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Punished and corrected as an example to all

On the treatment of rebellious nobles
during and after the Flemish Revolts
(1482-1492)

MA (Res) Thesis, Europe 1000-1800
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19 December 2014

“Ô la belle histoire! le beau livre que l’Esprit Saint écrit présentement!
Il est sous la presse, âmes saintes, il n’y a point de jour qu’on n’en arrange les lettres,
que l’on n’y applique l’encre, que l’on n’en imprime les feuilles.”

— Jean-Pierre de Caussade, *L'abandon à la providence divine*, Ch. XI.

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Introduction *

“When the Young White King gained victory over his enemies everywhere, the Blue King was saddened, and won and bought once more, with his great wealth, a mighty captain, the greatest that the Young White King had with him, and promised him much more money, and also castles, fortresses and land; that captain would furthermore eternally have and rule the land and people of the Young White King. That captain abandoned the Young White King, and drew to himself evil people, a great number of crowds, among whom there were many great criers, and he gave that people a lot of money, and promised to make them all lords for ever. They accepted this, and they were also called the Black and Fallen White Company.”¹

So goes the explanation that Maximilian of Austria (1459-1519) gives in the pseudo-autobiographical *Weißkunig*, of the origin of his struggle with the Netherlandish nobleman Philip of Cleves (1459-1528).² After the death of duchess Mary of Burgundy left the four year old Philip the Handsome (1478-1506) duke of the Burgundian Netherlands, Maximilian struggled between 1482 and 1492 against a coalition of the Flemish cities and a handful of the most important noblemen for the regency, which in 1483-1485 and 1488-1492 erupted into the Flemish Revolts.³ Philip of Cleves, as presented here, was bought by the king of France with the ambition to reign in Maximilian's stead; while the king's notorious enemies, the Flemish, are presented as the Brown Company, Philip and his men are the Fallen Whites, apostates. The *Weißkunig* presents

* I wish to thank Jelle Haemers for allowing me to read and make use of the manuscript of his latest book, *De strijd om het regentschap over Filips de Schone*. Wiel Dorssers, Thérèse Peeters and Vanessa Abeyawardena have helped me clear up many difficult passages and correct many errors.

- 1 Maximilian and Marx Treitzsaurwein, *Der Weiß Kunig. Eine Erzählung von den Thaten Kaiser Maximilian des ersten* (Vienna 1775 (written ±1513)) 225: “Als der Jung Weiß kunig gegen seinen veindten allenthalben den Sig behilt, das verdroß den blaben kunig, und gewann, und erkauffet abermals, mit seinem großen gelt, ainen mechtigen hauptman, den maisten den der Jung weiß kung, bey Ime het, und versprach Ime darzu Insonderhait, viel mer gelt, auch Purg Sloß unnd Lannd, derselb hauptman solle auch Ewiglichn haben, unnd Regiren, des Jungen weißen kunigs Lannd und leut, derselb hauptman viel von dem Jungen weißen kunig ab, unnd hennget an sich von schlechten leuten, ain grosse anzall volcks, darunder der grossen schreyer gar vill waren, und er gab denselben volckh gar vill gelts, und versprach Inen, Sy alle zu Ewigen Zeiten herren zu machn, das namen Sy also an, und wurden auch genennt, die Swartz und abgefallen weiß geselschaft[.]” ‘Schreyer’ or in Dutch ‘roepers’ and ‘krijzers’ were common terms to indicate a mob of foolish and spineless rebels: Jan Dumolyn, ‘Marginalen of radicalen? Het vertoog over de ‘roepers en krijzers’ tijdens stedelijke opstanden, voornamelijk in het laatmiddeleeuwse Vlaanderen.’, *Tijdschrift voor sociale en economische geschiedenis*, 2 (2005) 29-53.
- 2 The commentary of the first edition from 1775 is severely mistaken in identifying the *Hauptman* as Jan van Coppenhole.
- 3 The term ‘Flemish Revolt’ is from Jelle Haemers and Louis Sicking, ‘De Vlaamse Opstand van Filips van Kleef en de Nederlandse Opstand van Willem van Oranje’, *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis* 119, 3 (2006) 328-347. I shall be referring to two of them to more easily distinguish and compare between them.

Maximilian's life as the struggle of a ruler beset by unrelenting misfortune as a result of being born under an unlucky constellation, yet victorious through divine grace.⁴ But he did not just see himself confronted with traitors; some hated him from the get-go. The *Theuerdank*, the other of Maximilian's writings, offers us a glimpse into the thoughts of the Burgundian nobility upon hearing of the Austrian's journey to the Netherlands to marry the duchess Mary: "Many in the country were much saddened in their hearts, thinking 'if the hero comes to our lady the queen, he will immediately take from us our rule.'"⁵ And so, three evil councillors of the queen attempt to thwart the noble hero — until they end up beheaded, hanged and thrown off of a balcony. The relationship between Maximilian and the nobility he found in the Netherlands was not always rosy, if these writings are any indication. But unlike *Theuerdank*'s adversaries Fürwittig, Unfallos and Neydlhart, and in spite of rebellion being a capital crime, all but one of the members of the high nobility who opposed Maximilian died of natural causes. Some, like Louis of Gruuthuse, faced prison sentences; others, like Philip of Beveren, never saw their actions mentioned again. And the young king's greatest captain, Philip of Cleves, underwent a ritual of humiliation before being receiving a pardon. Why were Maximilian's political enemies not eliminated in the harshest ways, like those of the *Theuerdank* were? Was there more to the relationship than a winner-takes-all struggle over rule?

The composition of the aristocracy in the Netherlands looked quite different before and after the regency of Maximilian of Austria over his son Philip the Handsome (1482-1494). In 1477, Adolf of Cleves was lieutenant-general of the Netherlands to Mary of Burgundy; in 1493, his son Philip could not find employment and left for an Italian adventure in French service. Louis of Gruuthuse, the lieutenant of Holland, had been the other of the 'guardian angels' of the Burgundian state and Mary's *chevalier d'honneur*; his son ended up in France and his territories fell into the hands of other families. Wolfert of Borsele succeeded Louis as lieutenant in the North shortly after in 1478; his house died out a handful of years later, ending several centuries of the family's dominance of Zeeland and Holland. Instead, we find by the reign of Philip the Handsome that power has shifted to the families that would hold it during the reign of Charles V and some up to the Dutch Revolt: the houses of Nassau, Egmond, Glymes-Bergen, Burgundy, Croÿ.⁶ What had

4 Heinz-Otto Burger, 'Der Weisskunig als Literaturdenkmal' in: Heinrich Musper (ed.), *Kaiser Maximilians Weisskunig* (Stuttgart 1956) 15-33, there 19-33; Larry Silver, *Marketing Maximilian. The visual ideology of a Holy Roman emperor* (Princeton 2008) 1-7.

5 Maximilian, Marx Treitzsaurwein and Melchoir Pfintzing, *Die geuerlicheiten und eins teils der geschichten des loblichen streyparen und hochberümbtes helds und ritters herr Tewrdanncks* (Vienna 1888 (first print 1517)) 29-31: "Etlich dasselbig in dem lanndt // Verdross an Irem hertzen seer // Gedachten khümbt der Held die her // Zu unnsrer frawn der Künigin // So wirdet Er gleich nemen hin // Von unns als unnsrer regiment[.]"

6 Jean-Marie Cauchies, '«Croît conseil» et ses «ministres». L'entourage de Philippe le Beau (1494-1506)', in A. Marchandise (red.), *À l'ombre du pouvoir. Les entourages princiers du Moyen Âge* (Luik 2002) 391-411. More than half of the provincial governorships between 1503 and 1572 were held by the families Croÿ, Nassau, Egmond,

happened during the regency of Maximilian? Partially we can explain this by the simple fact of noble families dying out. This was (and maybe still is) a universal phenomenon in European nobility.⁷ But no power shift is entirely by accident. It is no coincidence that all those top noblemen of the Burgundian reign had, at some point, taken part in the Flemish Revolts, and it is just as little of a coincidence that the new elite consisted more or less of the men who had been loyal to Maximilian during that period.

John Armstrong asked himself at the 1962 Anglo-Dutch conference whether the Burgundian government had 'a policy for the nobility'.⁸ What he considered one of the most important elements of the relationship between the dukes and their nobility was the punishment of insubordination of any kind. The Habsburg successors are left outside of the scope of the article, but Armstrong made a quick summary of what he thought to be the primary difference: "After 1477, Maximilian duke of Austria continued with zest the jousts of his Burgundian predecessors, but either could not or would not continue their tradition of strict order at court. In fact the revival of private feuds among the nobility both provoked and complicated public disturbances of a more serious character. Here as in other matters the troubles of the Burgundian-Habsburg period proved the sound judgment of the preceding régime."⁹ If this period was the watershed between a loyal Burgundian nobility and an out-of-control Habsburg nobility, the punishment of insubordination should be the ideal test case for determining the relationship between Maximilian and his nobles. The aim of this thesis is to use the punishment of several noblemen after the rebellions against Maximilian of Austria to determine the archduke's, later king's, position vis-à-vis the nobility, including not only conflicts of interest, but also dependency and propaganda purposes. What considerations had to be taken into account in finding the proper judgment, and what methods were employed to take advantage of the victory over these men?

Justification

There is at present no publication that deals systematically with how nobles in the

Lalaing, Bergen, Lannoy and Montmorency: Henk Van Nierop, 'The nobles and the revolt', in: Graham Darby (ed.), *The origins and development of the Dutch Revolt* (London and New York 2001) 48-66, there 50; Paul Rosenfeld, 'The provincial governors from the minority of Charles V to the Revolt', *Standen en Landen*, 16 (1959) 1-63, there 17.

7 Jonathan Dewald, *The European nobility, 1400-1800* (Cambridge 1996) 17; Paul Janssens, *De evolutie van de Belgische adel sinds de late middeleeuwen* (Brussels 1998) 185-189; Raymond van Uytven, 'Vorst, adel en steden: een driehoeksverhouding in Brabant van de twaalfde tot de zestiende eeuw', *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis*, 59 (1976) 93-122, there 110; Paul de Win, 'Queeste naar de rechtspositie van de edelman in de Bourgondische Nederlanden', *Tijdschrift voor rechtsgeschiedenis*, 223 (1985) 223-274, there 266.

8 John Armstrong, 'Had the Burgundian government a policy for the nobility?', in: idem, *England, France and Burgundy in the fifteenth century* (London 1983) 213-236.

9 Armstrong, *Policy for the nobility*, 218.

Burgundian lands were, or were not, punished, and to what degree, as the studies of Bellamy and Cuttler do for England and France.¹⁰ Perhaps this is because Louis XI made much blue blood flow after spectacular show trials in parliament, sometimes with the peers called from all over the country, whereas none of the rebellious high nobles in the Netherlands were sentenced to death. They were, furthermore, already partially or entirely judged in the peace treaties that ended the wars. Although this means that their 'trials' have been given some attention in studies of the conflicts that surrounded them, it will be more useful to look at the conflicts in the context of a judicial combat.¹¹

Andreas Walther, writing in 1911, was the first modern historian to pay attention to the nobility in the conflicts with Maximilian of Austria, and he connected it to other processes, such as the exodus of court members to France: “Die Kämpfe Maximilians in den Niederlanden waren keineswegs nur gegen die flandrischen Städte gerichtet. Vielmehr wendet sich fast der gesamte hohe Adel von ihm ab und macht mit Frankreich gemeinsame Sache.”¹² Arie de Fouw, in his 1937 thesis on Philip of Cleves criticised this generalisation. In his opinion, Walther's eagerness for creating a clear system made him overlook the specific reasons for opposition and the forms that it took. The nobles of the Flemish Revolts always professed a loyalty to Philip the Handsome and tried to maintain independence from France. De Fouw's research was meticulous and he had a good eye for sentiments. Where the book fails as a piece of modern history, is in its bias; he sought to do justice to Philip of Cleves by defending him as a man guided by honour defying Habsburg absolutism. He regarded Philip as having had to succumb to Maximilian's will, but his tenacity in his own righteousness earned him an honourable peace treaty without repression.¹³

The post-war decades were not kind to the history of the nobility. Under the influence first of Henri Pirenne, then of Charles Tilly, Flemish historiography focused foremost on the relationship between the prince and his cities.¹⁴ As a result, Robert Wellens' 'Revolte brugeoise'

10 J.G. Bellamy, *The law of treason in England in the later Middle Ages* (Cambridge 1970); S.H. Cuttler, *The law of treason and treason trials in later medieval France* (Cambridge 1981).

11 Cf. Johan Huizinga, 'Uit de voorgeschiedenis van ons nationaal besef', in: idem, *Verzamelde werken*, II, (1948-1953) 97-160, there 106-107.

12 Andreas Walther, *Die Anfänge Karls' V.* (Leipzig 1911). 10-20: “Die Kämpfe Maximilians in den Niederlanden waren keineswegs nur gegen die flandrischen Städte gerichtet. Vielmehr wendet sich fast der gesamte hohe Adel von ihm ab und macht mit Frankreich gemeinsame Sache.”

13 Arie Fouw *Philips van Kleef. Een bijdrage tot de kennis van zijn leven en karakter* (Groningen and Batavia 1937) see p. 65-66, 184-186 for his discussion of Walther's standpoint. Johanna Oudendijk summarised De Fouw's thesis in 1941, but tried to nuance the view by pointing out that not all of Philip's actions were defensible. It too, is a moral judgment of the man: Johanna Oudendijk, *Een Bourgondisch ridder over den oorlog ter zee. Philips van Kleef als leermeester van Karel V* (Amsterdam 1941).

14 Jan Dumolyn, 'Henri Pirenne en het particularisme van de laatmiddeleeuwse Vlaamse steden: een deconstructie', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 86 (2008) 709-733; Maarten Prak, 'Charles Tilly: de kunst van het samenleven', *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis*, 119 (2006) 559-564. Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, III (Brussels 1923), considers the Revolt at an end at Ghent's surrender at Cadzand, and ignores Philip of Cleves' struggle in the next months. To Pirenne, this is the end of the era of particularistic urban revolts, now triumphed over by the modern and

(1965) and 'Etats généraux' (1974), as well as Wim Blockmans' 'Autocratie ou polyarchie?', which are today still some of the best overviews of the period in time, have very little to say about the role of the nobles in the conflict.¹⁵ The renewed interest in the nobility from the late eighties onwards has shifted the balance,¹⁶ but only in 2000 did Hans Cools pick up where Walther left off, combining all the insights that had been gathered over the last century and molding them into a chapter in which the position of the aristocracy as a rival to Maximilian was emphasised.¹⁷ The view of Helmut Koenigsberger in his history of the Estates-General, written in 2001, was almost the complete opposite. To him, Maximilian's rule was “erratic” and not indicative of an understanding of the Netherlands, and the nobles were easily convinced to switch to any side. It was the Estates-General and its collective will to keep the Burgundian state together that saved the day.¹⁸ Since then, Jelle Haemers has almost singlehandedly brought the study of the regency to life. He views the conflicts not as being between a prince and his subjects, or between progression and conservation, but as a clash between two ideologies of statecraft. In this, we find noblemen on both sides. By virtue of their considerable wealth, prestige and contacts, they populate the upper echelons of the parties, not driven into a standpoint by class, but often by personal interest and financial incentives.¹⁹

Most revolt stories have the peace as the final result of the narrative, only mentioning it at the end of the story. The prince has won, order has been restored, and everyone lives happily ever after — or at least until the next time the Ghenters feel they are paying entirely too much tax. In part, this is because that is exactly the objective of such peace treaties: to give a sense of closing, both in the eradication of those directly responsible, and in the remission of all others. That is why a spectacular party can be thrown immediately afterwards. But the theme of peace has been gaining

centralised monarchy.

15 Wim Blockmans, 'Autocratie ou polyarchie? La lutte pour le pouvoir politique en Flandre de 1482 à 1492, d'après des documents inédits', *Bulletin de la commission royale d'histoire*, 140 (1974) 257-338; Robert Wellens, *Les Etats généraux des Pays-Bas des origines à la fin du règne de Philippe le Beau (1464-1506)* (Heule 1974); idem, 'La révolte brugeoise de 1488', *Handelingen van het genootschap voor geschiedenis*, 102 (1965) 5-52.

16 A recent overview of the historiography of the Low Countries nobility in the middle ages can be found in Jan Dumolyn and Thérèse de Hemptinne, 'Historisch adelsonderzoek over de late middeleeuwen en de vroegmoderne periode in België en Nederland: een momentopname', *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 123 (2009) 481-489.

17 Hans Cools, *Mannen met macht. Edellieden en de moderne staat in de Bourgondisch-Habsburgse landen (1475-1530)* (Zutphen 2001) 119-129.

18 Helmut Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals and parliaments. The Netherlands in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries* (Cambridge 2001) 52-72.

19 For a summary of his own views, Haemers, *De strijd om het regentschap over Filips de Schone. Opstand, facties en geweld in Brugge, Gent en Ieper (1482-1488)* (Ghent 2014) 10. The other important works are idem, *For the common good. State power and urban revolts in the reign of Mary of Burgundy (1477-1482)* (Turnhout 2009); idem, 'Philippe de Clèves et la Flandre. La position d'un aristocrate au coeur d'une révolte urbaine (1477-1492)' in: idem, Céline van Hoorebeeck and Hanno Wijsman (eds.), *Entre la ville, la noblesse et l'état: Philippe de Clèves (1456-1528). Homme politique et bibliophile* (Turnhout 2007) 21-100; idem, 'Factionalism and state power in the Flemish Revolt (1482-1492)', *Journal of social history*, 42 (2009) 1009-1039.

some traction in the last few years. In 2007, Lucien Bély nuanced the focus of Charles Tilly and Geoffrey Parker on war as the primary driving force of modernisation, and called attention to a diplomatic revolution with the aim of establishing an 'art of peace'.²⁰ In the Netherlands, this has led to a study by Violet Soen on the (failed) attempts of Dutch noblemen and the Habsburg government at reconciliation during the Revolt.²¹ We need to see peace from a broader perspective than a diplomatic history and within the full light of relationships of power and dependency. A concluded peace treaty was read aloud on the market squares of all the towns of the participating states. We are hard-pressed to find any form of text that had a more widespread audience. As such, we can't ignore the significance of such documents and associated rituals for the culture at large. Accompanying punishments must be seen within the context of the more recent historiographical cultural turn towards memory and identity.²²

Method

The objective here is not to look at the judicial position of a nobleman in revolt. That approach would face two dangerous pitfalls: firstly, 'the nobility' as a concept is much easier used than defined. Various regional and temporal differences make and made it impossible to actually give a clear and indisputable definition of the term and of the people belonging to it. Rather than apply a legalistic demarcation, historians now mostly agree that a nobleman is someone who manages to keep up the life of a nobleman.²³ The second reason is that the demarcation line might, in this case, sooner be drawn between those nobles who were members of the Order of the Golden Fleece, and had their own judicial statute, and those who did not.²⁴ Instead, I shall look at the eight most important noblemen who revolted during the years 1482-1492, whose status was unquestioned. In addition to the seven aristocrats of the Flemish regency councils, I will also look at John of Montfort, a nobleman who led Utrecht against Maximilian in 1483 and seized the important border town of Woerden in 1488. Since his position was not connected to any of the other nobles, and his struggles were almost entirely independent of the Flemish situation, he serves as a 'test

20 Lucien Bély, *L'art de la paix. Naissance de la diplomatie moderne (XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles)* (Paris 2007).

21 Violet Soen, *Vredehandel. Adellijke en Habsburgse verzoeningspogingen tijdens de Nederlandse Opstand* (Amsterdam 2012).

22 Marc Boone, 'Le dict mal s'est espandú comme peste fatale. Karel V en Gent, stedelijke identiteit en staatsgeweld' *Handelingen van de maatschappij voor geschiedenis en oudheidkunde te Gent*, 53 (2000) 31-63.

23 Antheun Janse, *Ridderschap in Holland : portret van een adellijke elite in de late Middeleeuwen* (Hilversum 2001). 19-42; Janssens, *De evolutie*, 103-125; De Win, *Queeste*, passim.

24 Frédéric, baron of Reiffenberg, *Histoire de l'ordre de la Toison d'or depuis son institution jusqu'à la cessation des chapitres généraux. Tirée des archives m[^]mes de cet ordre et des écrivains qui en ont traité* (Brussels 1830) XLIX-L; Françoise de Gruben, *Les chapitres de la Toison d'Or à l'époque bourguignonne (1430-1477)* (Louvain 1997) 41-43; De Win, *Queeste*, 231-232.

case'; that the conclusions drawn from the others can be applied to him too, argues for a more universal policy.

The cultural turn was mentioned above. Any study on culture in the medieval Netherlands will at some point come into contact with the legacy of Johan Huizinga. The portrait of the aristocratic lifestyle painted in his *Waning of the middle ages* is that of a court filled with ceremony that has lost any connection with practical considerations. There is a “disharmony between the form and life and reality.”²⁵ Huizinga's harsh terms have bothered historians ever since, and many have attempted to show the use of chivalric forms. Wim Blockmans and Walter Prevenier coined the Burgundian 'theatre state'; the dukes, in their view, employed the lavish rituals as medieval mass media that showed a “grandiose mystification of power.”²⁶ Peter Arnade worked out the concept, focusing on a case study of Ghent, and integrated the submissions and punishments of revolting cities into this model. He argued that ceremony and public display were the building blocks of Burgundian politics, and he was the first to study the punishments of rebellions as an event with a propagandistic purpose.²⁷

While the recognition that ceremony and ritual were not empty husks is of major importance, the term theatre state is not without issues. It was borrowed from Clifford Geertz's study of Bali, *Negara*. Recently, however, Andrew Brown has called out “a near reversal of the term's original meaning.” Whereas in *Negara*, “power served pomp”, and not the other way around, the Burgundian theatricality is usually described as legitimising state formation.²⁸ Those who have studied the relationship between pomp and power for Maximilian of Austria found that he did not see the two as separate concepts.²⁹ Looking at one concept as serving the other is an anachronistic mode of analysis. A more subtle direction of argument may be found when going back to Huizinga. In a 1921 he delivered a lecture called 'La valeur politique et militaire des idées de chevalerie à la fin de moyen âge'. It is more positive on the importance of 'pompous' mentalities for medieval lives.

25 Johan Huizinga, *Herfsttij der middeleeuwen. Studie over levens- en gedachtenvormen der veertiende en vijftiende eeuw in Frankrijk en de Nederlanden* (21st print; Amsterdam 1997 (first print Haarlem 1919)) quote p. 141.

26 Wim Blockmans and Walter Prevenier, *De Bourgondiërs. De Nederlanden op weg naar eenheid, 1384-1530* (Amsterdam and Louvain 1997) 223-227.

27 Peter Arnade, *Realms of ritual. Burgundian ceremony and civic life in Late Medieval Ghent* (Ithaca and London 1996).

28 Clifford Geertz, *Negara. The theatre state in nineteenth-century Bali* (Princeton 1980); Andrew Brown, 'Bruges and the Burgundian “theatre-state”': Charles the Bold and Our Lady of the snow', *History*, 84 (1999) 573-589, there 574-576, quote p. 575. Idem, 'Ritual and state-building: ceremonies in late medieval Bruges', in: Jacoba van Leeuwen (ed.), *Symbolic communication in late medieval towns* (Louvain 2006) 1-28, there 4-8; Cf. Koziol, 'Review article: The dangers of polemic: Is ritual still an interesting topic of historical study?', *Early medieval Europe*, 11 (2002) 367-388, there 371-372 n.13, where the author even claims that “if one correctly understands Geertz, one know that one cannot apply his model of the Balinese *Negara* anywhere else.”

29 Herman Wiesflecker, *Kaiser Maximilian I. Das Reich Österreich und Europa an der Wende zur Neuzeit*, pt. I, *Jugend, burgundisches Erbe und Römisches Königtum bis zur Alleinherrschaft 1459-1493* (München 1971) 29; Paula Fichter, 'The politics of honor: Renaissance chivalry and Habsburg dynasticism', *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et renaissance. Travaux et documents*, 19 (1967) 567-580.

In it, Huizinga asked his audience to consider the importance of chivalry in the way in which medieval nobles and lords understood their world: “C'est la formule par laquelle les hommes de ce temps réussirent à comprendre, tant soit peu, la complexité effrayante des événements.”³⁰ Modes of comprehension were not much of a subject back when the lecture was given, but much has changed since then. The study of pardon letters has led the way.

Pardon and grace in regular trials have a long historiography. The methodology that has been developed there is impressive and useful to this research. Pardon letters had been important sources on the life of common people who would never get voices in court chronicles, but in 1987, Natalie Zemon Davis's *Fiction in the archives* changed the field by focusing on such letters not as a gateway to a world to be studied, but rather studying the form of such letters themselves.³¹ She argues that, since life presents itself in events and not in concrete stories, the narratives of these documents were carefully crafted and employed literary techniques to achieve certain goals. Walter Prevenier has picked up this method for pardon letters in the Netherlands.³² He rejects the idea that the truth is the representation of reality, and allows for multiple truths to be found in trials documents in the form of contradictions.

Davis made use of the theories of historical theorists and applied them to the 'history-writers' of the past. Louis Mink had argued that narrative was a mode of comprehension that is “primary and irreducible”. While we live separate events, human thought connects them in a narrative.³³ Hayden White initiated a theory of historical writing by pointing out that every history uses modes of emplotment, explanation and ideological implication. The very arrangement of a narrative is, according to him, highly significant for its meaning.³⁴ In Davis' view, the writers of pardon requests and grants were very aware of this, and carefully employed specific structures and tropes in their narratives of events to make events plausible or understandable. We may then reinterpret in these terms Huizinga's sentence that medieval nobles find in chivalry “la formule par laquelle les hommes de ce temps réussirent à comprendre [...] la complexité effrayante des événements.”

A power struggle involves the employment of symbolic violence; that is, powerholders

30 Johan Huizinga, 'La valeur politique et militaire des idées de chevalerie à la fin de moyen âge', in: idem, *Verzamelde werken*, III, *Cultuurgeschiedenis I* (1949) 519-529, quote p.522.

31 Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the archives. Pardon tales and their tellers in sixteenth-century France* (Stanford 1987).

32 Walter Prevenier, 'Les multiples vérités dans les discours sur les offenses criminelles envers les femmes dans les Pays-Bas méridionaux (XIVe et XVe siècles)', in: Sylvain Gouguenheim a.o. (eds.) *Retour aux sources. Textes, études et documents d'histoire médiévale offerts à Michel Parisse* (Paris 2004) 955-964; idem, 'Vorstellijke genade in de praktijk. Remissiebrief voor Matthieu Cricke en diens mede-acteurs voor vermeende vrouwenroof in oktober 1476, slechts geïnterneerd na kritische verificatie door de raadsheren van het Parlement van Mechelen', *Bulletin de la commission royale d'histoire*, 175 (2009) 225-258.

33 Louis Mink, 'History and fiction as modes of comprehension', *New literary history*, 1 (1970) 541-558 quote p.557.

34 Hayden White, 'Interpretation in history', *New literary history*, 4 (1973) 281-314.

will try to direct what is considered possible and natural, and define dichotomies.³⁵ As such, writing and re-writing history are terrific political tools.³⁶ Few examples show this better than Maximilian of Austria's *Theuerdank* and *Weißkunig*, which aimed at legitimising his actions by molding them into the plot structure of a traditional chivalric romance. I will take the method one step further: if the arrangement of events into a narrative is an act that in itself creates meaning, then it follows that one would want to manipulate the events in such a way that they have a 'natural' order or prominence and interconnect with other events. In the following, I shall argue that the pompous side of the submissions did not just involve a 'self-representation'³⁷ but that, in addition, the rituals and symbolism that ended such conflicts or were employed afterwards, sought to impose a version of the story upon everyone; that the emplotment of White is not merely an act by the historian, but also one forced upon events by various rituals and ceremonies: it is clear that rites of manhood or the sacraments of marriage and priesthood demarcate the various chapters in a life and give meaning to them. So, too, does a ritual of submission after a revolt serve to cement the moment as a happy ending to a story of war, after which the bond between prince and subject is restored and the next chapter may be one of social order. Ritual, read like this, is an imposition of truth. A struggle over legitimacy, then, is both one over which truth would be accepted, and also over who has the authority to decide which truth was to be universalised in a troubled state where none could hold absolute claim to legitimacy.

Methodologically I employ an uncommon combination of techniques. To write a cultural history of grace, one must resort to Thick Description, according to Prevenier, and the same goes when rebellious noblemen are the subject.³⁸ The term Thick Description was coined by Gilbert Ryle and expanded upon by Clifford Geertz.³⁹ Thick Description is based on the idea that meaning is something that is attributed to certain actions or symbols, and that we must interpret an account by looking deeply into the intended meaning of such actions and symbols. Using this method on a set few historical actors almost necessarily brings us within the realm of microhistory. This brand of research stems from the principle that “microscopic observation will reveal factors previously

35 Pierre Bourdieu, 'Rethinking the state: genesis and structure of the bureaucratic field', *Sociological theory*, 12 (1994) 1-18, there 3-4.

36 Frederik Buylaert, Jelle Haemers, Tjamke Snijders and Stijn Villerius, 'Politics, social memory and historiography in sixteenth-century Flanders: towards a research agenda', *Publications du centre européen d'études bourguignonnes*, 52 (2012) 195-215.

37 Blockmans, Wim and Esther Donckers, 'Self-representation of court and city in Flanders and Brabant in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries' in: Wim Blockmans and Antheun Janse (eds.), *Showing status: representation of social positions in the late middle ages* (Leiden 1999) 81-111.

38 Walter Prevenier, 'The two faces of pardon jurisdiction in the Burgundian Netherlands. A royal road to social cohesion and an effectual instrument of princely clientelism' in: Peter Hoppenbrouwers, Antheun Janse and Robert Stein (eds.), *Power and persuasion. Essays on the art of state building in honour of W.P. Blockmans* (Turnhout 2010) 177-195, there 193-194.

39 Clifford Geertz, 'Thick Description: toward an interpretive theory of culture' in: idem, *The interpretation of cultures. Selected essays by Clifford Geertz* (New York 1973) 3-30.

unobserved.”⁴⁰ Building up a system from historical individuals to create a larger picture means that none of them can really defy a pattern, because their behaviour forms the basis for any observed pattern.⁴¹ In this case, it is important to see the personal relations between Maximilian and the noblemen manifest. We must try to find and interpret the messages that are not immediately clear to us, but would have been by contemporaries.

These methods, however, can be painfully subjective. The interpretation of an event is unmeasurable and unverifiable (or falsifiable).⁴² Therefore, to counteract such uncertainties, I will employ a comparativist method, which allows the historian to see the many possibilities and disprove certain theories by referring to other situations.⁴³ While the main objective here is to compare the eight noblemen discussed with each other, I will also compare the conclusions drawn therefrom with historiographical analyses of both Burgundy under Charles the Bold and of the kingdom of France during the reigns of Louis XI and Charles VIII (1461-1498).

The division of this thesis is twofold: the first half forms the background, and aims to answer in three chapters the question of *What happened?*, *Why would or would not Maximilian want to punish a nobleman?* and *What tools and traditions could he employ?* The second half deals with the actual events of punishments and grace. I make a distinction between *punishments after participation in urban rebellion*, which were impersonal or unofficial, the *punishments in the Order of the Golden Fleece*, which were the result of actual trials, and *punishments for feuds*, which involved both the qualities of diplomacy and of personal trial. The latter needs some explanation in its definition: since John of Montfort from 1488 and Philip of Cleves from 1490 onwards were considered, by themselves and by the court, to be acting as individuals, rather than as members of an impersonal revolt, both the negotiations and the punishments differ in form from those dealing with revolts in the proper sense.

40 Giovanni Levi, 'On microhistory', in: Peter Burke (ed.), *New perspectives on historical writing* (Cambridge 1991) 93-113. 97-98.

41 Brad Gregory, 'Is small beautiful? Microhistory and the history of everyday life', *History and Theory*, 38 (1999) 100-110, there 103.

42 Levi, *On microhistory*, 98-99.

43 Stefan Berger, 'Comparative history', in: idem, Heiko Feldner and Kevin Passmore (eds.), *Writing history: theory and practice* (London 2003) 161-179, there 164-165; Charles Tilly, *Big structures, Large processes, huge comparisons* (New York 1984) esp. p. 81-83.

I. Background

1. Historical overview

1.1 The first Flemish revolt, 1483-1485

The death of Mary of Burgundy on March 27th 1482 was not the first time the subjects in the Netherlands protested against the policies of her husband Maximilian of Austria,⁴⁴ but it was the immediate cause for a full-blown crisis that, with a break, spanned eight years of his twelve year regency. The right to the throne of the ducal couple's son Philip (the Handsome) as “prince et seigneur naturel” was undisputed,⁴⁵ but at not yet four years of age, the Burgundian lands were expecting a long regency, and the question was how to fill it. The marriage contract of Mary and Maximilian from 1477 stipulated that the archduke was not eligible to inherit anything from his spouse,⁴⁶ although an amendment made a month later annulled this clause.⁴⁷ He did demand the “tutelle, mambournye, garde et gouvernement” over his children Philip and Margaret.⁴⁸ Mary's last will had indeed included this, but only the Estates-General could actually appoint Maximilian.⁴⁹ A gathering was thus organised in April 1482.⁵⁰ It quickly became clear that the Estates were divided over the issue. The chancellor of Brabant, traditionally first to speak, voiced the opposition of the duchy to the war with France that had been going on since 1477 and stated that the acceptance of the archduke would depend on his foreign policy plans. The Ghent pensionary William Rijm made largely the same argument on the behalf of the county of Flanders.⁵¹ That same day — April the 29th

44 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 259-261; Blockmans, 'Vlaanderen 1384-1482' in: D.P. Blok (ed.) *Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, pt. IV, *Middeleeuwen* (Haarlem 1980) 201-223, there 223; Haemers, *For the Common Good*, *passim*.

45 Jean-Marie Cauchies, *Philippe le Beau. Le dernier duc de Bourgogne* (Turnhout 2003). 25-29; Louis Prosper Gachard, *Lettres inédites de Maximilien, duc d'Autriche, roi des Romains et empereur, sur les affaires des Pays-Bas I: 1478-1488. II: 1489-1508*, II (Brussel 1851-1852) 249 (quote).

46 Jean Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique du droit des gens; centenant un recueil des traitez d'alliance, de paix, de treve, de neutralité, de commerce, d'echange, de protection & de garantie; de toutes les conventions, transactions, pactes, concordats, & autres contrats, qui ont été faits en Europe, depuis le regne de l'empereur Charlemagne jusques à présent*., tome III. pt. 2 (Amsterdam 1726) 10. Referred to in Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF) manuscrits français (ms. fr.) nr. 18997 7-1, 7-2.

47 Haemers, *For the Common Good*, 1.

48 BNF ms. fr. 18997 10-2.

49 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 264; idem, *De volksvertegenwoordiging in Vlaanderen in de overgang van middeleeuwen naar nieuwe tijden (1384-1506)* (Brussel 1978) 313; Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 119; Wiesflecker, *Maximilian I.*, 160-162; The text of Mary's last will is edited in Eduard, lord of Lichnowsky, *Geschichte des Hauses Habsburg, VIII, Kaiser Friedrich III. und sein Sohn Maximilian. 1477-1493* (Vienna 1844) 732-737.

50 Wellens, *États-généraux*, 186-190; Gachard, 'Analectes historiques. Huitième série', *Bulletin de la commission royale d'histoire*, 3rd series, 2 (1860) 311-341.

51 For William Rijm, Haemers, *For the common good*, 238-239.

— the deputies of Holland, Hainault and Valenciennes decided to support Maximilian, and Brabant followed suit the next day.⁵² Flanders and Maximilian were at an impasse at this point, with the Three Members still concerned over the latter's policy towards France, the position of the French king as suzerain over crown Flanders, and the uncertainty that surrounded the laws of regency in the county.⁵³ No compromise could be found with the Flemish for the time being.⁵⁴ The weak position of Maximilian also had a great deal of influence on the foreign policy of the Netherlands; the peace with France, signed in Arras on the 23rd of December 1482, was for a large part dictated by the Flemish cities.⁵⁵ Louis XI even spoke of it as a treaty “avec ceulx de Flandres.”⁵⁶ The treaty stipulated that Margaret of Austria, Philip the Handsome's younger sister, was to be married to the dauphin, with several counties and lordships serving as dowry.⁵⁷ The archduke had little say in the matter, since his children were being held in Ghent, away from his reach, and he was forced to send a plenipotentiary delegation to sign. Where he was accepted, Maximilian harshly made his position known; a group of five deputies of the Estates of Brabant was executed for having conspired with the Flemish “contre sa personne, haulteur et seigneurie” and the abandonment of his daughter Margaret.⁵⁸

In the mean time, trouble was brewing in the North and Maximilian sought to pacify the neighbouring prince-bishopric of Utrecht by military means to guarantee the safety of Holland. The campaign would require his presence there, which would undoubtedly have spelled trouble for his relationship with Flanders. Therefore, in order not to let the situation escalate, he ratified on the fifth of June 1483 part of the regency council that the Flemish had created earlier that year.⁵⁹ It

52 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 262-264; see Hans Smit, *Vorst en onderdaan. Studies over Holland en Zeeland in de late middeleeuwen* (Louvain 1995) 567-568 for the oath, taken on the 21st of May.

53 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 265-266. Holland, Hainaut and Brabant, Blockmans argues, had more experience with minorities and other difficult successions than did Flanders, *ibidem* 258-259. That said, the Brabantine custom was to install a regency council rather than appoint a tutor; John the Fearless was bought off of the regency during the minority of his nephew John IV in 1415. Perhaps this is a partial explanation for why the duchy rallied behind Maximilian later than Hainaut and Holland, where no such custom existed.

54 Haemers, *De strijd*, 46-55.

55 Haemers, *De strijd*, 55-58.

56 Jean-Marie Cauchies, 'Maximilien d'Autriche et le traité d'Arras de 1482: négociateurs et négociations', in: Denis Clauzel, Charles Giry-Deloison and Christophe Leduc (eds.), *Arras et la diplomatie européenne, XV^e-XVI^e siècles* (Arras 1999) 143-164, quote p.155-154; J. de Saint-Genois, *Lettres adressées par Maximilien I^{er}, archiduc d'Autriche, depuis empereur, à l'abbé de Saint-Pierre à Gand et à quelques autres personnages (1477-1487)* (Ghent 1845) 46-47. See also a song from that period which repeats the phrase “C'est France et Flandre et la paix entre deux”, Antoine-Jean Leroux de Lincy, *Recueil de chants historiques français depuis le XII^e jusqu'au XVIII^e siècle, avec des notices et une introduction*, pt. I, XII^e, XIII^e, XIV^e et XV^e siècles (Paris 1841) 402-403.

57 Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, III, 100-107; Leo Kooperberg, *Margaretha van Oostenrijk, landvoogdes der Nederlanden (tot den vrede van Kamerijk)* (Amsterdam 1908) 17-24.

58 Hoccalus, 'Histoire des Païs-Bas, depuis 1477 jusqu'en 1492, écrite en forme de journal par un auteur contemporain' in: J. J. de Smet (ed.), *Recueil des chroniques de Flandre*, pt. III (Brussels 1856) 689-742, there 271; Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 277-278.

59 Edited in Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 339-341. According to Marc Boone, the structure of the council reflected that of the one the rebellious Flemings instated in 1379: Marc Boone, 'La justice politique dans les grandes villes flamandes: étude d'un cas, la crise de l'État bourguignon et la guerre contre Maximilien d'Autriche (1477-1492)' in:

consisted of representatives from the Three Members of Flanders of three noblemen that had already served as councillors to Philip: Adolf of Cleves, lord of Ravenstein, Philip of Burgundy, lord of Beveren and Louis of Bruges, lord of Gruuthuse — always in that order, since Adolf and Philip were 'nobles of the blood', that is, related to archduke Philip.⁶⁰ Over the course of the next month, Jacob of Savoy, count of Romont, Wolfert of Borsele, lord of Veere, who had been appointed by the Flemish, but not accepted by Maximilian, were added, and Adrian Vilain, lord of Rassegem also joined the council.⁶¹ The words of the document make it clear, however, that Maximilian did not intend to hand over what he perceived as his rights to tutorship in the county; the council was only charged with the “cure, charge et conduite des affaires d'icellui notre pays et conté de Flandres tant qu'il nous plaira.”⁶² It was a stop-gap measure that also required the county to pay 20,000 crowns annually.⁶³ What did give the council a good deal of authority was the fact that Philip the Handsome himself resided in Ghent, and was not allowed to leave.

Holland's old tradition of party strife had been reinvigorated after the death of Charles the Bold in early 1477. The Hook and Cod wars had been more or less subdued by the Burgundians, but after the last duke died the crisis was followed up by Hook coups in several cities. The new lieutenant (stadholder), Wolfert of Borsele, was driven into the camp of the Hooks, and his lieutenancy culminated in the plundering of the houses of the Cods in the Hague with an army that he had gathered to relieve the court from a siege by the Cod leaders. After many failed attempts by Maximilian at reconciliation and the installation of a neutral lieutenant in the person of Josse of Lalaing, the archduke finally chose to support the Cods. Many of those that were banished moved to Utrecht, which was pressured by Maximilian to uphold a 1430 treaty stating that it would not house refugees from Holland. Before the bishop could evict them, the Hooks, under the leadership of John of Montfort, took Utrecht in 1483. Maximilian was forced to lay siege to the city. He reconciled with Montfort, but by then the late Lalaing had been replaced by the front man of the Cods, John (III) of Egmont, finally solidifying the position of that party in Holland.⁶⁴

After the defeat of Utrecht, Maximilian's attention quickly shifted Southwards again to

Yves-Marie Bercé (ed.) *Les procès politiques (XIV^e-XVII^e siècle)* (Rome 2007) 183-218, there 215.

60 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 279, 288; Cools, *Mannen met macht* (2001), 120-121.

61 Haemers, *De strijd*, 57-58, 64-65.

62 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 341; Louis-Prosper Gachard, 'Les archives royales de Düsseldorf. Notice des documents qui concernent l'histoire de Belgique', *Bulletin de la commission royale d'histoire*, 4th series, 9 (1881) 267-366, there 306. The formulation “tant qu'il nous plaira” was common in the nomination of councillors: Jean-Marie Cauchies and Hugo de Schepper, *Justice, grâce et législation* (Brussels 1994) 58.

63 Blockmans, *De volksvertegenwoordiging*, 138-139. Bruges took the burden of 19.000; Ghent refused to pay up at all

64 Michel van Gent, *Pertijelike saken. Hoeken en Kabeljauwen in het Bourgondisch-Oostenrijkse tijdperk* (Den Haag 1994) 164-328; S.B.J. Zilverberg, *David van Bourgondië, bisschop van Terwaan en van Utrecht (±1427-1496)* (Groningen 1951) 50-70; Marius Pieter van der Linden, *De burggraven van Montfoort in de geschiedenis van het Sticht Utrecht en het graafschap Holland (± 1260-1490)* (Assen 1957) 145-162. The document of Egmont's appointment is edited in Yvonne Bos-Rops, Hans Smit and Ed van der Vlist, *Holland bestuurd. Teksten over het bestuur van het graafschap Holland in het tijdvak 1299-1567* (The Hague 2007) 391-392.

Flanders. In a stroke of luck for the archduke, his nemesis Louis XI of France had died the day before the peace was signed in Utrecht. France, suzerain of the Flemish county and supporter of any enemy of Maximilian, was plunged into a regency crisis of its own as the newly crowned Charles VIII was a mere 13 years old.⁶⁵ If ever there was a time to act, this was it. The archduke immediately annulled the peace of Arras of 1482, thus effectively restarting the war, and disbanded the Flemish regency council in October 1483, as it was not yet four months into office.⁶⁶ But what was supposed to be a swift seizure of power by the archduke turned into the first of the Flemish revolts when the lords of the regency council and the Members of Flanders refused to accept Maximilian's authority.⁶⁷

Interestingly, the next step was taken by the 'grand bâtard' Anthony of Burgundy, the illegitimate son of Burgundian duke Philip the Good, who had fulfilled important positions during the reign of his father and his half-brother Charles until the latter died in 1477 and Anthony traded in the Burgundian court for that of France.⁶⁸ Anthony's position as father to Philip of Burgundy, one of the original three members of the regency council, and as family member of Philip the Handsome made him closely related to the conflict, while his stay in France for the last seven years meant he was far enough away from local politics that he could be considered a fairly impartial observer. He assembled the members of the Order of the Golden Fleece in Dendermonde in early June to arbitrate between the Order's sovereign Maximilian and five of its members who formed the Flemish regency.⁶⁹ The Flemish held on to their demands of an autonomous regency council, and asked that the knights guarantee the rights of Philip in the territories that had accepted Maximilian of Austria as regent. They furthermore asked Anthony of Burgundy and Philip of Cleves — son of

65 Cools, *Mannen met macht* (2001), 122; Koenigsberger, *Monarchies*, 60; Yvonne Labande-Mailfert, *Charles VIII. Le vouloir et la destinée* (Paris 1986) 29-36; Hoccalus, *Histoire des Pays-bas*, 704 speaks ironically of a "petit discord qui estoit lors en France entre aucuns princes." There are interesting comparisons to be made between the Netherlands and France in this period. A major factor in complicating the succession in France, that eventually led to open conflict in the 'Guerre folle', was, as in the North, the centralising tendencies of the (previous) monarch. It was the (former) Burgundian Philippe Pot, addressing the Estates-General of France, who argued that it was the right of this body to appoint the king's council during his minority: Helmut Koenigsberger, 'Monarchies and parliaments in early modern Europe. *Dominium regale or dominium politicum et regale*', *Theory and society*, 5 (1978) 191-217, there 193. A comparative study might be able to shed light on the differences or lack thereof concerning centralisation and succession in the 'composite' Burgundian state and the 'unified' French state. Kooperberg, *Margaretha*, 36, makes a comparison between Maximilian and Anne of Beaujeu.

66 Raymond van Uytven, 'Crisis als cesuur' in: D.P. Blok (ed.) *Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, pt. V, *Nieuwe tijd* (Haarlem 1980) 420-435, there 423. Maximilian blamed the French for breaking the peace: Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, I, 62.

67 For the letters of discussion, BNF ms. fr. 18997, f.1r-24r, the relevant parts of which are edited in Joseph Kervyn de Lettenhove, Joseph, *Histoire de Flandre*, pt. V, *Ducs de Bourgogne. 1453. -1500. Depuis la paix de Gavre jusqu'aux traités de Damme et de Cadzand* (Brussels 1850) 526-546.

68 Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 165-166.

69 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 284; idem, *Handelingen van de leden en van de Staten van Vlaanderen : excerpten uit de rekeningen van de Vlaamse steden en kasselrijen en van de vorstelijke ambtenaren. Regeringen van Maria van Bourgondië en Filips de Schone : 5 januari 1477-26 september 1506* (Brussels 1982) 331-332.

Adolf, who was still in Maximilian's service — to oversee this.⁷⁰ The archduke maintained the claims that he had been making since the death of his spouse. To the first of the Order's points, the symbolism of his status of guardian instead of sovereign, Maximilian was willing to consent.⁷¹ What broke down the negotiations was the difficulties between the archduke and the city of Ghent. Two of the city's magistrates, William Rijm and Daniel Onredene, retired to their quarters when things went Maximilian's way at the gathering.⁷² The chronicle of Despars says that “it was all a waste of effort, since the aforementioned archduke did not answer other than that he would have nothing to do with those peasants and rascals of Flanders, but that he would be custodian and tutor of the persons and goods of his underage children, whether those people would like it or not, with more such propositions and threats.”⁷³ Nothing came of the arbitration, but what can be concluded from this episode in Dendermonde, is the influence and the position that was awarded to the Order of the Golden Fleece. Rather than an organ to tie the aristocracy to the sovereign,⁷⁴ it manifested itself here as a guardian of a 'national' well-being and both parties expected it to play a neutral part.⁷⁵

With negotiations failing, Maximilian decided in November that military campaigns were to solve the issue.⁷⁶ The archduke had seen it coming: a year earlier he complained to his nephew that he had really wanted to spend some time dancing and hunting, but he would have to kill ten thousand Flemings before he could do so in peace.⁷⁷ Philip of Burgundy, realising that the force of arms of Flanders was no match for that of Maximilian, switched sides.⁷⁸ Furthermore, an aggressive blockade of the Brabantine economy of the county rallied the other territories behind Maximilian, officially so in a meeting of the Estates-General in December 1484.⁷⁹ War commenced

70 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 285. The document is edited there pp.344-349.

71 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 286, 350-353. Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 122-123

72 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 287; Hoccalus, *Histoire des Pais-bas*, 703; Gruuthuse said so too in his defense in 1491: Bernhard Sterchi, *Über den Umgang mit Lob und Tadel. Normative Adelsliteratur und politische Kommunikation im burgundischen Hofadel, 1430-1506* (Turnhout 2005) 611.

73 Nicolaes Despars, *Cronycke van den lande ende graefschape van Vlaenderen*, pt. IV, J. de Jonghe (ed.) (Bruges 1840) 241-242. “twas al verloren aerbeit, duer dien dat hem die voornoemde eerdsthertoghe anders gheen antwoorde: en ghaf dan dat hij met die boeren ende bijnghels van Ghendt niet te doene hebben wilde, maer dat hij voocht ende momboir wesen zoude van de persooenen ende goedinghen van zijne onbejaerde kynderen, ofte hemlieden lief ofte leedt ware, met meer andere dierghelijcke propoosten ende dreeghementen.” cf. Cornelius Aurelius, *Cronycke van Hollandt, Zeelandt ende Vrieslandt* [Divisiechroniek] (Leiden 1517) f.396r.

74 De Gruben, *Les chapitres*, 6-11.

75 Armstrong, *A policy for the nobility*, 231.

76 Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 289.

77 De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 78.

78 Haemers, *De strijd*, 113-114; Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 123. Cools is mistaken when he states that Adolf of Cleves also jumped ship. A curiosity is that Aurelius, *Divisiechroniek* f. 397r mentions that Maximilian forgives Beveren only with the subjection of Ghent.

79 Van Uytven, *Crisis als cesuur*, 424; Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States general*, 61. For example, archduke Philip was to reside in a different location every four months, but Ghent refused to let him leave, to the dismay of the Brabanters: Olivier de la Marche, *Mémoires d'Olivier de La Marche, maître d'hôtel et capitaine des gardes de Charles le Téméraire*, Henri Beaune en Jules d'Arbaumont (eds.) (Paris 1888) 260-261.

late in that year when Brabantine troops took Dendermonde disguised as monks.⁸⁰ Court chronicler Monstrelet mentions that Maximilian made a speech in the castle of Oudenaarde, which he seized on the third of January the following year, in which he explained that he had taken the city “pour garder l'heritage de son filz et ne volloit quelque mal faire à nulz des manans en habitans.”⁸¹ The punishment, it seems, was to be reserved for the actual perpetrators. On the side of Flanders, Jacob of Savoy was made 'lieutenant et capitaine général'. His campaign into Brabant was devastating to “pluseurs villages non accoustumés d'estre persecutéz de guerre”, but the flu quickly forced him and his army to retire to Flanders.⁸² The council had successfully used its connections to the French court to persuade the king to send the marshall Philip of Crèvecoeur, lord of Esquerdes — who had served the Burgundians until the demise of Charles the Bold — to the Netherlands, but his army quickly found itself at odds with the Flemish burghers.⁸³ Their disagreement led to the Flemish army marching out on its own and being annihilated on the 22nd of May, 1485.⁸⁴ This, in turn, caused the French to retreat from Flanders altogether.⁸⁵

In addition to the Wim Blockmans's 'Great Tradition of Revolt' of the Flemish and Brabanters against the various overlords throughout the centuries, Marc Boone and Maarten Prak have coined a 'Little Tradition'. They noticed that urban revolts would almost invariably be preceded by a takeover of the city magistracy by the lower classes.⁸⁶ But as the internal revolts of the burghers against the urban elites fuelled the larger ones against the state, so too did the surrenders of the Flemish cities depend on a retaking of power by those elites. In Ghent, William Rijm, the pensionary whom we have encountered as the speaker on behalf of Flanders at the

80 De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 266-268; Molinet, Jean *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, I, Georges Doutrepoint en Omer Jodogne (eds.) (Brussels 1935) 437-438 speaks of December, the *Histoire des Pays-bas*, 704 of November 25th.

81 Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 438-441; see also Hoccalus, *Histoire des Pays-bas*, 704; De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 270-271. The populace was similarly put at ease during the capture of Dendermonde (De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 268). Charles VIII, however, reprimanded Maximilian for having “êtes entré à puissance d'armes, & y avez fait & souffert faire tous exploits de Guerre & hostilité, tuer & meurtrit plusieurs des pauvres habitans, butiner & piller leurs biens & maisons[.]” Dumont, *Corps universel*, III/2, 138.

82 Gachard, *Lettres inedites*, I, 52-53; Hoccalus, *Histoire des Pays-bas*, 704; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 438; Alphonse Wauters, *Histoire des environs de Bruxelles, ou description historique des localités qui formaient autrefois l'ammannie de cette ville*, pt. II, (Brussels 1855) 39-41.

83 Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 123; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 446-447. On the strained relations between the French and the Flemish, see Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States generals*, 59-60, 61. On d'Esquerdes, see Marie-Thérèse Caron, 'Philippe de Crèvecoeur, connu sous le nom de seigneur ou maréchal d'Esquerdes' in: Raphaël de Smedt (ed.), *Les chevaliers de l'Ordre de la Toison d'or au XV^e siècle. Notices bio-bibliographiques* (Frankfurt 2000) 161-163; Mikhael Harsgor, *Recherches sur le personnel du conseil de roi sous Charles VIII et Louis XII*, 4 pts. (Lille 1980) 1077-1116.

84 Hoccalus, *Histoire des Pays-bas*, 705; Jean Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 449-450; Molinet has no more than 60 Flemings get away out of a total of 20.000-24.000.

85 De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 272.

86 Marc Boone and Maarten Prak, 'Rulers, Patricians and Burghers: the Great and the Little Tradition of Urban Revolt in the Low Countries', in: Karel Davids en Jan Lucassen (eds.) *A Miracle Mirrored: The Dutch Republic in European Perspective* (Cambridge 1995) 99-134; Wim Blockmans, 'Alternatives to Monarchical Centralisation: the Great Tradition of Revolt in Flanders and Brabant.' in: Helmut Koenigsberger (ed.), *Republiken und Republikanismus im Europa der Frühen Neuzeit* (München 1988).

gathering of the Estates-General in 1482, and whom the chroniclers of the court accused of breaking down the mediation by the Order of the Golden Fleece, was imprisoned, as were Daniel Onredene, Jan van Coppenhole and even Rassegem, member of the regency council. The first two were executed by the aldermen in June. They were held responsible for the break with France. In addition, word had it that Rijm meant to sell Philip's jewellery to pay for the war effort, and some even said that he wanted to send the young archduke to Paris to be married to a French lady.⁸⁷ It was the impoverished merchant elite of Bruges that called for negotiations with Maximilian.⁸⁸ The archduke was received in Bruges late in June, where he made peace with the Three Members on the 28th.⁸⁹ He entered Ghent early in July, finally reuniting with his son after several years, “dont les coers de ceulx qui les veoyent furent sy esprins de joye qu'ilz en plouroyent à grosses lermes.”⁹⁰ The punishment of the city was rather mild, but when the Ghenters rioted against Maximilian's troops in the city a few days later, they were forced to beg the archduke “to prefer grace and mercy to strictness or rigour of justice.” The city was extended his grace, but the new treaty that was drawn up for it included terms from the harsh peace that Philip the Good had made with the city after its revolt in 1453.⁹¹ Flanders was pacified, for the time being.

87 Hoccalus, *Histoire des Païs-bas*, 707; De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 274-275; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 459; *'t Boeck van al 't gene datter gheschiedt is binnen Brugghe sichtent jaer 1477, 14 Februarii, tot 1491*, Charles Carton (ed.) (Gent 1859) 78.

88 Hoccalus, *Histoire des Païs-bas*, 707; De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 277. They explicitly mention that the initiative came from the “marchands et les notables” and “les gens de bien”.

89 *Verzameling van XXIV origineele charters, privilegien en keuren van de provincie van Vlaenderen van de XIII.^e, XIV.^e, XV.^e en XVI.^e eeuw* (Ghent 1788) 131-135; Blockmans, *Handelingen*, I, 350-356; An abridged French version can be found in Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 460-462, which is also included in Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, III/2, 145.

90 Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 463.

91 *Dagboek van Gent van 1447 tot 1470, met een vervolg van 1477 tot 1515*, pt. II, Victor Fris (ed.) (Ghent 1901-1904) 262-263; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 464-467; SAG OV 835: “[...] ghebeden dat prefererende gracie ende ghenade voor strancheit ofte rigeur van justicien hem ghelieven willen[...].”



Image 1: The Burgundian Netherlands between 1477 and 1493

2.2 The Second Flemish Revolt, 1488-1492

With Flanders pacified and France in turmoil, Maximilian was able to turn to matters of the empire. In February 1486, he was elected king of the Romans. The coronation followed in April.⁹² The war with France, which had still been going on since 1483, but fought without much vigour by either parties, flared up again as the newly crowned king optimistically sought allies among the now openly rebelling *pairs de France*.⁹³ Despite Maximilian's best attempts, however, Philip of Crèvecoeur booked many successes against the Habsburg army in this period, taking St.-Omer en Therouanne, and capturing a handful of the most important nobles during the disastrous battle of Béthune in 1487.⁹⁴

All of this required a lot of money from the subjects, who already suffered from shortages in foodstuffs. To obtain such sums, the government tried to bypass the big cities and levy taxes from the smaller villages, and it also decreased the amount of silver in the coinage to make more profit minting.⁹⁵ This was not only just as damaging to the economy as the aides were, but it also undermined the negotiating position that the cities had.⁹⁶ The atmosphere in the Flemish urban centres especially was very volatile; it took only a spark to become explosive. The two sparks were some old familiars, Jan van Coppenhole, the Ghent populist who had fled to France, and Adrian Vilain, formerly part of the regency council, who had been imprisoned in Vilvoorde until a family member set him free in the summer of 1487, returned to Ghent and immediately replaced the city's government.⁹⁷ Philip of Cleves (the son of Adolf), Anthony of Burgundy and his son Philip attempted to reconcile the city and the king, but to no avail.⁹⁸ A chronicle describes the situation as such: “Et, en effet, se démonstèrent rebelles et désobéyssans au roy des Rommains, sans toutesvoies encoires faire ouvertement la guerre d'un party ne d'autre, jusques à ce qu'ils eurent prins la ville de Courtray[.]”⁹⁹ That assault on Kortrijk had taken place on the night of the 9th of

92 Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 479-516 is especially lengthy on these episodes. Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 123, seems to be wrong dating the coronation in June; that's when Maximilian returned to the Netherlands.

93 Van Uytven, *Crisis als cesuur*, 425; Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, III, 42-43.

94 't Boeck, 168-169. Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 571-577.

95 Blockmans, *De volksvertegenwoordiging*, 617-618; Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States generals*, 62-63; Peter Spufford, *Monetary problems and policies in the Burgundian Netherlands, 1433-1496* (Leiden 1970) 141-146. Cf. Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, I, 63-64, in which Maximilian promises the aldermen of Ypres to find other ways than aides to pay for the war.

96 Wouter Ryckbosch has argued that it was not so much the sums of money that were asked that led to discontent, but the lack of influence in the spending of it: Ryckbosch, 'Stedelijk initiatief of hertogelijke repressie? Financiële hervormingen en kredietbeleid te Gent (1453-1495)', *Tijdschrift voor sociale en economische geschiedenis* 4, 2 (2007) 3-28, there 11-12.

97 Hoccalus, *Histoire des Pais-bas*, 718; Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States general*, 62; Power was now in the hands of the weaver's guild. Their problems with Maximilian are described in a letter to the city of Mons: Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, I, 68-72; cf. Wellens, *Revolte brugeoise*, 14-18.

98 De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 106.

99 Hoccalus, *Histoire des Pais-bas*, 718.

January 1488. Perhaps Ghent at that time felt confident enough to establish its dominance over the countryside after Charles VIII of France had officially expressed a few days earlier that he would protect the city.¹⁰⁰

Maximilian decided to call together the Estates-General in Bruges to discuss the matter in early 1488.¹⁰¹ The contingent of German troops that he brought with him to the city did much to agitate the Brugians, however.¹⁰² Furthermore, he expanded the 'conseil des finances', the control of which was left to six high noblemen:¹⁰³ Philip of Cleves, Philip of Beveren, John III of Bergen, Baldwin and John of Lannoy, and Martin of Polheim. Bruges was stirring and Maximilian ordered nearby troops to advance towards the city.¹⁰⁴ When he neared the gate to let them in on the 31st of January, the gatekeepers closed off the city, locking the troops outside and the king of the Romans inside. He was told to return to his stay.¹⁰⁵ During that night, the Bruges guildsmen assembled and captured a number of the city's magistrates, who were gruesomely tortured and executed.¹⁰⁶ Maximilian sent Philip of Beveren and John of Lannoy out to promise the guildsmen that if they ceased their insubordination, they would not be punished.¹⁰⁷ But rather than a stand down, the fifth of February saw the now fully mobilized citizens capturing the king and placing him in the apothecary house Craenenburg by the Great Market.¹⁰⁸ The law in Bruges was renewed with the help of Ghenter deputies on the 12th, and the Franc was dismembered.¹⁰⁹ Most spectacular, perhaps, was when the Brugians beheaded the hated *maître d'hôtel* Pieter Lanchals, on the city square right before Maximilian's eyes;¹¹⁰ "ilz ne furent mains joyeux de sa prinse que s'ilz eusissent tenu le

100Wellens, *États généraux*, 200-201; idem, *Revolte brugeoise*, 12. Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, III, 44, speaks of a "république autonome sous la suzeraineté royale."

101Wellens, *États-généraux*, 458.

102De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 287-288; Wellens, *Revolte brugeoise*, 14; cf. De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 105.

103Hugo de Schepper, 'De burgerlijke overheden en hun permanente kaders, 1480-1579' in: D.P. Blok a.o. (eds.), *Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden V* (Haarlem 1980) 312-334, there 334; Andreas Walther, *Die burgundischen Zentralbehörden unter Maximilian I. und Karl V.* (Leipzig 1909), 53-57. The text of the ordinance is found there on pages 193-195.

104Wellens, *Revolte brugeoise*, 21.

105Jean Surquet 'Mémoires en forme de de chronique, ou histoire des guerres et troubles de Flandres, mutations et rébellions des flamens contre Maximilien, roy des Romains, d'après un manuscrit de la bibliothèque d'Arras' in: J.J. De Smet (ed.), *Recueil des chroniques de Flandre*, pt. IV (Brussels 1856) 503-586, there 509; Wellens, *Revolte brugeoise*, 21-22, cf. 33-34.

106Hoccalus, *Histoire des Pais-bas*, 719; Wellens, *Revolte brugeoise*, 29.

107Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 589.

108Surquet, *Mémoire en forme de chronique*, 509. Wellens, *Revolte brugeoise*, 11, mentions an Austrian manuscript by Johan Roll dealing with the events of Maximilian's capture which hadn't been used and, to my knowledge, hasn't yet been almost fifty years later. I believe he might be referring to Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Cod. 3083.

109't Boeck, 183-184, 185-186; Wellens, *Revolte brugeoise*, 29;

110't Boeck, 205-209; Marc Boone, 'La Hollande, source de capital social pour un Flamand ambitieux? Les intérêts et les aventures de Pierre Lanchals, grand commis de l'État Burgundo-Habsbourgeois (vers 1441/42-1488)' in: Peter Hoppenbrouwers, Antheun Janse and Robert Stein (eds.), *Power and persuasion. Essays in the art of state building in honour of W.P. Blockmans* (Turnhout 2010) 197-223; idem 'La justice en spectacle. La justice urbaine en Flandre et la crise du pouvoir «bourguignon» (1477-1488)', *Revue historique* 308/1 (2003) 43-65, there 59-62. Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 247-248; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 638. In addition to being an agent of governmental centralisation, Lanchals had also been responsible for the condemnation of the revolutionary Bruges burgomaster

Grant Turc”, says Molinet.¹¹¹

The event — a king detained by his own subjects! — shocked the whole of Western Europe. The pope, after having sent an observer, excommunicated the inhabitants of the county of Flanders, citing it as a case of *lese majesty*. He warned, moreover, that those who would persist would invoke the “secular arm of the emperor”.¹¹² Maximilian's father Frederick did indeed attempt to come to his aid, bringing with him many German princes and an army of approximately 16,000 men.¹¹³ The Estates-General had gathered with Philip the Handsome in Malines, and in great numbers too; even the usually less than enthusiastic Luxembourgers and Brabantine clergy attended. Unlike the Germans, most were determined to resolve the situation peacefully.¹¹⁴ Perhaps this was on the instigation of Maximilian himself, who had an assassination attempt against him barely foiled and who was afraid of being sent to Ghent or even to France.¹¹⁵ The Venetians — Europe's foremost republicans — had sent the Bruges magistracy a little note containing the advice that “dead men make no war.”¹¹⁶ On May the 12th, the Estates of Brabant, Flanders, Hainaut and Zeeland, gathered in Ghent, signed a treaty of union for themselves and for the other of Philip's lands, which also re-instituted the regency council in Flanders. It moreover gave the Estates-General more authority and stipulated that it would assemble yearly.¹¹⁷ By ratifying the treaty on the

Louis Steylin and others in 1485 as baillif of the city: *t Boeck*, 92-93. The executions are mentioned by Huizinga as an example of the 'carnavalesque joy' that the people derived from punishment: Johan Huizinga, *Herfsttij der middeleeuwen. Studie over levens- en gedachtenvormen der veertiende en vijftiende eeuw in Frankrijk en de Nederlanden* (21st print; Amsterdam 1997 (first print Haarlem 1919)) 38.

111Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 637.

112Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 642-642, II, 1-6; Some letters sent to the archbishop of Cologne by the Three Members can be found in Rombout de Doppere, *Fragments inédits de Rombout de Doppere découverts dans un manuscrit de Jacques de Meyere*, Henri Dussart (ed.) (Bruges 1892) 76-77.

113*Die Geschichten und Taten Wilwolts von Schaumburg*, Adelbert von Keller (ed.) (Stuttgart 1859) 79; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 38-42. Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, 92-93 also mentions the army, but the baillif of Hainaut estimates it at 10,000-12,000 combatants. The 30,000 that Wellens, *Revolte brugeoise*, 47, mentions is unlikely.

114Wellens, *États-généraux*, 203-204, 459-462; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 614-618. Wiesflecker, *Maximilian*, I, 215, is less than appreciative of the Estates' pacifism.

115De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 126; Hoccalus, *Histoire des Pays-bas*, 722; Inge Wiesflecker-Friedhuber, *Quellen zur Geschichte Maximilians I. und seiner Zeit* (Darmstadt 1996) 49. A letter by Maximilian to Adolf of Cleves, Beveren, Gruuthuse, Bergen, Molembais and Aymeries contained the grim line “Et se je meurs, je recommande mon filz à mon père.” BNF ms. fr. 11590, f.259v. He asked Philip of Cleves in Sluis to demand of the soldiers “qu'il veullent avoir encore tousiours pascience de point courre ou faire nul dommaige au pays de Flandres jusques que l'espoir de la paix soit passé.” BNF ms. fr. 18997 f. 76v. cf. f.103v; Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, I, 86.

116Jan van Naaldwijk, 'Eerste kroniek van Holland' [Transcription of London, British Library, MS Cotton Vitellius F xv], in: Sjoerd Levelt, *Jan van Naaldwijk's chronicles of Holland. Continuity and transformation in the historical tradition of Holland during the early sixteenth century*, CD-ROM (Hilversum 2011) 547. The chronicle claims that the information came from Jean Lemaire de Belges (“meester jan meijer van belges”), who also noted that Maximilian obtained and kept the letter. Perhaps he remembered it during his later wars with the Serenissima Repubblica.

117Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, III/2, 199-200; Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States generals*, 64; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 24-31; *Verzameling van XXIV charters*, 137-148; Wellens, *États généraux*, 212-213; Jan Burgers, Hans Smit and Ed van der Vlist, *Bronnen voor de geschiedenis der dagvaarten van de Staten van Zeeland, 1318-1572*, pt. II, *Teksten 1479-1536* (The Hague 2011) 450-452; Blockmans, *Handelingen*, 458-463. The Estates of Holland were absent, but had planned to come. Their delegates were ready to leave when on the 13th of 14th of April, news came of the excommunication of the Flemish, and the question of whether it was even allowed to open negotiations with them arose. When a delegation finally arrived in Malines on the 25th, the archduke and his council

16th, Maximilian won his freedom.¹¹⁸ To ensure that the peace would be kept, the cities of Ghent and Bruges demanded a number of hostages from the king of the Romans, among whom was Philip of Cleves.¹¹⁹ Philip swore to go to Ghent and to defend the county against Maximilian if the king should break the treaty.¹²⁰

Mere weeks later, Philip of Cleves and Maximilian were indeed at odds and up in arms. Who went wrong at what point, is an issue that has often been reduced to a history of the two men, ignoring the forces around them. Considering that the issue of blame would be the primary point of contention for Philip for the next four and a half years, it is worth looking into the situation more in-depth. Though Maximilian had agreed not to persecute the Three Members for their actions, the emperor Frederick had not. Philip the Handsome had revoked the right of the Estates-General to secure peace without consent of the emperor, but the message arrived a day after they had already done so.¹²¹ Frederick was determined to wage war against the Flemish; he wrote to the duke of Bavaria to come to Flanders to punish them for the “grossen unmenschlichen Handel, und wir der ongestrafft bleiben solt, was Schimpfs und Schadens das uns [...] dem Heiligen Reiche, dir und einem jeden so Regierung und Eberkeit hat.”¹²² Maximilian himself seems to have opposed the campaign of his father at first, and asked him several times not to continue.¹²³ He even suggested to Bruges that the city should appease the emperor by gaining the support of some German princes and by releasing the German hostages.¹²⁴ His advice was not taken up. The king of the Romans then

forbade the Hollanders to travel to Ghent, relying on the other lands to make a good deal soon: Hendrik Kokken en Marjan Vrolijk, *Bronnen voor de geschiedenis der dagvaarten van de Staten en steden van Holland voor 1544*. pt. IV 1477-1494, *tweede stuk: Teksten* (Den Haag 2006) 799, 800-801.

118BNF ms. fr. 17909, f. 67r-72v; *Verzameling van XXIV charters*, 149-159; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 6-24. For the ceremony, De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 139-140; 't Boeck, 222-224.

119As was usual in when a prince was released as part of a peace treaty: Randall Lesaffer, 'Peace treaties from Lodi to Westphalia', in idem (ed.), *Peace treaties and international law in European history* (Cambridge 2004) 9-44, there 28-29. Philip's status as a 'hostage' is peculiar, since he was at the same time expected to form part of the regency council in Flanders. The May 12 orders the council to consist of the nobles of the blood; Philip Wielant, 'Recueil des antiquités de Flandre, par le président Ph. Wielant, d'après divers manuscrits de la bibliothèque de Bourgogne' in: J.J. De Smet (ed.), *Recueil des chroniques de Flandre*, pt. IV (Brussels 1856) 1-442, there 332, specifies this as Adolf and Philip of Cleves and Philip of Burgundy “et aultres”.

120De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 140-148; Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, 101-102; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 15.

121Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, I, 88-89.

122Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 61 n. 261. See Paul-Joachim Heinig, 'Ein bitter-freudiges Familientreffen.: Maximilian I. und sein Vater in Löwen (24. mai 1488)' in: Jacques Paviot (ed.), *Liber amicorum Raphaël de Smedt*, pt. III, *Historia* (Louvain 2001) 183-195, there 188-192, for the ways in which Frederick tried to motivate the imperial Estates.

123Isidore Diegerick, *Correspondance des magistrats d'Ypres députés à Gand et à Bruges pendant les troubles de Flandre sous Maximilien, duc d'Autriche, roi des Romains etc.* (Bruges 1853) 233-234; *Geschichten und Taten*, 79; Hocalus, *Histoire des Païs-Bas*, 724-725; De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 294-295; Naaldwijk, *Eerste kroniek*, 555; Jean Devaux, *Jean Molinet, indiciaire bourguignon* (Paris 1996) 561-568, sees this as a later, official version to imply Maximilian's good intentions. That is not impossible, but it is odd that he would both rewrite the history of the 16 May treaty and at the same time forbid its mentioning a month later.

124Diegerick, *Correspondence*, 230-231; De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 151-152; Joseph Grünpeck has Maximilian give the following little speech outside the gates of Bruges: “You Brugians have forced me to make a peace, which is made according to your will; I have promised to keep it, on conditions, and I shall keep it for so far as I am able. But I believe that my father, the imperial majesty, will not confirm it. He stands in Brabant right now with a mighty

changed his mind and joined his father's expedition on the 24th of May, and on the 5th of June, the imperial army began its forty day siege of Ghent.¹²⁵ Philippe of Cleves had sworn loyalty to the Estates of Flanders just the day before, and did so again on the 26th of May.¹²⁶ While both Maximilian and Philip were to take up the following struggle with earnestness and determination, they were essentially both dragged into a conflict between Frederick III and the Flemish cities; the king even assured the Estates of Hainaut that this was a war of the emperor for the benefit of Philip the Handsome and had nothing to do with the Peace of Bruges.¹²⁷

The issue: Maximilian had solemnly sworn the Peace of Bruges on the 16th of May and had taken up arms against the cities of Flanders the week after. Did he break his oath? If so, was he allowed to? June seemed national letter writing month, and we have correspondence from Philip of Cleves to Maximilian, Frederick, the king of Portugal, and Christoph of Bavaria, as well as letters of reply from the king of the Romans. The emperor had written to Ghent that he demanded obedience for the parts of the county that were held as an imperial fief.¹²⁸ Maximilian justified this to Philip of Cleves, pointing out once more that the emperor's war had nothing to do with the 16 May peace, but was a matter between the cities of Bruges and Ghent and the respect they were due their sovereign and the Holy Roman Empire. It was, moreover, undertaken by the advice and consent of the nobles of the blood and the council of Philip the Handsome. Maximilian himself was obliged to join his father's cause, since he had sworn to uphold the imperial majesty when he was crowned king of the Romans.¹²⁹ Louis Pynnock, chamberlain and mayor of Louvain, argued that the oath was imposed on Maximilian by rebels, and as such, he was not obliged to honour it¹³⁰ — which was technically true, as Medieval law stipulated that oaths made under threat were of no value.¹³¹ This was a matter that the Flemish had foreseen, and they had made it clear even before releasing Maximilian that “many princes have often made great treaties while being imprisoned, that have always been kept,” followed by some examples.¹³² Maximilian used the same imperial

army; for that reason I advise you to take all care to reconcile with him.” Wiesflecker, *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 50.
125De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 159; Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 51; Heinig, *Bitter-freudiges Familientreffen*, 193-195; Lichnowsky, *Geschichte des Hauses Habsburg*, VIII, 739-740.

126Diegerick, *Correspondence*, 235; Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 51. Philip was also awarded a salary of 4800 lb. par. at this time. a confirmation dated the 9th of June is edited there on pages 87-88; Blockmans, *Handelingen*, 465.

127Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, I, 100.

128De Doppere, 79.

129BNF ms. fr. 18997, f.14r-15r, 17v-18r; Diegerick, *Correspondence*, 238-239; P.-J. Van Doren, *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Malines*, pt. III, *Lettres missives* (Malines 1865) 28-30; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 48-50 (quote p.49). See Theodor Meron, 'The authority to make treaties in the Late Middle Ages', *The American journal of international law*, 89/1 (1995) 1-20, for the theoretical underpinnings of 'the inalienability of sovereignty'.

130Edmond Pouillet, *Sire Louis de Pynnock, patricien de Louvain, ou un maieur du Xve siècle. Etude de moeurs et d'histoire de la période bourguignonne* (Leuven 1864) 257.

131Meron, *The authority*, 13-20; Friedrich Thudichum, *Geschichte des Eides* (Tübingen 1911) 48.

132Diegerick, *Correspondence*, XXIX; See also Allan Hertz, 'Medieval treaty obligation', *Connecticut journal of international law*, 6 (1991) 425-443 for difficulties surrounding treaties as oaths bound by religious ceremony.

reasoning to accuse Philip of Cleves of treason. As a member of the house of Cleves and related to the house of Burgundy, he was “totallement sujet audit Saint Empire.” What could be more honorable than to serve his emperor in defending Philip the Handsome and his lands against the Ghenters, who had always been disobedient towards their princes?¹³³

Philip of Cleves never bought the 'separate conflict' argument; it seemed to him an excuse to start the war in spite of the peace treaty. The Three Members of Flanders were not even directly answerable to the emperor — nor in fact, to their true sovereign, the king of France — but only their count was, and Philip the Handsome had never deemed to injure the majesty of the empire. As for himself, as a vassal of Philip the Handsome he was to be absolutely loyal to his immediate prince first and foremost. Their sovereign Frederick made war upon archduke Philip without reason and “en ce cas, le vassal est tenu de deffendre son seigneur naturel contre icellui souverain, et tous sermens et fidelitez d'entre le seigneur et le vassal sont reciproques.” Philip of Cleves, moreover, was bound by the oath that he had sworn upon the release of Maximilian, to defend the signers from anyone who would break the peace. Philip had to take the actions that he did for his soul and for his honor: “par ledit serment je me suis obligié à Dieu, mon createur, le souverain roy des roix, de l'entretenir, meismement que ce que ay fait ledit serment, ce a esté à vostre commandement et très instante requeste[.]”¹³⁴ He was careful to express himself in this manner to Maximilian, but in letters to Frederick and especially in those to his relative John II of Portugal he also made it clear that a lot of nobles at court were envious of him and sought his downfall.¹³⁵ To the Ghenters, he referred to either Frederick or Maximilian — it is not made clear, perhaps deliberately — as a “vicious tyrant” (valschen tyranten).¹³⁶ On the 6th of July, Philip of Cleves was declared enemy of the state — or more correctly, enemy of Philip the Handsome, the lord whom he claimed he was defending all along.¹³⁷ Just as we cannot say for sure whether Maximilian had intended to discard his oath before taking it, we also cannot say whether Philip of Cleves had accepted to being a hostage with the prospect of switching sides.¹³⁸

The month of June had also seen the regency council being reinstated for Flanders. It contained a handful of old familiars, such as the lords of Beveren, Gruuthuse and Rassegem, as wel

133Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 48-50 (quote p.49).

134BNF ms. fr. 18997, f.13r-13v, 15r-17v, 18r-19r; Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 355-357; Diegerick, *Correspondence*, 257; De Doppere, *Fragments*, 80-83; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 46-48, 50-54, 55-56 (quotes pp.47, 51).

135De Doppere, *Fragments*, 78-80, 82-84.

136Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, I, 104.

137Van Doren, *Inventaire*, 28-30.

138De Fouw, *Philip van Kleef*, 139-153, pleads for the breaking of the oath by Maximilian to be the thing that forced Philip to act in service of the Three Members. Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 49 and idem, *De strijd*, 196 n.1049, argues that everyone saw Maximilian's turn coming, and one could not reasonably have been surprised that he did not keep his oath.

as Philip of Cleves, who served as its most active member and lieutenant general of the count.¹³⁹ The Habsburg war effort was off to a disastrous start and 1488 turned out to be a very good year for the revolt. The imperial siege of Ghent failed miserably in its aims, and the German troops left the Netherlands in October. The French, under the leadership of the lord of Esquerdes, were already in a state of readiness before Maximilian was released, and immediately joined up with the Ghenters.¹⁴⁰ Louvain and Brussels, declaring that they wanted to honour the treaties made in Bruges, joined with Philip of Cleves and the Flemish. The rest of Brabant followed suit, or had already done so.¹⁴¹ Already in July, the city of Middelburg in Zeeland — and presumably many others — had received a “letter in the form of a placard” urging them to join the Flemish within eight days, but it was in vain.¹⁴² At a meeting of the Estates-General in Antwerp, meanwhile, Frederick had declared Philip to be an enemy of the empire; his goods were to be confiscated.¹⁴³ The Netherlands were pitted into a civil war. The Revolt had on its side most of Flanders and the Southern cities of Brabant, which included five of the duchy's seven major cities, supported by the French. On Maximilian's side were Hainaut, Zeeland, Malines and the North of Brabant, which mainly meant Antwerp, and whatever Imperial help could be gotten. Little help was to be expected from the other territories.

Holland was firmly on Maximilian's side, but it soon faced its own problems. The confusion in the South proved to be the ideal opportunity for the Hooks to try and retake power. Francis of Brederode, the younger son of the illustrious family, had given up his education in Louvain and gathered troops and supplies in Flanders throughout spring and summer.¹⁴⁴ Philip of Cleves, as the regency council's lieutenant-general of the archduke, named Francis lieutenant

¹³⁹Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 52-53; see also the oath sworn on the 9th of June, *ibidem* 87-88.

¹⁴⁰De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 138, 155; Surquet, *Mémoire en forme de chronique*, 533; See also P. Pélicier, P., *Lettres de Charles VIII, roi de France*, pt. II, 1488-1489 (Paris 1900) 207-210.

¹⁴¹De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 168, 182-183; Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 61-62; Alexandre Henne and Alphonse Wauters, *Histoire de la ville de Bruxelles*, pt. I (Brussels 1845) 305-306; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 68-70.

¹⁴²Burgers, Smit and Van der Vlist, *Dagvaarten Zeeland*, II, 457-458.

¹⁴³General State Archives, Brussels (GSAB) Rekenkamer (RK) nr. 104 f.93r-100v; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 65, 71; Wellens, *Etats-généraux*, 214-217;

¹⁴⁴Willem van der Sluys, 'Verhaal van den Jonker Fransenoerlog (1509)' in: Unger, J.H.W. en W. Bezemer (eds.), *Bronnen voor de geschiedenis van Rotterdam*. pt. II: *De oudste kronieken en beschrijvingen van Rotterdam en Schieland* (Rotterdam 1895) 53-173. 66, 67; Kornelis van Alkemade, *Rotterdamse heldendaden onder de stadvoogdy van den jongen heer Frans van Brederode, genaamt Jonker Franses Oorlog* (Rotterdam 1724) 74; Van der Sluys says that the Hooks had applied to Philip of Cleves for help already in February 1488. Van Alkemade knows it was the 12th of that month. Both mention that Francis arrived in Sluis on the 14th of april. before Philip's falling out with Maximilian. The status of Van der Sluys's chronicle, also one of the main sources for Van Alkemade, as genuine is unsure, and his dates are almost with exception wrong: M. Carasso-Kok, *Repertorium van verhalende historische bronnen uit de middeleeuwen. Heiligenlevens, annalen, kronieken en andere in Nederland geschreven verhalende bronnen* (Den Haag 1981) 442-443; Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 376 n. 26. While it does not say that Francis and the Hooks went to Philip of Cleves immediately, a contemporary poem by an anonymus does state that they started their activities during the time that Maximilian was a captive in Bruges: A.J., *Kort verhaal*, 31. For its dating, see Unger, *De oudste kronieken*, 29-30; Carasso-Kok, *Repertorium*, 282-283. Diegerick, *Correspondence*, 461 suggests that they instead hid in Ghent before sailing out, which is much more likely.

(stadholder) of Holland and sent him on his way to keep Holland occupied.¹⁴⁵ In the night of 18 November, he landed near Delfshaven and took control of Rotterdam.¹⁴⁶ On the night of the December the 26th our old familiar, the Utrechter John of Montfort had taken Woerden, a city with a “strong fortress, that was impregnable” with ease because only one watchman had manned the battlements.¹⁴⁷ Although allied to the Flemish, the Hooks did not base their cause on the same ideology. While the regency council sought to install a government without Maximilian of Austria, Brederode and Montfort had no qualms asking for the king to confirm and sign a treaty as father and tutor of Philip the Handsome. The demands, as they were submitted in February 1489, mostly concern a return to balance and to peace between the Hooks and Cods. They required a neutral lieutenant to replace John of Egmont, the leader of the Cod faction, and a redistribution of offices to Brederode and his supporters to create an equilibrium.¹⁴⁸ John of Montfort's demands were of an even more personal nature. In a letter to the Estates of Holland, he justified his occupation of Woerden at length. The Sticht War of 1483 was, in his view, to blame on the “counterparty (wederpartie) of my lord of Montfort.” The surrender of Utrecht stipulated that Montfort would receive Maximilian's grace, and the goods of his that were confiscated during the war would be returned to him. Therein lay the problem; he expected to be be handed back the lordship of Purmerend, which was taken from him in 1481, but never saw it again. The Estates of Holland reasoned that the lordship was taken from him when he was banished from Holland, before the actual Sticht War, and thus was not included in its peace treaty. What made matters worse was that it had, by then, been bought by John of Egmont and added to his newly elevated county.¹⁴⁹ It is noteworthy that while the demands of both Brederode and Montfort essentially constituted a reversal of Maximilian's policy in Holland since 1477, the Hooks never questioned the king's authority or legitimacy. These demands were, however, completely unacceptable to the leading Cods, and now Holland was embroiled in civil war as well.

145Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 376. Van Alkemade, *Rotterdamse heldendaden*, 306-307 contains a safe conduct in which Brederode calls himself lieutenant.

146Van der Sluys, *Verhaal*, 70 and Van Alkemade, *Heldendaden*, 78, 84 misdate the event on the 20th. Aurelius, *Divisiekronek*, f. 399v and A.J. *Kort Verhaal*, 31 name the 18th, which is confirmed by archival sources: Kokken and Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 848-851.

147A.J., *Kort verhaal*, 33; Van Alkemade, *Rotterdamse heldendaden*, 102-103; Aurelius, *Divisiekronek*, 400r (quote); Van der Sluys, *Verhaal*, 84; Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 377.

148Regional Archives Dordrecht (RAD) Oud archief (OA) 639 3, f. 1-2v; an edition is found in M.P. Van den Brandeler, 'Geschiedkundige bijdrage over het jaar 1490', *Berigten van het historisch genootschap te Utrecht*, 2e serie, 2 (1859) 79-127, there 115-119, and part of it are edited in Kokken and Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 891-892. The Brandeler edition is very useful, since the original piece is quite damaged in areas. Critical analysis in Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 380-381.

149RAD OA 639, 2. The first 5 out of 18 points are edited in Kokken and Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten*, IV 895. Critical analysis in Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 381-383. See also Idem, 'Jan van Egmond (1438-1516), een Hollands succesverhaal', *Handelingen van de koninklijke kring voor oudheidkunde, letteren en kunst van Mechelen*, 95, 1 (1991) 259-279, there 267; Aurelius, *Divisiekronek*, f. 395v-396r.

In early 1489, after having dropped by himself in Holland to motivate the populace, Maximilian set out to find support for his cause in Germany and recruit the English and Spanish monarchies for a four-pronged attack on France.¹⁵⁰ In the mean time, Albert of Saxony, a cousin of his and a veteran of the Hungarian wars, was charged with the task of subduing the rebels in the Netherlands.¹⁵¹ Albert was a very capable man indeed, but he had several advantages on his side as well. Compared to his South German mercenary army with state artillery, the Flemish and Brabanters were at a disadvantage despite comparable numbers.¹⁵² French support was absolutely vital for the continued resistance — and it was that support that began to wane as the lily monarchy looked to its West. In September of 1488, the last independent duke of Brittany, Francis II, passed away. France had long sought to integrate the duchy and saw its chance now. Philip of Cleves rode to Charles VIII's court in the hope of gaining support, but with few results.¹⁵³ Brederode and his followers had to flee Rotterdam in June.¹⁵⁴ On the 22nd of July, 1489, Charles and Maximilian signed the peace of Frankfurt, in which the Flemish and Brabantine question was also meant to be resolved; the revolters were to accept the king of the Romans as regent to Philip the Handsome. Both parties would proclaim the 1482 peace of Arras; nobody mentioned that of May 16th 1488.¹⁵⁵ The remaining Brabantine cities, hungry and ridden with pestilence, signed their separate peaces less than a month later on the 14th of August.¹⁵⁶ Albert of Saxony sent Philip of Cleves a short, clear letter saying that “quant les rebelles subgetz de monseigneur le roy des Romains et de nostre cousin l'Archiduc, son filz, en Flandres et Brabant se remettront en l'obéissance qu'ilz leur doivent, nous cesserons et ferons cesser de toute guerre[.]”¹⁵⁷

Frankfurt was a broad peace; it outlined the international politics for Charles VIII, Maximilian, Henry VII, Ferdinand the Catholic and also Anne of Brittany. The Flemish peace was outlined at Montilz-lez-Tours on 30th of October.¹⁵⁸ In both, it was stated that Philip of Cleves would be reinstated in his honours and pensions, as Charles, no doubt, preferred to see his ally

150Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, II, 30-31; Wiesflecker, *Maximilian I.*, I, 322.

151Wim Blockmans, 'Albrecht de Stoutmoedige, hertog van Saksen, stadhouder-generaal der Nederlanden (1443-1500)', *Handelingen van de koninklijke kring voor oudheidkunde, letteren en kunst van Mechelen*, 95, 1 (1991) 189-200.

152Bart Willems, 'Militaire organisatie en staatsvorming aan de vooravond van de Nieuwe Tijd. Een analyse van het conflict tussen Brabant en Maximiliaan van Oostenrijk', 1488-1489, *Jaarboek voor middeleeuwse geschiedenis*, 1 (1998) 261-285.

153*Dits die excellente cronike van Vlaenderen (Antwerpen 1531) f.261r*; De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 199-200, 202-203; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 83-84.

154Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 385.

155Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, III/2, 236-238; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 156-162. Philip was very displeased when he heard of a peace being signed, but Charles sent him a reassuring letter that he had not abandoned him, nor the Flemish, Brabantines or Liègois: Pélicier, *Lettres de Charles VIII*, II, 386-387.

156 De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 222-223; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 162-164.

157Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, II, 46.

158Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, 242-244; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 164-172; John of Montfort was still allied to Philip of Cleves and the Flemish, but was not considered in either treaty.

remain one of the mightiest men in the Netherlands, rather than be a martyr for a dead cause. But debate — which will be analysed in a later chapter — over who was to blame for the conflict in the first place brought Philip into conflict with Albert of Saxony and the court in Malines, and he turned the city of Sluis into a den of piracy. He had been the leader of the Flemish cause up to this point, but from 1490 on, the revolt was Philip's game, and Sluis became a more dangerous locus of defiance than Bruges or even Ghent.¹⁵⁹ The governor of Flanders, Engelbert of Nassau, entered Bruges in January 1490 and renewed the law, albeit not without issues.¹⁶⁰ In the following months, Philip's garrison at Sluis and that of Albert of Saxony at Damme ensured that, whichever side the city was on, its connection to the international waterways was hampered. The expenses of living caused a lot of discontent, and, according to Philip Wielant, “Philippe de Clèves practiqua une commotion” in the city and sent John of Rans and George Picavet, along with 300 armed men, to take over the government in August.¹⁶¹ The citizens had tried to mediate, “but my lord of Nassau did not want to hear anything about Philip of Ravenstein, except that they would distance themselves from him, and then they would speak of peace.”¹⁶² Montfort, in the mean time, was defeated at the end of the summer of 1490. After many attempts by the estates of Holland, which had been under the leadership of the lieutenant Egmont and the royal stable master,¹⁶³ to finally bring Albert of Saxony to the North, he lay siege before the castellan's home town on the 1st of June.¹⁶⁴ The siege had been going on for 16 weeks when eventually a farmer managed to redirect the flow of water and drain the moats. Montfort surrendered soon after.¹⁶⁵ The Brugians did not have the resources to wage war against Albert and Engelbert and had to surrender already in November.¹⁶⁶ Ghent had remained largely neutral. It did not wage open warfare, but neither did it accept the terms of the treaty of Frankfurt or Montilz-lez-Tours. The many messengers that Philip of Cleves sent to the city probably tried to convince it to come to the aid of Bruges and rekindle the revolt.¹⁶⁷

159John Armstrong, 'The Burgundian Netherlands, 1477-1521' in: G.R. Potter (ed.), *The new Cambridge modern history, volume 1: the Renaissance, 1493-1520* (Cambridge 1957) 224-258, there 239.

160't Boeck, 323; Despars, 455-457; Excellente cronike, f. 264r.

161't Boeck, 347-348; *Excellente cronike*, f.265v; Wielant, *Antiquités*, 335;

162*Excellente cronike*, f.267v.

163Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 380, identifies the stable master with Adolf of Nassau, a cousin of Engelbert. To the best of my knowledge, however, Adolf served as royal *Hofmeister* instead (Wiesflecker, *Maximilian I.*, V, 280; Noflatscher, Heinz, *Räte und Herrscher. Politische Eliten und der Habsburgerhöfen der österreichischen Länder, 1480-1530* (Mainz 1999) 56, 63, 68). The *Geschichten und Taten* identifies the stable master as a 'Deschitz', who might also be called 'Zoller' (85, 90). A count of 'Tsorne' died during the siege of Montfort (Naaldwijk, *Eerste kroniek*, 557), but I have not been able to identify him, if it is the same person, with any Zollern.

164Kokken and Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 942-943; RAD OA. 639 12, f.2r-3r, edited in Van den Brandeler, *Bijdrage*, 126-127 and Kokken and Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 945-946.

165*Geschichten und Taten*, 102-103; Regional Archives Leiden (RAL) Stadsarchief I, nr. 1230.

166Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 211-213; Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, III/2, 262-263.

167De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 244.

Ghent stirred up again, but only in March 1491.¹⁶⁸ France had supported Philip and the Flemish over the years, with financial, natural and moral support, and Philip was once again given the title of lieutenant general in October 1491,¹⁶⁹ but its interest gradually waned as Charles VIII turned his eye towards the conquest of Brittany instead.¹⁷⁰ Longtime prisoner Charles of Egmont, son of the once duke of Guelders, Adolf, was released in February 1492. He rallied the estates of the duchy behind him and threatened to overthrow Habsburg rule there. As a result, Albert of Saxony and the court decided that the Flemish war had to be brought to an end before another front would open in the North, and made the decision to finally lay siege to Ghent and Sluis.¹⁷¹ Philip of Cleves' one time companion Philip of Beveren, long since reconciled and now in possession of the office of admiral, which Cleves still claimed for himself, sealed him in from the sea.¹⁷² The blockade of Ghent agitated its citizens. On the 16th of June, the Coppenhole twins, who had been the leaders of the resistance against Maximilian, were executed, and peace was signed on the 29th of June.¹⁷³ The siege of Sluis took its toll on both the attackers and defenders as disease ravaged both parties; but only when Philip of Cleves' father died and he had to look after his inheritance, did he finally give up his struggle.¹⁷⁴ So ended over fifteen years of unrest in Flanders. A year later, the peace of Senlis was signed with France, which ended a quarter of a century of conflicts.¹⁷⁵

168De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 248.

169Wim Blockmans, 'La position de la Flandre dans le royaume à la fin du XV^e siècle' in: Bernard Chevalier and Philippe Contamine (eds.), *La France de la fin du XV^e siècle. Renouveau et apogée* (Paris 1985) 71-90, there 83; Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 70-71, 88-89; Letters from Philip to Charles VIII can be found in BNF ms. fr. 15541, f.9r (misdated "environ 1488"; it should probably read 1491 or 1492), f.92r, f.121r.

170Wiesflecker, *Maximilian I.*, I, 324-333.

171Gachard, 'Analectes historiques. Dixième série', *Bulletin de la commission royale d'histoire*, 3rd series, 4 (1863) 323-367, there 354-355, 358-359.

172*Excellente cronike*, f.275v; De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 267; *Geschichten und Taten*, 121-124.

173*Dagboek*, II, 270; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 253-254; Wielant, *Antiquités*, 337. The treaty is edited in Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 357-368.

174*Geschichten und Taten*, 126-128; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 309-327; The treaty is edited in Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 88-97.

175Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, III/2, 303-309.

2. Clashes at court

The chapters above have shown that a group of high nobles led and organised some very serious revolts indeed. To properly assess the reasoning behind the punishments doled out at the end, it is necessary that we look at the considerations that had to be taken into account by Maximilian and his lieutenants. With the process of judgment as unregulated as this one, it depended largely on the assessment of the nobles. What were good reasons to take harsh measures, and what were reasons to placate such people instead? In which ways was Maximilian dependent on the nobles? We take a look at two factors: the first is the broader context, what were these revolts, and what led to a culture where so many would choose to throw their lot with the Flemish against Maximilian of Austria? Secondly, we look at the narrower context, the petty rivalries and struggles at court that informed the decisions of these people to actually form an alternative government.

2.1 Permanent discontent

For the Flemish cities, it is the opposition to the process of state formation that is traditionally cited as the main driving force.¹⁷⁶ Wim Blockmans especially has worked this out for the Low Countries. In his view, the counts and dukes had worked together with the cities to bring down the powerful nobility of the high middle ages, until, by the 15th century, the nobles were brought down and the monarchs centralised and bureaucratised society and placed it in a 'national' framework. This conflicted with the interests of the urban centres, which had vested interests in self government and international trade. The Great Privilege of 1477 was a continuity in urban demands, but that it was actually granted was a major break in centuries of centralising policy.¹⁷⁷ The revolts against Maximilian of Austria follow this “spirit of 1477”; the entire period up to 1492 is characterised as one of great “medieval” urban autonomy finally crushed by the “modern” state.¹⁷⁸ While this model works very well for the great cities, and is supported by the texts of the demands that were made from both sides in various treaties, it is rather problematic for our research into the role of the nobility. How to place the nobles of the regency council in this?

176cf. Tilly, *From mobilization to revolution* (Reading 1978) 184-185.

177Blockmans, *Metropolen aan de Noordzee. De geschiedenis van Nederland, 1100-1560* (Amsterdam 2010) 44-73; idem, 'Voracious states and obstructing cities: an aspect of state formation in preindustrial Europe', *Theory and society*, 18 (1989) 733-755, there especially 751. idem, 'Breuk of continuïteit? De Vlaamse privilegiën van 1477 in het licht van het staatsvormingsproces', in: idem (ed.), *1477. Het algemene en de gewestelijke privilegiën van Maria van Bourgondië voor de Nederlanden* (Kortrijk 1985) 997-125; idem and Raymond van Uytven, 'Constitutions and their application in the Netherlands during the middle ages', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 47 (1969) 399-424, there 403-405;

178Blockmans, *Autocratie*, especially 307-312.

Raymond van Uytven sketched largely the same process as Blockmans did for the urban communities, but he also pointed out that the nobility after having been 'defeated' as independent players, by no means left the playing field. The reign of Philip the Good was characterised by a revival of the nobility by its entering into princely service — a process that later historians have dubbed “state feudalism”.¹⁷⁹ By means of systematic endowments with territories, offices and associated exorbitant salaries, the dukes of Burgundy created a “super nobility” or aristocracy.¹⁸⁰ They were, moreover, gifted with lands across different provinces of the Netherlands and could thus for the first time be considered Burgundian (in the greater sense of the word) or Dutch.¹⁸¹ According to van Uytven, the revolts do not form a consistent tradition of urban resistance towards state centralisation, as they do with Blockmans, but a gradual shift over the course of the centuries. While the earlier revolts were urban in nature, they grew increasingly more 'noble'; Van Uytven even goes so far as to say that the nobles “dragged the cities along” in 1488 and that they would do so again in the Dutch Revolt.¹⁸² This reading of the Flemish Revolts places much more emphasis on the aristocracy, and it explains why the nobles had the means to form alternative sources of power, but it still doesn't quite answer what the motivations of these nobles were to take up the sword in the first place.

Both wrote their accounts of the Flemish Revolts a long time ago, in the seventies and eighties. Luckily, historiography has picked up on the regency of Maximilian in the new millennium, and the increased attention to prosopography has provided us with new approaches and insights. Hans Cools' thesis on the Burgundo-Habsburg aristocracy includes chapters that deal with the loyalties of noblemen from the reign of Charles the Bold to the Flemish Revolts.¹⁸³ What is important in his work is that he sees the actions of nobles as individual *choices* based on personal factors. While state formation is the driving force behind the genesis of the aristocracy, it is not necessarily that for the conflicts; Cools says that the noblemen who defected to France “did not confront “the state”, but a quickly shifting arrangement of forces instead.”¹⁸⁴ The most influential scholar on the period at this time is Jelle Haemers, who has written some articles specifically on the motivations behind the revolting nobles. But whereas Cools looks at the nobles in an international perspective of choice — throwing one's lot with the Burgundians or with the French — Haemers

179Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 15.

180Van Uytven, *Crisis als cesuur*, 433; The term aristocracy has become fairly mainstream since Hans Cools defined the elites that formed the subject of his study as such: Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 15.

181Van Uytven, *Vorst, adel en steden*, 110-112. Cf. Rosenfeld, *The provincial governors*, 13-16. The view goes back to Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, t. III.

182Van Uytven, *Crisis als cesuur*, 434; Van Uytven, *Vorst, adel en steden*, 118-119.

183Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 149-194.

184Hans Cools, 'Noblemen on the borderline. The nobility of Picardy, Artois and Walloon Flanders and the Habsburg-Valois conflict, 1477-1529', in: Wim Blockmans, Marc Boone and Thérèse de Hemptinne (eds.), *Secretum scriptorum. Liber alumnorum Walter Prevenier* (Louvain 1999) 371-382, there 376.

takes into account the accretion of new forms of government agents, parvenus and Germans following Maximilian. He posits that the high nobility was threatened in its influence by a wave of lower ranked contenders and sought to retain its position by supporting a less centralised form of government, the regency councils. In essence, by dividing the court up into multiple social groups, Haemers is largely able to take Blockmans' urban theoretical structure and apply it to a section of the nobility. He is, nevertheless, adamant on maintaining that the Flemish Revolts are urban revolts in which the nobility has little, if any, driving force.¹⁸⁵ There is an apparent difference of insight: in the models of Blockmans and Haemers, a faction needs to be losing power in order for it to spark a revolt, whereas Van Uytven and Cools imply that only strong factions can challenge the power of the prince.

Certainly Maximilian of Austria was not the only ruler who had to deal with malcontent nobles. Charles the Bold may have seen no open rebellion against himself, but his reign was plagued by dubious loyalties and defections to the king of France as well. Across the borders, the English and French had their own noble rebellions;¹⁸⁶ we may even draw connections between these and later conflicts, such as the Dutch Revolt and the French Wars of Religion. Jonathan Dewald speaks of “a spectacular series of aristocratic rebellions, stretching from the fifteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries.”¹⁸⁷ The issue was not necessarily one of an actual decrease of influence in the face of growing state formation — Philip of Cleves, after all, was at the height of his power in 1488 — but rather a *sense* that things were not going to go the right way, or that one was treated unfairly.¹⁸⁸ Much of this came down to a structural change in the position of the nobility. In former centuries, a nobleman derived his worth from his birth and several leading nobles could expect to be allowed into court by virtue of the goods they held.¹⁸⁹ This changed generally in the 15th century, but particularly quickly in the Burgundian Netherlands, where only a handful of men could penetrate into the new centralised court of the dukes.¹⁹⁰ Favouritism was structural in this period; status could no longer be entirely taken for granted based on someone's lineage and possessions, but

185Jelle Haemers, 'Adellijke onvrede. Adolf van Kleef en Lodewijk van Gruuthuze als beschermheren en uitdagers van het Bourgondisch-Habsburgse hof (1477-1492)', *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis*, 10 (2007) 178-215; idem, *For the common good*; idem, 'Le meurtre de Jean de Dadizeele. L'ordonnance de cour de Maximilien d'Autriche et les tensions politiques en Flandre (1481)', *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes*, 48 (2008) 227-248; idem, *Philippe et la Flandre*.

186Bellamy, *Treason in England*; Cuttler, *Treason in France*.

187Dewald, *The European nobility*, 134-139, 137 (quote).

188Dewald, *The European nobility*, 137, 149.

189Mario Damen, 'Heren met banieren. De baanrotsen van Brabant in de vijftiende eeuw', in: idem and Louis Sicking (eds.), *Bourgondië voorbij: de Nederlanden 1250-1650. Liber alumnorum Wim Blockmans* (Hilversum 2010) 139-158, there 140-148.

190Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 95-128; Werner Paravicini, 'Soziale Schichtung und soziale Mobilität am Hof der Herzöge von Burgund', in: idem, *Menschen am Hof der Herzöge von Burgund* (Stuttgart 2002) 371-426; Robert Stein, *De hertog en zijn Staten. De eenwording van de Bourgondische Nederlanden, ca. 1380-1480* (Hilversum 2014) 126-127.

was formed in a relationship between prince and favourite. The prince's most trusted men might expect material rewards in the forms of pensions or donations of confiscated property, and he could influence the prince's policy and control access to him.¹⁹¹ With it came a new discourse in which the ascription of *renommée* by contemporaries formed the core of a nobleman's honour. The primary way to assess a man was by his deeds. One of the primary qualities that a ruler should have, was to recognise virtue.¹⁹² This shift in mentality and the change in the economy, where landed goods, while still profitable, lost ground to the ability of princes to pay wages and pensions, formed the new aristocracy, which, as we have seen, Van Uytven and Cools have written about. The nobility, while not necessarily becoming less powerful, became a social group that was increasingly dependent on the prince for its wealth and status. As the supply of services at court increased, its providing nobles couldn't be met with the same rewards they were used to getting. Quite simply, it is a constant problem with favouritism that there is not enough favour to go around — and so we're seeing a structural discontent and strife between nobles themselves.¹⁹³ Favouritist relationships were also more fragile than those based on status, and could be ended at any moment.¹⁹⁴

In Norbert Elias' theories, the prince attracted the nobility with his lavish court and exploited the competition amongst them to strengthen the state.¹⁹⁵ While it's tempting to think that such a situation might be taking place here, it does not award the nobles enough power of themselves and perpetuates the myth of an absolutist state.¹⁹⁶ At times, the conflicts between noblemen at court could be seriously harmful to the position of the prince, and not just when it erupted into rebellion. A telling example is given when Philip of Cleves himself, in a treatise he wrote on naval warfare, advises Charles V not to make known who would become the leader of a military expedition, “pour ce que tousjours vostre conseil ne sera point qu'il n'y a quelque partialité ou envye”; if Charles would announce his lieutenant, the enemies of that man would only give bad advice in the hope that the campaign failed.¹⁹⁷ Such was the enmity in the Habsburg court in Philip's eyes.

The Burgundian state has traditionally been described as less centralised than the

191Jan Hirschbiegel, 'Zur theoretischen Konstruktion der Figur des Günstlings', in: idem and Werner Paravicini (eds.), *Der Fall des Günstlings. Hofparteien in Europa vom 13. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert* (Ostfildern 2004) 23-39.

192Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 231-244, 563-576; Jelle Haemers, 'Opstand adelt? De rechtvaardiging van het politieke verzet van de adel in de Vlaamse Opstand (1482-1492)', *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 123 (2008) 586-608.

193Arlette Jouanna, *Le devoir de révolte. La noblesse française et la gestation de l'Etat moderne (1559-1661)* (Paris 1989) 102-116.

194Hirschbiegel, *Zur theorie des Günstlings*, 29-30.

195Norbert Elias, *Die höfische Gesellschaft. Untersuchungen zur Soziologie des Königtums und der höfischen Aristokratie mit einer Einleitung: Soziologie und Geschichtswissenschaft* (Darmstadt 1969); for this is in the contexts of revolts, see Perez Zagorin, *Rebels and rulers, 1500-1660*, pt. I, *Society, states & early modern revolution* (Cambridge 1982) 96-97.

196Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 30.

197Oudendijk, *Bourgondisch ridder*, 109.

French, because the cities — the Flemish in particular — could exert power and the duke had to depend largely on the *aides* consented by the Estates-General, whereas the king could employ direct taxes. The position of the Burgundians towards their vassals on the other hand may be characterised quite differently. Whereas France and England had their peers, and the Empire its host of smaller lordships, the Burgundian vassals, although some were titular princes and counts, were never rulers in their own right.¹⁹⁸ Louis XI could be under assault from the League of the Public Weal, an alliance of vassals using the military might of their own domains. Philip the Good's spectacular rise during the early years of his reign meant that he had quickly outpaced the expansion of the fiefs in the Netherlands, and guaranteed that from a territorial perspective, he did not have any rivals.¹⁹⁹ Instead, noblemen built up social networks and personal legitimacy in the cities.²⁰⁰ People with the power of Adolf of Cleves and Louis of Gruuthuse could appoint men of their own preference for the influential posts of bailiff in Ghent and Bruges.²⁰¹ The great nobles were also not limited to a single area of origin, and interregionality was most prominent among the high nobility. By the last quarter of the fifteenth century, a quarter of the lower and middling nobility in Flanders was 'foreign'; for the high nobility that number was thrice as high.²⁰² Adolf of Cleves, though a Brabantine by title, also held considerable fiefs in Flanders and Zeeland;²⁰³ Gruuthuse, though from a traditional Flemish family, had worked himself up to being one of the greatest landholders in Holland during his stay as lieutenant-general.²⁰⁴ Borsele's patrimony was not just located in Zeeland, but also in the North of Flanders.²⁰⁵ The great aristocracy of the Netherlands then did not consist of men with peripheral autonomy, but of nobles who had worked their way into the centres of power, where they could challenge the dukes not with their land or wealth, but with their popularity among the burghers.

Some nobles could claim an even higher status than the regular aristocracy. The concept of the nobles of the blood originated in France in the 14th century, but only gained importance in the

198Paravicini, *Soziale Schichtung*, 382-383; Janssens, *De evolutie*, 129-130.

199Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Good. The apogee of Burgundy* (New edition Woodbridge 2002 (first print London and New York 1970)) 54-97.

200Mario Damen, 'Rivalité nobiliaire et succession princière. La lutte pour le pouvoir à la cour de Bavière et à la cour de Bourgogne', *Revue du Nord* 91 (2009) 361-384, there 373-378; Perhaps just like the Burgundians' own position in France before 1435 depended as much on their influence with the Parisians as it did on the wealth and power of their domains.

201Haemers, *Adellijke onvrede*, 191-194

202Frederik Buylaert, 'La noblesse et l'unification des Pays-Bas. Naissance d'une noblesse bourguignonne à la fin du Moyen Age', *Revue historique*, 653 (2010) 3-25, there 22. Frederik Buylaert and Jan Dumolyn, 'La signification politique, sociale et culturelle de la haute noblesse dans les pays Habsburgo-Bourguignons (ca. 1475-1525): un état de la question', in: Jelle Haemers, Céline van Hoorebeek and Hanno Wijsman (eds.), *Entre la ville, la noblesse et l'État. Philippe de Clèves (1456-1528). homme politique et bibliophile* (Turnhout 2008) 279-295, there 285-286.

203Jelle Haemers, 'Kleef (Cleve), Adolf van', *Nieuw nationaal biografisch woordenboek*, 18 (2007) 540-547, there 540.

204Frederik Buylaert, *Eeuwen van ambitie. De adel in laatmiddeleeuws Vlaanderen* (Brussels 2010) 113-114;

205Buylaert and Dumolyn, *La signification*, 285.

second half of the 15th. Over the next century, the blood relatives would clash with the peerage over matters of precedence, in which the former would eventually be victorious and they eventually became “a separate body and an order of supreme dignity”.²⁰⁶ Burgundy lacked a peerage in the French style, and as a result, the status of the 'seigneurs du sang' as the most elevated one developed sooner than in France. They were even regarded as the most prestigious part of the Order of the Golden Fleece. The 1473 chapter made note that Adolf of Cleves, being descended from John the Fearless, was to have the first place among the knights in any procession or train, along with any nephews and other close relatives of the duke, while Anthony, the Great Bastard, first chamberlain of Charles the Bold, held second place. Being an illegitimate son of Philip the Good ranked him lower than the legitimate family members, even if they were less closely connected, but it elevated him above all other members of the order.²⁰⁷ Adolf, “comme étant le plus noble,” was moreover the one to personally knight Maximilian in 1478 and the young Philip the Handsome in 1481.²⁰⁸ His salary in 1477 was a 9600 lb.; he and his family accounted for more than half of the total costs of pensions.²⁰⁹ Although, as noblemen, they belonged to the second estate, a treaty such as the one signed on the 16th of May 1488 was signed first by Adolf of Cleves and Philip of Beveren, then by the clergy, and following the nobles and deputies of the cities;²¹⁰ they were placed on the same level as territorial lords.

The nobles of the blood thus formed an alternative locus of legitimacy, next to Philip the Handsome's father Maximilian. The Flemish demanded not only that the regency in Flanders was held by the nobles of the blood and the council, but they also wanted the boy's relatives to assist Maximilian in governing in the other principalities.²¹¹ When Maximilian was captured in 1488, the Three Members demanded to speak to the nobles of the blood, and refused to take action until these would come to Ghent.²¹² They were also the ones who had to set up the different proposals for the release of the king of the Romans.²¹³

In conclusion, we might argue that unruly noblemen were the rule rather than the exception in this period. Any monarch who did not gain territory as quickly as Philip the Good or Charles V did, was inevitably going to find himself with a shortage of favours to deal out in the face

206Richard Jackson, 'Peers of France and princes of the blood', *French historical studies*, 7 (1971) 27-46 27-46, quote by a contemporary on p.43.

207Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 81; De Gruben, *Les chapitres*, 382.

208Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 91 (quote), 113, 117-118; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 251, 366.

209Haemers, *For the common good*, 108-109; Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States generals*, 54-55; By comparison, Louis of Orléans, the nearest of the blood and heir to the throne in France, receive 44,000 lb.t.: Frederick Baumgartner, *Louis XII* (Sutton 1994) 19.

210Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 22.

211Wielant, *Antiquités*, 332.

212BNF ms. fr. 11590, f.257v; De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 122-123, 126.

213BNF ms. fr. 11590, f.257v, 266v, 269r, 272v.

of a nobility that had been conscripted and empowered as representatives of rule. They operated not in the peripheries, as the dangerous rebels of France did, but exactly at the heart of power. In addition, a group of nobles of the blood came into power; they were, at the same time, the ones who had most to lose from the rule of a Habsburg, and also the ones most necessary to legitimise that rule as a continuation of a Burgundian tradition. That exactly these people revolted is neither surprising nor irrelevant.

2.2 A court of contenders

We have seen that, in addition to any disagreement with the duke, a great source of medieval and early modern revolts was tensions and factionalism at court, which almost inevitably led to discontent among nobles who might group together as a result. Factions did not necessarily correspond to a social partition.²¹⁴ Although any clear cut distinction into factions is artificial, it can be very useful if used with consideration. We might be able to shed light on the common characteristics of the men who formed the regency council, and position them next to three groups at court that threatened their position.

The high nobility being a fairly small club, its members did not have a lot of choice if they wanted to marry people of their own status.²¹⁵ Consequently, we can see that, of the noblemen of the regency councils, only Rassegem does not neatly fit within a family tree that also included the Burgundian dukes (see the appendix).

The death of Charles the Bold in 1477 shook up the Burgundian nobility. Louis XI exploited the situation by taking over the late duke's position as patron for a good deal of powerful military men, and introducing them to the French court. Among them were such men as the grand bâtard Anthony and the governor of Picardy and Arras Philippe de Crèvecoeur, lord of Esquerdes.²¹⁶ Together, they formed a Flemish faction at court, which insisted on intervening in Flanders over Brittany and which could serve as a link with the rebellious cities.²¹⁷ Maximilian's court ordinance was no doubt meant to counteract this exodus. While the absolute size of the court shrank, the number of noble chamberlains for the archduke alone came up to 116, almost thrice that of the previous dukes.²¹⁸ The battle over the nobility continued over the years by means of promises and

214Dumolyn and Buylaert, *L'importance*, 279-289.

215Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 97-98.

216Cools, *Mannen met macht* 102-106; Cools, *Noblemen on the borderline*, 379-380; Haemers, *For the common good*, 103-14; See also David Potter, *War and government in the French provinces. Picardy 1470-1560* (Cambridge 1993) 45-51.

217Blockmans, *La position*, 77-88; Harsgor, *Recherches*, II, 1633.

218Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 32; Louis-Prosper Gachard, 'Ordonnance et état de la maison de Maximilien, duc d'Autriche et de Bourgogne: Septembre 1477', *Bulletin de la commission royale d'histoire*, II, 9 (1856) 117-127.

favours. Philip of Beveren was given the prospect of a tempting inheritance in France, but Maximilian won him over by giving him the governorships of Namur, Picardy and Artois, the Golden Fleece collar and a stipend that was double the salary of a councillor-chamberlain.²¹⁹ Maximilian made sure to win Charles of Croÿ for himself by elevating his county of Chimay to an imperial principality.²²⁰ Olivier de la Marche and Philip of Croÿ were rumoured to be interested in French service in 1478, but they, too, stayed in Habsburg service.²²¹ Maximilian had made attempts to woo Beveren's father, the grand bâtard Anthony of Burgundy, back to the Low Countries, but to no avail.²²² As long as the king of France was intent on bleeding the Burgundo-Habsburg court dry of nobles, Maximilian was forced to employ a careful and expensive policy of favours.

The arrival of Maximilian and a stronger grip on the machinery of state and nobility was not appreciated by everyone. Most of the members of the regency council belonged to the people who had filled up the power vacuum at duke Charles' death in 1477. Jelle Haemers has regarded Adolf of Cleves and Louis of Gruuthuse as the 'guardian angels' of the Burgundian dynasty in this period. The former was promoted to lieutenant-general of the Netherlands, with Philip of Cleves as his backup, and the latter was made *chevalier d'honneur*, the equivalent of a first chamberlain, and thus the closest person to the duchess.²²³ Since the Great Privilege in Holland forbade any foreigners to take office, Gruuthuse, as lieutenant-general, was replaced by his family member Wolfert of Borsele.²²⁴ They all ran into conflicts with Maximilian at some point. Borsele was already in a troubled position because of the tight connections between his late father and the French king, his marriage to Charlotte of Bourbon, and rumours circulated that he, too, was not exclusively loyal to the Burgundian dynasty. When his lieutenantcy failed and he threw his lot with the Hooks, Maximilian supported the Cods and relieved Borsele of his position.²²⁵ The archduke's policy in Holland brought him in conflict with Wolfert of Borsele during the Flemish Revolt, but it also pitted him against John of Montfort in the Utrecht war. Louis of Gruuthuse was dealt a blow when a conflict between his favourite for the position of Bruges bailiff and the former bailiff, who believed he still held the position, was brought before the Great Council. Maximilian and Mary personally

219Gachard, *Les archives*, 304-305; Haemers, *For the common good*, 121-122.

220Werner Paravicini, 'Moers, Croy, Burgund.. Eine Studie über den Niedergang des Hauses Moers in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts', in: idem, *Menschen am Hof der Herzöge von Burgund* (Stuttgart 2002) 237-340, there 253-254; idem, *Soziale Schichtung*, 382-383.

221Alistair Millar, *Olivier de la Marche and the court of Burgundy, c.1425-1502* (unpublished thesis Edinburgh 1996) 195.

222Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 166; Gachard, *Lettres inedites*, II, 392-393.

223Haemers, *For the common good*, 105-109; Christophe Butkens, *Supplemt aux trophées tant sacrés que profanes du duché de Brabant* (The Hague 1726) 44.

224Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 153-154; Arie van Steensel, *Edelen in Zeeland. Macht, rijkdom en status in een laatmiddeleeuwse samenleving* (Hilversum 2010) 278-281.

225Mario Damen, *De staat van dienst. De gewestelijke ambtenaren van Holland en Zeeland in de Bourgondische periode (1425-1482)* (Leiden 2000) 194-195; Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 207-209; Louis Sicking, *Zeemacht en onmacht. Maritieme politiek in de Nederlanden 1488-1558* (Amsterdam 1998) 38.

intervened and sided against Gruuthuse.²²⁶ That his son John joined the French court, married a granddaughter of Charles VII, and became brother-in-law to Esquerdes probably did not help either.²²⁷ Adolf of Cleves found the former castellan of his fief Wijnendale and bailiff of Ghent John of Dadizeele murdered in 1481. The killer was sheltered by Maximilian, and the archduke refused to start an official investigation. Not only was this a provocative towards Adolf, but Rassegem, as the first alderman of Ghent, led the protest that the city organised.²²⁸ At the chapter of the Golden Fleece in 's-Hertogenbosch in 1481, neither Gruuthuse nor Borsele showed up. The latter was not just punished with the fine for nonattendance, but was also accused of having used violence during his lieutenancy, and of having had provided crucial information to the king of France.²²⁹

Maximilian's foreign policy was far more firmly anti-French than that of Philip the Good and perhaps even more so than that of Charles the Bold had been. Confronted with the statement that “les Francois [sont] anciens ennemis de la maison de Bourgogne,” Louis of Gruuthuse could only respond with amazement that he was one of the oldest members of court, and had never heard such things said during the reign of duke Philip.²³⁰ We have already seen some relationships of regency council members with France come by — Borsele's wife Charlotte of Bourbon, Beveren's father Anthony and Gruuthuse's son John, who were active members of the Flemish faction at the French court. Furthermore, Jacob of Savoy was the uncle of Charles VIII, and his wife, Mary, was the heiress of the convicted count of Saint Pol; they had a lot of confiscated goods to gain if they remained in the good graces of the French.²³¹ Philip of Cleves married Mary's sister Françoise some time in 1487, and he could expect to gain from it as well if he did not antagonise Charles. By that time, Jacob was dead and Mary was remarried to the count of Vendôme, Francis of Bourbon.²³² We thus have an elite of people who worked themselves up to be the most important people after the crisis of 1477, but who ran into conflict with Maximilian of Austria, both over matters of influence and jurisdiction within the Netherlands, as well as in his policy towards France. To counteract them, the Austrian supported a host of other clients, who might be expected to be more agreeable.

We can divide their rivals into two important groups. Firstly, we have men who climbed

226Haemers, *For the common good*, 113-116; idem, *Adellijke onvrede*, 191-198.

227Haemers, *For the common good*, 117; Maximiliaan Martens, *Lodewijk van Gruuthuse, maecenas en Europees diplomaat* (Bruges 1992) 117; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 460.

228Haemers, *For the common good*, 126; idem, *Le meurtre*; Victor Fris, 'Rasseghem (Adrien Vilain II, dit le sire de)', *Biographie nationale*, 18 (1905) 748-755, there 748-749.

229Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 110-111.

230Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 624-625. See also Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, 112, 115-116.

231Cools, *Noblemen on the borderline*, 380; Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 122. David Potter, 'The Luxembourg inheritance: the house of Bourbon and its lands in Northern France during the sixteenth century', *French History*, 6 (1992) 24-62, there 27-29.

232Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 42-43.

the ranks by their legal, financial or diplomatic skills: the parvenus at court. The urban centres of the Netherlands and Burgundy brought forth many officers who had a better grasp of finances and law than the traditional noble families could provide. Such men were adopted into the state administration and given much greater rewards than they could find in any city. This, in turn, allowed them to live like nobles and even marry into noble families, climbing the social ladder at speeds that were very alarming for any old elite.²³³ Pieter Lanchals, the servant of Maximilian who was beheaded on Bruges' market square in 1488, is the most prominent example; he was born the son of a carpenter, but worked himself up to the post of receiver general some time before 1477. It is after Maximilian entered the Netherlands, that Lanchals' career became truly spectacular, being knighted, made *maître d'hotel*, and put in charge of financial policy in Flanders.²³⁴ His appointment to bailiff in Bruges furthermore set him up as a clear contender for Gruuthuse, who had invested much in being the local power holder in the city²³⁵ — and if we are to believe Gruuthuse's defense in 1491, Lanchals had also started a propaganda campaign against him, writing various “libelles diffamatoires.”²³⁶ Officers like William Hugonet and Guy de Humbercourt, who were tried by the Ghent mob in 1477, were of similar caliber.²³⁷ Rumours circulated that Adolf of Cleves had been suspiciously reluctant to intervene, and even that Hugonet and Humbercourt had been murdered “à l'instigation d'aucuns de la court.”²³⁸

A second group consists of the noblemen who had hitherto been part of the traditional high nobility of the Burgundian and even pre-Burgundian Netherlands, but who were only in this period being elevated to supranational importance — and who would take over from the old elite after their downfall. The most important among these are (Limping) John III and (Cross-eyed) Frederick of Egmont, Engelbrecht II of Nassau, Henry of Witthem and the brothers of Glymes-Bergen.²³⁹ Especially the Brabanters seem to have been doing very well.²⁴⁰ While Louis of Bruges

233Haemers, *For the common good*, 126-129; Dumolyn and Buylaert, *L'importance*, 282-284; for a similar situation in England, see Steven Gunn, 'New Men' and 'New Monarchy' in England, 1485-1524', in: Robert Stein (ed.) *Powerbrokers in the Late Middle Ages: Les Courtiers Du Pouvoir Au Bas Moyen-Age* (Turnhout 2001) 153-163.

234Boone, *La Hollande*; idem, 'Un grand commis de l'Etat burgundo-habsbourgeois face à la mort: le testament et la sépulture de Pierre Lanchals (Bruges, 1488)', in: Frank Daelemans and Ann Kelders (eds.) *Miscellanea in memoriam Pierre Cockshaw (1938-2008). Aspects de la vie culturelle dans les Pays-Bas bourguignons* (Brussels 2009) 63-88.

235Haemers, *For the common good*, 128-129.

236Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 622.

237Boone, *La justice en spectacle*, 43-64.

238Boone, *La justice en spectacle*, 53-58; Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires de Philippe de Commynes*, pt. I, Dupont (ed.) (Paris 1843) 392-393; Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 124; Haemers, *For the Common Good*, 112-113; Wielant, *Antiquités*, 327. On the other hand, Adolf served as guardian for Humbourt's children for some time: Gachard, *Les archives*, 307.

239Walther, *Zentralbehörden*, 17-20; Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 93-94.

240Raymond van Uytven, 'Het hart van de Bourgondische en Habsburgse Nederlanden (1430-1531)' in: idem a.o. (eds.), *Geschiedenis van Brabant: van het hertogdom tot heden* (Zwolle and Louvain 2004) 213-232, there 223-227; Paul de Win, 'Filips de Schone en de Brabantse adel, of de Brabantse adel en Filips de Schone?', in: Raymond Fagel, Jac Geurts en Michael Limberger (eds.), *Filips de Schone, een vergeten vorst (1478-1506)* (Maastricht 2008) 37-62.

had been *chevalier d'honneur* — the equivalent of a first chamberlain — to Mary of Burgundy,²⁴¹ Maximilian took Engelbrecht of Nassau as his first chamberlain in 1482.²⁴² The honour was, perhaps, not only given by virtue of the talents that the lord of Breda had displayed up to that point, but also by his marriage to Maximilian's niece Cimburga of Baden.²⁴³ He was furthermore put in charge of the regency government when the archduke was elected and crowned king of the Romans.²⁴⁴ It must have stung somewhat that Philip of Cleves, who was handed the reins of the southern domains during the Utrecht war, was not elected for this position, even when he apparently put in enough effort during the absence that Molinet actually named him first as regent. Regardless, there is no evidence that Philip actively disliked Engelbrecht and they might even have liked each other.²⁴⁵

The same does not go for the first chamberlain of Philip the Handsome, John of Bergen,²⁴⁶ lord of Walhain (the later John III of Bergen op Zoom) and his brothers.²⁴⁷ The ascendancy of the family under Maximilian of Austria is quite remarkable. John II was a loyal noble and chamberlain, but never achieved a position of real influence; a noble like so many others. His sons John III and Cornelis were elected into the Order of the Golden Fleece in 1481 and 1500, and son Henry, the bishop of Cambrai, would become the Order's chancellor in 1493.²⁴⁸ Most important was the choice of John for Philip the Handsome's first chamberlain in 1485, a position which would turn into the most important one at court once the archduke would come of age.²⁴⁹ Up

241Butkens, *Trophées supplement*, I, 44.

242H. Jansen, 'De Bredase Nassaus', in: idem (ed.) *Nassau en Oranje in de Nederlandse geschiedenis* (Alphen aan de Rijn 1979) 11-44 34; Paul de Win, 'Engelbert (Engelbrecht) II Graaf van Nassau-Dillenburg en Vianden, Heer van Breda', *Handelingen van de koninklijke kring voor oudheidkunde, letteren en kunst van Mechelen*, 95, 1 (1991) 85-115, there 91.

243John of Egmont, too, was related to Maximilian, although much more distantly: M.A. Beelaerts van Blokland, 'De nationale positie van het huis van Egmond in de XVe en XVIe eeuw', *Jaarboek van het centraal bureau voor genealogie*, 14 (1960) 33-39, there 35-36.

244Royal House Archives (RHA), Oude Dillenburgse linie 1331-1605 (ODL), nr. 456.

245Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 471. Philip did, after all, own a portrait of Engelbert: De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 335-336.

246The family name Glymes that is sometimes used by modern historians (also in the combination Glymes-Bergen), was dropped by the family itself after John I inherited the city of Bergen op Zoom in 1419: Willem van Ham, *Het doorlichtig huis van Bergen op Zoom: een overzicht van de geschiedenis van de heren en markiezen van Bergen op Zoom, hun verwanten en hun bezittingen (1287-1795)* (Zaltbommel 1977) 41. In keeping with contemporary sources, I will use the name Bergen for the family.

247The editor of De Doppere, *Fragments inédits*, 83 n. 2., believes that the enmity between Philip of Cleves and John of Bergen went back to the murder by Philip of Lancelot of Berlaymont in 1484. That the houses of Bergen and Berlaymont were "sans doute alliée" at this time because the baron of Berlaymont married a granddaughter of the lord of Bergen op Zoom in 1578, is, in my opinion, a weak argument.

248 Hans Cools, 'Les frères Henri, Jean, Antoine et Corneille de Glymes-Bergen: les quatre fils Aymon des Pays-Bas bourguignons', *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* 41 (2001) 123-133, there 125-127; Cornelis Sloomans, *Jan Metten Lippen, zijn familie en zijn stad. Een geschiedenis der Bergen-op-Zoomsche heeren van Glymes* (Rotterdam and Antwerp 1945) 1-111.

249For the office of first chamberlain, see Werner Paravicini, 'The court of the dukes of Burgundy. A model for Europe?' in: idem (ed.), *Menschen am Hof der Herzöge von Burgund. Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Stuttgart 2002) 507-534, there 509-512; Fritz Walser, *Die spanischen Zentralbehörden und der Staatsrat Karls V.* (Göttingen 1959) 17-19; Walther, *Zentralbehörden*, 140-152; cf. Damen, *Rivalité*, 373-378.

to that point, the care of the young archduke had been in the hands of Adolf of Cleves, his closest Burgundian relative and godfather while the previous first chamberlain, Josse de Lalaing, died in 1483.²⁵⁰ Adolf's son Philip of Cleves might have expected that, as a noble of the blood and loyal follower of Maximilian, he would be next in line, rather than Bergen.²⁵¹ John was also appointed governor of Namur in 1485, a position that Philip of Cleves had tried to buy from the prince of Orange, who held it before Bergen did.²⁵² It resulted in a grudge. When the Namurois ousted Bergen's troops in spring 1488, they immediately notified Philip of Cleves, who, hailed by the townsfolk, installed his own garrison mere days later.²⁵³ Not just did Philip take the castle to protect it from “foreign or disloyal hands,” but “to tell the truth, to come to justice, which we have always had and followed, regarding the office of governor of Namur, which my aforementioned lord the king has always promised to us.”²⁵⁴ It had to be reconquered in August of that year.²⁵⁵ Finally, according to Adolf of Cleves, it was common knowledge that John had wanted to obtain the admiralty of the Netherlands, which was in the hands of Philip of Cleves since 1485.²⁵⁶

Philip also held the Bergen family responsible for the 1488 conflict. In a letter to the city of Malines written when Maximilian was still captive, Philip thought it necessary to justify himself and his father against his detractors. He names Frederick of Egmont, lord of IJsselstein and Cornelis of Bergen, the later lord of Zevenbergen, as two nobles who have accused the nobles of the blood of wanting to make peace with the Flemish too easily when the imperial army was already gathering in Cologne.²⁵⁷ In addition to slandering Philip and his father in this and other ways, they

250Haemers, *De strijd*, 44, 74; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 276; Hanno Wijsman, 'Politique et bibliophilie pendant la révolte des villes flamandes des années 1482-1492: relations entre les bibliothèques de Philippe de Clèves et de Louis de Bruges et la Librairie des ducs de Bourgogne' in: Jelle Haemers, Céline van Hoorebeeck and Hanno Wijsman (eds.), *Entre la ville, la noblesse et l'état: Philippe de Clèves (1456-1528). Homme politique et bibliophile* (Turnhout 2007) 245-278, there 246-248; Apparently, Adolf still guarded over Philip in 1486 during Maximilian's journey to Germany: Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 470-471. For Lalaing, Walther, *Zentralbehörden*, 145 n.1.

251The Bergen family was related to the Burgundian dukes: they descended from a bastard son of John II of Brabant († 1312): Butkens, *Trophées Supplement*, I, 146. John's great-granddaughter Margaret married the Burgundian duke Philip the Bold in 1369. However, the ties were so distant that the members of the Bergen family were not considered nobles of the blood or addressed as *cousins* for it

252De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 96; Edmond Poulet, 'Les gouverneurs de province dans les anciens Pays-Bas catholiques', *Bulletins de l'académie royale des sciences, des lettres et des beaux-arts de Belgique*, 2e serie, 35 (1875) 362-437, 810-921, there 904.

253 De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 127-130; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 63-64.

254Van Doren, *Inventaire Malines*, IV, *Lettres missives*, 25: “[...] soe verre 't selfve slot ghevallen ware in vremde oft ongetrauwe handen, als oick, om die waerheyte te zeggen, om te commen tooten goeden rechte dat wy altyt gehadt ende gevolget hebben, aengaende der officien van gouverneur van Namen, van denwelcken myn vorscreve heere de conynck ons altyts toegeseecht heift te doen gebruycken[.]”

255De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 177; Throwing out the governor John of Bergen was considered to be lese-majesty, but the city was forgiven if it would rally itself behind Maximilian's cause; probably a wise decision in September 1488: Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 63.

256Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 647.

257For Cornelis of Bergen, see Cools, *Les frères*, 127-128; Sloomans, *Jan metten Lippen*, 61-66. IJsselstein, too, very much enjoyed Maximilian's favour, as his fief of Buren was elevated to a county in 1492; the only other person to have gained an elevation to count was Frederick's older brother John of Egmont.

had encouraged the Germans to punish and plunder Louvain and Brussels, two cities that had disagreed with Maximilian in the past; “By which one may take notice of the good opinion, love and friendship they have towards aforementioned matter and the lands from which they were born.”²⁵⁸ A letter sent to the king of Portugal on the 27th of June after having joined the Flemish is even clearer. Philip mentioned that a group at court, with John of Bergen and his brothers as the leaders, had fuelled the war so that they could vindicate themselves against him. The entire war had little to do with the emperor or Maximilian; it was the Bergen clan at court which stirs up war against Philip and the Flemish out of spite and envy.²⁵⁹ The claim was brought forward in 1492 as well, when he stated that the war, the infraction of the peace and all evils had been procured by John of Bergen and his ilk out of hate for Philip of Cleves. “[P]our satisfaire à sa dampnable ambition, lui sambloit qu'il ne seroit point sceur en son estat, se mondit seigneur Philippe n'estoit bany publicquement et dechassé du pays.”²⁶⁰

Philip of Cleves likely was not the only man who harboured a grudge against the Bergen clan. During the war with Utrecht, a sizable amount of land confiscated from John of Montfort was given to Michael, the sixth of the Bergen brothers. He died soon after, and the fief was inherited by none other than his elder brother John, who appointed Cornelis governor.²⁶¹ Although Montfort's struggle mostly seems to have concerned John of Egmont's lordship of Purmerend, his demands did include being reinstated as lord of these goods as well.²⁶²

Two things are noteworthy about these contending groups. Firstly, although they were not always newcomers and had built careers under the Burgundian dukes, their fortunes rose greatly under Maximilian of Austria. It seems that they were made specifically to be contenders, and that Maximilian had tried, by these means, to curb the power of the aristocracy that had grabbed the reins of state in 1477.²⁶³ Secondly, they could not always enjoy the affection of the (Flemish) cities. We have seen how Lanchals and other state officials were tried at the Bruges market square. Whether the new elite was as disliked is not clear. John of Bergen's governorship certainly was not liked by the local populace, and Engelbrecht of Nassau had wanted to commit a blood bath in Ghent when its citizens had started rioting after Maximilian's entry in 1485.²⁶⁴ It is also worth mentioning

258Van Doren, *Inventaire Malines*, IV, *Lettres missives*, 22-26. “By denwelcken men wel mach mercken die goede meeninge, minne ende vriendscap, die zy hebben totten vorscreven materien ende den landen daer zy uuyt geboren zyn;”

259De Doppere, *Fragments inédits*, 82-84.

260Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 282.

261Municipal Archives Bergen op Zoom, Register van procuraties en certificaties nr. 5269 f.104r; Van der Linden, *Burggraven*, 164-165; Slootmans, *Jan metten Lippen*, 60-61. The chronology is uncertain here; Van der Linden sees Michael granted the goods on November 4th, 1482, but Slootmans has him die on the 30th of August that same year.

262RAD OA 639 5, f.1r; Van den Brandeler, *Bijdrage*, 120.

263Buylaert, *Eeuwen van ambitie*, 186-248; Buylaert and Dumolyn, *L'importance*, 282-284.

264De la Marche, *Mémoires*, III, 283.

that while the Cleves family, Gruuthuse and Borsele had *hôtels* in Bruges, nobles such as Bergen and Nassau only focused on Brussels and Malines.

In the end, we find that the noblemen who revolted against Maximilian of Austria certainly had their own reasons and goals, that only sometimes overlapped with those of the urban centres. To speak of the revolts as either urban or noble would be dangerously reductive. Furthermore, the status of these people, their legitimacy and their political networks put them in a different position than the popular politicians. We must accept that, like the Dutch Revolt, the Flemish Revolts were not an easily defined struggle between two parties, “but a highly complex process in which different groups strove for different goals.”²⁶⁵ As for Maximilian of Austria, he was faced with certain groups within the nobility that he at once needed to keep loyal to his cause by means of pensions and offices, and at the same time weaken their position and replace them with a political elite that more loyal to and dependent on himself. The two were essentially clashing: if he won in political power, he would risk losing legitimacy, and if he would use noblemen to enforce his legitimacy, he was forced to give up political power in exchange. The revolts broke the uneasy status quo. Could the punishments doled out solve his dilemma?

²⁶⁵Henk van Nierop, 'Alva's Throne — making sense of the revolt of the Netherlands', in: Graham Darby (ed.), *The origins and development of the Dutch Revolt* (London and New York 2001) 29-47, quote pp.32-33.

3. Traditions of crime and punishment

Law and justice were well rooted in Medieval society, but rebellions more or less escaped the subtle grasp of the doctors of law. There were many kinds of justice, remarks Philippe Contamine, but what was lacking (then as now) was any form of specific 'political justice.' The punishment of rebels consisted mostly of ad-hoc solutions and traditions, rather than of any clearly defined code.²⁶⁶ This often led to conflicts and uncertainties over procedure and jurisdiction. The Burgundian, thanks to the ever unsatisfied Flemish guildsmen, had built up a great deal of experience in punishing and repressing urban communities after revolts, and developed certain common repertoires. The situation during the regency of Maximilian of Austria was unprecedented, however, in the sense that it combined noble feuds with urban revolts. Thus enmities that might normally have been solved (one way or another) in the closed confines of court entered the stage of interregional and even international politics, and much of the future of Philip the Handsome's subjects depended on such outcomes. In this chapter, we will examine several traditions of punishment, from the basis of criminal law, to experience with urban repression and elite conflicts, and I will argue that certain strategies and customs existed, that could be applied and adapted to the situation of the 1480s and '90s.

3.1 Treason and grace in criminal law

Even just within criminal law, the concept of treason could be quite muddy. It consisted of two elements: on the one hand the Germanic idea of breach of trust (usually termed *sedition*), which was based on the idea that a man had sworn fealty to his lord. By acting against his liege in one way or another, he broke that bond and was culpable of one of the highest crimes. This was essentially a feudal conception of treason. By the fifteenth century, the word sedition had lost this particular meaning in favour of its modern one.²⁶⁷ The other element was the Roman concept of *laesa maiestatis*, or lese majesty. By the time of imperial Rome, it came to mean any form of insult against the dignity of the emperor, which included infringing on his rights, such as by making counterfeit money.²⁶⁸ Lese majesty had fallen into disuse after the fall of the Roman Empire, but

²⁶⁶Philippe Contamine, 'Inobédience, rébellion, trahison, lèse-majesté: observations sur les procès politiques à la fin du Moyen Âge', in: Yves-Marie Bercé (ed.) *Les procès politiques (XIV^e-XVII^e siècle)* (Rome 2007) 63-82, there 64.

²⁶⁷Philip Wielant, *Filips Wielant. Verzameld werk I. Corte instructie in materie criminele*, Jos Monballyu (ed.) (Brussels 1995) 188: "Seditious, those who organise unjustified [ongheoorlooftde] meetings and stir up the people[.]"

²⁶⁸Bellamy, *Treason in England*, 1-14; Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 4-9; Jan Dumolyn, 'The legal repression of revolts in Late Medieval Flanders', *Tijdschrift voor rechtsgeschiedenis* 68 (2000) 479-521, there 483-486.

was picked up again by theoreticians from the 12th century onwards.

The concept was intimately interwoven with the idea of the sovereignty.²⁶⁹ In the Netherlands, the importance of the concept probably reached its zenith under Charles the Bold, who placed much emphasis on justice as the foundation of his rule and eventually went so far as to accuse the Estates of Flanders of lese majesty for not consenting to the aides that he proposed. He also like to style himself a sovereign lord despite holding French and Imperial fiefs.²⁷⁰ Regardless, the Netherlands were quite late to develop the concept and it was very rarely explicitly used.²⁷¹

Philip Wielant, in his practical treatise on criminal law includes many crimes that are considered crime against temporal majesty: not only conspiracy against the prince, his officers or the commonwealth, but also to continue serving an office from which one has been relieved or to appoint oneself. Most of these were punishable by death, and all included the confiscation of the perpetrator's goods. Wielant also mentions that traitors had historically had their houses destroyed.²⁷² To do so was a symbolic act that washed away the memory of the perpetrator of the crime, but the practice had gotten very rare indeed by the 15th century.²⁷³ Lese majesty by conspiracy against the prince was one of the *cas royaux* or *cas réservées* (which the Burgundians had appropriated themselves) that could only be judged by the prince or his council — at least theoretically.²⁷⁴

While the Burgundian duke could employ harsh punishment as a strategy to enforce his position and make clear his power over his subjects, he could also do so by choosing “grace et misericorde” over “rigueur de justice.”²⁷⁵ That is, to extend grace to a convicted man or woman and, with some attached conditions, set him or her free from the consequences of the sentence. As a tool, it was gradually tightened; the lower echelons of power (such as the sovereign bailiff of Flanders)

269Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 9-15.

270Blockmans, '«Crisme de leze magesté». Les idées politiques de Charles le Téméraire', in: J.-M. Duvosquel, J. Nazet and A. Vanrie, *Les Pays-Bas bourguignons, histoire et institutions. Mélanges André Uyttebrouck* (Brussels 1996) 71-81; Werner Paravicini, 'Mon souverain seigneur', in: Peter Hoppenbrouwers, Antheun Janse and Robert Stein (eds.), *Power and persuasion. Essays in the art of state building in honour of W.P. Blockmans* (Turnhout 2010) 27-48; Stein, *De hertog en zijn Staten*, 183-191.

271Dumolyn, *The legal repression*, 489-494.

272Wielant, *Corte Instructie*, 78-82, 186-191; Lisa van Hijum, *Grenzen aan macht. Aspecten van politieke ideologie aan de hoven van Bourgondische en Bourgondisch-Habsburgse machthebbers tussen 1450 en 1555* (Enschede 1999) 107-111. For good measure, it is set next to crime against the divine majesty, among which is the original sin, “so harshly punished that all the world was lost for it.”

273Corien Glademans, *Om die wrake wille. Eigenrichting, veten en verzoening in laat-middeleeuws Holland en Zeeland* (Hilversum 2004) 177-184; It seems to have been more common in France for political crimes. The hôtel of the prince of Orange was brought down in 1477 when the man himself could not be captured for trial: Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 231; see also *ibidem* 234. As of fall 2014, the practice is used by the Israelis against Palestian terrorists, not without controversy.

274Bellamy, *Treason in England*, 12; Cauchies and De Schepper, *Justice*, 53; Dumolyn, *The legal repression*, 490, 497; That it was not always so clear-cut in (French) reality is shown by Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 18, 55-84.

275Prevenier, *The two faces*, 179; cf. Marjan Vrolijk, *Recht door gratie. Gratie bij doodslagen en andere delicten in Vlaanderen, Holland en Zeeland (1531-1567)* (Zutphen 2001) 10.

lost the power of remission, but the Burgundian duke appropriated it in all its forms despite it having nominally been a royal prerogative.²⁷⁶ By the second half of the 15th century, the *matières de grâce* were reserved exclusively to the duke and his closest councilmen; not even the Great Council could extend pardon.²⁷⁷

The 'misericorde' of the king or duke had clear connotations with the grace of God and reinforced the idea of a clear link between the earthly ruler and his heavenly judge.²⁷⁸ From the perspective of princely authority, the act made clear for everyone to see the power of the duke over the court that had sentenced the convict. Not only could he display his capacity to overrule the local lawmen, but it also required the convicted to specifically appeal to the duke and recognise him as the highest representative of the law.²⁷⁹ Of course, the dukes did not just go around pardoning people left and right in order to show their superiority over the urban aldermen. Walter Prevenier has suggested that there were two principal reasons for a pardon: 90%, he estimates, were the 'idealistic' pardons described at length by Marjan Vrolijk in her dissertation. They were attempts to circumvent the narrow and inconsiderate practices of Medieval law and instead to work towards a form of reconciliation between the perpetrator and the victim. It usually required all involved parties to agree with the solution.²⁸⁰ In addition to those, however, Prevenier identifies a 10% which he calls 'politically motivated'. It was at any time entirely possible that a person who was in some way involved in the Burgundian clientèle network was guilty of having committed a grave crime. In order to maintain (or gain) the ability to make use of such a person, he was granted a pardon. One example given is that of one Adrian Vilain (the eponymous cousin of the regency council member) who, after having abducted the widow Humbercourt, fled and worked himself up in the ranks of Jacob of Savoy's military detachment. As a commander there, he was too useful to be convicted of abduction or rape.²⁸¹ What is interesting is that while the 'idealistic' pardons take the specific circumstances and context into account more than the law could allow for, but a 'politically

276Jonas Braekevelt, *Un prince de justice. Vorstelijke wegeving, soevereiniteit en staatsvorming in het graafschap Vlaanderen tijdens de regering van Filips de Goede (1419-1467)* (Unpublished thesis, Ghent 2013) 93-132; Vrolijk, *Recht door gratie*, 9-18;

277A.J.M. Kerckhoffs-de Heij, *De Grote Raad en zijn functionarissen, 1477-1531*, 2 pts. (Amsterdam 1980) 8-9, 53; Walther, *Zentralbehörden*, 10, 14.

278Claude Gauvard, «*De grace especial*». *Crime, état et société en France à la fin du Moyen Age* (Paris 1991) 934; Geoffrey Koziol, *Begging pardon and favor. Ritual and political order in early medieval France* (Ithaca and London 1992) 77-108, 181-213.

279Cauchies and De Schepper, *Justice*, 62-66.

280Davis, *Fiction in the archives*; Marjan Vrolijk, *Recht door gratie*, passim; Prevenier, *The two faces*, 179-183. See also Hugo de Schepper and Marjan Vrolijk, 'The other face of struggle against violence. Peace and order by clemency in the Netherlands, 1500-1650', in: Thomas F. Shannon and Johan P. Snapper (eds.), *Janus at the millennium. Perspectives on time in the culture of the Netherlands* (Dallas 2004) 279-293. For the idea of law being social order, rather than a set of rules, see Koziol, *Begging pardon*, 214-240.

281Prevenier, *Two faces*, 183-185; idem, 'Geforceerde huwelijken en politieke clans in de Nederlanden: de ontvoering van de weduwe van Guy van Humbercourt door Driaan Vilain in 1477', in: H. Soly en R. Vermeir (eds.) *Beleid en bestuur in de oude Nederlanden. Liber amicorum Prof. Dr. M. Baelde* (Gent 1993) 299-307

motivated' does not do so at all. The question of the veracity of the story becomes irrelevant. "The prince and his notaries," writes Prevenier, "only care about the opportunity and the usefulness of a pardon, and the construction of a more or less credible discourse."²⁸² The 16th century French jurist Jean Papon even went so far as to claim that a "homme rare & excellent en sa vacation, & dont la mort seroit dommageable à la republique" could be remitted for a crime as grave as homicide.²⁸³ Theoretically, at least, even lese majesty could not be pardoned, but this happened only very rarely.

Nonetheless, although being extended pardon sounds like a good deal, it was in some ways quite painful for anyone to ask for it. To ask for grace was to admit to having committed the crime. Pardon requests was usually full of all manners of excuses and conditions that made the crime understandable, but they were always a confession, which was at best shameful and at worst one's worst enemy if the request for pardon was denied.²⁸⁴

3.2 Repression of urban communities

Even though the elements of justice described above may have been employed opportunistically and cynically at times, they were more or less able to function well. Criminal law as an instrument was, however, quickly rendered obsolete once tens of thousands of Flemings decided to revolt against the duke of Burgundy. To try every one of them would have been a ludicrously laborious process. What happened instead was that not the individual but the city was used as the standard unit of measurement.²⁸⁵ The treaties and rituals surrounding the surrender of a rebellious city occupy a difficult space between diplomacy and justice where the two can't meaningfully be separated. Since the complete massacre of the population obviously was not an option, the rebellious subjects were, with a handful of exceptions, extended the duke's grace.²⁸⁶ However, that grace was combined with some harsh repressive measures.

While the conflicts of the Burgundian dukes with the Flemish urban communities have always received much attention. Historians such as Henri Pirenne, Richard Vaughan and Wim Blockmans, however, had only looked at such peace treaties themselves, focusing on the way in

²⁸²Prevenier, *Two faces*, 191.

²⁸³Jean Papon, *Trias iudicial dv second notaire de Jean Papon, conseiller dv roy, et lieutenant general au baillage de Forestz*. (2nd edition Lyon 1580) 471. The example given is that of a soldier who had murdered 17 people, but was so good at his job that even the notoriously harsh Francis I saw reason to remit his crimes.

²⁸⁴Davis, *Fiction in the archives*, 11; cf. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan Smith (New York 1977) 37-39, 53.

²⁸⁵Antony Black, 'The individual and society' in: J.H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Medieval political thought c. 350-c. 1450* (Cambridge 1988) 588-606, there 602-604; J.P. Canning, 'Law, sovereignty and corporation theory, 1300-1450', in: J.H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Medieval political thought c. 350-c. 1450* (Cambridge 1988) 454-476, there 473-476.

²⁸⁶Jörg Fisch, *Krieg und Frieden im Friedensvertrag* (Stuttgart 1979)78-81.

which the Burgundian dukes broke the city state ideal.²⁸⁷ The study of the rituals involved in revolts and in the submission of a city, which is a more recent trend in historiography, owes much to the work of Peter Arnade. He incorporated such rituals into the larger scheme of the Burgundian theatre state. Arnade describes Philip the Good's actions after having defeated Ghent in 1453 as following: “[H]is answer to Ghent's rebellion was to impose a crushing punishment, the purpose of which, I argue, was a full public recuperation of princely authority. As part of his terms for peace, the duke demanded that Gentenars undergo a dazzling ceremony of humiliation which, with a host of other ritual punishments, was meant to belittle the defeated townsmen through a drama of collective punishment.”²⁸⁸ This does not mean that we should neglect the actual, 'political' terms of the peace treaty; but it does mean we should see these in the light of a broader repressive act of the dukes, the point of which was not only to diminish the stature of the cities, but also to make that painfully clear to the inhabitants. The rituals described for Ghent by Arnade correspond well with those of other conflicts. We can identify a certain repertoire of options available to the dukes.

Firstly, there is often a ritual destruction. In the case of a rebellion, the entire city was culpable of lese majesty. Theorists agreed that a prince had the authority to destroy any such city. It had come up several times in the past: councillors suggested the destruction of Bruges, Ghent and Malines after their revolts in 1438, 1453 and 1467, and would later advise it to Charles V and Philip II. Although doing so certainly would have sent a clear message, it would also have meant a serious blow to the power of the duke; if they behaved, these cities were centres of major importance, and so they were spared. Dinant and Liege, located in the eponymous principality, were less fortunate in 1466 and 1468, and they were systematically rased. Instead of destroying the entire city Philip the Good closed one of Bruges' gates and made it serve as a chapel, and closed two of Ghent's entrances.²⁸⁹ During the Flemish Revolts, Engelbert of Nassau advised to destroy Ghent when the citizens caused a riot in 1485 after Maximilian had entered: “[P]ar ce moyen estoit le prince perpetuellement seigneur et maistre de Gand et de toute Flandres.” Philip of Cleves disagreed and argued that “quant Gand seroit destruite, il perdrait la fleur et la perle de tous ses pays.”²⁹⁰ In the end the Habsburger did not alter the civic topography of the submissive cities after any of the peace treaties, even if he had hoped to be able to demolish the house where he had been held captive in

287Pirenne, *Histoire*, II, 338; III, 53. Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 305-307; idem, *La répression de révoltes urbaines comme méthode de centralisation dans les Pays-Bas bourguignons*, *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes*, 28 (1988) 5-9; Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 332.

288Arnade, *Realms of ritual*, 97-98.

289Marc Boone, 'Destroying and reconstructing the city. The inculcation and arrogation of princely power in the Burgundian-Habsburg Netherlands (14th-16th centuries)' in: Martin Gosman, Arie Vanderjagt en Jan Veenstra (eds.), *The propagation of power in the Medieval West. Selected proceedings of the international conference, Groningen 20-23, November 1996* (Groningen 1997) 1-33; Arnade, *Realms of ritual*, 116-117; Dumolyn, *The legal repression*, 509.

290De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 283.

1488 and replace it with a chapel for John of Dadizeele and Pieter Lanchals.²⁹¹ A plan to fortify the ducal residence and integrated the gate to Bruges into it, as well as to build a tower near the waterway to Antwerp was never realised.²⁹²

Secondly, the cities were obliged to pay a fine to the duke. This has been termed the *amende profitable*, as a companion to the ritual *amende honorable*.²⁹³ It is surprising that Maximilian, who asked so much money of the Flemish, was relatively mild in his fining. The peace of Bruges after the first revolt included no fine, not even after the riot in Ghent after the archduke had entered, save for a hefty payment for the negotiators and some reparations to Margaret of York.²⁹⁴ The second revolt was more financially destructive. The Brabantine cities were individually fined so as to wring as much money as possible out of them, but the fine imposed on the county of Flanders through the treaty of Montilz-lez-Tours was relatively modest.²⁹⁵ Even 's-Hertogenbosch, which had not taken sides in the conflict, but had refused the emperor passage on his way back to Germany, could only buy off its punishment.²⁹⁶ In the separate peace treaties, Bruges and Ghent were fined as well.²⁹⁷ In addition, Maximilian's monetary ordinance, enacted in 1489 just after the treaties were signed, tripled the amount of silver in the coinage, thus making these fines suddenly worth a lot more.²⁹⁸ Several cities had to file for bankruptcy in the following years, Bruges among them.²⁹⁹ In spite of such consequences, the fines were relatively mild. Ghent, for example, ended up paying only a sixth after Cadzand in 1492 than it had paid at Gavere in 1454.³⁰⁰ A very significant portion of this sum was to be paid to several of Maximilian's men: about one seventh, 1,667 lb.gr. went to Albert of Saxony and one twelfth, 1000 lb. of the 12,000 lb. to Engelbert of Nassau.³⁰¹ By this means, Maximilian and his predecessors hoped to be effective patrons for their clientèles.³⁰² These were impressive amounts of money, and the count of Nassau

291BNF, ms. fr. 17909, f. 49r; Boone, *La justice en spectacle*, 62. It was common in reconciliations that the murderer had to pay for a certain number of masses to be held for the victim, on rare occasions with a memorial sign: Glaudemans, *Om die wrake wille*, 236-248.

292Boone, 'From cuckoo's egg to "sedem tyranni"'. The princely citadels in the cities of the Low Countries, or the city's spatial integrity hijacked (15th-early 16th centuries)' in: idem and Martha Howell, *The power of space in late medieval and early modern europe. The cities of Italy, Northern France and the Low Countries* (Turnhout 2013) 77-96, there 85.

293For those of 1438 and 1454, see Jan Dumolyn, *De Brugse opstand van 1436-1438* (Heule 1997) 283-292; Idem, *The legal repression*, 513-514. The Bruges fine was about 7 years' worth of income.

294Haemers, *De strijd*, 119, 137; Wouter Ryckbosch, *Tussen Gavere en Cadzand. De Gentse stadsfinanciën op het einde van de middeleeuwen (1460-1495)* (Gent 2007) 38.

295Blockmans, *Albrecht van Saksen*, 193-194; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 166-167.

296J.N.G. Sassen, *Chartes en privilegiebrieven, berustende in het archief der gemeente 's-Hertogenbosch* ('s-Hertogenbosch 1862-1865) nrs. 630, 631.

297Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 211-212.

298Van Uytven, 'Politiek en economie: de crisis der late XV^e eeuw in de Nederlanden', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 53 (1975) 1097-1149, there 1108-1109; Spufford, *Monetary problems*, 160-163.

299Van Uytven, *Politiek en economie*, 1145.

300Ryckbosch, *Tussen Gavere en Cadzand*, 39.

301Ryckbosch, *Tussen Gavere en Cadzand*, 39.

302Dumolyn, *The legal repression*, 514; Dumolyn, *Brugse opstand*, 292.

was said to have built his palace in Brussels with the spoils of Flanders, but we need to keep in mind that they received pensions of 2500 and 1500 lb. respectively per year.³⁰³

A third aspect, one of the most important, was the political repression employed, in the form of confiscation of civic privileges. Doing so often included changing the way in which the college of aldermen was formed, and the dukes used this as a means of gaining more influence in the political landscape of a city. In our case, however, we may skip a detailed description of such events, since none of these means could be applied or adapted to the case of noblemen. It is worth noting that in the end, although Maximilian was often quite willing to maintain a particularistic status quo after the first peace treaties, the submissions after the cities revolted again were quite repressive.³⁰⁴

Once all conditions were agreed upon, the city could perform the *amende honorable*, the ritual in which the repentant populace asked for forgiveness. It had been an old tradition, but the Burgundians refined it and made it a staple of the submission of revolts, and included the exact terms of it in their peace treaties. It involved the city magistracy and all other prominent male citizens kneeling bareheaded and barefoot (the captains even in their undergarments) before the duke, handing over the keys of the city and pleading for mercy. Kneeling and begging in this way was a ritual that was most commonly seen in the reconciliations that took place after a murder. The murderer and his friends and family — sometimes hundreds of people — were dressed down to their shirts and asked for forgiveness.³⁰⁵ Presenting the keys, on the other hand, was a common ritual in princely entries; it signified the complete submission of the city and handed over the day-to-day authority to the prince while he stayed. It also meant he couldn't be locked in or out.³⁰⁶ When Philip the Good entered Ghent in 1453, he furthermore introduced the custom of confiscating the guild banners and publicly parading and displaying them as spoils. Next to the prominently displayed ducal banners and emblems, these banners drew attention to the ideological stripping down of the literally undressed supplicants.³⁰⁷ Both these procedures and the following procession through the streets, filled with *tableaux vivants*, were coated with a layer of sacredness that made numerous comparisons between the victor and God, portraying him as a messianic figure.³⁰⁸ The

303GSAB Raad van State en Audiëntie (RSA) 22bis, f. 1v-2r; Wauters, *Histoire des environs*, 192.

304Dumolyn, *The legal repression*, 514-516. Jacoba van Leeuwen, *De Vlaamse wetsvernieuwing. Een onderzoek naar de jaarlijkse keuze en aanstelling van het stadsbestuur in Gent, Brugge en Ieper in de Middeleeuwen* (Brussels 2004) passim, but for the regency of Maximilian in specific, 95-118, 170-191, 231-246.

305Glaudemans, *Om die wrake wille*, 227-229.

306Hans Smit, *Vorst en onderdaan. Studies over Holland en Zeeland in de late middeleeuwen* (Louvain 1995) 287-289; Dumolyn, *De Brugse opstand*, 295 n.896.

307Arnade, *Realms of ritual*, 122-123; Loïc Colella-Denis, 'Les réconciliations entre Philippe le Bon et ses sujets révoltés dans les *Mémoires* de Jacque du Clercq', *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* 53 (2013) 111-123, there 122.

308Peter Arnade, *Beggars, iconoclasts, and civic patriots. The political culture of the Dutch Revolt* (Ithaca and London 2008) 34-38; idem, *Realms of ritual*, 119-126; Boone, 'Diplomatie et violence d'Etat. La sentence rendue par les

very accusatory nature of such a ritual was offensive to citizens; when the French mediated between Philip the Good and Ghent, the Ghenters objected to the use of the word 'sentence' and rejected the humiliating proposal outright.³⁰⁹ Moreover, the peace was proclaimed in the language of the victors, French, to a Dutch speaking audience.³¹⁰ Charles the Bold would follow the same pattern.

In such cases, Maximilian was aware of the specifics of a Burgundian tradition. He sent the *maître d'hôtel* Olivier de la Marche, who was often tasked with keeping traditions alive and proper, to Adolf of Cleves and Philip of Beveren in preparation for his entry in 1485, “pour dresser les besongnes et leur dire ce qu'ilz avoyent à faire.” Letters were sent to the Ghenters to tell them how to meet the archduke; as usual, bareheaded and on their knees.³¹¹ Their banners, however, were not confiscated.³¹² Information on this event is very scarce, and the fact that Molinet describes the humiliation of the citizens after the tumult later that week in much more detail, should tell us that it did not entail a terribly spectacular event. That second time, the chancellor of Brabant told the Ghenters that “le duc les avoit recheu à mercy et fait paix, plus à leur honneur et avantage que au sien, dont ses princes ou barons s'estoyent esbahis.”³¹³ In the case of Bruges, which was pacified earlier that month, I have not been able to find evidence of a ritual of *amende honorable*. The archduke entered the city by ship and the chroniclers present this occasion more as a renewal of his oath than as a punishment of the city.³¹⁴ It was not necessarily Maximilian who had to be present. In 1490, the *amende* was consented to by Bruges to Engelbert of Nassau, although I have found no reference to it having taken place.³¹⁵ The Ghenters kneeled before Albert of Saxony in 1492, presenting him their apologies and the city keys, “mit mer gar vil schönern worten.”³¹⁶ In all cases,

ambassadeurs et conseillers du roi de France, Charles VII, concernant le conflit entre Philippe le Bon, duc de Bourgogne, et Gand en 1452', *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d'Histoire* 156 (1990) 1-54, there 18-19; Dumolyn, *The legal repression*, 516-517; Neil Murphy, 'Between court and town: ceremonial entries in the Chroniques of Jean Molinet', in: Jean Devaux, Estelle Doudet and Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, *Jean Molinet et son temps. Actes des rencontres internationales de Dunkeque, Lille et Gand (8-10 novembre 2007)* (Turnhout 2013) 155-161.

309Boone, *Diplomatie et violence*, 2, 14.

310John Armstrong, 'The language question in the Low Countries: the use of French and Dutch by the dukes of Burgundy and their administration', in: idem, *England, France and Burgundy in the fifteenth century* (London 1983) 189-212, there 196; Arnade, *Realms of ritual*, 121.

311Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 462-463. De la Marche himself does not recall this event in his *mémoires*, but he can be quite vague and confused in general on this period. For his influence on the traditions, see Millar, *Olivier de la Marche*, 184-290.

312During their little rebellion four days later, the Ghenters rallied behind their banners: Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 464; *Hoccalus*, Histoire des Païs-Bas, 708.

313Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 467. He continues: “Item, comment, illec lui venu, s'estoyent mis en armes contre lui et les siens et volut tourner vers son hostel par trois quartiers, dont il avoit bien pensé de les mettre à totale ruine par feu et espée, ne fuist la pitié qu'il avoit des eglises, pareillement des bonnes personnes qui illec sont habitans.” N.B. Molinet is remarkably inconsistent in the titles he uses in these chapters, but it is clear from the context that 'duke' in this case refers to the archduke rather than his son.

314't Boeck, 75-76; Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 257-263; De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 277.

315Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 487: “eerst, dat die van Brugghe ghehouden zullen wesen die grave Inghelbert van Nassauwe, fote zijnen stedehoudere, eene honorable amende ofte voetval te doene buyten die poorte van haerlieder stede, ten eersten dat zy daer toe vermaent zullen wezen.”; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 211.

316*Geschichten und Taten*, 125 (quote); Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 523.

however, the description, if there is one, is very short compared to the accounts of the subsequent festivities and rejoicing and no banners were confiscated this time around.

Not everyone could be part of the *amende honorable* and walk away with the shame and a future of heavy taxes. Some people were deemed too guilty or too dangerous, and they were excluded from the peace, to be judged in trial. Such trials almost invariably ended in banishment or beheading, with a great degree of publicity.³¹⁷ Over the course of the two Flemish revolts, 38 of Maximilian's opponents were confronted with a death penalty, 9 of them in Ghent and 29 in Bruges. By comparison, the cities themselves during their revolutionary reigns executed 43 men who favoured the archduke, although here it is Ghent that holds the higher number, with 31 to 12.³¹⁸

³¹⁷Boone, *La justice politique*, 205-218; Dumolyn, *The legal repression*, 502-507, 517-519.

³¹⁸Boone, *La justice politique*, 206. It is worth noting that opponents of Maximilian were not just executed by him or his lieutenants, but were also tried by counterrevolutionary regimes before they signed peace, as William Rijm and the Copenhole twins were.



Image 2: Maximilian enters Ghent in 1485, as depicted in the *Weißkunig*.

3.3 Conflicts with noblemen

While the Burgundian dukes saw many urban revolts from even before they actually inherited the county of Flanders, they were not confronted with my nobles revolts.³¹⁹ For a reservoir of practices

³¹⁹An exception is the plot of William of Rochefort and John de la Trémoille, both knights of the Order of the Golden Fleece, to deliver Dijon into the hands of Charles VII in 1432: Gaston de Fresne de Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles*

and customs, Maximilian might have looked elsewhere. To France, for example, which had a long legacy of treason trials. Louis XI conducted more trials than any contemporary. The king, just like duke Charles the Bold, did much to expand his authority by employing the idea of lese majesty.³²⁰ There was an interesting shift in the tactics of confiscation. The very accusation of lese majesty was enough to warrant a confiscation of the accused's goods.³²¹ During the Hundred Years War, the king usually opted to integrate such lands into the royal domain. It allowed for easier reconciliation and incentivised a return to the French party for those who had chosen the English or Burgundians. But as the troubles became more internal and the integrity of the realm became the goal, confiscated property was instead largely handed out to the king's favourites.³²²

One of the most important trials, in itself and in the ramifications it had for the relations between France, Burgundy and the borderline noblemen, was that of the *connétable* Saint Pol. The fabulously wealthy Louis of Luxembourg, count of Saint Pol was one of those noblemen who had an independent position in the Franco-Burgundian borderlands, and king Louis and duke Charles sought to get rid of him.³²³ In 1475, the *connétable* was charged with treason by the French monarch, and was given the choice either to admit to a conspiracy and to plead with the king for mercy, or to subject to criminal law. He did not bow down and was finally beheaded after a swift trial.³²⁴ The king, seizing the opportunity for propaganda, gave copies of the trial documents to important noblemen in the realm.³²⁵ Saint Pol was a very high nobleman by Burgundian standards, but a little less so by French. The peers of France could legally only be tried by the king and the other peers, although in practice this mostly meant *in the presence* of the others rather than by them, and even then the right was not consistently employed. They suffered some hard punishments for rebellions, but none of them were condemned to death. Instead, the duke of Nemours forfeited his peerage when he revolted in 1470, and when he was tried again in 1477, he was not granted the privilege of defending himself in front of his peers, and was eventually relieved of his body. The

VII, pt. II, *Le roi de Bourges, 1422-1435* (Paris 1882) 459-461. Some cases that did not involve such overt betrayal or rebellion, but were classified as treason include the infidelity of the count of Tonnerre under John the Fearless and the 'Borsele affair' under Philip the Good: Pierre Gresser, 'Inconduite et trahison d'un prince sous Jean sans Peur: le cas de Louis de Chalon, comte de tonnerre', *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* 48 (2008) 57-72; Robert Stein, 'De affaire Van Borselen en de consolidatie van de Bourgondische macht in de Nederlanden (1425-1435)', *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 124 (2009) 3-29.

320Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 213-233.

321Maurice Keen, *The laws of war in the late middle ages* (London and Toronto 1965) 91-92.

322Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 120-141.

323Cools, *Noblemen on the borderline*, 374-375.

324Yves Lallemand, 'Le procès pour trahison du connétable de Saint-Pol', in: Yves-Marie Bercé (ed.) *Les procès politiques (XIV^e-XVII^e siècle)* (Rome 2007) 145-155, there 152-154.

325Werner Paravicini, 'Peur, pratiques, intelligences. Formes de l'opposition aristocratique à Louis XI d'après les interrogatoires du connétable de Saint-Pol' in: Bernard Chevalier and Philippe Contamine (eds.), *La France de la fin du XV^e siècle. Renouveau et apogée* (Paris 1985) 183-196, there 184.

duke of Alençon seemed to be heading the same way if he would not perform an *amende honorable*, but he escaped the verdict when Louis XI died.³²⁶ René of Anjou was summoned to court for lese majesty, but was at the same time approached by an embassy which convinced him to sign an accord with the king and so escape trial; the cession of Provence to the crown was probably arranged then and there.³²⁷ The different treatment of the count of Saint Pol and the peers shows that a man's status was vital in his chances for survival. The kingdom's greats could escape with concessions or honourable amends.

Charles VIII and his regents were undoubtedly milder people than Louis XI had been, and the Mad War of 1485-1488 did not result in any spectacular executions, just like the Flemish Revolts did not. Francis II of Brittany and Louis of Orléans were called before the parliament of Paris, but the trial was indefinitely postponed when neither appeared.³²⁸ Francis eventually signed a peace treaty with the king, which opened up the way for the incorporation of the duchy into the kingdom; the duke of Orléans spent three years in prison, but was eventually released by Charles VIII in the hope that he could secure the marriage between himself and Anne, the new duchess of Brittany.³²⁹ The policy of Charles and his regents seems to have been to use mildness in order to gain a territorial advantage. For all France's experience with trials, its monarchs seem to have employed the ad hoc political grace that Prevenier identified for criminal law.

The Burgundian state did not have anything like the French system of peerage as a level of distinction. But the dukes had their own select group with special privileges in the form of the Order of the Golden Fleece. The most important conflict between the Burgundian dukes and their vassals was unquestionably that of Charles the Bold and the Croÿ clan. Anthony 'the Great' Croÿ, his brother John (II) and their nephew John (III) of Lannoy were the stars of the Burgundian court during the reign of Philip the Good, with clientèles all over the Burgundian domains. But they did not limit their services to duke Philip and also had good connections with Louis XI of France, which gained them many prestigious and profitable offices on the other side of the border.³³⁰ Charles the Bold contested their influence at his father's court and launched a propaganda campaign against the Croÿs, accusing them of attempts at bewitching and kidnapping him.³³¹ When Charles took over many of his ill father's duties in 1465, he expelled the Croÿs and Lannoys from the

326Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 94-115.

327Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 229-230.

328Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 577-581. Even Philip the Handsome was called upon to attend as one of the realm's major vassals.

329Baumgartner, *Louis XII*, 34-36; Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 235-236.

330Damen, *Rivalité*, 12-17; Violet Soen, 'La causa Croÿ et les limites du mythe bourguignon: la frontière, le lignage et la mémoire (1465-1475)' *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes*, 52 (2012) 81-97, there 84-87.

331Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 474-487.

Burgundian domains, confiscated their possessions and publicly accused them.³³² Anthony, the two Johns and their children found refuge with the French king and could still enjoy considerable power from their possessions South of the border.³³³ All three being Fleece Knights, they asked to defend themselves before their peers. Charles, who had become duke of Burgundy and sovereign of the Order in 1467, was not inclined to use the corrections. This was a case of lese majesty, he argued, and was not one to give up judicial powers easily. He gave the three the choice between either undergoing a trial by criminal law for the crime of lese majesty, or submitting to him and begging for his forgiveness. Neither were acceptable to the Croÿs and Lannoy, who considered themselves innocent and claimed that they would prefer “mourir que de demander pardon.” As knights, they demanded to be tried by their peers. In May 1468, Charles and the loyal knights settled the matter of the Order's authority; “ledit ordre est institué pour l'exaulcement et gloire de sa maison, non pas pour diminuer sa seignourie et sa haulteur,” and thus a statement was made that the Order could only judge “matière touchant l'onneur” and not act as an alternative to criminal justice.³³⁴

In the end, the Order of the Golden Fleece had failed a mediative institution and the Croÿs were forced to ask for Charles' mercy. John of Lannoy appeared before the duke in June 1468,³³⁵ and John of Croÿ and his son Philip begged for the ruler's grace two months later. They were quickly reconciled. In an attempt to drive a wedge between the two branches of the family, the two Croÿs were given many prestigious offices and even some lands of their family members still in exile. Anthony was only reconciled with Charles in 1473. As he would not submit, he was reconciled not by grace, but by a correction and thus did not need the ritual humiliation. The duke only entrusted him again with his lands after he moved back to the Burgundian Netherlands. Anthony's son Philip was only brought together with Charles again in December 1475, after the Grand Croÿ had died. Louis of Luxembourg, the *connétable* of Saint Pol had bequeathed some of his domains to Philip in his testament. With so much in the balance, Philip needed Charles in order to secure his inheritance, and the duke of Burgundy needed the powerful Croÿ on his side rather than that of the king of France. All the former had to do was to take a new oath of loyalty.³³⁶

A big difference between France and Burgundy was that the French Order of Saint Michael, founded to compete with the Golden Fleece, was not nearly as influential as was its

332Damen, *Rivalité*, 17-20; Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 488-493;

333Soen, *Causa Croÿ*, 89-90.

334Soen, *Cause Croÿ*, 90; Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 504-520. Thus the statutes of the Order of the Golden Fleece at least justified the condemnations of Egmont and Hornes on the charge of lese majesty in 1567, despite claims that, as knights, they could only be tried by peers: Nierop, *The nobles and the revolt*, 62.

335Raphaël de Smedt, 'Jan heer van Lannoy, stadhouder en diplomaat' *Handelingen van de koninklijke kring voor oudheidkunde, letteren en kunst van Mechelen*, 95, 1 (1991) 55-84, there 71.

336Soen, *Causa Croÿ*, 90-96.

Burgundian counterpart; his membership never helped Saint Pol in the slightest.³³⁷ The battle that Charles the Bold had waged to elevate his justice above the peer judgment of the Order, was less of a problem in France; even the peerage was brushed aside fairly easily. Even when Charles did gain the concession of being the sole judge, he still opted to have the *amendes* take place at the chapters of the Golden Fleece, and the fellow members were still the authority on issues of honour. Comparatively, Burgundian justice was much weaker. At best it could spend years trying to opt noblemen to ask for mercy while they were sheltered in France, but the duke sometimes had to settle for a less than spectacular and affirmative reconciliation. By contrast, the king of France was able to capture, try and execute noblemen who were suspected of having taken part in a conspiracy. Nevertheless, both consistently used the flexibility of political grace and reconcile whenever it suited strategic aims.

³³⁷Although it was symbolically taken from him just before the execution: Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 227.

II. Punishments and reconciliations

As mentioned in the introduction, this section will be divided between punishments for urban rebellions, the judgment in the Order of the Golden Fleece, and the punishments for feuds with the government. The following table aims to illustrate the place of the nobles within these categories.

	Urban revolt	Fued	Golden Fleece	Noble of the blood
Adolf of Cleves, lord of Ravestein	1482-1485		X	X
Philip of Burgundy, lord of Beveren	1482-1485, 1488-1489		X	X
Louis of Bruges, lord of Gruuthuse	1482-1485, 1488-1490		X	
Wolfert of Borsele, lord of Veere	1482-1485		X	
Jacob of Savoy, lord of Romont	1482-1485		X	
Adrian Vilain, lord of Rassegem	1482-1485, 1487-1490			
Philip of Cleves	1488-1489	1490-1492		X
John of Montfort	1483	1488-1490		

4. Punishment for the participation in urban revolts

Maximilian of Austria had a different conception of a regency than did the council that disputed his guardianship over Philip the Handsome. While the regency council posed the young Philip as an independent ruler with a body politic that was, as Kantorowicz has said “utterly void of infancy”, Maximilian often used a combined style of Maximilian-and-Philip, with the two as an indivisible political persona.³³⁸ In his mind, the affairs of him and his son could not be separated, and until his coronation in 1486, they used each other's titles.³³⁹ With the exception of John of Montfort in 1483, all the nobles were judged by the authority of the united persona because they “avez usurpé et usurpez journelement les haulter, auctorité et seignourie de nous et de nostre dit filz.”³⁴⁰ That

³³⁸The seal that Maximilian had made for Philip, for example, named and depicted the both of them: Jelle Haemers, 'Zegels, eden, taal en liturgie. Ideologie, propaganda en het symbolische gebruik van publieke ruimte in Gent (1483)', *Handelingen van de maatschappij voor geschiedenis en oudheidkunde te Gent*, 61 (2007) 183-212., 194-197; Ernst Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies: a study in medieval political theology* (Princeton 1957) 7-9.

³³⁹From his crowning in 1486 onward, Maximilian opted no longer to use a plural archdukes, dukes, etc., but usually styled himself king of the Romans (and later, king of Hungary, Dalmatia and Croatia), and left the Burgundian titles solely to Philip (an exception is found in Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, II, 57, where the old style was used, but with Maximilian's name replaced by his title as king). When Maximilian appointed Engelbert of Nassau as lieutenant-general of Flanders from Nuremberg, the charter was officially styled as being written by Maximilian and Philip both, so he too was no strange to creative Kantorowiczing. It is signed with Maximilian's own seal as king of the Romans: KHA ODL 462. Albert of Saxony also styled himself lieutenant-general of both princes. cf, Van Doren, *Inventaire*, II, *Lettres missives*, 6-7: “[G]hy weet hoe [...] eenige particuliere personen [...] in cleenen getale, hebben by huerer grooter giericheyt ende ambition gepresumeert te onthouden den persoon van onsen harde lieven ende zere geminden zone Phelips [...] ende voorts te usurperen 't regiment an den voorscreven lande van Vlaendren [...] in 't welke doende zy grootelick mesbruuckt ende mesgrepen hebben jegen ons die, gemerct de jonchede van jaeren van onsen voorscreven zone, behoeren, na allen rechten godlick ende weerlick, te hebben de geheele ende vulle administracie ende 't regiment, alsowel van den persoon van onsen voorscreven zone, als van allen zynen landen[.]”

³⁴⁰Keryvn de Lettenhove, *Histoire de Flandre*, V, 534.

castellan of Montfort, along with the city of Utrecht, was punished by the archduke in 1483, when Philip the Handsome was held in Ghent, in his role of count of Holland.³⁴¹ In short, he regarded the guardianship to entail more or less the same rights, titles and authority as the *jure uxoris* had before Mary's death. Maximilian's position as king of the Romans, being suzerain in Brabant, Holland, Utrecht and Imperial Flanders, was rarely ever invoked, even though his father charged him with the conduct of war against Philip of Cleves and the Flemish and “to punish and correct and to institute such a repression and obtain amends.”³⁴² The imperial ban, which forfeited Philip's goods, was pronounced at that meeting of the Estates-general in Antwerp, but the king of the Romans could not lift it; only the emperor could.³⁴³ All of this meant that one of Maximilian's primary goals during both the conflict and the resulting treaties was to establish his position as regent of Philip the Handsome; it was the only claim that was to any degree useful.

While peace treaties in the middle ages and after were generally signed between rulers who acted by their authority rather than as representing a political body,³⁴⁴ the urban communities had long traditions of popular representation and signed as cities or confederations. In these cases, the peaces of Utrecht in 1483 and Bruges in 1485, were signed with, respectively, 'those of Utrecht' and 'those of Flanders'.³⁴⁵ None of the noblemen involved concluded their own peace. They were either included in the negotiations and mentioned in the final document, or, when they were knights of the Golden Fleece and were entitled to be tried by their peers, they were clearly mentioned as not being part of the general pardon that was extended in such peace treaties. Being grouped together with the citizens, they underwent a sort of literary *amende honorable* in the preamble of the text. The preamble to a peace would try to pin the guilt on the losing party and sometimes to justify the war. This was a common feature of a treaty between a ruler and a rebellious vassal, but it did demand a certain amount of power. It denied the losing party the *autoritas belli*, the right to have waged the war in the first place, and was quite humiliating in every sense.³⁴⁶ The Utrecht treaty

341 Antonius Matthaëus and Theodorus Verhoeven (eds.), *Rerum Amorfioriarum scriptores duo inediti* (Leiden 1693) 329-330; cf. 336-339 for the Amersfoort treaty made some days later.

342 GSAB RK 104, f.97r-97v: “te straffene ende corrigeren ende sulcken bedwanck af te stellene ende beternisse te vercrigen”. The only time I know of that Maximilian invoked his sovereignty is found in Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, I, 116: “nous [...] comme roy des Rommains, sommes vostre souverain, et, comme père et mambou de nostredit filz, vostre prince et seigneur.”

343 Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 91; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 64; Surquet, *Mémoire en forme de chronique*, 550; On the ban, Friedrich Battenberg, *Reichsacht und Anleite im Spätmittelalter. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der höchsten königlichen Gerichtsbarkeit im Alten Reich, besonders im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert* (Cologne 1986). 249-449.

344 Lesaffer, *From Lodi*, 13-22.

345 *Verzameling van XXIV charters*, 16/1; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 423.

346 Randall Lesaffer, 'The concepts of war and peace in the 15th century treaties of Arras', in: Denis Clauzel, Charles Giry-Deloison and Christophe Leduc (eds.), *Arras et la diplomatie européenne, XV^e-XVI^e siècles* (Arras 1999) 165-182, there 168-171. An example that Lesaffer gives is that of the 1414 and 1435 treaties of Arras between the duke of Burgundy and the king of France. In the first, John the Fearless was blamed for having waged a rebellion against his suzerain, whereas in the second, Philip the Good is not reprimanded and the *autoritas belli* of both parties is

mentions that Maximilian accords the Utrechters mercy after they had asked for it. That in Flanders was quite long. It recalled at length how the Flemings by means of several malevolent persons had kept Maximilian's son from him and denied him regency. But, inspired by God and appalled by the shedding of Christian blood, the archduke is willing to make peace:

“We, as the one who has always been more inclined towards peace than to war, have received the subjects and inhabitants of the aforementioned lordship and county of Flanders spiritually and truly, from our true knowledge and princely power and do receive them hereby in grace”.³⁴⁷

By signing a treaty like this, everyone subscribed to the views expanded upon in it, and admitted that this version of events was the one that had transpired, much like the ritual of *amende honorable* was designed to publicly humiliate and impose a truth. But outside of this general, all-encompassing message included in the pacification charters, there was a lot of room for noblemen to be treated, from very leniently to very harshly. Not everyone got away as easily as the bastard of Fenin, an obscure and relatively harmless man whom Maximilian forgave with the reasoning that “puis qu'il hait les Francois, je lui pardonne.”³⁴⁸ In the following, we will look at the individual verdicts. Although condemnation or grace were essentially individual affairs that had little to do with any kind of standardised legal procedure, we can discern some common themes.

4.2 Family members into the fold: Philip of Burgundy, lord of Beveren and Adolf of Cleves, lord of Ravenstein

The ideal situation, from Maximilian's perspective at least, was that the nobles would abandon the Flemish cause and join his instead. He made special attempts to woo the nobles of the blood into his camp, just as he had before accorded great sums of money to keep them from moving into French service. In February 1485, the archduke made arrangements for the continuation of Adolf's payment of a 12.280 lb. pension, as well as that of 1600 lb. for his wife — much more than the 6000 lb. that the nobleman was receiving from the Three Members.³⁴⁹ We have already seen the arguments with which Maximilian tried to win over Philip of Cleves in the spring of 1488; in the autumn of that year, he sent a letter in which he proposed to Philip to forgive him for his rebellion and maintain him and his father in their pensions and offices if he would only switch sides. The

implied.

³⁴⁷Verzameling van XXIV charters, 16/1-16/2.

³⁴⁸Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 463.

³⁴⁹Gachard, *Les archives*, 307-308.

letter was dismissed as one that “contained much honey, but mixed with much poison.”³⁵⁰

Philip was the first to distance himself from the regency council, but his relation to it in later phases is not entirely clear. He is less visible as an active participant in the revolt after the 1484 meeting of the knights of the Golden Fleece, but we still find him in France to request aid in March the next year.³⁵¹ He reconciled with Maximilian in April of the next year, and he was part of an embassy headed by Engelbert of Nassau that entered Bruges on the 1st of June 1485 to negotiate peace.³⁵² The *Divisiiekroniek* claims that it was his father who brokered the eventual treaty.³⁵³ Despite entertaining Maximilian's agenda, Beveren never lost the trust and esteem of the Flemish cities. After the treaty was made up and signed ten days later, the people of the city asked him to become the city's new captain; Philip's former regency council colleague and former captain of Bruges, Louis of Gruuthuse, had been arrested earlier that day. Philip, however, refused to accept the honor until Maximilian was informed.³⁵⁴

Adolf of Cleves stayed in the regency council, but when in June 1485, the opponents of the regime of the revolt, under the leadership of Matthew Peyaert, grabbed power in Ghent and took some of the most important nobles and officials captive, they were apparently aided by Adolf's men.³⁵⁵ That, coupled with the conquests of Maximilian, left only him alone with the representatives of the city, in the regency council. Adolf and the new leaders seem to have come to an agreement: he remained in position as, at least nominally, the most important man, while he supported their renewal of the law and their attempts to seek peace with Maximilian of Austria. Philip of Beveren returned to the city soon after and the both of them, together with the representatives of the Council of Flanders still present, publicly condoned the actions of the new regime.³⁵⁶ Beveren also represented the city in a delegation that discussed the final content of the peace treaty; unlike Adolf, he signed it as one of Maximilian's company.³⁵⁷ It was Adolf who brought Philip the Handsome before his father outside of Ghent on the 7th of July. By the time Maximilian's company entered the city, he too had become part of the archduke's entourage.³⁵⁸ The overdue pension was paid less than

350“[...] mits dat dieselve brieven innhouden vele hoenichs, hoewel datter veele venyns inne gemyngelt is, soe ghy wel mitter selven antworden vertaen sult.” Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, I, 166-168.

351Haemers, *De strijd*, 74.

352Haemers, *De strijd*, 114; Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 252.

353Aurelius, *Divisiiekroniek*, f.397r.

354Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 257.

355De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 279.

356Blockmans, *Handelingen*, 353; Haemers, *De strijd*, 110-113; Van Leeuwen, *Vlaamse wetsvernieuwing*, 101.

357Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 259, 262. When the *Divisiiekroniek*, f. 397r, claims that “at this time reconciled and united with the duke [Maximilian] [...] lord Philip of Beveren,” the writer is either unaware that Philip had already joined Maximilian's service (which is quite possible), or is aware of a ceremony that we are not (which seems less likely, considering the important tasks which had been entrusted to him in the previous month).

358De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 280-281. He walked alongside Nassau, his own son Philip, Charles of Guelders and Charles of Chalon.

a month after the peace was signed, as well as 400 lb. for 'rendered services'.³⁵⁹

Nobody spoke of either Philip's or Adolf's actions as part of the regency council. One of the men who was tried and convicted for crimes against Maximilian, confessed that, besides having tried to send Philip the Handsome to France, he also attempted to cast suspicion on Adolf.³⁶⁰ Conveniently, any negativity about the nobleman could be explained away as the evil rumour of a convicted rebel. When he was appointed the guardianship and tutelage of duke Philip during Maximilian's journey to gain the king's crown in Germany, court chronicler Molinet stressed that he had "tousjours, en paix et en guerre, s'en estoit honorablement acquité."³⁶¹ The dubious position that he had played during these years was only brought up again when the second revolt erupted, but it seems, by that time, to have been a means of putting pressure on his son, rather than a direct response to his involvement in the first revolt. Unlike Adolf, Beveren did join the second regency council, but he abandoned that before its formal dissolution as well, some time in the summer of 1489.³⁶² Once again, no mention was made of it. Like the French peers, the family members of Philip the Handsome had, by their status, been judged much milder. Unlike the former, however, Adolf and Beveren never needed to publicly make amends or make concessions. For all of Philip of Cleves' mistrust of Maximilian's forgiveness, it seems to have been quite possible to escape a rebellion unscathed, if only one was a family member and helped dismantle the urban revolts.

4.3 Goods and offices: Wolfert of Borsele, lord of Veere, and Jacob of Savoy, count of Romont

Wolfert of Borsele and Jacob of Savoy were in considerably worse positions than the nobles of the blood; their position was based on accumulated wealth and offices, and was less vital than the legitimacy provided by the family members. In the end, their saving graces were that their reconciliation legitimised the transaction of (parts of) their landed goods. Borsele and Maximilian did not particularly get along after the disastrous lieutenancy of the nobleman in Zeeland and Holland, and he was met with scrutiny at the chapters of the Golden Fleece. The count of Romont served as captain-general of Flanders and became the principal military leader of the revolt.³⁶³ They were faced with the confiscation of their properties. Romont's lordship of Enghien (Hainaut) was

359Haemers, *De strijd*, 120; Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 29.

360Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 266.

361Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 471.

362It is in June of 1489 that Maximilian, after being begged by Philip, forgives the inhabitants of Philip's possessions in Zeeland: Jacobus Ermerins, *Eenige Zeeuwsche oudheden, uit echte stukken opgehelderd en in het licht gebragt; Behelzende de heeren van Vere uit den huize van Bourgondien; Benevens een beschryving van het kasteel en kappittel van Zandenburg* (Middelburg 1786) 12.

363Louis Colot, 'Jacques de Savoie, comte de Romont, homme ligne de la maison de Bourgogne', *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* 20 (1980) 89-102, there 101.

taken by Maximilian in 1484 and was given to Philip of Cleves in May of the next year.³⁶⁴ Other parts of his possessions were given to Engelbert of Nassau and John of Bergen.³⁶⁵ In March 1485, John of Kruiningen conquered Veere, confiscated Borsele's possessions and renewed the law. The lordship was returned to the crown, and Maximilian swore the oath as lord of Veere on the 9th of June.³⁶⁶ Although he did have land outside of Zeeland,³⁶⁷ the isle of Veere and its surroundings had been the base of power for the Borseles; for all intents and purposes, Wolfert's power was broken. Romont, at least, had received the county of Saint Pol from the French king, once held by his father-in-law, Peter II of Luxemburg.³⁶⁸

But Borsele and Romont did not just lose lands, but also their offices: the two of them served as admirals of the Burgundian Netherlands, with Borsele fulfilling the function in Holland, Zeeland, Artois and Boulonnais, and Romont doing so in Flanders. In January 1485, Maximilian created one office for the entire admiralty of the Netherlands, and Philip of Cleves was the man for the job. The instruction specifically mentioned that it was conceived of “en deportant et deschargeant dudit office tous autres detenteurs et occupeurs quelzconques.”³⁶⁹ The offices of Borsele and Romont had been cleverly superseded without the need for a legitimisation of taking them away.

What to do? As Ghent experienced its internal revolution, Romont was accused of conspiring against the city with the French. He defended his honour from Bruges, but the turning tide meant that he had to flee the city. His wife could not get away in time and was captured.³⁷⁰ Jacob was left out of the peace treaty and summoned to appear before the Order, but he had retreated to Saint Pol and enjoyed a pension from the French king.³⁷¹ Fleeing the scene altogether seemed the preferable option to him. Borsele stayed in Ghent, but things certainly did not look very good for him when the whole of Flanders was surrendering to Maximilian.

364Victor Fris, 'Romont (Jacques de Savoie, comte de)', *Biographie nationale*, 19 (1907) 928-937, there 934; Gachard, *Les archives*, 308. In 1529-1530, Enghien was the most profitable of the Bourbon domains in the Low Countries, which included most of the Luxembourg inheritance. At a very respectable 6,357 lb.t., it brought in over thrice as much as Saint Pol: Potter, *The Luxembourg inheritance*, 55.

365De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 87-88.

366Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 374; P. Henderikx, 'De vorming in 1555 van het markizaat van Veere en de aard en herkomst van de aan het markizaat verbonden goederen en heerlijkheden', in: P. Blom, P. Henderikx and G. van Herwijnen (eds.), *Borsele, Bourgondië, Oranje. Heren en markiezen van Veere en Vlissingen* (Hilversum 2009) 61-104; Sicking, *Zeemacht*, 38; Smit, *Vorst en onderdaan*, 236, 386-387, 606-607; For Kruiningen, see Van Steensel, *Edelen in Zeeland*, 284.

367Van Steensel, *Edelen in Zeeland*, 282 n. 148.

368M. Bonnabelle, 'Étude sur les seigneurs de Ligny de la maison de Luxembourg, la ville et le comté de Ligny', *Mémoires de la société des lettres, sciences et arts de Bar-le-Duc*, 9 (1880) 3-116, there 68; Fris, *Romont*, 935; Emmanuel, marquis of Pastoret, *Ordonnances des rois de France de la troisième race, recueillies par ordre chronologique*, pt.19, *Les ordonnances rendues depuis le mois de mars 1482 jusqu'au mois d'avril 1486* (Paris 1835) 458-461.

369Sicking, *Zeemacht*, 43.

370Fris, *Romont*, 935-936; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 460.

371Haemers, *De strijd*, 122.

While the both of them could not count on a lot of sympathy at court and did not have much value to the archduke, they eventually saved themselves by means of the familial contacts they created. Wolfert of Borsele decided to play his ultimate trump card: to marry his daughter Anna to someone who could serve as his advocate with Maximilian and the Order of the Golden Fleece. Anna had in the past been engaged to Philip of Cleves, likely in an attempt to create a power bloc to withstand the policies of the archduke. But the wedding never came to pass, as Wolfert of Borsele, Adolf of Cleves and co-signer Louis of Bruges formed the regency council while Philip remained on Maximilian's side.³⁷² So when the war ended, on the 4th of July, six days after the conclusion of the peace and three days before Maximilian entered Ghent, where Borsele still resided, the former lord of Veere and Anthony, the Great Bastard, wrote up a marriage contract between their children Anna and Philip, the lord of Beveren. A day later, Philip himself entered the city and agreed to it.³⁷³ They probably had great expectations of the marriage; Wolfert could be protected by a member of the Burgundian dynasty, who enjoyed Maximilian's favour and was nigh untouchable. Philip of Burgundy had always been a man with the status to be one of the prime noblemen in the Netherlands, but the lordship of Beveren was not quite enough to match. With the Borsele patrimony, he could expect to be a geopolitical player as well. Maximilian agreed to the marriage. Two other Borsele daughters were later married to Martin and Wolfgang of Polheim, intimate friends of Maximilian, and the first also a Fleece knight.³⁷⁴

Jacob of Savoy, too, attempted to find himself a way out of the conflict with Maximilian; his wife's sister, Françoise, had been captured as well, and as guardian of the Luxembourg patrimony by virtue of his marriage, Romont was to provide a possible dowry. Philip of Cleves was to eventually marry Françoise and become his brother-in-law. Before that could happen, Romont was reconciled with Maximilian in February 1486, on the condition that Philip would get to keep the lordship of Enghien and that he would inherit Saint Pol in case Jacob of Savoy were to die without an heir. The marriage took place in the autumn of 1487.³⁷⁵ The count of Romont had died before that time, in February of 1487.³⁷⁶ Philip of Cleves did not, in the end, receive the prized Saint Pol. Romont's widow gave birth to a posthumous daughter and eventually

372Haemers, *Adellijke onvrede*, 203-205; idem, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 31-33. The document is edited ibidem, 84-87.

373Henderikx, *De vorming van het markizaat*, 85-86. John Armstrong has argued that "Intermarriage between the great families of the different provinces dates rather from the post-1477 period, by which time the aristocracy was more conscious than the government of the abiding unity within the Burgundian heritage." Armstrong, *A policy for the nobility*, 234-235.

374Van Steensel, *Edelen in Zeeland*, 283; Louis Sicking, Ten faveure van Veere en de vorst. De heren van Veere als makelaars in macht tussen zee en vasteland, ca. 1430-1558' in: P.A. Henderikx, G. Herwijnen and P. Blom (eds.), *Borsele, Bourgondië, Oranje. Heren en markiezen van Veere en Vlissingen, 1400-1700* (Hilversum 2009) 27-60, there 45.

375Haemers, *De strijd*, 122; idem, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 42-43.

376Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 554-555.

married François of Bourbon, the count of Vendôme. They were instituted by Charles VIII with the county instead.³⁷⁷ In the end, both Wolfert and Jacob knew they could not expect to be reconciled based on their own qualities, and instead opted to make themselves invaluable to Maximilian by being the means by which the ducal family, in the form of the two Philips, could inherit valuable territories.

4.4 Urban authority: Adrian Vilain, lord of Rassegem, and Louis of Bruges, lord of Gruuthuse

To a large degree, having power in the Netherlands meant having contacts in the powerful cities, and noblemen were instrumental in this. To effectively take over administration, Maximilian either had to win the favour of an influential aristocrat, or provide a new regime. In Holland, he could easily replace the Hooks with Cods under the leadership of some of his chamberlains, such as the lord of Egmont. In other places, he was unable to create his own base of power, and was forced to reconcile with noblemen who might then serve as a link between the court and the city. Few people could command a respect that transcended the party and class struggles. Those who could were both invaluable and highly dangerous to anyone wishing to employ them. Louis of Gruuthuse, was a man without equal in his home town Bruges. Perhaps to balance his Brugian influence in the regency council, Adrian Vilain, the lord of Rassegem, a prominent Ghenter, was added to the council later.

Louis of Gruuthuse, was faced with a problem as the war was nearing its end: while Utrecht and Ghent were impenetrable for Maximilian, he had a few men up his sleeve in Louis' bastion of Bruges, in the person of Pieter Lanchals, whom we have discussed as a lowborn rival of the old aristocracy in the second chapter, and his cohorts. As a result, the repression there was harder, and more people were executed than in the much more troublesome Ghent.³⁷⁸ Gruuthuse had meant to leave the city at the very last moment, but the approaching army closed off the gates and he had nowhere to go. The first thing Engelbert of Nassau did upon entering Bruges, was find him in the city hall and take him into custody. The count of Nassau asked Gruuthuse whether he wanted to be tried by his peers of the Order of the Golden Fleece, or by the law of Bruges; he responded that he preferred his native city.³⁷⁹ Even so, the request was not granted; he was thrown into the 'prison commune' of Bruges, and the responsible law was never informed of the events, nor of his case.³⁸⁰ Olivier de la Marche retrieved him from prison and brought him along to Gent, and onward to Malines, where he could prepare his defense for the next chapter of the Order of the Golden

³⁷⁷Bonnabelle, *Étude*, 67-68; Haemers, *De strijd*, 123; Potter, *The Luxembourg inheritance*, 27-28.

³⁷⁸Haemers, *De strijd*, 119-133.

³⁷⁹De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 276; Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 257; Fris, *Dagboek*, II, 260; Wielant, *Antiquités*, 329.

³⁸⁰Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 629.

Fleece.³⁸¹

Rassegem faced the opposite situation: he was captured by his townsmen and initially reconciled with Maximilian. On the 7th of 8th of June 1485,³⁸² the faction in Ghent more inclined towards peace with Maximilian grabbed power and locked up some of the city's leading political figures of the revolt, such as Daniel Onredene, William Rijm, the Coppenhole twins and Rassegem, in the local castle. The first two were tried, condemned and put to death on the 14th.³⁸³ Rassegem was charged with having been “the first original origin and head of all the past commotions, mutinies and seditions.”³⁸⁴ But he wisely spent his time in prison “gagner amis par dons et autrement,” and did not share the same fate as Onredene and Rijm. He was released from the Steen a day later by his allies among the aldermen.³⁸⁵ He was immediately made captain of the city again, much to the dislike of the great dean Matthew Peyaert, who had lead the revolt. While doing so, they imprisoned one of the city's new sergeants. When Peyaert demanded the man be restored to liberty, Rassegem's allies demanded that the other political prisoners would be released as well.³⁸⁶ On the 26th, Rassegem was part of the peace negotiations; his agreement to the proposal was deemed necessary for the city to accept it.³⁸⁷ He, too, feared the popular unrest, however, and decided it best to flee to Tournai.³⁸⁸ Maximilian forgave him all of his actions of the recent war just days after.³⁸⁹ It is likely that Maximilian tried to win Rassegem's favour back by remitting his misdeeds, and by that means gain an ally within the notoriously hard to penetrate politics of Ghent.

But Rassegem did not return to Ghent and did not turn over to Maximilian's side. Instead he moved on to Lille, where a band of Engelbert of Nassau's archers captured him despite the reconciliation on the 26th of January 1486, and led him to the prison of Vilvoorde in Brabant.³⁹⁰ Around that same time, his mother was banished from Ghent, being suspected of partaking in a plot to assassinate the city aldermen.³⁹¹ What was to become of Rassegem is entirely unclear; unlike the Fleece knights, he was not summoned to a trial to defend himself. Instead, his captivity ended more spectacularly. In early August of 1487, his eponymous relative, the lord of Liedekerke, daringly rescued him from prison.³⁹² Both of them moved to Tournai, to enter their native Ghent again in

381 *t Boeck*, 83-84; De la Marche, *Mémoires*, 279-280; Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 268; Aurelius, *Divisiechroniek*, f. 397r.

382 First date suggested by Haemers, *De strijd*, 110, the second by Fris, *Dagboek*, 259.

383 Hoccalus, *Histoire des Païs-Bas*, 707; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 458-459

384 Despars, IV, *Cronycke*, 258.

385 Hoccalus, *Histoire des Païs-Bas*, 707.

386 Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 259; Fris, *Dagboek*, II, 260; Hoccalus, *Histoire des Païs-Bas*, 707.

387 BNF ms. fr. 17909, f.84.

388 Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 459.

389 Haemers, *De strijd*, 124. Indeed, he was not on the list of people excepted from the peace: Wielant, *Antiquités*, 330.

390 Armand de Behault de Dornon, 'Le château de Vilvorde, la Maison de Correction et leurs prisonniers célèbres (1375-1918)', *Annales de l'académie royale d'archéologie de Belgique*, 70 (1922) 67-108, 236-343, there 253-256;

Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 581;

391 Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 275-276; Haemers, *De strijd*, 169.

392 Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 582-583.

September. Rassegem wrote letters to Maximilian, pleading his innocence and the injustice of his imprisonment, and also asked Philip of Cleves to support his cause. The Vilain cousins were asked by several important Flemish figures to justify their actions at a meeting in Dendermonde, where Philip of Cleves and Anthony and Philip of Burgundy could hear their case and act as arbiters. These nobles of the blood agreed, and so did Maximilian; but despite the necessary hostages having arrived in Ghent shortly after, the aldermen of Ghent forbade Rassegem and Liedekerke to leave the city.³⁹³

The rest is history — parties radicalised, and early in the next year the Brugians joined the Ghenters in revolt as they captured Maximilian. Few series of events encapsulate the difficulty that surrounded unreliable noblemen as well as the circumstances of the lord of Gruuthuse during the second Flemish Revolt do. He was locked up in Malines, Gorcum and Vilvoorde from 1485 to 1488.³⁹⁴ When Maximilian was captured by the Brugians, the council of Philip the Handsome decided that Gruuthuse be released so as to help with the negotiations — he was released on the fifteenth of February, mere two weeks after the event, and we find him attending a meeting of Philip's council at the end of the month.³⁹⁵ The Three Members of Flanders were very eager to have him be part of the negotiations; a delegation to organise the meeting of the Estates-General in Ghent specifically demanded “monseigneur de la Grutuse, qui leur estoit fort agreable.”³⁹⁶ The archduke agreed, and gave him a safe conduct, sending him on his way on the 12th, and after the Ghent chapter, he alone visited Maximilian in Bruges. There, Gruuthuse reported later, the king of Romans said that he would give up his regency over Philip the Handsome and gave him letters declaring so.³⁹⁷ On that occasion in Bruges, he did not just visit Maximilian, but also went to the nine members of the city to personally thank them for six jugs of wine that every one of them had given to him.³⁹⁸ Even if Maximilian's concession was by no means forced onto him, the lord of Gruuthuse was certainly what we would today call 'corrupt' when suggesting it to him.³⁹⁹ Not long after, Maximilian regretted having said what he had, and asked for his letters back; he felt that

393Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 286-287, 291-294; De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 105-16; Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Histoire de Flandre*, IV, 215-216.

394De Behault de Dornon, *Le château*, 251-253; Maximiliaan Martens, 'Louis de Bruges, seigneur de Gruuthuse, prince de Steenhuyse, comte de Winchester, seigneur d'Avelgem, de Haamstede, d'Oostkamp, de Beveren, de Tielt-ten-Hove et d'Espierres' in: Raphaël de Smedt (ed.), *Les chevaliers de l'Ordre de la Toison d'or au XV^e siècle. Notices bio-bibliographiques* (Frankfurt 2000) 148-151, there 150; Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 171.

395Joseph van Praet, *Recherches sur Louis de Bruges, seigneur de la Gruthuyse* (Paris 1831) 24; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 615, 619.

396Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 622.

397Diegerick, *Correspondence*, 90-91; Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 630, 633; Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 631.

398't Boeck, 208.

399Cf. Wim Blockmans, 'Corruptie, patronage, makelaardij en venaliteit als symptomen van een ontluikende staatsvorming in de Bourgondisch-Habsburgse Nederlanden', *Tijdschrift voor sociale geschiedenis*, 11 (1985) 231-247, there 240-242; Alain Derville, 'Pots-de-vin, cadeaux, racket, patronage. Essai sur les mécanismes de décision dans l'état bourguignon', *Revue du Nord*, 56 (1974) 341-364 341-345.

Louis of Bruges had pressed him into making concessions by means of scare tactics.⁴⁰⁰ Despite the mediating role that Gruuthuse ostensibly played, the king did not feel he could trust him at all, and wrote to his son that he feared the nobleman would deliver him into the hands of his enemies or otherwise harm him. As a result, Gruuthuse was captured by the magistracy of Malines in spite of Philip's earlier assurances as to his safety. The Ghenters were particularly suspicious of this course of action. Deputies of the Estates-General sent the city of Malines a letter begging the magistrates to release the old nobleman, because he had great influence on the spirit of the inhabitants of Bruges and because his presence could contribute a lot to the deliverance of Maximilian.⁴⁰¹ Several members of Philip's court, including Henry and John of Bergen and Henry of Witthem — rivals who could only benefit from his fall from grace — visited him and assured him that no harm would come to him and that “l'arrest de la personne n'estoit que pour bien et a bonne fin.” This quickly turned out not to be the case. He was brought to Dendermonde with an armed and alert escort, ready, as he later claimed, to murder him in case anyone tried to rescue him.⁴⁰² Just before his release, the king of the Romans promised to the Three Members that upon his delivery, he would set Gruuthuse free from his arrest.⁴⁰³ It is unclear whether Maximilian did do so, or whether he escaped; he did not make an objection to the claim that he did.⁴⁰⁴ In any case, he was considered a wanted man again soon after, and was captured by German troops and led to Rupelmonde in June.⁴⁰⁵ There, he was used as a trump card. When the war flared up, the Ghenters were eager to violently dispose of the German hostages who no longer served any use; the imperial troops made clear that if such were to happen, Gruuthuse would be killed. His son John and Philip of Cleves, therefore, pleaded with the populace to keep their calm.⁴⁰⁶ Friends helped him escape from Rupelmonde already in early July.⁴⁰⁷ In his defense, Gruuthuse explained that he was justified in having fled by divine and natural law. After all, he was treated “vilainement et durement” and was threatened with death or deportation to Germany on a daily basis. He realised that he could not go to Malines for fear of his safety, and he could not flee to France for the sake of his honour; Ghent

400Diegerick, *Correspondence*, 124-125; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 7;

401Van Doren, *Inventaire*, IV, *Lettres missives*, 21-22; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 7.

402Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 631-632.

403Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 10-11. Oddly enough, Gruuthuse is listed as one of the signees of a treaty of union between the several of Philip the Handsome's lands, including Brabant, Flanders, Limburg, Luxembourg, Hainaut and Zeeland. Some manuscripts date it on the 1st of May, but all evidence seems to point towards Gruuthuse still being in Malines at that time; he certainly did not sign the treaty of May the 16th. What's more, it seems peculiar that the Estates of Limburg and Luxembourg, which signed here, did not sign that later treaty. It might be better dated after. In Molinet's chronicle, it is placed between the treaty of 16 May and its execution, which certainly does not help clear things up. Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 31, note e; following that, Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, III/2, 200.

404Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 632.

405Martens, *Louis de Bruges*, 150.

406Diegerick, *Correspondence*, 258.

407De Behault de Dornon, *Le château*, 252; Martens, *Lodewijk van Gruuthuse*, 34.

was the only safe place to go.⁴⁰⁸ And so, Louis of Bruges joined another revolt against Maximilian.⁴⁰⁹

Gruuthuse eventually served as member of the regency council, captain of the city of Bruges and, during the Brabantine campaign of Philip of Cleves, he conducted affairs in Flanders as his replacement.⁴¹⁰ Rassegem was one of the fiercest antagonists of the king of the Romans. When several of the king's closest advisors were captured in Bruges, it was Rassegem who asked for a portion of them to be handed over to Ghent, where some of them eventually died gruesome deaths.⁴¹¹ During the war, Rassegem served as commissioner of the law besides conducting the Ghent war effort.⁴¹²

Regardless, the both of them knew when their cause was a lost one. Louis of Gruuthuse and Adrian of Rassegem supported the movement for peace in 1489 and represented the county of Flanders in negotiating the peace of Montilz-lez-Tours.⁴¹³ Although Gruuthuse left Bruges just before Engelbert of Nassau entered it as victor on the 16th of January 1490, he was found outside of the city a short while later.⁴¹⁴ His caution was unfounded; he does not seem to have been punished for his role in the revolt, and we still find him in position of captain of the city in spring.⁴¹⁵ The reason was quite simple: once again, the authorities needed the lord of Gruuthuse to negotiate for them; in this case, it was Philip of Cleves in Sluis who needed to be argued with, and so Gruuthuse was sent as the head of an embassy of prominent Brugians to relay the government point of view.⁴¹⁶ Ghent never really submitted after signing the peace of Montilz-lez-Tours, but the lord of Rassegem strived towards abandoning Philips of Cleves and reconciling with Maximilian. Philip later complained that the Ghenter had hindered his every action and at one point even tried to have him assassinated.⁴¹⁷ Molinet tells us that when Ghent was still independent and reluctant to give up, Rassegem, “tenant parti contre la querelle du roy des Romains,” forsook the oaths to and alliance

408Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 634.

409Van Praet, *Recherches*, 26.

410*Nieuw nationaal biografisch woordenboek*, 18 (2007)388-396, there 394. The first mention of him as captain is on the 26th of January 1489: 't Boeck, 259. He seems to have spent most time in Ghent up until that point, since he is said to have entered Bruges on the 19th of November 1488 after 35 weeks of absence; *ibidem* 254. Van Praet, *Recherches*, 42, mentions earlier visits to the city.

411De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 110.

412Diegerick, *Correspondence*, 203, 236; Jelle Haemers and Botho Verbist, 'Het Gentse gemeenteleger in het laatste kwart van de vijftiende eeuw. Een politieke, financiële en militaire analyse van de stadsmilitie', *Handelingen van de maatschappij voor geschiedenis en oudheidkunde te Gent*, 62 (2008) 291-325, there 321-322.

413De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 194; Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 66; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 165

414't Boeck, 323; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 172.

415't Boeck, 336; Van Praet, *Recherches*, 26-27 notes that Gruuthuse was named before all other officers of the city in this period in any list.

416BNF ms. fr. 18997, f.85r-f.85v; 't Boeck, 330; De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 232, says that the city accounts of Sluis proved that the same delegation was also present on the 30th of January, but this is mentioned by neither of the two meticulous sources that recall this embassy, nor by any other source.

417BNF ms. fr. 18997, f. 115r-115v, edited in De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 376-377.

with Philip of Cleves for the promise of money.⁴¹⁸ Philip, in turn, proclaimed a feud against him and had him assassinated on the 12th of June, 1490.⁴¹⁹ A sad ending for the man who was just getting reconciled with the authorities after being one of the nastiest thorns in the court's side since 1477.

It was also in June 1490 that Bruges sprang back into revolt, partially over the numismatic ordinance from which the lord of Gruuthuse had a lot to lose;⁴²⁰ The whole of the city's magistracy stayed in place, presumably including Gruuthuse, but he did not stay for long.⁴²¹ The next month, he headed a delegation of the city to discuss its problems on a meeting of the Estates-General in Malines. That meeting was never held, but he stayed behind in Malines, and Jan van Rans and Joris Picavet replaced him as captain of Bruges eventually.⁴²² He was accused before the Order of the Golden Fleece on the 20th of May, 1491.⁴²³ After the inconclusive trial, it is hard to trace Gruuthuse. His role in the sphere of Bruges politics had definitively ended after the city surrendered for a second time on the 29th of November 1490. Finally, in November 1492 — a mere month after Flanders had been pacified entirely — the old and sick Louis of Bruges rode into his native town for the last time, where he passed away on the 24th.⁴²⁴

The relationship between nobles with an urban base was a fickle one, on both sides. They could be the most dangerous and the most necessary men to the central government. As a result, they were treated harshly when they were punished, but at the same time imprisoned so that they could be used to bargain with or release at a later date. It is probably no coincidence that the very last book the oft-time prisoner Louis of Gruuthuse bought was a copy of Boethius' *De consolacione philosophiae*.⁴²⁵

4.1 The test case: John of Montfort, castellan of Montfort

Of all the noblemen discussed here, John of Montfort was the first to be defeated in 1483. But since he is the one who did not figure in the Flemish Revolt, we can use his experience to test the uniqueness of the Flemish cases. Did Maximilian use a radically different treatment for a man who

418Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 68-69; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 206-207.

419De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 238-241.

420*Excellente Cronike*, f.264r-265r; Van Leeuwen, *De Vlaamse wetsvernieuwing*, 189; Van Praet, *Recherches*, 29-30; Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 458, complains that he held off the numismatic ordinance for his own profit, "and not for the sake of the benefit [welvaert wille] of the common land of Flanders, as happens so often, may God help it!"

421Van Leeuwen, *De Vlaamse wetsvernieuwing*, 189-190.

422't Boeck, 347-348; *Excellente cronike*, f.264v-265r; Van Praet, *Recherches*, 30-31.

423Raphaël de Smedt, 'Le 15e Chapitre de l'Ordre de la Toison d'or. Une fête mémorable tenue à Malines en 1491', *Handelingen van de koninklijke kring voor oudheidkunde, letteren en kunst van Mechelen*, 95, 1 (1991) 3-38, there 11.

424*Excellente Cronike*, f. 277v;

425Wijsman, *Politique et bibliophilie*, 256. *De consolacione philosophiae* is a philosophical treatise on fortune, virtue and justice written around the year 524 by the Roman statesman Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius during his imprisonment awaiting his trial for treason under Theoderic the Great.

had not lived at court and who was to a large degree a foreigner, or do we see the same strategies applied?

After the defeat of the Hooks in the cities of Holland, attention turned to those who had fled and the people who had supported them, mainly from the neighbouring bishopric of Utrecht. On the 14th of April 1481, Maximilian had come before Montfort and demanded that the banished Hollanders be handed over to be tried. He had also asked bishop David and the city of Utrecht to break bonds with the lord of Montfort and act against him.⁴²⁶ Montfort himself received letters to appear before the Great Council to justify his actions, but never admitted to these demands. After he was called upon three times and three times did not appear before the Council, Maximilian and Mary proclaimed on the 17th of July the punishment that he was to receive if he did not defend himself: they “banished and banish the aforementioned lord of Montfort to eternal days from all of our lands and lordships and declare all the goods of that same lord of Montfort, whichever they are, to be to our profit forfeited, forwarded and confiscated.”⁴²⁷ In the end, he was not even punished for his actions during the occupation of Leiden and the harbouring of the Hooks, but for his unwillingness to explain these actions. Within ten days, the often contended Purmerend was given to Maximilian's close friend Veit of Wolkenstein.⁴²⁸ Even so, Montfort's position in Utrecht only was only strengthening; on the 7th of August, Montfort and his supporters took control of the city and forced the bishop to flee.⁴²⁹ The latter turned to Maximilian, who was intent on bringing bishop David back to the city by force of arms.

The conflict began in October of that same year 1481. In spite of the hitherto more than troublesome relation between Maximilian and John of Montfort, the archduke was still hoping that he would not have to take any more serious measures. While he instructed his lieutenant-general Josse de Lalaing not to concede in any way to Engelbert of Cleves, who was shoved forward as the new bishop, his policy on Montfort was far milder: “et en tant que qu'il peut toucher monseigneur de Montfort, veult aussi que ce soit mis en arbitrage et sceu se icelui seigneur de Montfort peut demourer sans prejudice dudit traictie es villes d'Utrecht et d'Amersfort, et autrement est content qu'il demeure en sa ville de Montfort.”⁴³⁰ For the time being, however, Montfort was still the fiercest opponent of the Habsburgs.

The castellan was captured by the opposing faction in Utrecht on the 21st of April 1483.

426Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 316-317; Van der Linden, *Burggraven*, 160-161.

427L. Galesloot, 'Trois arrêts historiques du Grand Conseil de Malines', *Bijdragen en mededelingen van het historisch genootschap gevestigd in Utrecht*, 6 (1883) 422-463, there 435-437, quote p.437.

428Van der Linden, *Burggraven*, 162. For Wolkenstein, see Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 306-307.

429Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 327.

430Michel van Gent, 'Een middeleeuwse crisismanager: Joost van Lalaing, stadhouder van Holland en Zeeland, 1480-1483', in Jacques Paviot (ed.) *Liber amicorum Raphaël de Smedt*, pt. III, *Historia* (Louvain and Paris 2001) 165-182, there 177. The instruction is not dated, but has to be written after the battle of Westbroek (26 December 1481).

The city of Montfort was to be put under the control of bishop David's delegates. The Hollanders demanded that the fortifications of the city and castle would be demolished, so that John would at all times be vulnerable. They were, however, ready to respect the goods of all in the Sticht. Rumour had it that the Hollanders wanted to execute him, but were divided over who would have the ownership of his head afterwards. It was, of course, also problematic that Montfort was subject both to Maximilian as well as David. Commotion in Utrecht changed the political situation again early in the next month, and John of Montfort was free again.⁴³¹ Only when Maximilian settled things with Louis XI and the regency council in Flanders, could the most drastic of measures be taken — the siege of Utrecht. On the 31st of August, a peace was mediated by emissaries of the emperor Frederick.⁴³² On the third day of the next month, the final peace was proclaimed, in which Montfort was also taken into account; he was to contribute to the 20.000 lb. that Utrecht had to pay in fine, but in return he was to be reinstated in the goods of his that were confiscated during the war. On the 6th, the archduke triumphantly entered Utrecht and received John of Montfort in grace.⁴³³ Undoubtedly, this was considered an anticlimactic end by the Hollanders; even if the rumour that they had wanted Montfort's head was not true, they had demanded that he was made harmless by the destruction of the fortifications of his home town. Maximilian acted quite mildly by not touching the city and castle, and was much harder on the ideological enemy Engelbert of Cleves than he was on John of Montfort, whom he had hoped could be used as an ally in the future. His Hollandish possession, which had by then come into the hands of Veit of Wolkenstein and John of Bergen, were not returned. This eventually became the cause of Montfort's second struggle in 1488-1491.

Compared to the noblemen of the Flemish revolt, we can only conclude that the strategies employed against John of Montfort were largely the same. Like Wolfert of Borsele and Jacob of Savoy, his goods were confiscated before the peace was signed, although for Montfort, it was at least legitimised by a case — or rather an aborted case — before the Great Council. His goods, too, were given to partisans of Maximilian. He could easily be driven from his possessions in Holland. Like in Bruges, where Pieter Lanchals could take over from Louis of Gruuthuse, the Hooks were easily replaced with Cods; they had essentially no bargaining position. Not so in Utrecht, where the bishop's party was not particularly strong and Montfort and his Hooks had to be appeased, just as Rassegem had to be in Ghent. Like them, he would also be driven into a new revolt out of dissatisfaction over the unclear and perhaps overly opportunistic way affairs were handled.

431 Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 361-362; Van der Linden, *Burggraven*, 167-168.

432 Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 364; edited in Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 423-424.

433 Aurelius, *Divisiiekroniek*, f.395r; Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 364-365; Van der Linden, *Burggraven*, 169.

4.8 Trends and patterns

Molinet tells us that Maximilian was accompanied by an impressive train of Flemish captives when he was received in Bruges, and his nobles proudly displayed their newly won goods. Philip of Cleves held by his side the wife of the count of Romont, her sister (who was to later become Philip's own wife) and their goods. Philip of Beveren carried along his new father-in-law, Wolfert of Borsele. Engelbert of Nassau had gotten the goods of Louis of Gruuthuse. The public display, according to the court chronicler, did much to convince the Three Members to uphold the newly made peace.⁴³⁴ It was made clear to everyone that the three knights of the Golden Fleece could not form an alternative legitimate government.

The various confiscations ended up benefiting a small number of favourables at court. Philip of Cleves and Engelbert of Nassau greatly expanded their domains by means of the Gruuthuse and Romont confiscations, and John of Bergen received a considerable amount as well. In Holland, the goods of John of Montfort were given to Veit of Wolkenstein and Michael of Bergen, but soon ended up with John of Egmont and Michael's brother John. For himself, Maximilian kept Veere, at least for the time being, but that, and the other Borsele lands, ended up in the hands of Philip of Beveren a year after. Katia Hancké has argued that for cities in this period, the confiscation of goods of political opponents of the regime was mostly a way to finance the expensive revolts. Furthermore, for a wide ranging program of confiscation to take place, the civic authority had to be powerful and well established.⁴³⁵ On the level of the government actor, we do not find the actions serving to aid finance; the fines paid by the cities were supposed to take care of that. Instead, we may see a double function to confiscation of noble goods. Firstly, since these mostly concern domains (as opposed to the *immeubles* of many urban convicted), depriving the rebellious nobles of them meant depriving them of an economic power base. It was hard to keep up being a grand seigneur without any land to match. Secondly, it allowed for a redistribution of wealth and served as a reward for other nobles. The relationship between authority and confiscation is present here as in urban cases, but the relationship seems to be reversed. Veere and Enghien were declared to have fallen to the crown before Borsele and Romont were taken into custody; Purmerend and Polsbroek after Montfort had refused to defend himself before the Great Council. It was more the case that archducal power was displayed and made public by means of confiscation of lands. One of the grant letters, that to Philip of Cleves for Enghien, mentions two reasons: “tant pour proximité de lignage que pour les grands et loyaux services.”⁴³⁶ These can be used for other

434Molinet, *Chroniques*, I, 459-460.

435Katia Hancké, 'Confiscaties als politiek wapen in intern stedelijke conflicten, casus: Gent: 1477-1492', in *Handelingen van de maatschappij voor geschiedenis en oudheidkunde te Gent*, 49 (1995) 197-220.

436Gachard, *Les archives*, 44.

cases as well. The proximity of line meant the cases of Philip of Cleves and Philip of Beveren, who, as nobles of the blood, were vital in the legitimising function they served by acknowledging the regency of Maximilian; the loyal services, of course, referring to tasks performed in the army or council of the archduke. The 'solution' to a rebellious nobility was thus to bribe the loyal nobility even further.

Proximity of line and services rendered were, in a way, also the qualities that the two members who escaped 'unscathed', Adolf of Cleves and Philip of Beveren, displayed. Both, as we have seen, were members of the ducal family. Maximilian of Austria had tried to portray himself as a protector of the Burgundian dynasty, the man who had come in 1477 to rescue the duchess Mary and her beleaguered lands from the threat of French invasion.⁴³⁷ Taking relatives of his son captive would have been entirely contradictory to the image of himself that Maximilian tried to get across. But it is hard to tell if such a propagandistic move was the ulterior motive in this case. Adolf and Philip also proved themselves to be the most 'reasonable' of the members of the regency council in the end. Philip retreated from military activity after the Dendermonde meeting and eventually switched camp altogether, which granted him forgiveness for all deeds misdome in the past. In the next months, he was crucial in establishing peace. Adolf did not leave the regency council, but he was the one to disband it in the end. His social position meant that he was almost as untouchable as the young duke Philip himself, and he weathered the tumult in Ghent without problems. He was the one who eventually disestablished the council and returned Maximilian to power. As such, both members were useful both in a legitimising way as well as in services rendered during the war. That Maximilian had always intended for them to more or less get away with it, is shown by the negotiations he had with Adolf over his pensions, and the fact that neither Beveren nor Ravenstein were, at any point, confiscated.

As for the personal treatment of the nobles, it is difficult to entirely condone the actions of Maximilian and his closest servants; we do find a good deal of promises not being held, such as that to Louis of Gruuthuse to choose his own court of justice and the grace awarded to Adrian of Rassegem. The confusion over Montfort's Hollandish possession may have been intentional as well. In the first case, that may have been the result of an overly generous promise of the lieutenant-general Engelbert of Nassau that did not conform to the plan Maximilian of Austria had for Gruuthuse. The situation in Bruges allowed for a more radical repression than that in Ghent, since there was an archducal party present in the former which could take over the reins in the city under

⁴³⁷Sonja Dünnebeil, 'Der Orden vom Goldenen Vlies als Zeichen der burgundischen Einheit. Ideal oder Wirklichkeit unter Maximilian I.?', *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* 52 (2012) 111-127, there 116 n.12; Graeme Small, 'Of Burgundian dukes, counts, saints and kings, 14 C.E. - 1500' in: D'Arcy Jonathan Dacre Boulton and Jan Veenstra (eds.), *The ideology of Burgundy. The promotion of national consciousness, 1364-1565* (Leiden 2006) 151-192, there 178-185. cf. Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, II, 91.

the leadership of Peter Lanchals. Aside from Gruuthuse, ten citizens of Bruges were excluded from the peace treaty, as opposed to only six for the much more troublesome Ghent.⁴³⁸ It is likely that Maximilian tried to win Rassegem's favour back by remitting his misdeeds, and by that means gain an ally within the notoriously hard to penetrate politics of Ghent. It is no surprise then that when Rassegem did not, in fact, return to his native city and cooperate with the new civic government, he was seen as a man with ulterior motives and was caught and placed in prison in spite of earlier promises.

If we have to come to a general conclusion here, it must be that the punishment doled out to these high noblemen depended almost entirely on the use that they could have and the services that they could provide to the rule of Maximilian of Austria. Adolf of Cleves and Philip of Burgundy had been useful in deconstructing the regency council in the end and brokering the peace between the archduke and the Three Members; and their continued good relations with him ensured the legitimacy of his rule. As such, they received no punishment at all. Adrian of Rassegem and John of Montfort had been a fierce opponents of Maximilian's, but the government thought that they could be reasoned with and that they could prove useful in upholding authority in Ghent and Utrecht in the future. Montfort was punished only in a monetary fine and Rassegem was not punished at all, at least until it seemed that he was not willing to actively cooperate in any plans of the archduke. Wolfert of Borsele, Jacob of Savoy and Louis of Gruuthuse were not quite as useful as the other members of the regency council. Borsele's personal conflicts had wrought havoc on Hollandish politics and contradicted archducal policy. His patrimony, moreover, had for a large part already been confiscated during the war, and as such, he had no base of power that Maximilian could not penetrate himself. Instead, his clients in Holland had been replaced by Cods under the leadership of John of Egmont, and his position in Zeeland was usurped by the archduke himself, and later given to Philip of Beveren. Jacob of Savoy's value never seems to have been one of urban clientèle, as it had been for others. He was a military man first and foremost, and even setting aside the fact that Maximilian had enough capable army leaders of his own — Philip of Cleves and Engelbert of Nassau most prominently — entrusting a man who had previously revolted and who had a host of connections at the French court with key locations on the border seemed like a disaster waiting to happen. So the patrimony of the count of Romont was dismembered and given to his successor, Philip of Cleves. Louis of Gruuthuse's main strength had been the incomparable popularity he enjoyed among the citizens of Bruges. Maximilian, however, sought to establish an entirely new regime, and counted instead on Peter Lanchals to take over the position of the city's first man.

438Haemers, *De strijd*, 119-133.

The final episode, from 1487 onwards, shows just what the strength of some of these people in the Flemish cities was. Rassegem, after his escape from prison, could rile up the entire city and pretty much caused it to go to war with Maximilian. As the Brugians revolted against the (by then) king, the council in Malines quickly realised that Lanchals' alternative government was not as effective as hope would have had it be; and when Lanchals himself ended up on the scaffold, the only way to reason with the Brugians was to recruit Gruuthuse from prison. Both the grace awarded Rassegem in 1485 and the release of Gruuthuse in 1488 show that Maximilian and his council preferred an untrustworthy interlocutor to complete urban anarchy, and that they were willing to bend the rules of trial to achieve stability in the Flemish cities. From there on, however, the government and the nobles ended up in a vicious circle of distrust and disrespect that had to lead to a breakdown at some point. Little wonder that the both of them ended up in a second Flemish revolt.

5. Punishment in the Order of the Golden Fleece

We have established that the actual punishment of the rebellious noblemen during the reign of Maximilian depended mainly on the usefulness of these people for further political and symbolic purposes. These sentences were barely at all influenced by the nature of the actual 'crime', but rather driven by an extreme pragmatism. What then, of the Order of the Golden Fleece, that bastion of ceremony and otherworldliness, how did these chapters deal with the trespasses of their members? The Golden Fleece has unjustly often been neglected as a political instrument in favour of the value of the ducal court.⁴³⁹ But the chivalric order often provided means for the dukes to portray a common identity and serve to build an interregional consciousness in a conglomerate of states that did not form a unity in any other way.⁴⁴⁰ As such, it formed a tool of great importance in the legitimation of the rulers of the Burgundian state, and the domain of the order was more than any other arena — certainly more than the court — an area in which impeccability was of the utmost importance. “[T]he Toison d’Or was one means,” argues Malcolm Vale, “whereby an aggressive and competitive nobility might not only be united, but disciplined.”⁴⁴¹

The Order went through some of its roughest years during the regency of Maximilian of Austria, with the Dendermonde meeting in 1484 and its divisions being perhaps its all-time low point. The Order had been founded as a means to integrate the nobility of the Burgundian lands, but things went rapidly downhill after 1477; many of its members left for French service, and Louis XI, having confiscated the duchy of Burgundy, claimed the sovereignty of the Order. Maximilian of Austria was accepted as the true sovereign without much problems in 1478, but out of 18 living knights, only 5 even attended the ceremony. Several new members had been chosen then to augment the total number of knights to 25, but no more than 6 were present at the chapter in 1482. When five of the Order's members joined the Flemish regency council in 1483 and ended up at war with the sovereign, the institute as a binding mechanism appeared to have very little function left at all. As such, it was vital that Maximilian reshape the Golden Fleece, bring as many members as possible back into the fold, correct and punish those who had deserted it, and restore it to a symbol of legitimacy.⁴⁴²

439 D’Arcy Jonathan Dacre Boulton, *The knights of the crown. The monarchical orders of knighthood in later medieval Europe, 1325-1520* (Woodbridge 1987)xiv-xv; Malcolm Vale, *War and chivalry. Warfare and aristocratic culture in England, France and Burgundy at the end of the Middle Ages* (London 1981) 34-35.

440 Boulton, *The knights of the crown*, 356-396; idem, 'The Order of the Golden Fleece and the creation of Burgundian national identity', in: idem and Jan Veenstra (eds.), *The ideology of Burgundy. The promotion of national consciousness, 1364-1565* (Leiden 2006) 99-115; Armstrong, *A policy for the nobility*, 231-232.

441 Vale, *War and chivalry*, 42.

442 Dünnebeil, *Der Orden als Zeichen, passim*; idem, 'Der Orden vom Goldenen Vlies zwischen Burgund und dem

The year 1483 saw a lot of attempts to bring the Order back together meet failure by the divisions between its members. Maximilian asked for the members of the regency council to justify themselves at the next chapter; they refused to cooperate, arguing that Maximilian was sovereign of the Order only by virtue of his marriage to Mary of Burgundy; Philip the Handsome would now be the new sovereign, and the next chapter would have to wait until his coming of age.⁴⁴³ The Dendermonde meeting of June 1484 solved that issue remarkably quickly, even if it did not solve anything else; the knights all agreed that Maximilian indeed had no right to be the sovereign of the Order anymore, but they had to concede that it was impossible to withhold chapters for another decade and acceded that the archduke of Austria was the most qualified to be the chief and conduct meetings until Philip would come of age — as long as he would style himself *père et chef* and his son *souverain de l'Ordre*.⁴⁴⁴

The final peace treaty with Flanders excluded, besides 19 citizens of Flanders, three members of the Order of the Golden Fleece: Jacob of Savoy, Louis of Gruuthuse and Wolfert of Borsele. They were to be tried by their peers, and as such, had to await the next chapter. Setting it up took a while. Although the statutes held that it ought to be organised every three years and was thus long overdue after the war, Maximilian's election to king the following year held up preparations. Only a handful of members met at preparatory meetings without the chief in 1486. Some of the things they debated on was whether Romont, Gruuthuse and Borsele ought to be summoned by means of closed letters or by public placard, and what form the accusation would take.⁴⁴⁵

In the end, absence, war and rebellion would keep the knights from assembling until 1491.⁴⁴⁶ By then, Jacob of Savoy and Wolfert of Borsele had already passed away. But in working towards the submission of the Flemish cities and of Philip of Cleves, a trial could be an ideal political weapon. Not just was the lord of Gruuthuse finally brought to trial, the previously uncharged Adolf of Cleves was also accused; no doubt a tool in the arsenal to force his son into compromise.⁴⁴⁷ Besides allowing the king to confiscate all of the possessions of someone accused of lese majesty, there were also precedents for punishing the children of the convicted.⁴⁴⁸ In spite of the charges against Borsele ostensibly having been dropped after his death, and the reconciliation of Maximilian with Romont, they, too, were included in the accusation.⁴⁴⁹ Posthumous prosecution

Hause Österreich', *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* 46 (2006) 13-30, there 25-26.

443Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 128-136.

444Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 139.

445Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 157, 159.

446De Smedt, *Le 15^e chapitre*, 3-38.

447Haemers, *Opstand adelt*, 8.

448Bellamy, *Treason in England*, 13.

449Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 530.

was not foreign to Roman law,⁴⁵⁰ and it shouldn't surprise us that the rules of the Order attached much value to it as well. Aside from the those on trial, only six knights attended; the father and chief was still in Austria as well.

Besides the members of the regency council, other members under trial were two knights who had opted for serving the French crown, Philip Pot and Philip d'Esquerdes, the marshall who had conducted the armies of Louis XI and Charles VIII against Maximilian. They were accused of perjury and convicted.⁴⁵¹ The final list of the issues charged against the members of the regency council was written up by the king himself in Austria.⁴⁵² Among other things, it accused the knights of having usurped the regency over Philip the Handsome and his lands; of having allied with the French, the ancient enemies of the Burgundian dynasty; of having waged war against Maximilian; finally, of not just having joined the revolt, but having been the instigators of it. The final charge: lese majesty.⁴⁵³ The charges cannot be called personal, since Philip of Cleves faced almost exactly the same accusations in Maximilian's letters. Adolf of Cleves and Louis of Gruuthuse were given copies of the text, so that they might prepare their defenses for a later date; it was scheduled for the next meeting, which ought to have taken place three years alter. In the obligatory corrections, Philip of Beveren was briefly reprimanded for his indifference during Maximilian's captivity, but there is no mention of his involvement in the second regency council.⁴⁵⁴ The points in which the assembled thought the king himself was lacking are very interesting: he was accused of being too indifferent to harmful events, and of confusing, in the distribution of his graces, the loyal and disloyal subjects. Specifically, they were referring to the ease with which Philip of Cleves had gotten away with the murder of Lancelot of Berlaymont in 1484 — and was able to accumulate many offices and honours in the years following.⁴⁵⁵

Several days later, the gathered knights discussed the fates of the late Jacob of Savoy and Wolfert of Borsele. The count of Romont was found guilty of having acted “contre les status d'icelle Ordre par lui juréz, il s'est armé et de son auctorité porté capitaine contre le roy et mondit seigneur, leur a fait guerre et commis plusieurs aultres cas reprochables et non dignes de chevalier d'honneur, en deleissant la vengeance à Dieu.”⁴⁵⁶ A little placard containing said verdict was added to his coat of arms in the St. Rombout in Malines, where this feast was held, and to that in the St. John of 's-Hertogenbosch, the site of the previous chapter.⁴⁵⁷ On Wolfert of Borsele no conclusion

450Cuttler, *Treason in France*, 93-94.

451Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 225-226.

452Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 188.

453Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 181-185.

454Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 194-196.

455Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 199-200; For this episode, see De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 66-77.

456Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 225-226.

457B. Bauchau, 'Jacques de Savoie (1450-1486). Histoire d'un portrait et protrait historique', *Handelingen van de*

was reached, and his coat of arms was not adorned with an accusatory text. The knights wished to await the verdict on Cleves and Gruuthuse, figuring that the cases would be similar. His stall plate would be painted over with the charges only in 1501.⁴⁵⁸

Adolf of Cleves and Louis of Gruuthuse consequently both wrote or had written for them long justifications. Unfortunately, it is difficult, if not impossible, to tell what degree of authorship the two nobles had over these texts. The similarities between the two of them and the fact that several passages are completely identical, make it clear that they were written in some form of cooperation, perhaps that of having one and the same jurist assist in writing.⁴⁵⁹ The justifications have been analysed quite recently by Bernhard Sterchi and by Jelle Haemers. Sterchi, in a book about normative literature at the Burgundian court, has focused on the rhetoric of defense.⁴⁶⁰ Haemers, more interested in the political situation, has looked at the texts, along with Philip of Cleves' justification, to reconstruct the political ideology of revolting noblemen.⁴⁶¹ I disagree with Haemers that the texts were used as “justification of the political resistance of the nobility in the Flemish Revolt”. They were instead complete *denials* of political resistance. The arguments raised were means by which the two men had hoped to be able to reconcile the undeniable political actions that they took with the ideology of the loyalist Fleece knights.

What becomes clear from the texts is that both parties made the most far-reaching claims that they possibly could, often venturing into the unbelievable. For example, the accusation will call out Adolf and Louis as the instigators of all troubles against Maximilian, even going so far as to blame Louis for having organised the Brugian revolt of 1488 at a time when he was still under house arrest in Malines. The both of them would, in turn, respond that they had never actually been in political opposition to the Habsburger and that when they retained Philip the Handsome in Ghent, they did so by commandment of Maximilian and under threat of the Flemish.⁴⁶² Several others have to take the fall for Adolf and Louis. In addition to generally expressing a very low regard for the Flemish citizens, William Rijm (whom, we have seen, was one of Maximilian's fiercest opponents) was blamed for almost everything.⁴⁶³ The count of Romont was blamed for all military action taken

koninklijke kring voor oudheidkunde, letteren en kunst van Mechelen, 95, 1 (1991) 117-146, there 145-146; Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 534, 763.

458Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 534-535.

459In the case of Gruuthuse, it is not even entirely evident that it was written during his life time, although that would seem entirely likely. The text of Adolf of Cleves, at least, bears a signature. Even so, when Adolf's father is mistakenly named *Jehan* instead of *Adolph*, we can assume that this was a sloppiness that was not his own; Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 538-539, 547-648. Jelle Haemers has suggested Roeland of Moerkerke, who also co-wrote Philip of Cleves' proposition as a possible author, and although this is entirely plausible, there is no evidence for it; Haemers, *Opstand Adelt*, 10.

460Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 547-558.

461Haemers, *Opstand adelt*, 1-23.

462Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 549-550, 661; Haemers, *Opstand adelt*, 10-13.

463Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 613-614, 616, 620, 654-656, 658, 660.

against Maximilian in '84 and '85; Adolf and Louis had nothing to do with that and had never lead any troops.⁴⁶⁴ So too was the alliance between Flanders and France the work of Romont and Rassegem, and the noblemen at trial had known nothing of it until it had been concluded;⁴⁶⁵ for so far as they had had contact with Charles VIII, it was to discuss the return of the duchy of Burgundy (perhaps not entirely coincidentally, the recovery of Burgundy was one of Maximilian's pet projects).⁴⁶⁶ By that time, of course, Rijm, Romont and Rassegem had passed away; they were easy targets to saddle with the blame.⁴⁶⁷ Adolf even positioned himself on Maximilian's side when he pointed out that in the past he had thrice punished the Ghenters for rebelling. “Et se le peuple a aimé ou ayme ledit seigneur de Ravestein,” so goes Adolf's defense, “ce n'a pas esté pour leur avoir permis ne tolleré leurs rebellions et desobéissances.”⁴⁶⁸

What is perhaps the most interesting underlying notion is the idea of permanence. Maximilian accused Adolf and Louis of *always* having conspired against him. They, in turn, do not admit that there was such a thing as an open conflict between them and the king; they had *always* been loyal. In order to support such claims, they also legitimised their persons by resorting to noble lineage — in Adolf's case, blood ties to the Burgundians — and the important and virtues roles that they had played in the ducal court since the time of Philip the Good.⁴⁶⁹ Sterchi summarises as follows: “Das situationsunabhängige Ansehen der Beteiligten liefert die Legitimation für deren Handlungen — auf die Legitimität der (womöglich interessegeleiteten) situativen Ansprüche jeder einzelnen Handlung wird nicht eingegangen.”⁴⁷⁰ We can also see such an obsession with a consistent personality in the decision to remove, repaint or cover up the stall plates of guilty knights in all churches where they hung. For this reason, Adolf of Cleves and Louis of Bruges did not just demand that the charges be dropped, but they demanded that they would never be mentioned again and be deleted from the protocol books altogether, “affin que jamais il n'en soit aucune mémoire ne congnoissance.”⁴⁷¹

Both Adolf and Louis died in 1492 before a verdict could be reached. A text by an anonymous man (perhaps Olivier de la Marche) advised the king-of-arms Toison d'Or on how to lead the funeral ceremony. It stressed the position of the Fleece collar in the ceremony and in the decorations.⁴⁷² But that did not mean the the need for a conclusion was a done deal. With the

464Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 612-613, 619, 624, 656.

465Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 612, 655.

466Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 652.

467Haemers, *Opstand adelt*, 10-11.

468Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 551-552, 660-661 [quote].

469Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 550-551; Haemers, *Opstand adelt*, 13-16.

470Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 557-558.

471Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 554-555, 671 [quote]; Haemers, *Opstand adelt*, 20-21.

472Malcolm Vale, 'A Burgundian funeral ceremony: Olivier de la Marche and the obsequies of Adolf of Cleves, Lord of Ravenstein', *English historical review*, 111 (1996) 920-938, esp. 931, 933. Vale seems to be unaware of the

permanence of such verdicts in mind, it was important for both the heirs of the men and for the Order as an institution to determine whether they had been guilty of lese majesty or not. Philip the Handsome and his closest advisors decided to wait until a fair number of older members could attend the next chapter. They had even hoped that the king of the Romans might be present at some point, but Maximilian was preoccupied with the matters of empire.⁴⁷³ The sixteenth chapter would only take place in January 1501. Jacob of Luxembourg, lord of Fiennes, who had married Gruuthuse's granddaughter, procured his defense, almost ten years after it was ostensibly written.⁴⁷⁴ Initially the confrères gave the Adolf and Louis the same sentence as Wolfert of Borsele: judgment would be left up to God. This lack of temporal conviction was not considered a good thing; the reports of it were “dures et doloieuses nouvelles” to Adolf's widow, who had hoped her late husband would be rehabilitated.⁴⁷⁵ Their coats of arms had been installed, as the as those of other members passed away were. But unlike the others — unlike even the Great Bastard, who was also not entirely in the clear after having joined the French court and accepting the Order of St. Michael — they were taken away and hung elsewhere in the church., with the herald Toison d'Or proclaiming the reasons before the empty seats as if addressing the charged themselves.⁴⁷⁶

More than half a year later, in September 1501, an ambassador of the king of France pleaded for them to be returned, and Philip, at this eager to please Louis XII, did so.⁴⁷⁷ The international relations had made the meetings of the Order an event with which even the French king got himself involved; Adolf's and Louis' sons were both in French service. But the members of the Order were not entirely willing to play Louis' game. Firstly, they severely reprimanded the ambassador when he called the situation an *outrage*, when they considered it *justice*. Secondly, Philip the Handsome attached a little note to the coats of arms declaring that he had returned them “sur la pryere et requeste du roy treschrestien et pour luy complaire.” The secretary wrote down in the protocols that six thousand people saw the note before it was removed a day later, and that “tout le monde” knew that the honourable position of the icons was not by virtue of the innocence of Adolf and Louis, but by an act of grace that the archduke bestowed upon them.⁴⁷⁸ To this day, the little shields still hang untouched in Malines, and in the end, judgment was up to God alone.

questionable position of Adolf at this time.

473Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 217, 219.

474Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 535-536.

475Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 535, 671. Reiffenberg, *Histoire*, 233.

476As described in a letter from the Mantuan ambassador Niccolò Frigio, edited in William Prizer, 'Music and ceremonial in the Low Countries: Philippe the Fair and the order of the Golden Fleece', *Early music history*, 5 (1985) 113-153, there 142, translation on p. 151.

477Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 481-482.

478Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 482; Sterchi, *Über den Umgang*, 543-544; all of this is recounted summarily in Bernhard Sterchi, 'The importance of reputation in the theory and practice of Burgundian chivalry. Jean de Lannoy, the Croÿs, and the Order of the Golden Fleece' in: D'Arcy Jonathan Dacre Boulton and Jan Veenstra (eds.), *The ideology of Burgundy. The promotion of national consciousness, 1364-1565* (Leiden 2006) 99-115, there 110-112.

The concern that the Order of the Golden Fleece had for writing correct history is astonishing. The knights were very aware that an event can be explained in different ways by placing it in a different context, both the acts of the regency council members, as the acts taken in the Order chapters. The modes of emplotment that could be employed by a chivalric order were quite limited. The code of honour allowed for the story of noblemen who had always conspired against the dynasty, and it allowed for the story of noblemen who had always supported the dynasty, but were duped by misunderstandings and lies. Turns, nuances and regrets were not used. Even when the king of France intervened to reverse a decision, it was cleverly accompanied with statements that emphasised that only the effects of the verdict had been changed, but not the verdict, and that doing so was in line with the magnanimosity of the Order.

6. Punishment for the feuds of John of Montfort and Philip of Cleves

Calling Philip of Cleves' or even John of Montfort's and Francis of Brederode's actions part of the Flemish Revolts is not without its problems. Jan Dumolyn and Jelle Haemers, in an article on the rebellious tradition in Flanders, have defined a rebellion or revolt as a form of collective action in Charles Tilly's definition; it "consists of people's acting together in pursuit of common interests." But Tilly makes clear that "action is collective to the extent that it produces inclusive, indivisible goods."⁴⁷⁹ If we hold to these definitions, we can hardly hold that Philip of Cleves and the two Hook leaders were in revolt, for their demands did not lay in the realm of collective goods, but in personal demands. We might sooner say that they employed forms of capital extortion, if we employ 'capital' in the sense that Pierre Bourdieu does;⁴⁸⁰ Brederode demanded political capital in the form of important political positions in the county of Holland; Montfort demanded economic capital in the form of the restitution of the lordship of Purmerend; Cleves demanded symbolic capital in the form of an acknowledgement that he had done the honourable thing all along.⁴⁸¹ In doing so, they made use of another option in a 'repertoire' of contention.⁴⁸² Rather than as rebellion, they made use of the techniques of the old noble feud. In and around France, a nobleman who suffered from a truce could go for a reprisal and seek compensation for his loss by military action without breaking that truce. It involved the general taking of goods, regardless of the victim. One could take the goods of one man for the crimes of another. The only person who was exempt from reprisals was the king, since he was not a private person, but public majesty.⁴⁸³ A more directly antagonistic conflict was what the German historians have called a *kleinkrieg*. Whenever a nobleman felt that he was treated unfairly by a fellow nobleman or by his liege lord, he had the right — some would say, duty — to declare a feud and wage small scale war, mostly by pillaging and burning, to obtain satisfaction. Several episodes of the Hook and Cod wars

479 Jan Dumolyn and Jelle Haemers, 'Patterns of urban rebellion in medieval Flanders', *Journal of medieval history*, 31 (2004) 369-393, there 372; Tilly, *From mobilization*, 7, 27-28, 84-90.

480 Pierre Bourdieu, 'Economisch kapitaal, cultureel kapitaal, sociaal kapitaal' in: idem, *Opstellen over smaak, habitus en het veldbegrip* (Amsterdam 1989) 120-141. For their application within the study of the medieval Netherlands, see Jan Dumolyn, *Staatsvorming en vorstelijke ambtenaren in het graafschap Vlaanderen (1419-1477)* (Antwerp 2003) 5-15 and idem, 'The political and symbolic economy of state feudalism: the case of late-medieval Flanders', *Historical materialism*, 15 (2007) 105-131.

481 The use of Bourdieu's terms here should be read as a handy metaphor for developing an ideal type of contention, rather than as a serious means of analysis — it is, if nothing else, a very anachronistic notion. To see honour as a form of accumulated labour implies that it is inherently temporal, whereas, as has been discussed in the previous chapter, one could be retroactively dishonourable.

482 Michael Biggs, 'How repertoires evolve: the diffusion of suicide protest in the twentieth century', *Mobilization: an international quarterly*, 18 (2013) 407-428, there 408-411; Tilly, *The contentious French* (Cambridge MA 1986) 9-10.

483 Keen, *Laws of war*, 218-234.

involved such feuds, and it was not the first time the families Egmond, Brederode and Montfort had been part of conflicts like these.⁴⁸⁴ When the parliament of Dôle favoured William of Vienne over Henry of Blamont as the lord of several territories, the latter garrisoned the castle there and had to be ousted by John the Fearless.⁴⁸⁵ Maximilian's father Frederick was confronted with a feud in 1453 when his erstwhile councillor Georg of Puchheim demanded overdue payment for his services in war. He damaged the lands in south-eastern Austria and tried to involve the local estates. Puchheim saw it as his duty to guard his honour in this way.⁴⁸⁶ Within such traditions, the actions of our three noblemen Brederode, Montfort and Cleves do not appear as strange as they do at first sight. Not only did they act differently from leaders of general revolts (as John of Montfort had in 1483 and Philip of Cleves up until 1489), they were treated differently as well. All previous treaties were signed with the inhabitants of political entities, such as those of Utrecht or those of Flanders. These treaties incorporated the noblemen that led the struggle. But these three feuds were resolved by treaties with the person. So important was Philip of Cleves' personal conflict with the authorities, that when Ghent surrendered in 1492, its crime was written down in the peace treaty as “having accepted and sustained the quarrel of lord Philip of Cleves”, along with all the war and damage that that entailed.⁴⁸⁷ With men who fought from such specific demands, it is worth looking at the way they were submitted with that in mind.

6.1 God's friend and all the world's enemy⁴⁸⁸

The surrender of Philip of Cleves has been treated by historians as a compromise and, in some cases, as half a victory.⁴⁸⁹ By contrast, John of Montfort's subjugation is seen as more repressive.⁴⁹⁰ These views, in my opinion, betray an anachronism. I will argue instead that in spite of many concessions to Philip of Cleves, he was denied the most important of his demands, and considerably more agreeable versions of a treaty were drawn up before. John of Montfort's articles

484Brunner, *Land und herrschaft*, 1-110; Glaudemans, *Om die wrake wille*, 33-65.

485Armstrong, *A policy for the nobility*, 216. Armstrong also mentions Gerrit of Strijen, who held Zevenbergen castle against Philip the Good in 1427, but as a partisan of Jacqueline of Bavaria, his quarrel can hardly be called a feud. For more on this case, see Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 45.

486Otto Brunner, *Land und Herrschaft. Grundfragen der territorialen Verfassungsgeschichte Österreichs im Mittelalter* (Vienna 1965 (first print Vienna 1942)) 12-14.

487Blockmans, *Autocratie*, 359: “[...]gheaccepteert ende ghesustineert hebben die querele van heere Phelips van Cleven[.]”

488“‘Aber da der von Rafenstein von Brück hinweg ziehen must, zoch er gein de Schleus [...] alda er sich lange weil gottes freunt und aller welt veint schreib.’” *Geschichten und Taten*, 101-102.

489Hans Cools, 'Philip of Cleves at Genoa: the governor who failed', in: Jelle Haemers, Céline van Hoorebeeck and Hanno Wijsman (eds.), *Entre la ville, la noblesse et l'État. Philippe de Clèves (1456-1528). homme politique et bibliophile* (Turnhout 2008) 101-115, there 101; De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 235: “Zulke een capitulatie is een overwinning”; Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 77: “Philippe ne doit rendre compte d'aucune de ses actions.”; De Win, *Filips en de Brabantse adel*, 55 calls it “merkwaardig”.

490Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 387-388.

were indeed painful, but not in such a way that his political career was inhibited. Furthermore, I hope to demonstrate that these treaties of 1490 and 1492 shared many elements of ritual and otherwise, which should give us a view of a bigger picture.

The treaties of Frankfurt and Montilz-lez-Tours both stipulated that Philip of Cleves be restored in his honour and that he would get to keep his estates, offices and pensions. The Frankfurt treaty employs the same rhetoric of grace that was used a decade later when the French ambassador demanded the restoration of the coats of arms of Philip's father and Louis of Gruuthuse: “le roi des Romains, à la requeste dudit roi très-Chrétien son beaufils, reprendra en sa bienveillance messire Philippe de Cleves.”⁴⁹¹ Thus it was a gift that Maximilian gave to the king of France, rather than something Philip deserved. Charles sent the latter a reassuring letter that he had not abandoned him, nor the Flemish, Brabantines or Liègois.⁴⁹² But even though the terms were quite in line with Philip's demand, the form was not and the matter had only gotten more complicated by the time of Montilz-lez-Tours. The treaty is surprisingly candid about the uncertainty:

“And about that my aforementioned lord Philip of Cleves has requested to be received to expostulate in all honour and reverence his justifications and also that he be held in his estates, offices and pensions which he has always had from the king of the Romans and the archduke, to whom he has continually been and is most humble kin, servant and subject; [in response to that] has been said that the mentioned lord Philip is included in the treaty of Frankfurt and that the most Christian king will talk of this request to the king, his father in law, when they will see each other.”⁴⁹³

As with the Golden Fleece trials, restored in honour still meant damaged honour. It implied that Philip had committed a crime of sorts, and that only Maximilian's goodwill towards Charles VIII bailed him out. Instead, he wanted to be recognised as having done the right thing all along, “à quoy tousvoies l'on ne la voulut respondre ne soy contenter.”⁴⁹⁴ What was the subject of many letters in June 1488 became the spindle of three years of conflict.

Albert of Saxony demanded from Philip a renewal of the law in Sluis, to which he agreed. The fighting had stopped, since Philip's oath was void now that the Flemings were

491Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, III/2, 236-238; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 156-162.

492Pélicier, *Lettres de Charles VIII*, II, 386-387.

493“Et sur ce que mondit seigneur Philippe de Clèves a fait requerir pour estre receu à remonstrer en tout honneur et reverence ses justifications et oussy qu'il soit entretenu ès estas, offices et pentions qu'il a tousjours eues d'icelui ou d'iceulx roy des Romains et archiduc, desquelz il s'est continuellement tenu et tient très humble parent, serviteur et subget, a esté dit que ledit monseigneur Philippe est comprins ou traittié de Francquefort et que le roy très cristien parlera de ceste requeste au roy, son beau père, quand ilz se verront.” Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 169.

494BNF ms. fr. 18997, f.83r-83v.

reconciled with Maximilian. But the commissioners proceeded to ask for the delivery of the castles, and although they expected a “bonne response”, they got a lengthy speech. Charles VIII had promised him that the issue would only be looked at when he and Maximilien arrived there together. Perhaps this was his interpretation of the clause in the Montilz-lez-Tours treaty. Recalling the entire history of the last few years, Philip of Cleves argued that he had only done what he did because of his hostage oath, and that he should not be punished, but rewarded. If Maximilian should come to Sluis, Philip would gladly take a new oath of loyalty, but until then he would not give Sluis' castles “à personne qui vive”.⁴⁹⁵ Subsequent talks between the lieutenant-general, Bruges and Philip of Cleves yielded few results, except that the latter agreed to take an oath of loyalty and hand over the keys to Sluis ceremonially, but now also required the king of the Romans to pay him a sum of money that was due.⁴⁹⁶ In the mean time, his position in Sluis allowed him to put pressure on everyone. He turned the city, “ein solch bevestigung, daraus man die ganzen kristenhait bekriegen [kann]”, into a den of piracy and blockaded all trade to Bruges.⁴⁹⁷

A last attempt at reconciling with John of Montfort was made in April 1490, and it reflects many of the same issues that plagued the conversation between Philip of Cleves and the local government. Maximilian and Philip wrote that:

“As the castellan of Montfort has taken with force and violence our house, castle, keep and city of Woerden, and from there has burnt, killed, captured, harmed and robbed our well-meaning subjects of our lands of Holland, and has done and perpetrated all acts of war that were possible from there; because of which that same castellan should certainly be corrected and punished as an example to others. Nevertheless, by humble petition and request of some of our loyal servants who has pleaded to us very seriously for the aforementioned castellan, and asked us to prefer and prove mercy before the rigour of justice.”⁴⁹⁸

495BNF ms. fr. 18997, f.84r-85r; De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 230-231.

496BNF ms. fr. 18997, f.86v-f.87r; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 258-259

497De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 228, 233; *Geschichten und Taten*, 101-102; Philip the Good called the city “le principal port et le clef de nostre pays de Flandres”: Dumolyn, *Brugse Opstand*, 240 n.701. See also the Verein für hansische Geschichte, *Hanserecense*, pt. III/2 (Leipzig 1883) nrs. 471, 496, 514, 515, 518, 523, 526, 528 and 557.

498RAD OA 639 4, f.1r: “Alzoe die borchgrave van Montfoirde met crachte ende gewelde inne genomen heeft ons huys, casteel, slot ende stede van Woerden, daer uuyte gebrant, dootgeslaghen, gevanghen, gescadet ende beroeft onse goetwillege ende getruwe ondersaten onser landen van Hollant, ende alle fayten van oerloge daer uuyt gedaen en geperpetreert hem megelic ende doenlic zijnde; daer of die zelve borchgrave wel behoerde gecorrigeert, gepugnieert ende gestraft te wesen ten exemple van anderen. Nochtans ter oetmoedeger bede ende versoecke van eenegen onzen getruwen dienaren die ons zeere ernstelic voere den voirs. Borchgrave beden hebben ende willene prefererende ende bewijzen barmhericheit voere riguer van rechte[.]” In April 1490, Maximilian was, of course, in Germany, while Philip the Handsome still resided in Malines. The document is not an official letter, but a draft with corrections, which might suggest that the definitive text was written by a third party — perhaps Albert of Saxony or Engelbert of Nassau?

The proposal went on to state that, because Montfort had “confessed his evil facts and crimes” and had begged for grace, mercy and remission, Maximilian and Philip would allow the castellan to be arbitrated in the matter between himself and John of Egmont by Albert of Saxony and Engelbert of Nassau, provided that he vacate Woerden beforehand. Like Philip of Cleves, he claimed that such an arbitration would violate the earlier promise of Maximilian, and he, too, wanted to keep onto the fortress until the arrival of the king himself. The commission that visited him considered these to be “frivolous proposals”, and so did Albert of Saxony.⁴⁹⁹ The siege finally brought him to terms half a year later, and he had wasted his opportunity at arbitration.

To recount all the events and negotiations between the court and Philip of Cleves here would take too long, and the work has already been done by others.⁵⁰⁰ We pick up Philip of Cleves' thread again in 1492. He had agreed to take a vow of loyalty to Maximilian and Philip the Handsome, but on certain conditions that were not easy to fulfill. When he demanded to be reinstated as lieutenant of Flanders and of Namur (held by Engelbert of Nassau and John of Bergen), he was denied these because he did not possess the first during the time the king was captured, and never legally possessed the second at all. As for the lieutenancy of Hainaut and the admiralty (held by the prince of Chimay and Philip of Beveren), those were already in the hands of other men, and Maximilian did not want to injure them. But on the whole, a lot of Philip's proposed articles were answered positively.⁵⁰¹ What they did not agree on, were the most important points.

In March, Roeland of Moerkerke delivered a “proposition” to the gathered archduke, fleece knights and Estates-General in Malines on behalf of Philip of Cleves. In it, Philip recounted his noble ancestry, the many good deeds he thought he had done for Maximilian and Philip the Handsome, and the self-sacrifice of him offering himself as a hostage in spite of his own wants. The two hour text also provided a summary of all the negotiations that had taken place up to that point.⁵⁰² After the archduke and his councillors had talked over it, the estates were called back in the next day to discuss the proposition,

499RAD OA 639 12, f. 1r-2r, printed in Van den Brandeler, *Bijdrage*, 123-125 and Kokken and Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 944-945.

500For Philip of Cleves, De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 228-265; Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 67-75; For John of Montfort, Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 382-383, 386. There are, however, many entires in the *Dagvaarten* that make mention of many delegations not included here.

501RAG Varia 3, nr. 244, nr. 26 for the proposals, nr. 9 and 9bis for the replies in Dutch, nr. 30 for the replies in French. Judging by the numerous corrections and marginal notations, the replies may be the originals. Nr. 35 is a version of the replies in Dutch with the notations integrated into the text. Summaries can be found in Isidore Diegerick, *Inventaire analytique et chronologique des chartes et documents appartenant aux archives de la ville d'Ypres*, pt.7 (Bruges 1868) 188-192 and 193-195.

502BNF ms. fr. 18997 f.74r-103r. The event is described and the text summarised by a member of the Hainaut delegate in Louis-Prosper Gachard, 'Analectes historiques. Dixième série', *Bulletin de la commission royale d'histoire*, 3rd series, 4 (1863) 323-367, there 342-344. The piece is analysed in Haemers, *Opstand Adelt*, passim.

“which, although it was of great length, came down in the end to two points: one for the repeal of the ban made by the emperor, and the other for the declaration that he was not the cause of the wars and divisions and the evil happenstances, etc. On which seemed, regarding the ban, that it had been made by the emperor and not by the king nor my lord the archduke: as such, if monseigneur Philip wants provision in this, he will have to get it from the emperor; but, in case the peace and appointment will be made, my lord can consent to him to be mediate with the emperor for the abolishment of the ban. And about the other conclusion, it is requested against the honour of the king.”⁵⁰³

The estates agreed with this decision of the court completely. Upon the departure of the embassy, Philip the Handsome spoke some of the first recorded words we have of him: “Dittes à monsieur Philippe qu'il ne me face faire chose dont je puisse avoir regret cy-après.”⁵⁰⁴

6.2 Rivals in diplomacy

Diplomacy was hot issue during the war. Maximilian and the court tried to monopolise the authority on the making of treaties, but they had trouble doing so. The estates of Lille, Douai and Orchies negotiated a pact of neutrality with France, and although they realised that the treaty would need the approval of Maximilian, they were quicker in implementing the truce than the king was in responding. He agreed to it eventually and reluctantly, but distanced himself from the treaty after the peace with France was signed, and severely reprimanded the cities.⁵⁰⁵ If the bribes are any indication of where the Walloon Flemings thought the major stumbling block in their private peace would be, fingers ought to be pointed at John of Bergen, who received the royal sum of 2400 lb.⁵⁰⁶ Many of the cities in Holland wanted to conclude a treaty with Brederode and Montfort without the consent of the central government. They argued that, although they had no authority over the domains or the offices of the county, they could sign a peace in their own name and shuffle money around. Philip the Handsome and his council disagreed vehemently and sent a letter to Dordrecht: to do so would be “greatly contrary to the highness and lordliness” of Maximilian and Philip, and the city was told to block any attempts at treaty that did not have the approval of Albert of Saxony and

⁵⁰³Gachard, *Analectes historiques X*, 344-345.

⁵⁰⁴Gachard, *Analectes historiques X*, 353.

⁵⁰⁵Michael Depreter, 'Le prince et les états de Flandre Wallonne: des diplomaties concurrentes? Modalités et enjeux du traité de Wavrin (14 décembre 1488)', *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* 53 (2013) 179-200.

⁵⁰⁶Depreter, *Le prince et les états*, 186, 194. This sum was given in two gifts, one in December 1488 and the other in January 1489, both of 1200 lb.

the councilmen of Maximilian in Malines. They were to wait until the king returned, “which shall be very soon, to come to the aid and comfort of you and our other good and loyal subjects, and to punish and correct the rebels and disobedient as an example to all others.”⁵⁰⁷ Both in Walloon Flanders and in Holland, we find that the local governors were supportive of the peace treaties, and in Holland the lieutenant and the stable master even 'advised' it.⁵⁰⁸ Already in 1488, Malines was told to redirect any letters from Philip of Cleves or the Flemish cities, who had “against their nature become French” unopened to the king.⁵⁰⁹ The Hollanders did read such letters, but decided not to risk making any separate peace with Philip of Cleves and infringe on the honour of Maximilian and Philip.⁵¹⁰ Before his departure, Maximilian had ordered that the Estates should all send a handful of plenipotentiaries to follow Albert of Saxony on his campaigns. The idea was that the lieutenant general could act swiftly, make clear his intentions, and gather insight from the natives, but it was perhaps just as much intended to keep an eye on the dignitaries of the Estates, and make sure they did not act on their own.⁵¹¹

Nevertheless, the revolting nobles knew quite well that the estates, in which the beleaguered cities played such an important role, were more pliable than was the central government.⁵¹² Philip of Cleves had always wanted to send a delegation to a gathering of the Estates General. The 'proposition' that Roelant of Moerkerke delivered on his behalf before the gathered estates on the 8th of March 1492 was nominally addressed to Philip the Handsome, but seems to have had the urban representatives as its target audience. For one thing, it was written in Dutch, while noblemen would generally converse in French at court.⁵¹³ At the end of the speech, which took over two hours, copies of its text, both in Dutch and in French, were handed to the members of the estates-general. Although the archduke Philip did not consider it necessary for them to get involved, he did allow Moerkerke to give his writings. The archduke was thankful for the “prudence et léauté” of the members of the estates when they were smart enough to immediately hand over their copies to the chancellor, but they graciously received copies of the responses that the court had written up a day later.⁵¹⁴ One of Philip's demands for a peace treaty had also been that the Estates would serve as arbiter in case there was any doubt over any of its point. This was not something the court could consent to; the interpretation of any point belonged to the king, the archduke, “and no

507Kokken en Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 728-730.

508Depreter, *Le prince et les états*, 186, 199; Kokken en Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 885-886.

509Van Doren, *Inventaire*, IV, *Lettres missives*, 29-30.

510Kokken en Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 1036-1037.

511Gachard, *Lettres inédites*, II, 22, 34-35; Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States generals*, 71.

512In 1483, Maximilian had even dared to ask the Three Members of Flanders not to write to the cities loyal to him “pour les séduire et desvoier de la raison, bonne amour, léauté, bon pourpos et vouloir qu'ilz ont envers nous et nostre fil.” Keryvn de Lettenhove, *Histoire de Flandre*, V, 537.

513Armstrong, *The language question*, 201-202.

514Gachard, *Analectes historiques X*, 336, 344-345.

one else.”⁵¹⁵

A lot of the negotiation had been in the hands of two of Maximilian's top diplomats, Charles of Croÿ, the prince of Chimay, and Engelbert of Nassau.⁵¹⁶ The two made the treaty between Albert and Saxony and John of Montfort,⁵¹⁷ and they were both instrumental in the negotiations with Philip of Cleves, along with the lords of Beveren and Chièvres.⁵¹⁸ In 1491, Chimay had been appointed 'principal mediateur' in the matter Philip of Cleves by Maximilian himself during a trip of the prince to Germany, but once in Malines “aucuns esperitz brisèrent tout ce qui estoit conchupt.”⁵¹⁹ Regardless, even if the power of Chimay was cast into doubt, he was still one of the most important negotiators. It might have been useful that the two who were sent out to reason with Philip of Cleves were also his successors, Nassau as lieutenant-general of Flanders and Chimay with the same office in Hainaut. For all their ability to negotiate, however, the men in the Netherlands did not have unlimited power in this case. They were allowed to punish or extend grace in Maximilian's name, “sauf toutesvoies et referme la disposicion des offices et benefices et la mamance des deniers, que avons retenu à nous tant seulement.”⁵²⁰ He may have had Philip of Cleves in mind while dictating this. It meant that any real compromise had to be sanctioned by the king himself.

6.3 Peace

Brederode's demise is one of compromise and bad luck. The Hollanders quickly decided that to end the occupation of Rotterdam was to be their first priority, and by February 1489, two months after the coup, the city had been surrounded.⁵²¹ When its garrison stealthily left in an attempt to receive supplies from John of Montfort, it was ambushed by the troops of the stable master, and, deprived of most his his men, Francis of Brederode was forced give up his immediate ambitions.⁵²² The treaty, signed near the end of June, allowed Brederode and anyone who wanted to follow him to

515RAG V3, 244, nr.9, f.3v, nr. 26 f.6r, nr.30 f.4r., nr.35 f.4v; Diegerick, *Inventaire*, IV, 191, 195.

516For Nassau's previous experience, see De Win, *Engelbert van Nassau*, 88-97. Chimay had represented Maximilian in the brokering of a truce in 1488, but seems to have become an important diplomat only after this time: Cools, *Mannen met macht*, 198; De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 194.

517Aurelius, *Divisiiekroniek*, f.404r; Naaldwijk, *Eerste kroniek*, 557; *Geschichten und Taten*, 103 als names John of Cruiningen here.

518De Fouw, *Philip van Kleef*, 257; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 319-320.

519Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 216, 321. The 1300 florins debt that Maximilian asked the magistracy of Malines to relieve Chimay of in September 1491 may have formed a reward for this appointment. Because the king of the Romans had very few actual funds, he often resorted to actions like these to pay his vassals: Spufford, *Monetary problems*, 141-146.

520RHA ODL 462.

521Van der Sluys, *Verhaal*, 99-102; Payments of the militias of Leiden and Haarlem can be found in Kokken and Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 875-876.

522A.J., *Kort verhaal*, 34, 40-41; Aurelius, *Divisiiekroniek*, f. 402v; Kokken and Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 905; Van der Sluys, *Verhaal*, 144-148.

leave Rotterdam unharmed, as long as they left all the weapons and artillery behind.⁵²³ The treaty forcing him from Rotterdam was a stopgap measure, a means for the Estates of Holland to buy time to organise their defenses. Whether it was actually agreed to by the central government in Malines, is unsure; considering the treaty took three days at the most to be written, it is unlikely.

Having left Rotterdam, he sailed towards Sluis.⁵²⁴ We find him entering Bruges on the 12th of August, “with very beautiful, rich state,” where he quickly set out to assemble a new force.⁵²⁵ When peace was nearing in the city early in the next year, Brederode, along with Gruuthuse, fled to Sluis; not two weeks later, Engelbert of Nassau entered.⁵²⁶ Brederode's fleet, manned by nobles, Flemings, Easterlings and Danes, threatened seafare throughout Holland and Zeeland, for the next year, but when rumour had it that he was planning to take the town of Goedereede on Westvoorn, Albert of Saxony sent the lieutenant Egmont and his cousin, the lord of IJsselstein, to hunt him down. In the battle of the Brouwershavense Gat, the Hollanders and their allies defeated the fleet and captured a heavily wounded Brederode, who was brought to Dordrecht. Before he could be tried, he passed away; even so, his status allowed him to be buried in the local Augustine convent while the bodies of his men decorated the city gates.⁵²⁷ For our present case at least, this is all a highly unlucky turn of events; it would have been interesting to see where he would have ended up alive.

Philip of Cleves surrendered in the Autumn of 1492. Adolf died on the 18th of September, 1492. His lands and the castle Ravenstein were ordered to be occupied three days later, and on the first day of October the Great Council pronounced all goods confiscated.⁵²⁸ Philip had very little choice at this point, and was forced to surrender if he ever wanted to bury his father and see anything of his patrimony; besides, the month long siege of Sluis was taking its toll.⁵²⁹ On the 9th of October, Chimay, Nassau, Beveren and Chièvres entered the city to speak with Philip, and they finally signed the peace treaty between him and Albert of Saxony on the 12th.⁵³⁰ The duke of Saxony

523Van der Sluys, *Verhaal*, 153-157. The evacuation of Rotterdam should probably be dated on the 23rd of June; it is mentioned as such in one of the accounts of the Estates of Holland, (Kokken and Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 905) and is confirmed by A.J.'s *Kort verhaal*, 34, which says that he left in the morning of a Monday, which the 23rd was. Naaldwijk, *Eerste kroniek*, 554 names St. John's mass, the 24th. The day of the treaty is more difficult to ascertain. Van der Sluys, while almost universally wrong with dates, does usually give a correct account of events and places two or three days between the treaty and the exodus. The *Divisiechroniek*, f. 402v, however, mentions that on the 22nd there was still negotiating going on, and that same day, messengers were sent to Haarlem and Alkmaar to send delegates to 'negotiate with those of Rotterdam' (Kokken and Vrolijk, *Dagvaarten Holland*, IV, 903).

524Aurelius, *Divisiechroniek*, f.404r.

525't Boeck, 297.

526't Boeck, 323.

527Aurelius, *Divisiechroniek*, f.404r-404v; Naaldwijk, *Eerste kroniek*, 558-559; 'De nederlaag van jonker Frans van Brederode, vermeld door Jan graaf van Egmond', *Bijdragen voor vaderlandsche geschiedenis en oudheidkunde* 2 (1861) 269-272; Van der Sluys, *Verhaal*, 168-171.

528Vale, *A Burgundian funeral*, 926; Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 76-77.

529De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 271; *Geschichten und Taten*, 126;

530De Doppere, *Fragments inédits*, 38; Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 320.

was so pleased with the peace, that he sent letters announcing the treaty immediately at its conclusion, before the whole process had taken place.⁵³¹

The treaty itself is already very telling. Before coming to the actual articles, Albert shortly recounts the sequence of events that has led to writing of the document. It is very discriminatory indeed; Philip of Cleves had held the city and castles of Sluis for some years, “within which and from which [he] made war and had war made against the lands and subjects of good will of our merciful lord and cousin [Philip the Handsome].” To “remedy” that and bring both Philip and the city to obedience, Albert was expressly commanded by Maximilian to lay siege. In the end, Philip asked to negotiate, after which Nassau, Chimay, Beveren and Chièvres mediated to conclude the peace between the lieutenant and him.⁵³² Having just recounted the difficult process and discussions from both sides, this version of the story seems very simplified to us. It is no attempt at recreating the sequence events, but rather, it is the formulation of an 'official version' of what events took place. One in which Philip of Cleves had taken actions to the detriment of his lord (as we have seen, the ultimate crime one could be accused of), and was disobedient to archduke and king. This version does not allow for a different interpretation of the public good. There is a connection to the judicial trial in the words, such as when Philip is given “grace, quittance, remission and abolition,” in those words,⁵³³ just as the dukes say that the condemned man is “quicté, remis et pardonné” or “forgiven, quitted and remitted out of especial grace.”⁵³⁴ Furthermore, the treaty is presented not as a compromise, but rather as a complete victory for the authorities, where Philip has no bargaining position, but can only beg for mercy. That the actual articles of the treaty contained a good deal of concessions towards Philip did not matter; what mattered was that by accepting and signing this document, he made known publicly that he subscribed to the version of the story in which he did wrong. The tone here is different from that of the treaty made between Charles VIII and Francis of Brittany four years earlier. There, too, does the king grant peace at the request of the loser's request, after having had to fight it for the well-being of his country, but the text never specifically dwells on any malign on Francis' part, and speaks instead merely of “diférends” between Charles and the duke; all of which “à grand regret, pour l'amour qu'avions toujours porté à nôtre tres-cher cousin”.⁵³⁵ The treaties between Maximilian and his subjects, including Philip of Cleves, are more keen to stress wrong-doings and write a narrative of events. The harshest blow for Philip of Cleves might have been at the end of the treaty. Albert declares to “have forgiven, quitted, remitted, abolished, and forgive, quit, remit and abolish from especial

531 Van Doren, *Inventaire*, IV, *Lettres missives*, 43.

532 Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 90.

533 Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 97.

534 Vrolijk, *Recht door gratie*, 19-20.

535 Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, III/2, 209.

grace” all “crimes, excesses and abuses” that have been committed against Philip the Handsome.⁵³⁶ The wording here is not standard treaty language, but taken from the law of grace, where the phrase was standard use. Furthermore, the treaty goes on to invoke the chancellor, the Great Council and the minor councils in Brabant, Flanders and Holland. The impression is given of a legal document; though it is a peace treaty constituted from concessions, it reads like a court case, with all the implications of inequality that that entails. Unfortunately, if the Montfort treaty ever had a preamble or such a conclusion, it has been lost.⁵³⁷

The ritual of submission that was organised in Sluis two days after the treaty was ratified, served to reinforce this idea and make the fact clear to everyone involved. A German biographer of one of Albert's captains describes the ceremony of Philip's surrender. It is worth quoting the piece at length:

“Duke Albert, lieutenant of his royal majesty, stood under his pavilion decorated in a golden piece. All of his men, counts, lords and noblemen, honourable and well dressed. Ravenstein, together with the citizens, knelt before the praiseworthy prince and admitted to having done injustice, begged for mercy. This speech took a whole half of an hour, which they did on their knees. He [Albert] answered that all the keys of the city and castles would be given to Schaumburg as the highest captain. He [Schaumburg] took with him the English captain and others, went into the castle, raised the banner of the empire, duke Philip and of the king of England from the castle, and they let all trumpeters blow with joy and let all other musicians play music.”⁵³⁸

Molinet also tells us that they bared their heads on this occasion.⁵³⁹ The process for John of Montfort two years earlier was much the same; kneeling, begging for mercy for previous crimes, and finally grace from Albert of Saxony.⁵⁴⁰ What draws attention is that despite the fact that negotiations between nobles like Philip and John, and Albert took on a very different form from

⁵³⁶Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 96-97.

⁵³⁷RAL SA 1230.

⁵³⁸“Herzog Albrecht, kuniklicher majestat stathalter, stunde under seinem gezelt in einem gulden stück köstlich geziert. Alle die seinen, von graven, herren und edlen ehrlich und wolgeklaidet. Der von Rafenstein sambt den bürgern knieten nider für den lobreichen fürsten und bekenten sich unrecht getan haben, baten umb gnad. Der von Rafenstein verpflichtet sich wider die küniklichen majestat oder der son, als sein recht naturlichen erbherren, nimmermer ze tun. Dise red wert ein ganze halbe stunt, die si auf iren knien teten. Die antworteten alle schlussl der stat und schlösser, wurden dem von Schaumburg als obristem hauptman eingeben. Der name zu sich den englischen hauptman und ander, zoch in daß schlos, sties des reichs herzogen Pfilipsen und des kunigs von Engellant banir aus dem schloss, ließen all trumetter mit freuden aufblasen, und ander spilleut all ir hofrecht machen.” *Geschichten und Taten*, 126-127.

⁵³⁹Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 320.

⁵⁴⁰*Geschichten und Taten*, 103.

those between the urban centres and the Habsburg victors, the ritual of submission is exactly the same. Philip of Cleves, his soldiers and the citizens of the town of Sluis are all grouped into one submissive body, even though the treaty was specifically one between Albert and Philip as individuals. Sluis figured as a 'client' of Philip's. The bending of the knee had been applied as a means for rebellious nobles to beg for pardon by the Carolingians, and had only later found its way into law and, from there on, into urban rebellions.⁵⁴¹ But from there, it seems to have found its way back. When Philip of Cleves and John of Montfort kneeled, they did so with all the innovations that the ritual had accumulated along the way, such as the lengthy outdoors speeches and the mass of penitents.

Another key element of the surrender of a city or fortified place was the handing over of the local keys as a sign of submission. Again, we find the act carried out both by John of Montfort and by Philip of Cleves, but in the second case with a twist. Philip handed Albert the keys to both the castles of Sluis during the ceremony as a sign of submission, but immediately after, Albert returned the keys to the larger castle, thereby giving the office of castle lord to Philip. In the end, Philip held Sluis both before and after the ceremony, but he hadn't held on to it, as he did not have the right; it was graciously given to him on that 14th of October.⁵⁴² “Lord, so far you have signed calling yourself the castellan of Montfort. The city is now in our hands. We give it back to you, and from now on, sign lord of Montfort.”⁵⁴³

Nevertheless, Albert, having had to lay siege to both places, very well realised the dangers of having the same people occupy Sluis and Montfort. Therefore, measures were taken to disarm the places. In the case of Montfort, the lord John had to open up the castle to a garrison of soldiers from Holland, and personally gain the permission for this from the local sovereign, bishop David. In addition, he was not allowed to rebuild the shattered city walls and defenses for the next ten years, with the exception of the roof of his castle.⁵⁴⁴ Doing so was a time-honoured tradition by the end of the fifteenth century.⁵⁴⁵ It also served a symbolic means; the houses of criminals and traitors were sometimes destroyed after they were tried or had fled.⁵⁴⁶ A shaping of space like this one, too, would have been a potent reminder of the power of Maximilian over John of Montfort, and the justness of its use. In Sluis, Philip of Cleves had to hand over governance of the smaller

541Koziol, *Begging pardon*, 177-178, 205.

542Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 91.

543Naaldwijk, *Eerste kroniek*, 558: “Heer ghij hebt u tot noch toe ghescreven burchgraeff van montfoert die stat staet nu in onsen handen die gheven wij u weder ende scrijft u voert an here van montfoert.”

544Van Alkemade, *Rotterdamse Heldendaden*, 316-317.

545Armstrong, *A policy for the nobility*, 217-218, especially n.1.

546Marc Boone, 'Urban space and political conflict in Late Medieval Flanders', *The journal of interdisciplinary history*, 32 (2002) 621-640, there 627; Glaudemans, *Om die wrake wille*, 177-184.

castle to Albert of Saxony.⁵⁴⁷ Its garrison was replaced by Albert's and a new captain was installed; five hundred men were stationed there.⁵⁴⁸ This ensured that any further rogue actions were essentially impossible; the lieutenant general had a back door into the city. But on the other hand, unlike the solution in Montfort, the city was, if the forces from the two castles were on the same side, defensible against threats from a common enemy. To repair the damage done to the larger of the two castles, Philip was allowed 30,000 lb., to be paid by the estates of Brabant, Flanders, Holland and Zeeland.⁵⁴⁹ In a way, the Montfort garrison and the occupying of the smaller Sluis castle can be seen as a link between Charles the Bold's aborted plans to erect a military citadel in Ghent, and Charles V's practice of doing so, both there and in other places.⁵⁵⁰ They suggested a permanent mistrust.

That Philip of Cleves' treaty is not particularly mild, is seen by comparing it to a more advantageous concept from the court from earlier in 1492. When Philip's emissaries left Malines on the 15th of March after having read out the lengthy proposition, they were given a proposal by the archduke. In it, he was offered the governorship of both of Sluis' castles, as well as the admiralty. It would, in retrospect, have been smarter to accept there and then, but at the time he could not consent to these terms because the point regarding his honour and his safety were not conceded to.⁵⁵¹ On the peace with Montfort, the 19th century historian Van den Brandeler has suggested that Albert of Saxony was obliged to be lenient, based on an anecdote found in the chronicle of Nicholas Despars: the defenders of the city of Montfort had captured the duke of Saxony himself, and only set him free once he promised to lay down his arms against John of Montfort.⁵⁵² One the whole, though, it seems unlikely that if the event took place, only a chronicler working in the second half of the 16th century would know of it. But it shows that not long after, myths were popping up trying to explain why Montfort was not set back much more than he was.

Philip of Cleves and his wife invited Albert of Saxony and the other signees to dinner, and they sat harmoniously together the evening after the submission ceremony.⁵⁵³ In Bruges, all thanked God “for the grace that He accorded that [Albert of Saxony] and lord Philip of Ravenstein came to an accord in such a friendly manner.”⁵⁵⁴ Philip finally left Sluis sporting a long beard,⁵⁵⁵ and

547Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 92.

548*Excellente cronike*, f.277v; Hoccalus, *Histoire des Pais-bas*, 740-741.

549Haemers, *Philippe et la Flandre*, 94-95.

550Arnade, *Beggars*, 191-192; Boone, *Urban space*, 637-638.

551Diegerick, *Inventaire*, IV, 195-196 for a summary of the proposal, 197 for Philip's reply.

552Van den Brandeler, *Bijdrage*, 89-90; Despars, *Cronycke*, IV, 461.

553Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 320.

554*Excellente cronike*, f.277v: “danckende god vander gracie die hi verleent hadde dat hi ende mijn heere Phelips van Ravesteyn so vriendelic veraccoordeert waren.”

555De Doppere, *Fragments inédits*, 38. This look is confirmed by a small contemporary portrait in the Musées des Beaux-Arts de Belgique by the Master of the Legend of St. Catharine, reproduced in Hugh Hudson, 'Paradise for ever. More on the patronage and iconography of the 'triptych with the miracles of Christ' in the National Gallery of

went to Bruges, which was decorated with lanterns and candles for the occasion.⁵⁵⁶ He was received “amicably and happily” and the magistracy organised a banquet for him and all other nobles.⁵⁵⁷

6.4 Epilogue

“And the parties from both sides were reconciled; but how or in what way was not mentioned to the common man and remained a secret between the lords,” so tells us the *Divisiechroniek* of John of Montfort's encounter with Albert of Saxony.⁵⁵⁸ We, unfortunately, have no more information than the common man, but we can make some guesses as to what had been discussed; in all likelihood, they tried to win his support. John of Montfort was the most powerful and influential man in Utrecht, and bishop David did not have eternal life. We can see that Maximilian and Philip tried to gain his favour a few years later: when the rise of Charles of Egmont in Gelre set up an anti-Habsburg block in the North-East, they wanted to have their relative Frederick of Baden set up as a coadjutor and successor to David. During one of their travels to make arrangements for this, Engelbert of Nassau and John of Cruiningen promised that Montfort would be restored in his Hollandish possessions within six months. That did not happen, but he received the lordship of Nieuwenveen in 1497, and was appointed councillor and chamberlain in 1505.⁵⁵⁹ Albert of Saxony had allowed Montfort to continue his struggle for Purmerend at the Great Council, and he took it up again in 1497. The trial was stalled for years on end, until the final resolution in 1509, when Montfort was perhaps getting a little too close with Charles of Gelre, conceded to John of Egmont. Not just was Montfort not in the right, the verdict expressed displeasure over the course of action taken. If Montfort had objected to the confiscation, he could appeal only to Maximilian or his procurator, and only do so within four years of the event. And even then, it was argued, he should have known better than to ask for restitution of a lordship that had by then been given to someone else, which the doctors of law forbade. What's more, Montfort's continued support of Maximilian's enemies and his rebellion meant that he hadn't held his end of the bargain and ought rather to have been deprived of all of their goods. Going beyond a mere struggle over one lordship, the trial discussed the history of Hook and Cod wars since the death of Charles the Bold (and in case, Montfort noted that several of Egmont's ancestors had supported Jacqueline of Bavaria and were

Victoria', *Oud Holland* 126 (2013) 1-16, there 4.

556Louis Gilliodts-van Severen, *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Bruges*, pt. VI (Bruges 1885) 364.

557*Excellente Cronike*, f.277v.

558Aurelius, *Divisiechroniek*, f. 404r “Ende de partien an beyden sijden sijn verenicht; mer hoe ofte in wat manieren is den ghemenen man oncondich gheweest ende is alleene onder tsecret van den heren ghebleven” cf. *Die alder excellenste cronyke van Brabant, van Vlaenderen, Hollant, Zeeland int generael, ende die nieuwe gesten geschiet zijnde bi onsen prince ende coninc Kaerl die in die ander Cronijcken niet en sijn* (Antwerp 1518) chapter lxv.

559Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 397-399.

banned for it by Philip the Good).⁵⁶⁰ The verdict thus not only gave a judgment in a particular instance, but it wrote the accepted version of the history of Holland and Utrecht.

Philip of Cleves already received his payment of 30.000 lb. in December of 1492.⁵⁶¹ He served at court and received his pensions, in which he received less money only than Albert of Saxony, but did not make it into the *conseil privé* and was not given any important office as governor or commander;⁵⁶² furthermore, the pension he received was not any higher now that he was lord of Ravenstein than it had been when his father was still alive, and it was not nearly the sum his father received in his glory days. A better method of assessment than the payments of the pensions may be those of bribes; and while he received numerous gifts before 1488, he almost never received any after.⁵⁶³ He served, essentially, as a symbol of legitimacy, a man whose position was too prestigious to ignore, but his conduct too unreliable to trust. Philip and Maximilian had not seen each other after that fateful May 16th 1488, and only met again in 1494. Philip personally asked for forgiveness for anything that might possibly have displeased Maximilian, and the king responded “Je le vous ay pardonné, et de fait je le vous pardonne.”⁵⁶⁴ Convinced perhaps his lack of recognition in the Netherlands, perhaps by his close blood ties to the new French king, Louis XII, Philip went to France in 1498. The command of Sluis, which he had defended for three years with so much vigour, was sold for 10.000 lb. to Engelbert of Nassau.⁵⁶⁵ He served the monarch in his Italian campaign as governor of Genoa and leader of a naval crusade against the Turks — disastrously in both cases.⁵⁶⁶ By the time he returned to the Netherlands in 1508, Philip the Handsome had died in Spain, and Maximilian was fulfilling another regency, this time for Charles V. John of Bergen had much influence with acting regent Margaret, and only when William of Croÿ, the lord of Chièvres, became the most powerful politician at Charles' coming of age, did

560Galesloot, *Trois arrêts*, 447-463; Van Gent, *Pertijelike saken*, 401-404; Although Montfort had also asked to be reinstated as the lord of Polsbroek during his occupation of Woerden, I have not been able to find any evidence that he made any more attempts at getting it back later; Purmerend seems to have been the only lordship he sued for.

561Chrétien Dehaisnes, *Inventaire sommaire des archives départementales antérieures à 1790. Nord. Archives civiles — série B. Chambre des comptes de Lille, Nos 1842 à 2338*, pt. IV (Lille 1881) 277; Vale, *A Burgundian funeral*, 929.

562GSAB RSA 22bis, f.1v-2r; Jean-Marie Cauchies, 'De la «régenterie» à l'autonomie. Deux ordonnances de cour et de vouernement de Maximilien et Philippe le Beau (1495)', *Bulletin de la commission royale d'histoire*, 171 (2005) 43-88, there 56-57, 66-67; Joseph Chmel, *Urkunden, Briefe und Actenstücke zur Geschichte Maximilians I. und seiner Zeit* (Stuttgart 1845) 537, 541.

563Joachim Piens, *Mechelse giften. De relatie tussen de stad en de vorstelijke entourage in de Bourgondische en Habsburgse periode (1467-1503)* (MA thesis Louvain 2010) 98. One occasion in which he did receive a few cans of wine was by the city of Middelburg in Zeeland when he discussed Philip the Handsome's estate in 1493: Burgers, Smit and Van der Vlist, *Dagvaarten Zeeland*, II, 534.

564Molinet, *Chroniques*, II, 394-395.

565De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 283-284.

566Cools, *Philip at Genoa*; Jonathan Dumont, 'Entre France, Italie et Levant. Philippe de Clèves et la «croisade de Mytilène» (1501): portrait d'un seigneur bourguignon par l'historiographe royal Jean d'Auton', *Publications du Centre européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* 49 (2009) 51-68; De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 288-329.

Philip gain a position of influence again.⁵⁶⁷ He had hoped to finally become a knight of the Order of the Golden Fleece in 1516, but was refused. If they accepted the man who had shown cowardice at the battle of Enguinegate, who had murdered Lancelot de Berlayment and Rassegem, and who rebelled against king and archduke, they would violate the Order's statutes of only accepting “nobles hommes sans reproche.”⁵⁶⁸ True to himself, he wrote a long justification of his actions, but to no avail.⁵⁶⁹ It was also rumoured Maximilian threatened to return his collar if Philip were accepted.⁵⁷⁰

567De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 343-344, 346-349.

568De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 379.

569BNF ms. fr. 18997, f.109r-116r, edited in De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 369-377.

570De Fouw, *Philips van Kleef*, 349-350, 377-382. Philip had only been allowed to attend the 1473 chapter of the Order as a spectator in his youth: De Gruben, *Les chapitres*, 366.

Conclusion

In the above I have employed methods of anthropology, prosopography, diplomatic history, combined with narrative historical theory to answer a question of political culture inspired by sociological considerations of symbolic violence: in what way does the punishment of rebellious nobles shed light on the relationship between Maximilian of Austria and the Dutch aristocracy?

Maximilian was in a precarious position. He did not, as historiography has held, represent an authority to a populace that demanded less authority; he was one possible locus of authority. Next to him, the Estates-general held the keys to the coffers and asserted its position, the nobles of the blood were seen as the true representatives of the Burgundian line and the closest to Philip the Handsome, and the Order of the Golden Fleece could be appealed to as standing above the quarreling parties. Maximilian had to make clear to one and all that his rank was above any other and that his authority was not to be questioned. The conflict was one of establishing recognition.

Some nobles reasserted their own position and rebelled. Their position was grounded in their blood ties to Philip the Handsome, or in their position in the mighty urban centres of the Netherlands. Unlike Louis XI, who initiated many treason trials to get rid of people he did not want and need in the kingdom, Maximilian had the conflicts more or less forced upon him. He had to punish people whom he had rather have on his side as well as those whom he would not. Consequently, the results varied. Some had their involvement in rebellions entirely ignored, whereas others were humiliated and imprisoned. The use that someone could have in the future was the primary deciding factor in the treatment. Power was redistributed and flowed into the hands of a new and loyal elite. A nobility that was afraid of losing its position to newcomers only accelerated this process by revolting and getting their goods confiscated. As an example to all.

The graces extended fit neatly into Walter Prevenier's political pardons, but the act of storytelling was hugely important. To establish a truth was not uncontested. Both Flemish Revolts sparked from evaluation of the past actions of Maximilian, whether that was from his financial policy, his foreign wars or his treatment of previously condemned nobles. What the revolters maintained was that Maximilian had repeatedly forsaken his duties and broken his promises; what Maximilian maintained was that he saved the Burgundian dynasty. Both sides had their own arguments. A victory meant the capability to militarily enforce the opposing nobles to publicly recognise the king's arguments as the right ones. As such, we're not just dealing with conflicts between single men, but with effects that rewrote history for all.

“Who controls the past,” ran the Party slogan in *Nineteen Eighty-four*, “controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.”⁵⁷¹ None of the parties involved in the Flemish Revolts was quite as sinister as that of George Orwell's novel, but the maxim held true for them all the same. The symbolism and rhetoric of the conflict was aimed at establishing its own origins. The question was what truth would be accepted in the end, and who was to judge it.

In the end, what were, as we have seen, conflicts with extremely complex and multi-interpretable causes, were reduced to common tropes and formulae, that of the king beset by envious traitors, that of the king and ever-loyal nobles, or that of the king extending grace solely out of his good will — chivalry as the way of making sense of the world, as Huizinga would have it. While life does not present itself with clear beginnings and endings, one can stage a moment to be more acceptable and obvious as such. One can make clear a point, search for its universal acceptance by confession or by a Fleece knight verdict. To have the aristocracy mold, by enforced ritual, reality into the shape of the *Weißkunic*.

⁵⁷¹George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-four*, ch. 3. The Ministry of Truth is invoked by Sterchi in *Über den Umgang*, 391, 527.

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Appendix: Simplified family tree of the Burgundian dukes and regency council members

