

Orange, Granvelle and Philip II*

H.G. KOENIGSBERGER

On the 23rd July 1561 Orange and Egmont wrote their famous first letter to Philip II, denouncing the political role of Cardinal Granvelle and complaining that they were excluded from all important decision-making in the government of the Netherlands¹. The overt opposition of the Netherlands high nobility to the leading minister of the regency government, a government of which they were themselves members, has traditionally been seen as a milestone in, or even the beginning of, the *voorspel*, the events leading up to the revolt of the Netherlands. Now this is rather curious. There was nothing remarkable about aristocratic factionalism or about complaints about a royal minister, either in the Netherlands or anywhere else in early modern Europe. Complaints against Granvelle himself were not new². Has it not simply been hindsight which has endowed the intrigues against the cardinal with more than incidental importance? Were not the real forces causing the revolt much more fundamental than the ambitions of a handful of near-bankrupt noblemen, most of whom eventually took no part in the revolt? Were not the causes of the revolt rather the social upheavals due to the industrialisation of the Flemish countryside, the distress caused in the big cities by disruption of trade, unemployment and high food prices, the spread of Protestant teaching together with the dislike of religious repression even by those who had every intention of remaining good Catholics, the defence of Netherlands liberties against monarchical autocracy, or simply the assertion of Netherlands nationalism against Spanish imperialism? Or again, if one prefers to use the terminology of the modern social sciences, was it not the dysfunction and final breakdown of a society, rather than the actions of a few individuals, which caused such a

* I wish to thank Professor Geoffrey Parker, Dr. Maria José Rodríguez-Salgado and Dr. Guy Wells for reading a draft on this paper and making valuable suggestions. The quotations in the text are translated.

1. N. Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste, Prins van Oranje* (The Hague, 1934) 311-315. Antoine Perrenot did not become Cardinal Granvelle until 1561; but for the sake of convenience I shall refer to him by this title throughout.

2. M. van Durme, *Antoon Perrenot* (Brussels, 1953) 158-160; K.J.W. Verhofstad, *De regering der Nederlanden in de jaren 1555-1559* (Nijmegen, 1937) 45-47.

massive upheaval as the revolt? These questions, which are really arguments and formulations of causes, do indeed have much validity and the answer to them should be at least a qualified yes. Here I shall only argue that historical instinct and the need for an orderly and dramatic presentation, which are the immediate reasons for our historiographical tradition about the actions of Orange and Egmont, may still be justified by the historical evidence³.

The government of Philip II in the Netherlands, like all early modern governments, depended ultimately on the co-operation of the local elites. At the same time, no popular movement was successful for more than a short time unless it had the support and leadership of this elite. At a time when both criticism of the king's policy and fear of popular revolt were growing⁴, a prolonged breakdown in co-operation between the monarchy and the Netherlands elite was a serious matter. It was so regarded at the time⁵, and it is therefore a legitimate subject for continued historical study.

Historians have given different reasons for the breach between Orange and Granvelle. Was it a basic clash between two opposed political philosophies? or were there more specific reasons, such as the appointment of Margaret of Parma, rather than Christina of Lorraine, as governor-general? Was it the publication of the plan for the new bishoprics or Orange's unapproved marriage with the Lutheran daughter of the hated Maurice of Saxony? or was it, as the German historian Ernst Marx maintained in a famous controversy with Orange's biographer, Felix Rachfahl, that the prince, Egmont and Glajon only became fully aware of Granvelle's domination of the government when they returned to Brussels from their provincial governments in the spring of 1561 and began to attend meetings of the council of state regularly⁶? Was Orange piqued by the regent's renewal of the Antwerp magistrate in the spring of 1561 without consulting him? For as burgrave of Antwerp Orange claimed this right and he had indeed been so consulted by the king himself in 1558⁷? Perhaps all these events played their part cumulati-

3. In doing this I have had the advantage of using three important but as yet unpublished studies: David Lagomarsino, 'Philip II and the Netherlands 1559-1573'; Maria José Rodríguez-Salgado, 'From Spanish Regent to European Ruler: Philip II and the Creation of an Empire'; and Guy E. Wells, 'Antwerp and the Government of Philip II, 1555-1567'. I would like to thank all three authors for making their typescripts available to me.

4. There were riots in Antwerp as early as 1554. Wells, 'Antwerp and the Government of Philip II', 49-57. Philip II to duke of Savoy, 2 May 1557, writes of the danger of being caught by a revolt without soldiers or money to put it down. Emmanuele Filiberto, duca di Savoia, *I Diarii delle campagne di Fiandra*, E. Brunelli, ed., Bibliotheca della societa storica subalpina, CXII, N.S. 21 (Turin, 1928) 182-183.

5. Marcantonio Mula, 'Relazione di Filippo II re di Spagna, 23 settembre 1559', in E. Albèri, *Le relationedegli ambasciatori veneti alsenato*, ser. 1, 3 (Florence, 1853)401: '...egiase ne (i.e. 'manifesta sollevazione de popoli') son visti qualche segni nelli Paesi Bassi'.

6. E. Marx, *Studiën zur Geschichte des niederlandischen Aufstandes* (Leipzig, 1902) 167 ff.

7. *Ibidem*, 174-175.

vely. It is certainly difficult to assign them any clear order of importance. Here I propose rather to try to look more closely at the terms in which the struggle between Orange and Granvelle was fought, at Philip U's reaction to it and at its historical implications for the Netherlands and for the Spanish empire.

In the middle ages the internal politics of the states of western Europe were largely determined by the relations between the kings and their most powerful feudal vassals. By the sixteenth century the feudal nobility had finally given up its earlier ambitions to become as independent of the monarchy as possible (as the German princes had done very successfully) and had thrown in their lot with the monarchies. It could be a very profitable alliance. In France and in the Netherlands the rulers used the great nobles as provincial governors⁸. In this position they were held to represent both the king's authority in the province and also the interests of the community of the province at the king's court⁹. Naturally, only members of the greatest families were usually appointed to these posts; for the provincial nobility would not have obeyed someone below their own rank. The governors fulfilled essential functions for the monarchies. Not only did they organise the defence and public security of their provinces, but they acted as the king's all-purpose administrative agents, immediately subject to his commands. They would enforce royal legislation and ordinances without being hampered by all the legal precedents, traditions and *esprit de corps* of the lawyers in the parlements and provincial courts. Since they were appointed for life they were, in their turn, most favourably placed to advance their own and their families' influence by building up clienteles of lesser nobles and of local royal officials. This they did directly through their command of the companies of *gens d'armes*, in France, and of the *bandes d'ordonnance*, in the Netherlands, and indirectly by channeling royal patronage to their followers. They came from a small group of families which were closely linked by intermarriage with each other and, through their younger sons, with the noble families just below their own exalted level. These latter families, in their turn and in the same way, were linked with other lesser noble families. At the top of this social grouping family connections often extended beyond the frontiers of the state, from the Netherlands especially to France but also to Germany.

8. Robert R. Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite: The Provincial Governors of Early Modern France* (New Haven and London, 1978). Paul Rosenfeld, *The Provincial Governors from the Minority of Charles V to the Revolt*. Standen en Landen, XVII (Louvain and Paris, 1959). There was no exactly similar position in England or Spain. The powers of the lords-lieutenant of the English counties were not nearly as extensive, while Spanish viceroys and governors-general, although having even greater powers, were not appointed for life.

9. See for instance the typically dual rôle played by the count of Hoochstraten, governor of Holland, in the 1530's. H.G. Koenigsberger, 'Patronage and Bribery during the Reign of Charles V', *Estates and Revolutions* (Ithaca and London, 1971) 166-175.

In the first half of the sixteenth century the system of provincial governorships had worked well for the monarchies. Charles V, Francis I and Henry II had enjoyed loyal and effective service from their great seigneurs, even when some of their families, such as the Egmont and the Montmorency, were split in their allegiance in the wars between these rulers. For these wars were straightforward dynastic power struggles in which, according to the ethos of the time, a nobleman's honour was fully preserved by loyal service to his own sovereign. Just as importantly, the system worked well because for the monarchies it was an age of expansion: territorial expansion, such as the incorporation of Groningen, Utrecht and Guelders in the Netherlands, which provided provincial governorships and a host of lesser positions; and economic expansion, both for the countries as a whole and more particularly for the governments. Increased tax revenues and greatly expanded credit facilities were used to extend government activities, especially warfare, and this meant more rewards for government service.

It was in the nature of these conditions that they could not last. In the 1550's this fact became unhappily apparent. Economic expansion gave way to economic crisis or, at best, to shifts in the patterns of trade with deeply disturbing social results. Government expenditure, optimistically overstretched for decades by continual warfare, finally outran taxable resources and available credit. Peace when it was finally concluded did not end the international rivalries between the great powers and was not expected to last. It did, however, cut off the prospect of new military commands for the high nobility and of expanding territorial patronage for the monarchies. The simultaneous injection of religious emotions into politics shattered the simple ethos of loyalty between monarch and ruling elite. These new conditions made the personality of the ruler more important than ever. Where, for whatever immediate cause, confidence in his person collapsed, the whole system of consensus politics between prince and high nobility was also likely to collapse. Different sections of the elite and especially its more ambitious individual members were driven to safeguard their positions and prospects. They could do this by one or both of two methods: by systematically expanding their own local power base far beyond anything they would have deemed necessary previously and by attempting to capture control of the central government. Neither line of policy was, at least initially, regarded as antimonarchical or as inherently treasonous; both hinged crucially on the control of patronage.

The economic and financial crisis struck the whole of western Europe. Collapse of confidence in the person of the ruler occurred in France, Scotland and in the Netherlands. The phenomenon of such a collapse was not entirely fortuitous. It was always very likely to occur at the moment of a disputed succession or of the succession of a child or a woman and of the setting up of a regency, especially if it was the regency of a woman. There was statistically at least a fifty per cent

chance of this happening at the end of any reign , and this was precisely what happened in these three countries. It was these three countries, too, which slid into civil war and again in all three of them the immediate cause of the civil wars lay in the behaviour of the high nobility.

It looks as if Granvelle was the first person fully to appreciate the nature of the crisis precipitated by Philip U's appointment of Margaret of Parma as regent for the Netherlands. It had been an appointment made very much *faute de mieux*, designed to keep out Christina of Lorraine with her French connections and, even more, Philip's detested and feared cousin, Maximilian of Bohemia. To Granvelle it seemed therefore necessary, above all, to maintain royal authority by himself directly controlling government patronage and, indirectly, by extending his own reputation and influence. Was it Granvelle who suggested to the king the setting up of the famous secret consulta, the inner advisory committee for the regent, consisting of himself, Viglius and Berlaymont, which was designed to by-pass the council of state? It seems at least likely; but while this move was necessarily secret, another was deliberately public. Probably in 1559 and possibly before the setting up of the consulta, Granvelle wrote to Philip:

Not for anything in the world would I be deemed importunate by Your Majesty, but no less would I wish that my relatives and friends should tax me with undue carelessness in my own case ... for it is so many years now that I have received any favour (*merced*) ... Now, forced by necessity and to avoid the opposition of my family and of everybody else who are expectantly waiting to see how Your Majesty will treat me ...

he hoped that the king would now show him his favour publicly¹¹.

Granvelle's arguments were entirely conventional and must have seemed perfectly reasonable to the king. In any case, he arranged for Granvelle's elevation to the cardinalate and to the archbishopric of Mechlin. Granvelle was pleased to be a cardinal and he accepted the archbishopric although he had doubts about the whole policy of the new bishoprics and although both he himself and his friends in Spain thought he had been rather hard done by to have been made to give up the much richer bishopric of Arras. If he wanted to play a prominent political role in the Netherlands and preserve royal authority, there was no way in which he could have turned down this expensive honour. For the whole scheme, together with the incorporation of the Brabantine abbeys in the new bishoprics, was designed not only to fight the growing threat of heresy but to increase go-

10. H.G. Koenigsberger and George L. Mosse, *Europe in the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1968) 249.

11. Ch. Weiss, ed., *Papiers d'Etat du Cardinal de Granvelle*, V (Paris, 1844) 657-659.

vernment influence in the estates of Brabant¹². At the same time it signalled to everyone that Granvelle was a man of influence with, and trusted by, the king. Having earned the king's patronage, he could therefore be relied upon to dispense patronage in turn to his own clients. As it turned out, the policy worked rather too well. It gave the impression that Granvelle had more influence with the king than he actually did.

Orange was just as concerned about his clientèle as Granvelle. For a while, and because they had been friends, they could arrange to split royal patronage by making deals, 'log rolling'. As late as January 1561 Orange wrote to Granvelle, signifying his pleasure at the king's appointment of the Seigneur de Chasteauroulleau to the position of 'chevalier de la cour de parlement' of Dôle. He went on to agree to give the captaincy of Arguel, which Chasteauroulleau had held, to Granvelle's cousin, the Seigneur Pancras Bonvalot¹³. But by the summer of 1561, whatever degree of trust had been left between the prince and the cardinal had evaporated in hard competition. In their letter to the king of 23rd June Orange and Egmont referred three times to the damage to their *honneur et réputation* and another time to their *honneur et estimation*¹⁴. Now in the sixteenth century *honneur* and *estimation* referred to the image others had of a man's ability to get his way. In political terms this always included his ability to dispense patronage. Orange and Egmont, just as Granvelle, claimed that 'everyone' was watching and, in their case, mocking. For Egmont was a successful military leader in the king's service, second only to the duke of Alba - and Alba had held the post of viceroy of Naples, and was currently serving as one of the principal shapers of royal policy in the king's own Council of State in Spain. Orange was an independent prince in his own right, like the duke of Savoy, the previous governor-general. His marriage to a princess of the electoral house of Saxony showed his own view of his social-political status and was meant to show it to the world. With the king in Spain and the government of the Netherlands entrusted to an inexperienced and not very intelligent woman - a great change, this, from the formidably intelligent and forceful Mary of Hungary - Orange would expect, and would be expected, to play the leading political role in the country. In modern language neither Egmont nor Orange could afford to play second fiddle to a jumped-up civil servant from Franche-Comté.

Over the next two years both sides built up their clienteles. Orange's precise po-

12. Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt* (London, 1977) 48 n. 24. I wish to thank Professor Parker for letting me have a fotocopy of Granvelle's letter of 12 May 1576 where he specifically makes this point.

13. L.P. Gachard, ed., *Correspondance de Guillaume Ie Taciturne*, II (Brussels, 1850) 4-6.

14. See note 1 above.

litical objectives in this period are notoriously difficult to penetrate¹⁵; but it looks as if he and his friends were aiming at a position in the Netherlands similar to that enjoyed by the Guises in France during the reign of Francis II. This meant obtaining the decisive voice in decision making in the government and control of both central and local patronage in order to build up irresistible support in the country. In this strategy the provincial governorships were crucial. Mansfeld in Luxembourg was the most blatant in exploiting his position. It was reported that he 'tyrannises the provincial council, signs any requests by his secretary, appropriates fines and browbeats the attorney-general in his chambers'¹⁶. He sold positions in the town councils for ten gold florins, let off a murderer for 100 *écus* and, horror of horrors, received the Jews in his province¹⁷. In Hainault Berghes' behaviour was almost equally autocrat. In March 1560 Margaret of Parma had recommended his appointment to the king precisely because he had local influence and could therefore counter-balance the excessive authority of the estates and of the bishop of Cambrai¹⁸. The appointment turned out to be a great disappointment for the regent. Berghes exercised quasi-dictatorial powers over the clergy yet failed to take effective action against heresy in a province which, because it bordered on France, was particularly exposed to the infiltration of Calvinist preachers¹⁹.

Orange, as one would expect, acted more subtly and, at the same time, with a surer aim for the acquisition of power. He tried to obtain the nomination as 'First Grandee' of Zeeland, a position which would have made him the sole representative of the nobility in the assembly of a province of which he was the governor²⁰. More sinister still, he tried to be appointed *ruward*, or *surintendent*, of Brabant. This position, as Granvelle wrote in alarm to the king, would have made him *suprême* in a province which the ruler had always taken care to administer without the intervention of a provincial governor²¹.

There is no doubt that Orange and his friends were highly successful in attaching large numbers of the nobility and of government officials to themselves. But inevitably their policy aroused jealousy and opposition. They failed to win

15. Cf. K.W. Swart, 'Willem van Oranje en de vestiging van de macht van de Nederlandse Statenvergadering', 2. I wish to thank Professor Swart for letting me have a copy of the typescript of his unpublished article.

16. Rosenfeld, *Provincial Governors*, 52.

17. Morillon to Granvelle, 9 Dec. 1564, Weiss, *Papiers d'Etat*, VII, 533.

18. Margaret to Philip II, 17 March 1561, L.P. Gachard, ed., *Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche, Duchesse de Parme, avec Philippe II*, I (Brussels, 1867) 148.

19. Rosenfeld, *Provincial Governors*, 51.

20. *Ibidem*, 53.

21. L.P. Gachard, 'La chute du cardinal de Granvelle en 1564', *Etudes et notices historiques concernant l'histoire des Pays-Bas* (Brussels, 1890) 110.

over Berlaymont, although they tried to tempt him with the promise of support for his son's election to the bishopric of Liège²² - a promise which was in itself a measure of their growing influence in the region. More serious still than their failure with Berlaymont was the resistance to their overtures by the duke of Aerschot and with him the resistance of the whole huge clan of the Croy and its widespread connections in the Walloon provinces. Margaret and Granvelle gleefully reported to Philip a quarrel which had arisen during a wedding party attended by all the great seigneurs. Aerschot had declared to Egmont that he was not willing to join the league against Granvelle, that they should not lay down the law for him and that, if they did not wish him for a friend as an equal, he did not care, 'for he had as much following of nobles and friends as any of them'²³.

There is equally no doubt that Granvelle was building up his own party. In the spring of 1562 he wrote to Philip that the seigneurs no longer accepted his invitations for dinner but that he did not really mind and that he invited 'gentlemen, councillors and even burghers to gain their goodwill in case these [i.e. the seigneurs] should push matters further'²⁴. A year later he was still using the same tactics. Many now had their eyes opened to the true nature of the seigneurs' policy, he informed the king, and many of the nobility had excused themselves to him that they could not do what they wished for fear of offending the seigneurs; but he, Granvelle, was entertaining them and keeping his friendship with them. This was the more necessary as Orange did not even bother any more about being *sur-intendant* of the estates of Brabant because in effect he exercised a great part of the powers of this office anyway and he did this with the help of Van Straelen, the Antwerp banker and superintendent of the taxes of the novennial *aide* of 1558²⁵. He himself, Granvelle added virtuously, had asked the regent to excuse him from attending the consultas, so as to prevent further jealousy. But it was an empty gesture, and his enemies knew it; for he had arranged that Margaret should continue to consult him privately²⁶. It was also well known that Viglius, the president of the privy council through which all patronage business was handled, was a faithful 'cardinalist'²⁷.

By the spring of 1563 Granvelle was unequivocally presenting the struggle for the control of patronage and, hence, for power in the Netherlands, as the principal

22. Margaret to Philip, 6 Febr. 1563, Weiss, *Papiers d'Etat*, VII, 5-6.

23. *Ibidem*.

24. Granvelle to Philip, 13 May 1562, *Ibidem*, VI 557-560. "... cavalleros, y consejeros y aun burgeses por ganarles la voluntad para en caso que quisiessen estos (i.e. the league of seigneurs) rebolver mas las cosas'.

25. Granvelle to Philip, 10 March 1563, *Ibidem*, VII, 19, 38.

26. *Ibidem*, 21.

27. Van Durme, *Antoon Perrenot*, 177.

issue between himself and the seigneurs²⁸. Soon afterwards he knew of the ultimatum Orange, Egmont and Hoorn had sent to Philip on March 11th, threatening to resign from the council of state - not, significantly, from their provincial governorships - unless the cardinal went. At almost exactly the same time the Edict of Amboise (19 March 1563) granted the French Huguenots at least a limited degree of toleration and, no doubt ominously from Granvelle's point of view, specially favoured the Huguenot nobility. He feared, as yet without giving any evidence, that one of the seigneurs in the Netherlands would make himself leader of the heretics, presumably just as had happened in France²⁹. In July he wrote to Philip that the *superintendencia* which Orange was claiming in Brabant would allow him to appoint the margraves of the four principal cities. The margraves were the representatives of the central government for criminal jurisdiction in these cities. If Orange controlled them, Granvelle argued, he would be more powerful than the duke of Brabant (i.e. Philip II or his regent). It was the cardinal's opposition to this aim which was the main reason for the quarrel between them³⁰.

In the next letter, on 25th July, Granvelle voiced his fears of the seigneurs' plots with German troops but added, perhaps sincerely, that not all of them knew of the ultimate plans³¹. On the 20th August, in a long, confused and almost hysterical letter to the king, Granvelle concentrated on the demands for the summoning of the States General. What he feared was not the traditional assembly of the deputies of the estates of the different provinces who would listen together to the king's proposals and then deliberate and answer separately, but a joint meeting where all discussed and resolved on the proposals together. This was what they had done in 1558, when the States General had hammered out the conditions of the huge nine-year *aide* together with the then regent, the duke of Savoy. Granvelle had opposed the joint sessions at that time but had been overridden by Savoy. He was particularly angry about the loss of royal authority which, he claimed, had been involved in allowing the States General to administer the nine-years *aide*. Straelen, the commissioner for this tax, had become his special *bête noir*³². Now Granvelle returned to the charge. Joint meetings would encourage

28. Granvelle to Philip, 10 March 1563, Weiss, *Papiers d'Etat*, VII, 21. 'Y porque veo que se ofenden mucho de que no entren en la consulta, y en renovar el magistrado de las villas, en lo qual no conviene en ninguna manera que tengan parte, porque seria la ruina de la autoridad de V.M., por quitarles el sentimiento que muestran tener de que entrevega yo en ello, he suplicado a Madama (i.e. the regent, Margaret of Parma) lo que antes muchas vezes, que consienta que yo me abstenga de las consultas, y que de lo que de mi quisiere ser informada lo hare aparte ...'. My italics.

29. Granvelle to Philip, 9 May 1563, *Ibidem*, 74-75.

30. *Ibidem*, 135-138.

31. *Ibidem*, 165.

32. F. Rachfahl, *Wilhelm von Oranten und der niederlandische Au/stand*, I (Halle and The Hague, 1906) 553-568. Verhofstad, *De regering*, 116-149. G.E. Wells, 'Antwerp', ch. 3, section C, 168-192; ch. 4, section D, 236, 243.

the estates to put forward demands they would not dare to make singly. By this he meant particularly the question of the new bishoprics and the placards against heresy. If the estates controlled taxation, the government would lose its credit on the money market and would no longer be able to raise loans on its own authority. The States General, even if it showed good will, would be so slow about raising money on credit that, if there was a rebellion or an invasion, the enemy would have captured half the country before the government could raise any troops and, within a short time, both the country and the Catholic religion would be lost. Orange and Berghes were in league with Straelen and even with some of the associates of Schetz, the king's financial agent in the Netherlands. They wanted to change the constitution so that they could command the state, and the regent, or even the king himself if he came, would have no further say³³.

But in spite of all these dire predictions Granvelle still raised doubts about the success of Orange's and Berghes' policy with the estates. Would the estates really want to pay for the garrisons and service the king's enormous debts, just because the great lords called the tune³⁴? Much of the fault lay with the prelates and their refusal to consent to the *aides* because of the plans to incorporate their abbeys in the new bishoprics. This had made the clergy hated and had exasperated the king, although it was really the fault of others. The abbots had 'allowed themselves to be led like buffalos without thought of the disastrous results this might have for them'³⁵.

In December 1563 the States General met in Brussels. It was a traditional meeting in which the provinces discussed the government proposals separately and not in joint session as in 1558. Granvelle thought it best to stay away, for fear the seigneurs would not come at all if he was there. As it was, he admitted that they were trying hard to get the *aides* accepted; but they were doing this by trying to build up their own following. Orange entertained the deputies of Flanders and Artois, of which Egmont was governor. Egmont entertained those of Orange's provinces of Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht. They gave dinner parties for seventy or eighty persons. The marquis of Berghes claimed that the States General would pay the seven million the king owed the troops, if only they were allowed to negotiate together. 'The estates of Brabant want to be the head', Granvelle commented sourly, and 'the marquis wants to be the cock'. Aerschot had got tired of the

33. Archivo General de Simancas, MS Estado 524, fo. 23-29. I would like to thank Dr. Rodriguez-Salgado for making a fotocopy of this MS available to me. Weiss, *Papiers d'Etat*, VIII181-187, leaves out some of the most interesting passages of this letter.

34. *Ibidem*, fo. 24.

35. Granvelle to Philip, 8 Sept. 1563, Weiss, *Papiers d'Etat*, VII, 206.

festivities and had left. Granvelle thought that the estates and the cities, too, were getting tired of the behaviour of the great lords³⁶.

The pattern then was this: both Granvelle and the great seigneurs were trying to build up networks of clients among the lower nobility, government officials and town councils so as to have the greatest possible political influence in the Netherlands without, however, formally derogating the powers of the king. Neither side could pursue their policy quite openly. The cardinal could not afford to appear to be building up a private following or even to oppose the seigneurs outright. They were still the king's councillors and, in the Eboli party and especially in the secretary Eraso, they had powerful friends at court. Eraso, moreover, had a kind of secret service in the Netherlands in the persons of two officials in the administrations of the Spanish troops in the Netherlands, Alonso del Canto and Cristóbal de Castellanos, and in the Augustinian friar, Lorenzo de Villavicencio. These three ran a campaign against the cardinal's alleged softness towards heretics, and they had the ear of the king. Later, after Granvelle had left the Netherlands and after Eraso had fallen from favour in Madrid, Villavicencio effortlessly transferred his allegiance to the Alba party and switched his campaign against the seigneurs³⁷. These circumstances go far to explain the repulsive tone of Granvelle's letters to the king, his constant disclaimers of his own interests in the control of patronage and his assurances in his own implicit belief in the uprightness of Orange and his friends, followed by innuendos about their personal loyalty and trustworthiness in religious matters. The trick was similar to that used by Shakespeare's Mark Anthony: 'For Brutus is an honourable man', - and it was just as effective³⁸.

Orange, for his part, had to be equally guarded³⁹. Not only must the king not suspect him of claiming loyalties which properly belonged to the ruler, but neither must his own aristocratic allies. While all the provincial governors were trying to build up their clienteles, it looks as if only Orange and Berghes really thought in terms of a Guise-like take-over of the whole government machinery. The constant demand for the summoning of the States General was a part of this policy. Perhaps some of the seigneurs really believed that this body could restore consensus in religion. Certainly they wanted to use it in their political game and thought they could control it. This was what Granvelle and, eventually, Philip

36. Granvelle to Philip, 10 Dec. 1563, *Ibidem*, 259-265.

37. For a detailed description of the careers and activities of these three persons see Lagomarsino, 'Philip II and the Netherlands', Pt. II.

38. Among many examples see Granvelle to Philip, 12 March 1562, Weiss, *Papiers d'Etat*, VI, 534, and 22 May 1563, *Ibidem*, VII, 79.

39. Rosenfeld, *Provincial Governors*, 54, especially n. 225.

II also thought. Hence their attempts to split the league of seigneurs, especially by detaching Egmont from it, and their refusal to summon the States General. Certainly, Granvelle's interpretation of Orange's policy in the early and mid 1560's is supported by what we know, much more unambiguously, about the prince's later policy. The constitutional arrangements which he made for the archduke Matthias in 1577 left effective power with himself and with the States General⁴⁰. In order to dominate the States General Orange consistently built up a party of his own followers in the towns. He did so in Holland after 1572, for instance by his appointment of Pieter Adriansz. van der Werff as burgomaster of Leiden, even though Van der Werff did not belong to a patrician family in that city⁴¹. Once the civil war with Don John of Austria broke out, both sides systematically deposed opposing magistrates and had their own followers elected or they simply appointed them⁴².

Orange and Granvelle, then, had a very clear view of the nature of power in the Netherlands and their respective policies were entirely logical. But how successful were they in their attempts to control the towns? Evidently, much work remains to be done on this topic; but such evidence as there is suggests that neither the prince nor the cardinal were very successful. Thanks to the forthcoming book by Dr. Guy Wells we know most about Antwerp.

Every spring, half of the city council of 18, the *schepenen*, were renewed, i.e. changed. They were chosen by the regent in her consulta with Viglius, Berlaymont and/of Noircarmes, the margrave of Antwerp and the chancellor of Brabant. The consulta chose from a list of nine candidates proposed by the city council and from another nine proposed by the *wijkmeesters* and *hooftmannen van de porterijs*. These were the very respectable, propertied persons who made up the 'third member' of the *breede raad* of Antwerp. On no occasion did the regent impose a candidate from outside this group. Not even the duke of Alba did that. The council could make doubly sure of controlling its own renewal by putting forward unsuitable candidates, unknown and obviously unqualified men, or close relatives of actual councillors. This practice would further restrict the choice of the regent and her consulta⁴³. Granvelle and Orange would each therefore be able to attract allies in the Antwerp magistrate. Jan van Schoonho-

40. H.G. Koenigsberger, 'Why did the States General of the Netherlands become revolutionary in the Sixteenth Century?', *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, II, No. 2 (1982) 109. Both for the above article and for the present paper I wish to thank Professor Swart for drawing my attention to some of the documentation supporting this point.

41. J.C.H. de Pater, *Jan van Hout (1542-1609)* (The Hague, 1946) 34.

42. C.H.Th. Bussemaker, *De afscheiding der Waalsche gewesten van de Generale Unie*, I (Haarlem, 1895) 240-241. L.P. Gachard, *Extrait des registres des Consaux de Tournay, 1472-1490, 1559-1572, 1580-1581* (Brussels, 1846) 114-116.

43. Wells, 'Antwerp', 89-94.

ven, burgomaster in 1564-1565, was a cardinalist and so was Hendrik van Berchem, a persecutor of heretics in districts under his private jurisdiction outside Antwerp. The banker Van Straelen and the pensionary Wesenbeke, as is well known, were or came to be Orangists. But neither Granvelle nor Orange could hope to pack the Antwerp council with a majority of his own clients or even organise a solid and reliable voting block. Some of the patrician families deliberately kept contact with both sides. Much the same happened in the French civil wars, and it happened probably in most early modern politics, because preservation of the family and its property was regarded as more important than the views or even the personal fate of the family's individual members. The Antwerp council as a whole was most anxious to avoid committing itself to either side. Its aim was to preserve the city's privileges and independence, especially its independent jurisdiction which assured foreign merchants their personal safety in the city, and to escape too close a scrutiny of their religious convictions. Such a policy was not the same as that of the cardinal who wanted a much clearer stand on the placards and the prosecution of heretics and who tried to get the city to accept the establishment of the new bishopric of Antwerp, as well as supporting the government over the *aides* demanded from the estates of Brabant. The prince of Orange was therefore seen as a useful ally in the blocking of policies which threatened the basis of Antwerp's trade and prosperity. But he was also a dangerous ally; for the Antwerp magistrate could not afford to antagonise the Brussels government and the king because it relied on them to uphold its privileges and trade treaties with foreign powers. Even the maintenance of law and order in the city and the position of the city oligarchy depended in the last resort on the support of the government. Fairly minor disturbances, such as those of 1554, demonstrated the helplessness of the council in the face of a popular movement and its need to rely on the government's soldiers as a sanction of last resort⁴⁴.

Other towns of the Netherlands may not have been as independent as Antwerp. The methods of renewal of their magistrates varied, and so did the influence which either the Brussels government or the provincial governors could exert. In Hainault the governor and grand bailli was held to control the renewal of the magistrates of the Hainault towns⁴⁵. The appointment of Berghes as governor therefore turned out to be particularly unfortunate for the government⁴⁶. In Flanders, Egmont, as governor, shared the annual renewal with several other noble commissioners and, no doubt, had the decisive voice⁴⁷. The governor of Holland was

44. *Ibidem*, 233-236, 239-241 and *passim*.

45. Rosenfeld, *Provincial Governors*, 23.

46. Cf. above, 579.

47. Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels, Papiers d'Etat et de l'Audience, MS 809³, folders for 1561-1566. No folio numbers. Rosenfeld, *Provincial Governors*, 23.

required to consult with the *schout* in each town⁴⁸. Orange, however, became notorious for his high-handed interference in the renewal of the magistrates⁴⁹.

But for all their efforts, it does not look as if the seigneurs were very successful in making the city councils into their clients. When Granvelle had left the Netherlands, the seigneurs who now dominated the council of state found, just as Granvelle had foreseen, that they could still not persuade the cities to grant the *aides* which were essential to maintain the country's defence. As far as we can tell at present, the town councils remained remarkably impervious to the party-building efforts of either the Brussels government or of the provincial governors, at any rate until the outbreak of open civil war⁵⁰. They pursued their own interests, including their religious preferences, which one could characterise for most of them as a non-persecuting catholicism, and they did not allow themselves to be integrated into the parties in the way this was happening in France.

This does not mean that the towns were not aware that the game was being played for very high stakes. This became apparent as early as 1562 over the question of the Biervleet tolls. Ghent had built a canal to the lower Scheldt estuary and petitioned the government for exemption from the tolls at Biervleet. It was a serious challenge to the commercial supremacy of Antwerp and Granvelle tried to use it deliberately to put pressure on the city to give up its opposition to the establishment of its bishopric. By brilliant diplomacy and great determination, especially on the part of Wesenbeke, Antwerp was able to block this challenge without surrendering in its opposition to the bishopric⁵¹. But in his dying weeks as Margaret's principal minister Granvelle returned to the charge. The occasion was the embargo on English imports, in November and December of 1563, when he advised the regent to pursue a hard line in order to bring pressure both on the English government and on Antwerp. The city lost its English trade to Emden, but also to Flanders, for the Flemish cloth industry received English semi-manufactured cloths via France, or even more simply from extensive smuggling⁵².

After the embargo was lifted, the rivalry between Antwerp and Flanders persisted and now came to involve the great nobles. Egmont supported an attempt by Bruges to have the staple of the Merchant Adventurers moved to Bruges instead of back to Antwerp. The Antwerp council turned to Orange. Somewhat tardily, the prince gave his support. The city won this bout, for the regent was not willing to antagonise Antwerp even more. The city was still much too impor-

48. *Ibidem*, 24.

49. *Ibidem*, 54-55.

50. Cf. Wells, 'Antwerp', 237.

51. *Ibidem*. 259-265.

52. *Ibidem*, 275-285.

tant for the economy of the Netherlands and the finances of Philip's government. But the victory was not due to the prince's intervention, and the city knew it⁵³.

Once the common enmity to Granvelle had disappeared, the league of seigneurs was showing evident signs of strain⁵⁴. While they now dominated the council of state, they were not able to win control over government patronage. Apparently to everyone's surprise in Brussels, this control passed to Margaret's Spanish secretary, Armenteros. By the early summer of 1564, Viglius was complaining about it to Granvelle⁵⁵. At the same time the provincial governors were still extending their powers in their provinces. 'Armenteros governs everything now', Viglius wrote to the cardinal in October. In Flanders, especially in Bruges, he continued, there was great opposition to the inquisitor Titelmans. The magistrates of the cities were still ready to maintain the law, but they could no longer be relied upon because

the authority of the governors, with the connivance of Her Highness (i.e. Margaret), increases so much that everyone seeks to please them or at least not to displease them⁵⁶.

In these circumstances it was quite logical that the seigneurs' next move was to try to subordinate the council of finance and the privy council to the council of state. If they could achieve this, they would have outflanked both Armenteros and Viglius with the other friends of Granvelle who still remained in the government of the Netherlands. In this move Orange, Egmont and Berghes were united, although we simply do not know whether their ultimate political aims were identical. But more crucial even than this question is another: would their political victory have been enough, or rather, would it have produced a reasonably stable situation?

The struggle between Orange and Granvelle and their respective allies had been a struggle for power within a given political context. Neither side had had any

53. *Ibidem*, 299-303.

54. E.G. Morillon to Granvelle, 1 April 1564, Weiss, *Papiers d'Etat*, VII, 452. 'Le conté d'Egmont et le prince d'Oranges se caressent, touttefois l'on s'apperceoit que c'est simulation ... Les femmes ne se cedent en rien, et se tiegnent par le bras, incedentes pari passu; et si l'on rencontre une porte estroicte, l'on se serreegalement ensemble, afinqu'il n'y ayt du devant ou derriere ...'. This characteristic comic opera aspect of the Netherlands politics before the storm - there are similar scènes in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* and in Verdi's *Falstaff*- had already flowered luxuriously in the grotesque manoeuvres of the courts of Madrid and Brussels to arrange the resignation-dismissal of Granvelle. See Van Durme, *Antoon Perrenot*, 207-218.

55. Viglius to Granvelle, 12 June 1564, G. Groen van Prinsterer, ed., *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, ser. 1, I (2nd ed.; Leiden, 1841) 263-265.

56. *Ibidem*, 317-319.

intention of breaking this context or of breaking out of it. The ultimate sovereignty of the king (however this ambiguous term might have been interpreted at the time) had not been called into question, nor had the maintenance of the Catholic religion. Unlike Condé and Coligny, none of the great lords of the Netherlands had proclaimed himself a leader of a Calvinist movement. Their opposition to the new bishoprics and the inquisition was political and emotional but not religious. The Brabantine abbots and the city councils all over the Netherlands who were in the forefront of this opposition were defending their property, their legal rights and their political autonomy. On the other side, Granvelle was certainly worried about the spread of heresy. But he saw the fight against it in terms of political power - and that, precisely, was his quarrel with Orange. 'It is laughable', he wrote to Gonzalo Pérez in 1563,

to send us depositions made before the inquisitors in Spain so that we should look for heretics here: as if there were not thousands professing heresy to whom we dare not say anything⁵⁷.

Yet while the contestants accepted the context of the struggle, this context was not stable. Forces which neither Granvelle nor Orange could control broke in on the struggle, swept the contestants aside and radically altered its terms. Both Orange and, much later, Granvelle, managed eventually to return to the struggle, but only after they had accepted the new terms. The forces over which, in the mid-1560's they had no control, were of course the spread of the Protestant movement and Philip U's reaction to this movement. The history of Protestantism in the Netherlands, the formation of the Compromise, the hedge preaching, the conventicles, the image breaking, the alliance between Calvinist nobles and burghers and the formation of the *gueux* as a fighting force - all these are well known, and I will not rehearse them here. The king's policy, however, requires a brief account. Inevitably, this account owes a great debt to the still unpublished work of David Lagomarsino and Maria José Rodríguez-Salgado who, between them and without always agreeing with each other, provide the most detailed and best-documented analysis of the politics of the Spanish court.

The key to an understanding of Philip U's policy is his view of the nature of his empire and of his own position as its ruler. Charles V had failed to have Philip succeed him as emperor; yet Philip thought of his dominions essentially in imperial terms, just as his father had done. He was the ruler of each of them, reigning over them not as king of Spain but as their own prince and by virtue of their own laws of succession. He had sworn to uphold their rights and privileges. If at times he chose to overrule certain of these rights and privileges, it was only in order to defend even greater rights of his subjects: to live under his, Philip's,

57. 17 June 1563. Weiss, *Papiers d'Etat*, VII, 106.

rule, to which God had entrusted them, and to live within the true Catholic faith, without being led astray from their salvation. Of both these rights he himself, and no one else, was the judge⁵⁸. When he was still in the Netherlands, after the emperor's abdication, he ruthlessly exploited the financial resources of Castile to carry on the war with France from the Netherlands. The emperor himself, both from Brussels and, later, from Yuste, fully supported and even increased this pressure on Spain⁵⁹. There is every reason to take seriously Philip's *cri de coeur* to Emmanuel Philibert, his regent of the Netherlands, in 1557:

Although I have ordered that my cities in Spain be sold for the defence of the Netherlands (and although I understand very well that they don't believe this), there is nobody in Spain who has got the money to buy these cities, for the whole kingdom is so poor, much poorer than the Netherlands... I for my part am doing what I can and will risk my person for them and join the army which is to defend these states and I will give them all the money I have... And for all this they thank me here by saying or thinking that I care nothing for them and that I prefer an inch of Spanish earth to a hundred leagues here. All this I cannot but feel strongly and grieve much over it, for it is so much without cause...⁶⁰.

Yet this hostility which Philip recognised was unavoidable. The supranational policy which the king pursued by force of his inheritance was never likely to be acceptable to subjects who had to pay for it, especially when the king was not among them to distribute royal patronage and personally supervise the administration of their country. England, Scotland and France all experienced deadly faction fights for control of patronage and power during royal minorities and regency governments. All of Philip's dominions, except the one in which he himself resided, were permanently in the position of needing regency governments. In 1559, when Philip had been absent from Spain for six years, that country, too, was on the brink of rebellion. The one point on which nearly everyone agreed

58. See for instance Philip's reply to a petition of the estates of Brabant, in 1562, against the incorporation of the abbeys in the new bishoprics. The king maintained that, in the case of a doubtful interpretation of the *joyeuse entree*, the decision could not rest with the estates. They should 'plustost considérer et interpréter qu'il n'y ait privilege, quelque fort qu'il soit, qui ne deit cesser pour tel bien que le présent, *cum summa sit ratio quae pro religione facit et salus populi suprema lex est*'. Gachard, *Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche*, II, 143.

59. Rodriguez-Salgado, 'Spanish Regent to European Ruler', ch. 5.

60. Philip to Savoy, London, 27 May 1557, Archives Générales du Royaume, Les Archives et les Bibliothèques d'Italie, vol. 1. Manuscrits divers 1172, fo. 225-227. '... y aunque he mandado que, para defender esos Estados, porque los tengo en mucho (aunque entiendo muy bien que no lo creen así) me vendan las ciudades que tengo en España, no se halla nadie que tenga dinero, porque todo el Reyno está pobre y harto mas qu'esos Estados... yo, de mi parte, lo que puedo hago, qu'es poner con ellos my persona y juntar el exercito, y traer para defension d'esos Estados un todo quanto dinero tengo ... y esto agrandezamelo ay de manera que diran ó pensaran que no los tengo en nada y que quiero mas un palmo de tierra en España que ay cien leguas. Todo esto no puedo dejar de sentirlo mucho y dolerme mucho dello, siendo tan sin causa ...'. Gachard's copy of the original in Turin. Partly quoted in Verhofstad, *De regering*, 113, n. 90.

during the 1560's was the need for the king's return to the Netherlands to solve its problems. The question was how this could be done. Spain was beset by mortal enemies in the Mediterranean, enemies who could, or so it was believed, count on the support of a 'fifth column', the Moriscos in southern and eastern Spain. In the event, Spain was plunged into civil war, the revolt of the Moriscos, before the most serious stages of the civil war in the Netherlands had even begun. Moreover, the regent whom Philip would have had to leave in Spain, the Infante Don Carlos, was showing progressively more alarming signs of mental instability. Yet there was no obviously acceptable alternative to Carlos.

Perhaps a much greater integration of the different parts of Philip's empire would have resolved at least some of his problems. Granvelle, at least, seems to have thought so. Quite consistently with his view of the nature of politics he urged the king to internationalise his patronage and give *encomiendas* of the Spanish orders of knighthood to Netherlanders; for then they would have to support the country from which they were deriving their income, and their relatives and clients would be won over with them. Even if only two or three Brabanders were honoured in this way, the cardinal assured the king, 25,000 would support him the more willingly in hope of similar advancement. In Italy, too, some high positions in government or in the military or naval establishment should be given to some of the principal Netherlands seigneurs who had shown their prowess in these fields. Orange himself, for instance, 'would not serve badly (as viceroy) in Sicily, for he would then be far from Germany and perhaps live with greater contentment'⁶¹.

It was an astonishing proposal, coming as it did in March 1563, at the very height of the cardinal's quarrel with the prince. Granvelle was certainly quite serious about his idea, for he came back to it in a later letter⁶², and I do not think he proposed it only to get his most dangerous opponent out of the Netherlands. Philip also took the suggestion seriously, but could not see it in the same way. As to the *encomiendas*, he replied, they were given only to persons who took the habit (i.e. religious vows) and many did this only to get an *encomienda*. Besides, there were so many people in Spain who served him and whom he could not reward except with money, which he needed for other purposes, or with *encomiendas*; and those who did not get one became disgruntled. Still, he was considering one for Gosuin de Varick, governor of Diest, who may have been connected with Orange. As to positions in Italy, there were very few, mainly viceroys. For these, because of the importance of religion, it was necessary to find someone about whom one could feel absolutely safe, not only about his own religious be-

61. Granvelle to Philip, 10 March, 1563, Weiss, *Papiers d'Etat*, VII, 53-55.

62. Granvelle to Philip, 13 June 1563, *Ibidem*, 156-157.

liefs but about the way he handled such beliefs. With the prince of Orange one just could not know whether it would work out in the way Granvelle suggested⁶³.

Here indeed was the heart of the matter. It was the unreliability of the civil authorities, both of the cities and of the provincial governors, in dealing with heresy which, as Dr. Rodriguez-Salgado has convincingly argued, made the maintenance of the inquisition and the enforcement of the placards in the Netherlands a matter on which Philip would never give way. In Naples and Milan, and even in Galicia in Spain, the civil authorities could be relied upon to the extent that the introduction of the inquisition could be given up in the face of local opposition, or at least postponed indefinitely⁶⁴.

The exchange between Philip and Granvelle showed the central ambiguity at the core of Philip's empire: here was a king who could speak only Spanish fluently, who lived in Spain, who surrounded himself with Spanish advisers and who, for seemingly good reasons, was reluctant to extend his imperial patronage to all his subjects. It did not matter that all his dominions, just as all countries of Europe in the sixteenth century, bitterly resented having non-natives appointed to 'their' offices and that hardly anyone really wanted to have a truly imperial, international administration. The provinces of the Netherlands were notorious strikers on this point, even against each other. It did not matter that, in fact, very few Spaniards were appointed in the Netherlands and not many more in Italy. It did not matter that Philip's imperial policies, and not least his policies in the Netherlands, often ran counter to the interests of his Spanish subjects. The overwhelming impression which Philip gave to his contemporaries was that he was a Spanish king, ruling a Spanish empire in the interests of the Spaniards.

Nowhere was this clearer than in Philip's policy towards France. When the first civil war broke out, in the early summer of 1562, Philip wanted to support the Catholics. The Netherlands, however, refused to cooperate in a policy of intervention. Granvelle and Margaret of Parma counselled against it. The Order of the Golden Fleece voted unanimously against any military action in France⁶⁵. Philip felt this attitude to be both humiliating towards himself and desperately dangerous for the Netherlands. The reports from Chantonnay, Granvelle's brother and Philip's ambassador in France, became more and more alarming. Thus in January 1563 Chantonnay wrote of talk among members of the French royal council, of how, now that heresy had gained a foothold in France, the Netherlands were ripe to fall. They were disenchanted with the Spaniards and would choose either the king of Bohemia as their ruler or, because Maximilian might

63. Philip to Granvelle, 13 June 1563, *Ibidem*, 85-89.

64. Rodriguez-Salgado, 'Spanish Regent to European Ruler', 481 ff.

65. Viglius, *Mémoires*, A. Wauters, ed. (Brussels, 1862) 46-47. Gachard, 'La chute', 109.

not be strong enough to defend them, the king of France himself. Philip would be quite unable to mount a diversionary attack from Italy or from Spain. Once the Netherlands had fallen and its warships had joined with those of France, England could not be held and then Spanish commerce with the Indies could no longer be protected. The duke of Savoy would then no longer be able to deny passage to French troops into Italy, and the Milanese would be pleased to throw off the burden of Spanish rule. In all this the French would undoubtedly get help from the Turkish fleet and from the Moors⁶⁶.

No doubt, the French councillors, 'important persons but not principal ones', as Chantonnay characterised them⁶⁷, were whistling in the dark to keep up their courage in the middle of a civil war, or perhaps they were just trying to frighten Philip's ambassador. If so, they were more successful than they could have hoped. Chantonnay reported their views in the classic form of a domino theory where one future disaster inexorably leads to another. But, for all the usual implausibilities of this theory, there were sufficient reasons for Madrid not to take the threat lightly. Philip had distrusted Maximilian ever since his cousin had edged him out of the succession to the Holy Roman Empire. Maximilian was known to have ambitions in the Netherlands and, when one thinks of the later venture by his son, the archduke Matthias, such ambitions were far from impossible. Moreover Alba, to whom Chantonnay addressed his letter, had himself in earlier years argued that the Netherlands were strategically very difficult to defend, especially without the presence of their prince. Philip knew all about this argument. He had himself summarised it for his father in 1544 when Charles V was wondering whether to give the Netherlands or Milan as a dowry for a Habsburg princess marrying the second son of Francis I⁶⁸. Finally, both Charles V's earlier experience and the ineffectiveness of the mismanaged Spanish intervention from Milan in the French civil war underlined the point made by the French councillors about the invulnerability of France-to attacks mounted from Italy or from Spain. Without troops in the Netherlands that were under his complete control, which the *bandes d'ordonnance* clearly were not, Philip could neither pursue a credible great-power policy in northwestern Europe nor even assure the safety of a dominion for which he regarded himself just as much responsible as for

66. Chantonnay to Alba, Paris, 16 Jan. 1563, *Archivo Documental Espanol*, publ. R. Academia de la Historia, V, *Negociaciones con Francia (1563)* (Madrid, 1952) 33-36.

67. 'Personas principales, no de los mayores que de los que entran en consejo...', *Ibidem*, 33.

68. Philip to Charles V, Valladolid, 13 Jan. 1544, M. Fernandez Alvares, ed., *Corpus Documental de Carlos V*, II (Salamanca, 1975) 306-309. F. Chabod, 'Milan o Países Bajos? Las Discusiones en España sobre la 'alternativa' de 1544', *Carlos V (1500-1558). Homenaje de la Universidad de Granada* (Granada, 1958) 367-370.

Spain. There was no alternative to co-operation with the Netherlands nobility⁶⁹.

The first implication of the full realisation of this fact was the necessity of throwing Granvelle to the wolves. It is quite likely, as Professor Lagomarsino has argued with a convincing wealth of documentation, that the cardinal's enemies at court, Secretary Eraso and the *Eboli parti*, egged on by the personal enmity of Simon Renard and the fanaticism of Fray Villavicencio, would in any case have won this round against Granvelle's supporters, Alba and Gonzalo Pérez. They certainly organised the political mechanics of Granvelle's recall from the Netherlands⁷⁰. Yet Philip's action in this case was very much part of a pattern of political behaviour which he followed consistently whenever one of his ministers, viceroys or governors ran up against local opposition that seemed for the moment insuperable. So it was with Margaret of Parma and, later, with her son, Alexander Farnese, with the marquis of Mondéjar in Andalucia, with Antonio Pérez and with the duke of Alba himself. With the viceroys of Sicily the practice became a regular system. Machiavelli had recommended making a show of sacrificing unpopular ministers⁷¹. In fact it was difficult to avoid doing this where an early modern ruler had to rely on the co-operation of a local elite. The almost universal contemporary lament of the fickleness of princes had much justification, for such fickleness was built into the system of early modern government.

Granvelle had faithfully carried out Philip's policy in the Netherlands. In the process he had become unacceptable to a large section of the local elite. As a result, the country was left virtually undefended against both military and religious attack. There was no way - and here I am again following Dr. Rodriguez-Salgado's argument - in which Philip could have continued Granvelle in office. Failing his own return to the Netherlands, he had to come to some sort of terms with those who commanded the local defence forces, the *bandes d'ordonnance*. Since Orange and his friends had always proclaimed their loyalty, both to himself and to the Catholic religion, the king had to hope that this alliance would still maintain his ultimate authority, and that the struggle against heresy would, at least, not be further weakened.

69. Here I am following Dr. Rodriguez-Salgado's interpretation 'From Spanish Regent to European Ruler', 449 ff. and *passim*.

70. Lagomarsino, 'Philip II and the Netherlands', pt. II.

71. N. Macchiavelli, *Il principe*, cap. VII. 'E perchè conosceva le rigorose passate avergli generato qualche odio, per purgare gli animi di quelli popoli, e guadagnarseli in tutto, volle mostrare che se crudeltà alcuna era seguita, non era nata de lui (i.e. Cesare Borgia), ma dall'acerba natura del ministro (i.e. Ramiro d'Orco). E preso sopra questo occasione, lo fece una mattina mettere a Cesena in duo pezzi in su la piazza con un pezzo di legno e un coltello sanguinoso a canto. La ferocità del quale spettacolo fece quelli popoli in tempo rimanere soddisfatti e stupidi'. With Philip's ministers the cutting in pieces usually applied to their careers rather than their bodies, although Juan de Escobedo might not have thought so if his assassins had left him any time to reflect on his fate.

It was a forlorn hope. Psychologically and politically the aims of the players in this game were too contradictory to make genuine cooperation possible. The tragi-comedy of mutual misunderstanding during Egmont's visit to Madrid shows that this fact was not immediately clear to most of the participants but that, on the contrary, there was quite a lot of mutual good will. One may well suspect, however, that Orange at least saw the situation more clearly and was not very surprised by the outcome. The immediate result was stasis, a seizing-up of the political process and a virtual standstill of the administrative machine. Again, this was an inbuilt hazard of early modern regimes, and Philip II's empire, with its geographically separate entities and its ethnic and religious tensions, was particularly prone to it. In Sicily, for instance, stasis was practically a permanent condition; for in the island the viceroy and the civil courts, on the one side, and on the other the Spanish inquisition allied with the proto-Mafia of disgruntled nobles and bandits held each other in an immovable balance. Philip reacted by changing the viceroys every three or six years and otherwise making soothing noises to both sides. Neither party, nor anyone else in Sicily, threatened his sovereign authority or the Catholic religion⁷².

In Spain and in the Netherlands, however, such masterly inactivity was in the long run not possible. In Andalucia stasis developed from the conflicting claims and manoeuvres of the inquisition, the *audiencia*, i.e. the supreme civil court of the province, the archbishop of Granada, his hostile cathedral chapter and the governor of the province, the marquis of Mondejar. All this manoeuvring took place at the expense of the Morisco population and against the background of Moorish raids across the Straits from North Africa. Philip, anxious both over defence and over the apparent resurgence of Islam among the nominally Christian Moriscos, backed the hard-line religious policy of Cardinal Espinoza against Mondejar, the *de facto* protector of the Moriscos. To satisfy local interest groups, as well as his personal enemies at court, the king relieved Mondejar of his responsibilities for the Moriscos and for internal security. The result was an explosion, the rising of the Moriscos against the paralysed civil and military authorities⁷³, followed by more than two years of civil war, then the dispersal and, finally, in the early seventeenth century, the expulsion of the Moriscos.

In the Netherlands stasis overtook the regime when, year after year, the estates of Brabant refused to pay the *aide* for defence which the government had asked for in 1558; when the provincial governors and the city councils blocked the government's religious policy; and when the noble members of the council of state

72. H.G. Koenigsberger, *The Practice of Empire* (Ithaca, 1969) 161-170.

73. Cf. K. Garrad, 'The Causes of the Second Rebellion of the Alpujarras (1568-1571)' (Cambridge Ph.D.thesis).

boycotted that body. Then, just as in Andalusia, the dismissal of the principal minister did not succeed in setting the government machinery in motion again. Here, too, the king's initiative in religious policy then triggered the reaction of forces outside the parties of the political and administrative elites, forces which the stasis had allowed to gather strength. They came into the open in the Compromise, the image breaking and the military actions of the armed *gueux*. This was the tragedy of Philip U's empire. For William of Orange it was an opportunity which he had helped to create but which he had not intended and whose nature became clear to him only with time. If for him the story in the end also turned to tragedy, it was at least a tragedy followed by catharsis: the foundation of a new, independent state, the United Provinces of the Netherlands.

Het intellectuele milieu van Willem van Oranje

M.E.H.N. MOUT

Voor J.J. Woltjer

INLEIDING

In de ogen van de historicus is de geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Opstand op te delen in een aantal segmenten: politiek, sociaal-economisch, religieus. Vertrouwde termen voor wie, genietend van de aanblik van het vergruisde beeld, een poging wil wagen nog een eigen steentje bij te dragen¹. In de geschiedschrijving van de Opstand ontbreekt zo iets als het intellectuele segment. Uiteraard hebben historici gedacht en geschreven over - religieuze, politieke - ideeën in de Nederlanden gedurende de zestiende eeuw, maar daarbij moesten zij vaak verzuchten dat het zo moeilijk is de rol van denkbeelden vast te stellen, de band tussen idee en werkelijkheid te beschrijven laat staan te analyseren².

Een ideeëngeschiedenis van de Opstand bestaat dus nog niet. Een dergelijk werk zou grotendeels neerkomen op de geschiedenis van het late humanisme in de Nederlanden, met al zijn internationale verbindingen, bezien in het licht van de Opstand. Tot nu toe echter hebben de historici slechts aarzelend en sporadisch de verbinding tussen 'humanisme' en 'Opstand' gelegd, en kwamen daarbij dan bijvoorbeeld uit op de ontwikkeling en werking van het begrip tolerantie, of bij het vermeende erasmianisme van Willem van Oranje³. Meestal werkten de geschiedschrijvers van de Opstand en die van het humanisme met een waterscheiding tussen eikaars gebieden. Beter ging het misschien tussen de historici van de Reformatie en die van de Opstand, en zeker ook tussen de geleerden die zich be-

1. Met S. Groenveld in zijn heldere bijdrage 'Beeldvorming en realiteit. Geschiedschrijving en achtergronden van de Nederlandse Opstand tegen Filips II', in: P.A.M. Geurts en A.E.M. Janssen, ed., *Geschiedschrijving in Nederland*, II, *Geschiedbeoefening* (Den Haag, 1981) 55-84, speciaal 84, beschouw ik het beeld wel als vergruisd, maar de situatie nog niet als hopeloos. Zie daar ook verdere literatuur.

2. Bijvoorbeeld bij het analyseren van de 'preconditions' voor de Nederlandse Opstand, zie J.W. Smit, 'The Netherlands Revolution', in: Robert Forster en Jack P. Greene, ed., *Preconditions of Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Baltimore-Londen, 1970) 43-46.

3. A.A. van Schelven, 'De opkomst van de idee der politieke tolerantie in de 16e-eeuwse Nederlanden', in zijn: *Uit den strijd der geesten* (Amsterdam, 1944) 9-71; E.H. Waterbolk, 'Humanisme en de tolerantiegedachte', in: *Opstanden pacificatie in de Lage Landen* (Gent, 1976) 299-315; idem, 'L'Erasmianisme de Guillaume d'Orange', in zijn: *Verspreide opstellen* (Amsterdam, 1981) 84-93.