y la historiografía reciente en torno al castigo de las ciudades rebeldes en los Países Bajos (siglos XIV a XVI)', in *El Ejército Español en Flandes 1567–1584*, ed. by León Van der Essen and Janssens (Cuacos de Yuste: Fundación Academia Europea de Yuste, 2008), pp. 45–72.

13 Janssens, 'Van vader op zoon. Continuïteit in het beleid van Karel V en Filips II met betrekking tot de Nederlanden', in *Dos monarcas y una historia en común: España y Flandes bajo los reinados de Carlos V y Felipe II* (Madrid: Sociedad estatal para la conmemoración de los centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2001), pp. 89–102; and Heinz Schilling, 'The Struggle for the Integrity and Unity of Christendom', in *Carolus: Keizer Karel V 1500–1558*, ed. by Soly (Antwerp: Mercatorfonds, 1999), pp. 285–365.

14 Johannes Arndt, 'Die kaiserlichen Friedensvermittlungen im spanisch-niederländischen Krieg 1568–1609', *Rheinische Vierteljahresblätter*, 62 (1998), pp. 161–83; Weis, 'La Paix d'Augsbourg de 1555: Un Modèle pour les Pays-Bas? L'Ambassade des princes luthériens allemands auprès de Marguerite de Parme en 1567', in *Entre Royaume et Empire: Frontières, rivalités et modèles*, Publications du Centre européen d'études bourguignonnes: XLII (Neuchâtel: Centre européen d'études bourguignonnes, 2002), pp. 87–100.

15 This intransigency of Philip II regarding the Catholic religion has been identified as an obstacle to peace during the Dutch Revolt. To quote Philip Benedict in 1999, 'Time and again — in 1566, 1577, 1579, 1589 and 1598 — Philip refused to concede rights of worship to the Protestants comparable to those granted by Charles IX and Henry III in France, even though it now seems with hindsight that these were all moments when he might have been able to end the political crisis in the Netherlands by doing so'. Benedict, 'The Dynamics of Reformed Religious Militancy: The Netherlands, 1566–1585', in *Reformation, Revolt, and Civil War in France and the Netherlands, 1555–1585*, ed. by Benedict and others (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999), p. 16.

16 Jean Boutier, Alain Dewerpe, and Daniel Nordman, *Un Tour de France royal: Le Voyage de Charles IX (1564–1566)* (Paris: Aubier, 1984), pp. 160–61; and Jérémy Foa, 'Making Peace: The Commission for Enforcing the Pacification Edicts in the Reign of Charles IX (1560–1574)', *French History*, 18 (2004), pp. 256–74.

17 Weis, 'La peur du grand complot catholique: La diplomatie espagnole face aux soupçons des protestants allemands (1560–1570)', *Francia. Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte*, 32 (2005), pp. 15–30.



Fig. 2: Hans Vredeman de Vries, *Allegory on the reconciliation of Antwerp, after 1585*. Museum Vleeshuis, Antwerp, AV 2009.009.01 – © Bart Huysmans.

reasoning after the religious settlements that William of Orange tested in Antwerp in the wake of the Iconoclastic Fury in 1566. After the Farnese victory, Antwerp would develop into a bastion of the Counter-Reformation.¹⁸ As Geoffrey Parker has pointed out more systematically, the King always feared that the loss of the Catholic religion in the Netherlands would result in the loss of many other territories for the composite Spanish monarchy; the Netherlands were but one part of his 'Grand Strategy' for his world empire.¹⁹

This essay argues that neither the Burgundian scenario of repression, nor the Grand Strategy of Philip II made for a concrete policy of pacification on the ground, and certainly not when applied to the metropolis of Antwerp. Whereas the aforementioned military pressure and the politico-religious repression served as the stick, sometimes concessions served as the carrot to smooth the Habsburg restoration and re-catholicization. Certainly, concessions were never easily granted, as the King (and more often his advisors) was afraid that they could be used against his authority. Time and again, endless debates surfaced regarding the exact form measures of accommodation might take. To complicate things further, distance prevented a smooth coordination of attempts at reconciliation: for example,

¹⁸ Thijs, *Van Geuzenstad tot katholiek bolwerk. Maatschappelijke betekenis van de Kerk in contrareformatorisch Antwerpen* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990); and Marie Juliette Marinus, *De contrareformatie te Antwerpen (1585–1676): kerkelijk leven in een grootstad* (Brussels: Koninklijk Vlaamse Academie, 1995).

¹⁹ Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven: Yale University, 1998); and Fernando González de León, 'The Grand Strategy of Philip II and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1559–1584', in *Reformation, Revolt*, ed. by Benedict and others, pp. 215–32.

letters took (on average) two weeks to travel between Madrid and Brussels, if they were not lost. To circumvent major evil, the King often delegated the power to make concrete and pragmatic decisions to the governors, who could then decide 'according the circumstances'.²⁰ Hence the governors-general received, to a certain extent, a margin for negotiation regarding *la pacification des troubles*. At first, Governess Margaret of Parma tried to accommodate the situation in Antwerp with moderate legislation. Subsequently, under the Duke of Alba a general pardon was attempted as a means of sparking reconciliation with King and Church. Finally, the capitulation treaties under Farnese foresaw the possibility of a *ius emigrandi* for Protestants and a full pardon for citizens. Even if the genesis and implementation of these three attempts at conciliation are scrutinized separately for Antwerp, they should at all times be understood as a complement to the aforementioned repressive and military manoeuvres. Special attention will therefore be paid in what follows to the interplay between the Habsburg strategy in general and its implementation in Antwerp in particular.

Mobilization and Moderation

The first governor-general to be confronted with large-scale political and religious unrest in the Netherlands was Duchess Margaret of Parma (1522–86). Though an illegitimate daughter of Emperor Charles V, she had been swiftly acknowledged as a member of the Habsburg dynasty. Margaret was appointed in 1559, when Philip II departed for the Iberian Peninsula and preferred his half-sister over other relatives bargaining for the same job. In doing so, the King aimed to follow in his father's footsteps by appointing family members in Brussels and by enhancing dynastic continuity within his composite monarchy.²¹ Still, she was certainly not a puppet on the string of Madrid: wedded to the Duke of Parma, Margaret also defended the House of Farnese, sometimes against Habsburg interests.²² As governor for the Netherlands, she often felt deprived of prompt guidelines by her half-brother. Therefore, she relied on the advice of her own secretaries and the senior Brussels bureaucrats, like Cardinal Granvelle and the lawyer Viglius.²³ Margaret always favoured initiatives of Catholic religious reform, especially by the Jesuits, and she was uncomfortable with the spread of the Reformation. According to her own testimony, the Duchess of Parma preferred to be 'torn apart in pieces, rather than to permit more than one

20 Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, pp. 47–75.

21 For the bibliography on the biographies of Margaret of Parma, the Duke of Alba and Alexander Farnese, I refer to the extensive footnotes in Soen, 'Philip II's Quest: The Appointment of Governors-General during the Dutch Revolt (1559–1598)', *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review*, 126 (2011), pp. 3–27. See also Horst Rabe and Peter Marzahl, 'Comme représentant nostre propre personne: Regentschaften und Regentschaftsordnungen Kaiser Karels V', in *Karl V. Politik und politisches System*, ed. by Rabe (Konstanz: Universitätsverlag, 1996), pp. 71–94.

22 Sebastiaan Derks, 'Madama's Minister: Tomás de Armenteros at the Court of Margarita of Austria', in *Agentes y Identidades en movimiento. España y los Países Bajos, siglos XVI–XVIII*, ed. by Maurits Ebben and others (Madrid: Silex, 2011), pp. 49–70; and Maria-Jose Rodríguez-Salgado, 'Almost a Royal Eagle: Alexander Farnese and the Spanish Monarchy', in *Alessandro Farnese*, ed. by De Jonge, forthcoming.

23 Folkert Postma, 'Granvelle, Viglius en de adel', in *Les Granvelle et les anciens Pays-Bas, Liber doctori Mauricio Van Durme dedicatus*, ed. by De Jonge and Janssens (Leuven: Universitaire Pers Leuven, 2000), pp. 157–77; and Postma, 'Van bescheiden humanist tot vechtrjas. Viglius van Aytta en de crisis van 1566–1567', *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review*, 123 (2008), pp. 323–40.

religion.²⁴ From the beginning of her governorship, Antwerp proved a hard nut to crack. Her attempts to install a bishop in Antwerp, as had been planned as part of the bishopric reconfiguration that Philip II revealed before his departure in 1559, failed. Instead, she had to silence the rumour that this bishopric scheme served to introduce the 'Spanish Inquisition' into Antwerp, an item of gossip within the city walls and an argument by the city magistrate used to counter every reform whatsoever, even in the financial sphere.²⁵

On 15 August 1566, religious riots hit the city of Antwerp hard: the iconoclasm was mainly directed at 'purifying' the sacred space of the cathedral and other churches within the city walls.²⁶ The underground Protestant communities then became militant in order to obtain concessions from the public sphere.²⁷ The outbreak of the Iconoclastic Fury in Antwerp and in other cities left Margaret of Parma in total despair, even to the extent that she twice wanted to flee from Brussels to Mons.²⁸ Henceforth, she would follow a 'zig-zag policy' between moderation and mobilization.²⁹ She still relied on Viglius as her main advisor, but she also temporarily sought the counsel of the Knights of the Golden Fleece and of the provincial governors in order to restore peace and order. These aristocrats then led negotiations in Brussels for an agreement with the dissatisfied Compromise of Nobles, who from the autumn of 1565 had asked for the abrogation of religious persecution.³⁰ Strikingly, on 23–25 August 1566 she endorsed a highly conditional permission for Protestant preaching. Juliaan Woltjer has dubbed this curious agreement with the Compromise of Nobles the 'first victory of the moderates' since, according to him, it permitted the worship of two religions and thus inaugurated a humanist *via media* towards religious co-existence.³¹ In fact, the agreement was officially framed as 'lettres patentes en forme d'assurance' ('open letters in the form of reassurance') for the members of the Compromise. According to its stipulations, the governor was henceforth willing to see these malcontent nobles as loyal vassals and to give them *assurance*, so long as they neither contravened royal sovereignty nor the Catholic religion. To this end, they had to prevent disorder and to disarm their league. In addition, the permission granted by the agreement for Protestant preaching was defined in a negative way: the formerly compromised nobles had henceforth to *prevent* preaching in places where it had not taken place before 23 August and, under all circumstances, stop

24 Margaret to Philip II, 27/08/1566: AGS E 530 s.f.; Olwen Hufton, 'Altruism and Reciprocity: The Early Jesuits and their Female Patrons', *Renaissance Studies*, 15 (2001), pp. 328–53 (pp. 340–41); and Giampiero Brunelli, 'Tra eretici e gesuiti. I primi anni di Margherita a Roma', in *Margherita d'Austria (1522–1586): Costruzioni politiche e diplomazia, tra corte Farnese e monarchia spagnola*, ed. by Silvia Mantini (Rome: Bulzoni, 2003), pp. 65–84 (pp. 77–78).

25 When, in March 1565, commissioners from the Council of Finance heard sworn witnesses, the Antwerp magistrates protested that this was 'une forme et espèce d'Inquisition'. See Wells, *Antwerp*, p. 350. See also F. Edward Beemon, 'The Myth of the Spanish Inquisition and the Preconditions for the Dutch Revolt', *ARG*, 85 (1994), 246–64; and Gert Gielis and Soen, 'The Inquisitorial Office in the Sixteenth-Century Low Countries: A Dynamic Perspective', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 66 (2015), pp. 47–66.

26 Arnade, *Beggars*, Chapter 4.

27 Jozef Scheerder, *De Beeldenstorm* (Bussum: De Haan, 1974); and Arnade, *Beggars*, pp. 90–165.

28 Postma, 'Van bescheiden humanist tot vechtjas', pp. 330–31.

29 I coined the term 'zigzagpolitiek' in Soen, 'C'estoît comme songe et mocquerie de parler de pardon: Obstructie bij een pacificatiemaatregel (1566–1567)', *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review*, 119 (2004), pp. 309–28 (p. 319); and now Soen, 'The Beeldenstorm and the Spanish Habsburg Response (1566–1570)', *BMGN-The Low Countries Historical Review*, 131 (2016), pp. 99–120.

30 Soen, 'Between Dissent and Peacemaking: Nobility at the Eve of the Dutch Revolt (1564–1567)', *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* (henceforth *RBPH*), 86 (2008), pp. 735–58.

31 Juliaan Woltjer, 'Political Moderates and Religious Moderates in the Revolt of the Netherlands', in *Reformation, Revolt, ed. by Benedict and others*, pp. 185–200; and Woltjer, *Op weg naar Tachtig jaar oorlog. Het verhaal van de eeuw waarin ons land ontstond* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2011), p. 383.

preachers who caused scandal or public disorder. Thus, tacitly, preaching (but not worship) could continue in places where it had already taken place, on the additional condition that this had happened without military protection.³² At the same time, a royal edict of 25 August prescribed heavy punishments for iconoclasts. Everyone received permission to kill iconoclasts 'comme l'on faict d'un ennemy commun de la Patrie' ('as you would an enemy of the Fatherland'). Those who took up arms during rioting were to be put to death like rebels and their property confiscated.³³ Despite their careful formulation, these *lettres d'assurance* were implemented very differently in the various provinces and cities of the Seventeen Provinces.³⁴ But by any account the base of concessions was smaller than in France, where the *édits de pacification* conditionally granted Protestants rights of worship.³⁵

Antwerp attempted the most daring interpretation of these *lettres d'assurance* under the auspices of its margrave, Prince William of Orange, though without the formal consent of the governess. On 2 September 1566, after negotiations and preliminary agreements, the Prince of Orange provided three places for Protestant worship within the city walls. The agreement with 'ceulx de la nouvelle Religion' ('those of the new Religion') did not explicitly name the governess, but stipulated that it would hold until the King made a final decision following consultation with the States-General. Three days later, the Council of State in Brussels deliberated how to abrogate the concessions granted in Antwerp. Even the Count of Egmond recognized that Orange was operating in the grey zone of the August agreement, yet advised in any case not to offend the Prince in order to prevent further radicalization;³⁶ this thus became the policy of accommodation which would apply to Antwerp during the following months. Even so, the first wave of emigration out of the metropolis started, making Antwerp's economy particularly vulnerable.³⁷ At this stage, Margaret wanted clearer guidelines from the King, while she carefully prevented the concessions made for Antwerp from being applied in other cities as well.³⁸ Hence Antwerp could profit, at least initially, from its importance as a commercial city and could bargain on local and temporary exceptions from the religious laws, just as it had done before the Iconoclastic Fury.

The deliberations in Madrid as to what might constitute an adequate response towards the Iconoclastic Fury lasted a long time. Philip II eventually opted for a tactic in which an army would leave for the Netherlands in order to pave the way for his

32 Soen, *Vredehandel*, pp. 68–77; and *Copie des lettres patentes en forme d'asseurance que la Duesse de Parme, Regente etc. a donné aux Gentilzhommes confederez, ayant présenté la Requete, au mois d'Avril soixantecinq avant Pasques. Ensemble des Reuersalles desdictz Gentilshommes. Et aussi des lettres closes escriptes par son Alteze pour le mesme effect aux Consaulx et principales villes de pardeça*, ed. by Michel de Hamont (Brussels, 1566), [BT 2490], KBR LP 1433 A. A draft of the text can be found in AGR PEA 244/1, fol. 112. See also *Copie des lettres d'assurance aux confederez*, 23/8/1566: AGS SP 2604 s.f.

33 *Placcart et ordonnance du roy [...] pour remedier aux saccaigemens, pilleries & ruynes des temples, eglises, cloistres & monasteres. Et donner orde à l'Emotion populaire, en ces pays d'embas*, [25/08/1566], ed. by De Hamont (Brussels, 1566), [BT 2491], KBR LP 1434 A.

34 Maarten Hageman, *Het kwade exempel van Gelre. De stad Nijmegen, de Beeldenstorm en de Raad van Beroerten, 1566–1568* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2005).

35 Olivier Christin, 'From Repression to Pacification: French Royal Policy in the Face of Protestantism', in *Reformation, Revolt*, ed. by Benedict and others, pp. 201–14.

36 Deliberations of the Council of State, 5/09/1566: AGR PEA 780, fols 147–48.

37 For Antwerp especially, see Janssens, *Brabant in het verweer: loyale oppositie tegen Spanje's bewind in de Nederlanden van Alva tot Farnese 1567–1578*, Standen en Landen: LXXXIX (Kortrijk: UGA, 1989), pp. 130–31.

38 Margaret to the city of Valenciennes, 9/1566: AGR PEA 244/2 fol. 49 (draft), preventing Valenciennes from asking similar concessions as Antwerp.

own arrival as Forgiving Father and Clement King granting a general pardon.³⁹ In the meantime (and as is less-known), Margaret of Parma and her advisors opted for a phased strategy that would eventually reinstall exclusive Catholicism. In the first phase, they concentrated on cities where no hedge preaching occurred before 23 August 1566. In the second phase, they decided to 'purify' cities where preaching was more or less permitted, if necessary with additional troops. In both phases, they used the clause in the *lettres d'assurance* stating that preaching should not cause public disorder as a juridical means of abolishing Protestant preaching and worship on the whole. For the reasons encountered above, and the fact that hedge preaching within the city walls had occurred before 23 August, Antwerp was positioned relatively far along the row of cities needing to be 'purified'. The assault of the Calvinist volunteer army of the nobleman Henry of Brederode hastened events, however.⁴⁰ William of Orange initially tried to claim new concessions for the Protestants, even though he had forbidden the Antwerp Calvinists from helping their co-religionists outside the city walls. The governess, however, felt empowered by the simultaneous capitulation of Valenciennes, the 'new Genève' where Calvinists had temporarily built a stronghold. She now forbade all Protestant preaching and required the Prince of Orange to renew his oath of loyalty to King and Church. Orange, however, decided to resign his functions in the Seventeen Provinces, and to leave for his family castle in Dillenburg in the Holy Roman Empire.⁴¹

After the departure of William of Orange, the governor-general concluded a preliminary and temporary agreement with representatives of Antwerp on 7 April 1567. In its most important point, it provided that the city would accept a garrison within the city walls and that royal authority would be restored. She also granted some provisional concessions to the magistrate — concessions about which she did not inform the King. In all, she thought that her task of restoring order in the Seventeen Provinces had been met relatively successfully. With a mission to the King, she solicited in vain to postpone the arrival of the royal army, which seemed to her now unnecessary. From 28 April onwards, she resided in Antwerp to negotiate further with the city magistrate, in order to accomplish her work for the pacification of the Netherlands. As Marnef commented and Gustaaf Janssens recently better documented, the ensuing provisional ordinance for Antwerp of 24 May 1567 resulted again in moderate legislation, at least by Habsburg standards.⁴² As before, the ordinance required the punishment of iconoclasts and rebels; preachers and their helpers would again be castigated. The decree was more hesitant, though, on the necessity of capital punishment and, as such, it was reminiscent of the project of a 'Moderation' of the

39 On the importance of the voyage of the King, Parker, '1567: The End of the Dutch Revolt?', in *España y las 17 provincias de los Países Bajos. Una revisión historiográfica (XVI–XVIII)*, ed. by Ana Crespo Solana and Manuel Herrero Sánchez, 2 vols (Córdoba: Universidad de Córdoba, 2002), I, pp. 269–90.

40 Postma, 'Van bescheiden humanist tot vechttjas', pp. 334–36.

41 Liesbeth Geevers, *Gevalen vazallen. De integratie van Oranje, Egmont en Horn in de Spaans-Habsburgse monarchie (1559–1567)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), pp. 170–71; and Soen, *Vredehandel*, pp. 72–75.

42 Marnef, 'The Towns and the Revolt', p. 95; and Marnef, *Antwerp*, pp. 88–107. Janssens has provided an edition and contextualization of the ordinance of 24 May 1567 in his 'De ordonnantie betreffende de pacificatie van de beroerten te Antwerpen (24 mei 1567): breekpunt voor de politiek van Filips II ten overstaan van de Nederlanden', *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Commissie voor de Uitgave der Oude Wetten en Verordeningen van België*, 50 (2009), pp. 102–32. See *Ordonnance et edict provisionnel [...] par sa majesté sur la pacification des troubles [...] d'Anvers, au faict de la religion [...] publié le XXVIII. jour de may [...] MDLXVII*, ed. by Guillaume Silvius (Antwerp, 1567), KBR LP 1452 A, KBR Manuscripts 17510–25, fols 208–19.

religious *placards* (religious laws) which had been debated a year earlier.⁴³ The remainder of the text was dedicated to prevent ‘major evil’ (in Viglius’s words) and, above all, to prevent further emigration. The preservation of commerce in Antwerp thus resulted in mitigated legislation, but inquiries into people suspected of causing troubles started afterwards. Margaret also allotted much effort to the reconstruction of Church property.⁴⁴ Reasons for this moderate approach might have been a combination of the personality of the Governor, her acquaintance with local elites, the influence of her humanist legal advisor Viglius, and, as before, the exceptional bargaining power Antwerp could wield.

After having dealt with Antwerp, Margaret twice tendered her resignation as governor-general, arguing that ‘her job was done’, but a disagreement between Madrid and Brussels on the strategy used in Antwerp soon arose. The King protested heavily against the ordinance of 24 May, especially on the relaxation of capital punishment that had been prescribed by the last laws of his father. His confessor Bernardino de Fresneda, Bishop of Cuenca, had written a crushing report on the mild penalties, which according to him could lead to an inappropriate liberty of conscience. A new ordinance of 23 July thus definitively abrogated Margaret’s concessions and restored the Caroline heresy legislation.⁴⁵ This might have been seen as a reproach of Margaret, but one should not forget that from 1577 onwards Philip II solicited her again for the governorship in the Netherlands.⁴⁶ Rather than a conflict between persons, then, there was a divergent view on how conciliatory gestures should be designed. In fact, Margaret still hoped for a general pardon which could be promulgated with the arrival of the King, but as long as this was not the case, she had acted pragmatically and in accordance with earlier legal concessions.⁴⁷ In the end, she was more offended — with regard to her person and on behalf of the Farnese House — by the fact that she had to relinquish her position as captain-general to the commander who would lead the punitive army into Flanders. Her announced resignation assured that this Spanish general, Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, third Duke of Alba, would succeed her in the Brussels governorship as well.

Punishment and Pardon

It was not without reason that Alba was reputed to be a hardliner on Habsburg policy regarding the Netherlands. Even long before he accepted the Brussels governorship in October 1567, he had obtained a reputation as a ‘hawk’ in his campaigns against the Ottomans, the Italian princes and the Schmalkaldian League.⁴⁸ After the Iconoclastic Fury, he advocated (in the Madrilenian *Consejo de Estado*) the hardline option of sending an army to restore order before the King came to grant a general pardon — a proposal much in line with the aforementioned views of the royal confessor Bernardino de Fresneda. The third commander to be solicited, he was the first to accept command of the punitive expedition for which he was vested with exceptional powers. He also received permission to install a

⁴³ Janssens, *Brabant*, pp. 121–22; and Soen, *Vredehandel*, pp. 59–65.

⁴⁴ Andrew Spicer, ‘After Iconoclasm, Reconciliation and Resacralization in the Southern Netherlands, c. 1566–85’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 54 (2013), pp. 411–33 (pp. 412–13).

⁴⁵ Janssens, ‘De ordonnantie’, pp. 116–19.

⁴⁶ Adela Repetto Álvarez, ‘Acerca de un posible segundo gobierno de Margareta de Parma y el cardenal Granvela en los estados de Flandes’, *Hispania*, 32 (1972), pp. 379–475; and Hugo de Schepper, ‘Le voyage difficile de Marguerite de Parme en Franche-Comté et en Flandre 1580–1583’, in *Margherita d’Austria (1522–1586)*, ed. by Mantini, pp. 127–40.

⁴⁷ Janssens, ‘De ordonnantie’, p. 115.

⁴⁸ Janssens, ‘Het oordeel van tijdgenoten en historici over Alba’s bestuur in de Nederlanden’, *RBPH*, 54 (1976), pp. 474–88.

‘Council of Troubles’ for the exemplary punishment of the main instigators of this ‘rebellion and heresy’ (quite the opposite of Margaret, who had tried to relax the penalties for minor offenders, as seen above). Alba erected this retributive tribunal immediately upon his arrival in Brussels, arresting the distinguished Counts of Egmond and Horn, Knights of the Golden Fleece, who were convicted for political resistance and their perceived failure to intervene during the Iconoclastic Fury. This repression created for William of Orange and his allies an additional incentive to invade the Netherlands during the spring of 1568, yet Alba took much pride in crushing this campaign at Jemmingen during the summer of the same year.⁴⁹

While undertaking his punitive mission in the Netherlands, Alba made Antwerp his preferred city to serve as an example of the new political and religious order. This strategy was probably inspired by earlier decisions made in Madrid, where the actions of William of Orange in Antwerp had been heavily criticized in the *Consejo de Estado*. Soon, the Duke started construction of the fortress that had already been planned by Margaret, to which he became closely associated because it was he who imposed this ‘Spanish citadel’ on the harbour. In 1569, he ordained a spectacular *razzia* of forbidden books precisely when the Antwerp printing industry was at its height. Moreover, he forced the city to finally accept the installation of a bishop within its city walls in March 1570, as had been long foreseen in the bishopric reform of 1559 but had since then been postponed as a concession. Alba crowned these efforts with the erection, in the court of the citadel, of the famous statue made from the canons captured at Jemmingen, in which the Duke displayed himself as an omnipotent victor, crushing the privileges of the Netherlands.⁵⁰

In this context of rapid and harsh repression, it might seem a paradox that the Duke of Alba would be the first governor to promulgate a general pardon ‘donnée pour le fait des troubles passés’ (‘given for the circumstances of the past troubles’). Even when Philip II had decided to postpone (and later cancel) his travel, the King continued to deliberate on the strategy of eventually forgiving the repentant inhabitants of the Seventeen Provinces.⁵¹ This was to happen by means of the aforementioned general pardon, which was the common term for the collective giving of grace to the people — or, more concretely, to those who showed repentance for their occasional misdeeds during events leading up to the Iconoclastic Fury. Hence, a general pardon could bring both a formal and a symbolic reconciliation between Philip II and his subjects — and, as such, it was conceived as an efficient and peaceful means of preventing further turmoil. Different reasoning supported this measure of conciliation, which diverged from the moderate legislation that Margaret of Parma had tried in Antwerp. If indeed religious beliefs required the death of a stubborn heretic,



⁴⁹ Janssens, ‘El ejército español y la Guerra de Flandes (1559–1598). Una bibliografía 1963–2008’, in *El Ejército Español*, ed. by Van der Essen and Janssens, pp. 395–438.

⁵⁰ Arnade, *Beggars*, pp. 201–02.

⁵¹ Unless cited otherwise, evidence for these paragraphs is to be found in Soen, *Geen pardon zonder paus! Studie over de complementariteit van het koninklijk en pauselijk generaal pardon (1570–1574) en over inquisiteur-generaal Michael Baius (1560–1576)*, Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten, Nieuwe reeks: XIV (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 2007).

Catholic faith simultaneously urged reconciliation between penitents and the Church.⁵² If rebellion called for deliberate repression in the political theory of the School of Salamanca, classical humanist thought simultaneously taught that mercy encouraged the acceptance of and love for the victor.⁵³ Finally, there was a dynastic incentive for leniency, as Maximilian I of Austria had introduced clemency as an innate virtue of the Habsburgs, and Charles V had deliberately referred to it in his policies.⁵⁴ But this royal pardon was never general, nor was it ever meant to be: according to juridical commonplaces, unlimited grace was as unwarranted as no grace whatsoever. Restrictions had to justify a general pardon: traitors, banned persons, leaders of the religious riots, and Protestant ministers were excluded. Indeed, the text proposed by Alba (which was ultimately accepted) broadly excluded such groups as reformed ministers or those who had carried arms. Moreover, the most important condition for pardon was a prior reconciliation with the Church, enabled by a pardon of the Pope, who could forgive heresy cases. Hence the general pardon was thought to be a temporary measure of grace, not a change in legislation, as Margaret had attempted.⁵⁵

Despite the important restrictions on who was to receive it, the general pardon was conceived as a means of marking the end of the repression and of beginning a new era of reconciliation among the inhabitants of the Netherlands, the King, and the Church. Typical problems of miscommunication delayed its promulgation, however. By August 1567, when postponing his voyage to the Seventeen Provinces, Philip II had suggested sending his half-brother Don Juan de Austria with a general pardon, but Alba vetoed this plan for unknown reasons.⁵⁶ This enabled the Duke to continue his line of severity and strictness and to bring all the culpable to trial before the Council of Troubles without granting any pardon whatsoever — and, accordingly, to have Egmond and Horn executed on 5 June 1568. Again, many councillors thought that after this ‘exemplary punishment’ the pardon would and should be issued immediately.⁵⁷ For Philip II, then, the defeat of Orange and his brother at Jemmingen in 1568 constituted a motive to grant pardon from the position

52 See Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 74–96, for the argumentation of the ‘willingness to kill’ of the rulers. For the reconciliation of penitent heretics in the Low Countries, see Soen, ‘De reconciliatie van “kettters” in de zestiende-eeuwse Nederlanden (1520–1590)’, *Trajecta*, 14 (2005), pp. 337–62; and, under Charles V, De Schepper, ‘Entre compromis et répression: Inquisition et clémence aux Pays-Bas sous Charles Quint’, *Charles Quint face aux réformes. Colloque international organisé par le Centre d’histoire des Réformes et du protestantisme*, ed. by Guy Le Thiec and Alain Tallon (Paris: Champion, 2005), pp. 159–77; and Marjan Vrolijk and De Schepper, ‘The Other Face of Struggle Against Violence: Peace of Order by Clemency in the Netherlands, 1500–1650’, in *Janus at the Millennium: Perspectives on Time in the Culture of the Netherlands*, ed. by Thomas Frederic Shannon and Johan P. Snapper, Publications of the American Association for Netherlandic Studies: xv (Lanham: University Press of America, 2004), pp. 279–95.

53 José A. Fernández-Santamaria, *The State, War, and Peace: Spanish Political Thought in the Renaissance 1516–1559* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Ronald W. Truman, *Spanish Treatises on Government, Society, and Religion in the Time of Philip II: The ‘De regimine principum’ and Associated Traditions*, Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History: xcv (Leiden: Brill, 1999); and Peter Stacey, *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

54 Veronika Pokorný, ‘Clementia Austriaca. Studien zur Bedeutung der Clementia Principis für die Habsburg im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert’, *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 86 (1978), pp. 311–64; and Ricardo García Cárcel, ‘Los contrastes de Carlos V y Felipe II en la política cultural’, in *Dos monarcas y una historia en común: España y Flandes bajo los reinados de Carlos V y Felipe II* (Madrid: Sociedad estatal para la conmemoración de los centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2001), pp. 48–62.

55 Soen, ‘La Répétition de pardons collectifs à finalités politiques pendant la Révolte des Pays-Bas (1565–1598): Un Cas d’espèce dans les rapports de force aux Temps Modernes?’, in *Préférant miséricorde à rigueur de justice. Pratiques de la grâce (XIII–XVII^e siècles)*, ed. by Bernard Dauven and Xavier Rousseaux (Louvain: Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 2012), pp. 97–123.

56 Soen, ‘C’estoit comme songe’.

57 Michel de Waele, ‘Un modèle de clémence? Le Duc d’Albe gouverneur des Pays-Bas, 1567–1573’, *Cahiers d’Histoire*, 16 (1996), pp. 21–32.

of 'clement victor'. By the end of July 1569, the Pope agreed to provide a papal pardon for the Netherlands and to give the Archbishop of Cambrai the competence to forgive repentant heretics, if they were prepared to accept the new Tridentine Formula of Faith. By November 1569, Philip II had finally signed a general pardon for his Dutch subjects: anyone prepared to reconcile themselves with the Catholic Church within three months could receive remission of his earlier crimes of *lèse-majesté* and heresy. Half a year later, on 16 July 1570, Alba publicly proclaimed this measure of grace.

Not coincidentally, the Duke chose to promulgate the general pardon in the city of Antwerp. Most probably, he considered the pardon to be a symbolic coronation of his restoration of order and peace, just as Margaret had done with her ordinance for Antwerp. Every chronicle recounts the magnificence with which the ceremony took place. The papal pardon was first proclaimed in the newly inaugurated cathedral, in the presence of the new Antwerp bishop. During the papal mass, court preacher and Bishop of Arras François Richardot spoke widely on the advantages of the virtue of the classical *clementia* and the Christian *misericordia*.⁵⁸ When in the afternoon the royal pardon was proclaimed at the city hall, the audience immediately complained about the many exceptions, once again equalling them to 'the Inquisition'. As this rumour spread quickly through the city, it became clear that neither the *mise-en-scène* of papal forgiveness and royal clemency nor its concrete formulation in the read out ordinance met the expectations of Antwerp citizens.

Most contemporary accounts report disillusionment regarding the many restrictions, even among the members of the Antwerp magistrate. Alba had to commission them to write a letter of thanks to the King stating that the general pardon was first published in their presence.⁵⁹ The governor clearly expected a positive propagandistic effect from this letter of gratitude, yet support from other cities was scant.⁶⁰ Despite the poor political reception of the measure, the new Antwerp bishop Sonnius reported an impressive number of *reconciliati* in the city: 14,128 in Antwerp, and 17,862 when the surrounding countryside was included.⁶¹ Marnef has used these impressive numbers to demonstrate the existence of religious *middengroepen* ('middle groups'), which had not chosen clearly for one religion or the other. But above all, a letter of pardon offered restricted juridical protection, especially as Alba interpreted the pardon very rigidly: whoever did not profit from it was punished again. As such, the general pardon thus brought immunity of persecution for those who had procured a letter of pardon, but it did not bring reconciliation in the political sphere.⁶² The successful invasion of the insurgent Sea Beggars in Holland and Zeeland would fuel the Revolt from 1572 onwards. The governorship of Alba's successor Luis de Requesens proved unsuccessful, for insurgents conquered more territory and royal

58 François Richardot, *Sermon, fait en église cathédrale d'Anvers en présence de [...] Duc d'Albe, le jour de la publication des Pardons de leur Sainteté et Majesté Royale Catholique* (Antwerp: Christoffel Plantijn, 1570). In particular, see. Janssens, 'Superexcellat autem misericordia iudicium: The Homily of François Richardot on the Occasion of the Solemn Announcement of the General Pardon in the Netherlands (Antwerp, 16 July 1570)'; in *Public Opinion and Changing Identities in the Early Modern Netherlands: Essays in Honour of Alastair Duke*, ed. by Pollmann and Spicer, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions: CXXI (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 107–23.

59 Antwerp Magistrate to Alba, 23 or 24/7/1570: SAA, Pk. 1.554 (General Pardon), piece 10/11; Alba to Antwerp magistrate, 24/7/1570: SAA, Pk. 1.554 (General Pardon), pieces 5/6/7.

60 Alba to Philip II, 09/10/1570: AGS, E. 545, 109, cf. EA, II, 443 and Gachard, *CPhII*, II, 154.

61 Sonnius to Alba: AGR PEA 271, fol. 257; Alba to Philip II, 7/11/1570: AGS, E. 545, fol. 120; or EA, dl. II, 456, cf. Gachard, *CPhII*, dl. II, 163; and Sonnius to Philip II, 15/10/1570: AGS, E. 545, fol. 105. 'Escribenme los legados y subdelegados de las otras partes que ha sido tan grande el concurso de gente que venian se no se daban a manos a recibirlos.'

62 Alba to Philip II, 9/8/1570: AGS, E. 545, fol. 60, cf. Gachard, *CPhII*, II, 145.

troops started mutinying. Especially after the Spanish Fury in November 1576, Antwerp became one of the main centres of resistance against Philip II, housing the seat of the rebel States-General and transforming into a Calvinist Republic during the governorships of Don Juan and Alexander Farnese.

Reconquista and Reconciliation

The governor-generalship of Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma (1543–92) and renowned besieger of the Antwerp Calvinist Republic, has been assessed in contradictory ways. In some accounts, inspired by a *leyenda rosa*, he appears as a clement peace dove;⁶³ in others, he is depicted as a merciless Spanish conquistador. Son of former governor Margaret of Parma and Ottavio Farnese, the Italian prince spent a considerable time of his adolescence at the Spanish court. In 1578 he was appointed governor-general rather suddenly, after the unexpected death of Don Juan de Austria. Initially, he became associated with atrocities as cruel as those of the Duke of Alba, such as the sack of the small Brabantine city of Zichem in 1578 and, more importantly, of Maastricht in 1579. From 1581 onwards, he coordinated an impressive military campaign for the Spanish King against the Calvinist Republics in Flanders and Brabant. Even in the earliest accounts of the Dutch Revolt, his conquest of Antwerp in 1585 seemed to seal a separation of the Seventeen Provinces.⁶⁴ As a result, in later historiography Farnese's *reconquista* was equated with the Spanish recapture of the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors. Despite this negative reputation, his campaign also gave birth to a more positive account, according to which Farnese won the Flemish and Brabantine cities by diplomacy and clemency, thus laying the foundation of 'Belgian' unity.⁶⁵

Furthermore, the victory over the Antwerp Calvinist Republic after a long and painful siege of fourteen months itself confirms the dual pattern of *reconquista* and reconciliation.⁶⁶ The capitulation treaty of 17 August 1585 explicitly stated that the Governor-General wanted to accept the citizens 'en toute douceur et paternelle affection' ('with all mildness and paternal affection'), and that the treaty should seal reconciliation.⁶⁷ Rather remarkably (and as had occurred previously during his campaign), Farnese was indeed willing to grant full pardon to conquered cities and citizens, and to restore old privileges

63 *Leyenda rosa* ('pink legend') is the term commonly used to refer to the endeavour of nuancing the *leyenda negra* ('black legend') by an overtly positive image of Spanish and Habsburg accomplishments. The expression was canonized by Ricardo García Carcel, *La leyenda negra: Historia y opinión* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1998), though some still refer to a *leyenda blanca* ('white legend'). Regarding Farnese specifically, this revisionism is discussed for example in Bart De Groof, 'Alexander Farnese and the Origins of Modern Belgium', *Bulletin van het Belgisch Historisch Instituut te Rome*, 63 (1993), pp. 195–221.

64 Jan Craeybeckx, 'De val van Antwerpen en de scheuring der Nederlanden, gezien door de grote Noordnederlandse geschiedschrijvers van de eerste generatie', in 1585: *Op gescheiden wegen. Acta Colloquii Bruxellensis 22–23 XI 1985*, ed. by Craeybeckx and others (Leuven: Peeters, 1988), pp. 121–50; and Marnef, 'Betreurd en/of gevierd: de val van Antwerpen (1585)', in *Het gebeugen van de Lage Landen*, ed. by Jo Tollebeek and Henk Te Velde (Rekkem: Ons Erfdeel, 2009), pp. 131–37.

65 Van der Essen, *Alexandre Farnèse et les origines de la Belgique Moderne 1545–1592* (Brussels: Office de publicité, 1943). See also the remarks of contemporaries in James D. Tracy, 'Princely *Auctoritas* or the Freedom of Europe: Justus Lipsius on a Netherlands Political Dilemma', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 11 (2007), pp. 303–29.

66 Soen, 'Reconquista and Reconciliation in the Dutch Revolt: The Campaign of Governor-General Alexander Farnese (1578–1592)', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 16 (2012), pp. 1–22.

67 *Articles et conditions du Traicté fait et conclu entre l'Altesse du Prince de Parme [...] d'une part; et la ville d'Anvers, d'autre part, le XVII^e iur d'Aoust l'an M.D.LXXXV* (Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1585), K. 737. This treaty has been published in different versions and translations, see K. 738–45.

in order to facilitate reconciliation with the King.⁶⁸ While Alba had eschewed leniency, curbed city privileges, only selectively offered pardon to subdued cities, and reluctantly agreed to a general pardon,⁶⁹ Farnese seemed to have learned lessons from his predecessor's mistakes, and his military supremacy encouraged him to play the role of clement victor. The pardon clauses included in his capitulation treaties were cast as sign of a Forgiving Father's virtues of 'clemency', just as in the general pardon of 1570. The reconciliation treaty offered citizens immunity from prosecution, the resumption of all their political and economic activities, and the return of any confiscated property. Farnese not only granted pardons more generously than Alba, he also offered 'oubliance generale & perpetuelle' ('full and eternal amnesty'), a kind of tentative amnesty. This 'oubli du passé' ('forgetting of the past') was an important means of forgiving and forgetting what had happened. In the French Wars of Religion it provided a tool for political and confessional reconciliation; in the Southern Netherlands it served as a means of forgetting the 'heretic past'. In contrast, the political culture of the insurgents was very much founded upon the duty to spread tales of persecution and repression to keep the memory of these alive.⁷⁰

The temporary approval of the *ius emigrandi* for Protestants has often been cited as the most concrete example of Spanish concessions during the campaign of Farnese, superseding mere rhetoric and the discourse of clemency. Some — but certainly not all — reconciliation treaties that Farnese had signed before had allowed Protestant citizens to stay longer in the reconquered city, and sometimes even permitted them to profess their religion privately as long as they did not cause a scandal. The Antwerp magistrate also negotiated hard on this point and obtained a *ius emigrandi* for four years, whereas Farnese had wanted to grant only three at the most. Protestant citizens also received permission to sell their property when they decided to emigrate, sometimes even quite some time after they had left. Those who wished to stay permanently, though, had to reconcile with the Catholic Church. These clauses in the capitulation treaties emphasized that the King did not want 'le corps ni les biens' ('the body nor the property') of his subjects and that he hoped to keep the economy running as smoothly as possible. The Antwerp treaty in particular mentioned that the King did not want to 'depeupler ceste ville tant principale fondee sur trafique et marchandise' ('depopulate this so important city based on transportation and merchandise'). Even if the *ius emigrandi* constituted only a temporary concession, its clauses were remarkable for many reasons. First, royal anti-heresy legislation had always prescribed the confiscation of goods and imprisonment of heretics, and had never allowed them to sell their goods while or after emigrating.⁷¹ Second, Philip II had always refused solutions that too closely resembled the Peace of Augsburg or other imperial concessions, and here they very much resembled the *Abzugsrecht* of that treaty.⁷² Third, when the King

68 This conditional restoration of the old privileges can be found in the seventeenth article of the Antwerp capitulation treaty: 'tant generaux que particulier, dont ils ont legitiment jouy avant ces troubles, leur seront punctuellement maintenus & gardés, pour en jouir paisiblement & livrement, comme avant cesdits troubles' (XVII).

69 Parker, 'The Etiquette of Atrocity: The Laws of War in Early Modern Europe', in Parker, *Empire, War and Faith in Early Modern Europe* (London: Penguin, 2003), pp. 144–68.

70 Pollmann, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands 1520–1635* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 125–30.

71 Aline Goossens, *Les Inquisitions modernes dans les Pays-Bas méridionaux (1519–1633)*, 2 vols (Brussels: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1997–98).

72 Weis, 'La Paix d'Augsbourg'; Weis, *Les Pays-Bas espagnols et les États du Saint Empire (1559–1579). Priorités et enjeux de la diplomatie en temps de troubles* (Brussels: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 2003).

had previously granted pardons, he had always insisted on prior reconciliation with the Catholic Church. The provisions of the *ius emigrandi* temporarily abandoned this condition, however, by only imposing conversion at the end of the reconciliation period.

Farnese himself never gladly granted the right to leave; rather he was obliged to do so by his representatives at the negotiating table. Each time, the Governor-General asked the advice of bishops and theologians; whenever possible, he excluded the *ius emigrandi* clause.⁷³ During the siege of Antwerp, he consulted not only the bishops of Mechelen and Antwerp, but also the papal nuncio Francisco Bonhomini.⁷⁴ Despite the official pardon and reconciliation terms, Farnese still ordered inquiries for Protestants professing their faith publicly. Generally, Catholic priests and bishops were pleased with citizens' supposed willingness to convert, especially when the number of conversions peaked at the end of the reconciliation period: five days after the end of the reconciliation period, the Antwerp Bishop Torrentius recorded 1500 conversions; some weeks later 1800; three months later 3000; and two years later 6000. While degrees of opportunism and abuse were unavoidable, the Bishop tried to punish (what he considered to be) fraud.⁷⁵ The ultimate aim of the *ius emigrandi* accorded under the governorship of Farnese was to encourage conversion and reconciliation with the Catholic Church; to underpin a broader Catholic reform; and finally to implement Tridentine Catholicism.

What seemed a generous concession *in fide* for the King and his Governor brought, of course, little comfort for Protestants: in the end, they still had to leave their city and sell their goods, and they received no formal recognition of their faith. When the offer of *ius emigrandi* was discussed during the peace negotiations of Breda in 1575 and of Cologne in 1579, it was vetoed by the insurgents as insufficient. In addition, the 'Republican' burgomaster Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde tried to convince Farnese that 'real clemency' consisted of permitting things that were against his heart and opinion, such as freedom of religion.⁷⁶ According to Michel de Waele, the 'clemency politics' of Alexander Farnese were therefore 'stronger' than those of the French King Henri IV, whose clemency involved far-reaching concessions to the reformed.⁷⁷ Still, during the reconciliation period, many Protestant and better-off citizens emigrated to the Northern Netherlands, the Holy Roman Empire, France, or England. The concession of the *ius emigrandi* proved, thus, detrimental to Farnese's policy of reviving the economies of the reconquered cities as soon as possible, and proved especially disadvantageous for the Antwerp economy.⁷⁸ Even so, this two-track policy managed to smooth the reconciliation process and to remove incentives for violent religious polarization after capitulation while enabling the rapid reconstruction of Church property and parishes.⁷⁹

73 Farnese to Philip II, 21/05/1584: AGS E 588 fol. 32, cf. Lefèvre, *CPh* II, 477479 (1014).

74 Marnef, 'Reconquering a Rebellious City'; Van der Essen, *Alexandre Farnèse: Prince de Parme, Gouverneur Général des Pays-Bas (1545–1592)*, 5 vols (Brussels: Librairie nationale d'art et d'histoire, 1932–37), I, pp. 114–16, 125–27.

75 Marie Jo Hendriks, 'De Reconciliatie te Antwerpen (1585–1600)' (unpublished masters paper, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1965), pp. 57–72.

76 Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde to Richardot, 14/07/1585: AGR PEA 586 fol. 30, cf. *BCRH* (3e s.) 9 349–52 (nr. 17).

77 Michel de Waele, 'Entre concorde et intolérance: Alexandre Farnèse et la Pacification des Pays-Bas', in *De Michel de L'Hospital à l'édit de Nantes. Politique et religion face aux Églises*, ed. by Thierry Waneffellen (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses universitaires Blaise-Pascal, 2002), pp. 51–70. See also Mark Greengrass, *Governing Passions, Peace and Reform in the French Kingdom, 1576–1585* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

78 Janssens, 'Verjaagd van Nederland. Een overzicht van recent onderzoek over de Zuidnederlandse emigratie in de zestiende eeuw', *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, 75 (1995), pp. 103–20.

79 Pollmann, 'Reconciliation and Atonement, 1585–1598', in *Catholic Identity*, pp. 125–58; and Spicer, 'After Iconoclasm', pp. 431–32.

Conclusions

Numerous Spaniards in the Netherlands identified Antwerp as the focal point of the calamities. In April 1567, Spanish paymaster of the army Cristobal de Castellanos commented to a royal secretary in Madrid that the city at the River Scheldt had been 'la fragua de todas las maldades que han sucedido' ('the forge for all the malice that had occurred').⁸⁰ This communication highlighted the fact that not only many Spanish observers in the Netherlands, but also King Philip II and his governors-general looked upon Antwerp as a crucial source of political and religious unrest during the Dutch Revolt. The city thus retained their particular attention throughout their general attempts to pacify the turmoil. It is striking that the governors-general Margaret of Parma, the Duke of Alba, and Alexander Farnese each dealt in an 'exemplary' way with the harbour city. Their aim was not only to induce Antwerp citizens to capitulate, but also to convince a wider swath of the population to do so, as the metropolis served as a news and information centre in early modern Europe. What happened in the microcosm of Antwerp might nonetheless be extrapolated to the macrocosm of the Dutch Revolt. The Habsburg governors shared an agenda to weaken urban opposition emboldened by the dukes of Burgundy. Moreover, they supported the aim of Charles V and Philip II to maintain the Seventeen Provinces exclusively Catholic. This resulted in a persistent political and religious repression, and this is the better-known part of the story. Their common long-term program often obscured that the Habsburg governors each pursued their general aim with very different measures, however. The great distances within the Spanish monarchy allowed the governors to be entrusted with a remarkable degree of manoeuvrability in their negotiations with the magistrate of Antwerp. Moreover, royal hesitancy and the King's delegation of both decision-making and action 'on the ground' often enhanced the autonomy of the governors.

As a result, in practice the concrete measures *sur la pacification des troubles* designed for Antwerp by the governors-general diverged notably in conception and consequences. After the Iconoclastic Fury, Margaret of Parma opted to mobilize troops, while provisionally moderating the existing legislation on heterodoxy. This military and legal strategy was in consonance with earlier events but was vetoed by Philip II and Alba. Thus under the governorship of Alba the rigid religious punishment according to the *placards* was reinstated, but a temporary general pardon was to enable reconciliation with the King and the Catholic Church. Instead of altering the legislation, as Margaret of Parma had attempted to do, the victory over William of Orange allowed for an exceptional period of grace which was to pave the way for order and peace. Though this general pardon seems to have induced a massive number of private reconciliations, it did not spark political reconciliation. Finally, after besieging the Antwerp Calvinist Republic, Alexander Farnese agreed to a capitulation treaty which provided both a general pardon and an *oubliance generale* (general amnesty), and allowed a four-year term for reconciliation with the Catholic Church. Unlike the legislation under Margaret and the pardon under Alba, prior formal reconciliation with the Church in order to reconcile with the King was temporarily removed from the stipulations. Each of these governors learned from predecessors and from the reactions of Antwerp

80 Cristobal de Castellanos to Pedro de Hoyo, 24/04/1567: BLL, Add. MS 28386, fols 32–34.

citizens in future attempts to restore peace and order. In Habsburg policy towards the Dutch Revolt, its return thus resided in a mono-religious and monarchical organization of society. As in the French Wars of Religion, the quest for peace remained a policy with malleable meanings and measures.⁸¹ The large-scale emigration (which reduced Antwerp to half of its former population by 1590) did not stop either with the rather lenient legislation of Margaret or the pardon under Alba; it even gained in force after the relatively favourable legal provisions of the *ius emigrandi* under Farnese. Despite the differences in short-term legal stipulations, long-term effects remained the same. For those citizens who remained in Antwerp and were affected by these measures of appeasement, however, it meant the difference between keeping one's property and having it confiscated — and even between life and death.

⁸¹ Penny Roberts, 'The Languages of Peace during the French Religious Wars', *Cultural and Social History*, 4 (2007), pp. 293–311.



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