

“From Candia to Haarlem”:
Mediterranean News in the
Haerlemsche Courant (1660 - 1669).

Konstantinos Theodoridis (s1683381)

k.theodoridis@umail.leidenuniv.nl

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Introduction

In the morning hours of the 26th of March 1661, avid readers would cross the Grote Markt of Haarlem and make their way to the north end of *Houtstraat* where Abraham Casteleyn's workshop was located, in order to purchase the Saturday edition of the *Haerlemsche Courant*. On the left column of the front page, under a bulletin from Livorno, dated March 5th, they would find the following news story. A *barque* that had left Tripoli on the 28th of February, brought with it some brief tidings: two corsairs of Tripoli had set upon a Christian ship called *Justice*, which – after a brief skirmish – managed to shake them off. When the *Bassa* of Tripoli learned how richly laden the lost prize was, he removed his *Tulbandt* from his head, threw it on the ground and then stepped on it angrily.¹ This story possesses some remarkably stereotypical traits of the way that pieces of news from the Mediterranean found their way in the seventeenth century Dutch press: a narrative (of sometimes anecdotal nature) pertaining to violence at sea, transmitted through a maritime network to a correspondent stationed in a major Italian port-city and then sent overland by post, to be published approximately one month after the date of the event described.

Building on the revolution of the printing press in the fifteenth century, the early modern period would witness spectacular improvements in the field of communications. The regular and increasingly global dissemination of all sorts of news and information eventually bequeathed contemporaries with a unique awareness of the world around them and – for the first time in history – gave birth to a sense of “contemporaneity”.² Thus, the past decades have seen a significant increase in scholarship dealing with early modern press, with an emphasis on how it contributed to the creation of a “public sphere”.³ However, despite the significant scholarly advancements, most studies still tend to deal with a single linguistic environment and

¹ Haerlemsche Courant [henceforth HC], 26-3-1661, No. 13, Sat., Livorno 5/3 [...] *dat het Schip de Justitie (het welcke eenighe tydt gheleden / teghens twee van zyn Roovers soo dapper is slaeghs gheweest /) van soo grooten warde was / van spyt zyn Tulbandt van het Hooft nemende / hadde met voeten ghetragt*. A more realistic account would have preferred the *Dey*, and not the *pasha* of Tripoli.

² Brendan Dooley, “Introduction”, in Brendan Dooley (ed.), *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe*, Farnham and Burlington, 2010, 1-20.

³ Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News How the World Came to know about itself*, New Haven – London, 2014, 230-231.

news from carefully designated geographic regions.⁴ Linkages between different news spheres and the mechanics of their marketing and consumption have as yet received little attention. To name but one example, the dynamics of the dissemination of Atlantic news in Europe and their connection to contemporary politics and editorial strategies is just now beginning to receive attention.⁵

This also certainly the case as far as the Mediterranean is concerned: although Fernand Braudel had included a chapter of his seminal work on communications - with distance being an unforgiving enemy in the sixteenth century, early modern networks of information in the Mediterranean have as yet received very little attention, with most studies centering on Venice's role as the main clearing-house of Mediterranean news and commercial information.⁶ Other studies have simply inventoried certain news concerning topics of Mediterranean history: through the study of selected French newsbooks, Turbet-Delof has made an extensive catalogue of news stories dealing with the corsairs of Barbary.⁷ John Paul Ghobrial's *The Whispers of Cities* has managed to put together an image of information flows between Istanbul, London and Paris, but the main focus of the book is European-Ottoman sociability in Istanbul as a conveyor of information and not news itself.⁸

Up to this day, the major discussions of Mediterranean historiography (the questions pertaining to its unity or disunity or to the nature of cross-cultural relations, to name but two) have not found some sort of equivalent in the study of Mediterranean news in the early modern press. However, our image of the place of the Mediterranean in global history won't be complete until we study the way by which Mediterranean

⁴ Joad Raymond, "Introduction: Networks, Communication, Practice", in Raymond, Joad (ed.) *News Networks in Seventeenth Century Britain and Europe*, New York, 2006, 1-17.

⁵ See for example Michiel van Groesen, "(No) News from the Western Front: The Weekly Press of the Low Countries and the Making of Atlantic News", *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 44/3, 2013, 739-760.

⁶ Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, vol I., Paris, 1966, 355-369; Pierre Sardella, *Nouvelles et spéculations à Venise au début du XVIe siècle*, Paris, 1948; Peter Burke, "Early Modern Venice as a Center of Information and Communication", in Martin, John and Romano, Dennis (eds.), *Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City State, 1297-1797*, Baltimore, 2000, 389-429; Eric Dursteler, "Power and Information: The Venetian Postal System in the Early Modern Eastern Mediterranean, 1573-1645", in Diego Curto, Eric Dursteler, Julius Kirshner and Francesca Trivellato (eds.), *From Florence to the Mediterranean: Studies in Honor of Anthony Molho*, Florence, 2009, 601-623.

⁷ Guy Turbet-Delof, *La presse périodique française et l'Afrique barbaresque au XVIIe siècle (1611-1715)*, Geneva, 1973.

⁸ John-Paul Ghobrial, *The Whispers of Cities: Information Flows in Istanbul, London, and Paris in the Age of William Trumbull*, Oxford, 2013.

news became known to the rest of the world.⁹ The lack of a substantial “newspaper culture” along the shores of the early modern Mediterranean may have shifted historians’ attention away from studying Mediterranean news in the press in general. Print culture in the Mediterranean had actually made very little progress outside of Italy and certain southern French and Spanish cities. Moreover, the few newspapers that circulated in mid-seventeenth century Italy were short-lived, as they were not suitable for the limited public sphere of city-state politics.¹⁰ In the Ottoman domain, a Muslim printing press would have to wait for Ibrahim Müteferrika’s pioneering - albeit short-lived - work in the 1720s.¹¹ Thus, in order to study Mediterranean news (and not just news *in* the Mediterranean) and its place in the nascent early modern “public sphere”, one is obliged to proceed through a foreign lens and turn to the study of the northern European press. Bearing in mind that foreign news started attaining mass publicity and elements of periodicity thanks to the appearance of the first newspapers in the early 1600s, it is only logical to privilege the study of the press of the seventeenth century’s most important news market: that of the Dutch Republic.¹²

The Mediterranean had occupied a prominent place in the news markets of the Low Countries at least since the Middle Ages.¹³ This was not only because Rome was the undisputed center of Christendom before the Reformation, but also thanks to the numerous forms of commercial contact between northern Italy and the markets of northwestern Europe. In the early modern period, Dutch interest in the Mediterranean came about as result of an enormous expansion of trade, shipping and diplomacy that occurred in the closing decades of the sixteenth century. The story of the Dutch *Straatvaart* (trade of the Straits) past the straits of Gibraltar has been told as an indispensable part of the so-called “Northern invasion” of a Mediterranean hungry for grain: a series of bad harvests made the Dutch and the English indispensable in

⁹ On how to study the Mediterranean through the lens of global history see, David Abulafia, “What is the Mediterranean?”, in David Abulafia (ed.), *The Mediterranean in History*, London, 2003, 11-32.

¹⁰ Pettegree, *The Invention* 67.

¹¹ William Watson, “İbrāhīm Müteferrika and Turkish Incunabula”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 88/3, 1968, 435–441. It should be noted that the Ottoman Jews, Greeks and Armenians had established their own printing presses much earlier.

¹² Otto Lankhorst, “Newspapers in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century”, in Brendan Dooley and Sabrina Baron (eds.), *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe*, New York, 2001, 151-159.

¹³ Frederic Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic*, New Haven 1973, 130-140.

freighting Baltic cereals in their ships' holds.¹⁴ As the seventeenth century progressed, this penetration would become more diversified and solid, with the Dutch moving on to capture the richer trades and expand throughout the whole of the Mediterranean basin. The most authoritative recent scholarship has not denied the dynamic nature of this process. Its long term historic impact, however, has definitely been watered down: emphasis is now placed on the survival of the established political and economic Mediterranean order.¹⁵

The present study will attempt to bring together the Mediterranean and the Dutch news communities, by examining Mediterranean news in the Dutch press through the *Haarlemse Courant*, in the decade 1660-1669. Born to a family of Haarlem printers, Abraham Casteleyn launched his *Weeckelijcke Courante van Europa* on the 8th of January 1656, initially publishing it every Saturday.¹⁶ In June 1658 he started the publication of a second newspaper, called the *Haerlemse Courant*, which appeared on the market every Tuesday. Beginning in 1660, both the Tuesday and Saturday editions were published as the *Haerlemse Courant*. Finally, in September 1664 the word *Opregte* (sincere) was added to the full title: Casteleyn had managed to obtain a special privilege from the city authorities, granting him the right to be the sole *stadsdrukker* (city-printer) and thus eliminating competition.¹⁷

I have chosen Casteleyn's *Haerlemsche Courant*, for the following reasons. To begin with, Haarlem's very close proximity to Amsterdam – the main hub of Dutch trade with the Mediterranean – allows us to consider the two cities as a unified news space. Information circulating in the two cities must have been drawn from pretty much the same news networks and issues of *corantos* printed in Amsterdam were also bought and read in Haarlem – and vice-versa. Number two, the *Haerlemsche Courant* managed to attain a unique status as the Dutch Republic's most popular newspaper.

¹⁴ Braudel, *La Méditerranée* 544-569; Jonathan Israel, "The phases of the Dutch straatvaart (1590–1713): a chapter in the economic history of the Mediterranean", *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 99, 1986, 1–30. For an alternative view of the first phase as described by Israel see Raul Christian van Royen, "The first phase of the Dutch Straatvaart (1591–1605); fact and fiction", *International Journal of Maritime History* 2/2, 1990, 69–102.

¹⁵ Molly Greene, "Beyond the Northern Invasion: the Mediterranean in the Seventeenth Century", *Past and Present* 174/1, 2002, 42-71.

¹⁶ Sautijn Kluit, "De Haarlemsche Courant", in *Handelingen der algemeene vergadering van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde te Leiden*, Leiden, 1873, 3-132 and esp. 5.

¹⁷ Maarten Schneider, *De Nederlandse krant 1618-1978: van "nieuwstydinghe" tot dagblad*, Baarn, 1978, 49-50. An *Extraordinaris* edition, published every Thursday, seems to have made its first appearance in July 1667, but its survival rate is very scant before 1669.

Many of its issues have been discovered in German and Scandinavian archives and - across the English Channel - London's coffeehouses offered the "best chocolate at twelve pence the quart and the translation of the *Harlem Courant* soon after the post is com in".¹⁸ Casteleyn's newspaper was read as far as Eastern Europe. An impressive number of the *Courant*'s issues has been discovered in the archives of Russia, where Czar Alexis I had his secretariat translate its news stories into Russian throughout the 1660s.¹⁹ Largely thanks to its popularity, the *Courant* enjoys a rather impressive survival rate for a mid-seventeenth-century newspaper, as no less than 341 of its issues survive for the period examined in this study: that is approximately 30% of the (theoretical) total number of separate issues published by Casteleyn between 1660 and 1669.²⁰ Thus, the unique nature of Cateleyn's newspaper makes it a first-class source to study Mediterranean news not only in the strict confines of the Dutch Republic, but also in early modern Europe in general.

As for the choice of the period under study, this had more to do with Mediterranean history in the 1660s – an especially turbulent decade for most of the Mediterranean basin. The last phase of the fifth Ottoman-Venetian War (also known as the Cretan War), culminating with the fall of Candia in 1669, had caused a significant increase of violence at sea. Other events, such as the French expedition against Jijel (Algeria) in 1664, the rise and subsequent hapless failure of Sabatai Zevi's (the "New Messiah of the Jews") movement, the destruction of Ragusa by a deadly earthquake in 1667 and the eruption of Mount Etna in 1669 made the 1660s a rather eventful decade for Mediterranean history. Moreover, the Mediterranean was especially important for the Dutch in the 1660s: according to Jonathan Israel, the decade 1660-1670 constitutes the last "dynamic" decade of Dutch trade in the Mediterranean. Like most other spheres of Dutch trade, the *Straatvaart* went into a phase of sharp decline after 1672,

¹⁸ George Trevelyan, *English Social History*, London, 1948, 286, quoted in Garrelt Verhoeven and Sytze van der Veen, *De Hollandse Mercurius: een Haarlems jaarboek uit de zeventiende eeuw*, Haarlem, 2011, 56.

¹⁹ Ingrid Maier, "Niederländische Zeitungen (>>Couranten<<) des 17. Jahrhunderts im Russischen Staatsarchiv für alte Akten (RGADA), Moskau", in *Sonderdruck aus Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 2004, 191-218; Ingrid Maier, "Zeventiende-eeuwse Nederlandse couranten vertaald voor de Tsaar", *Tijdschrift voor Mediageschiedenis* 12, 2009, 27-49 and esp. 32.

²⁰ If we assume that Casteleyn managed to publish his newspaper on a bi-weekly basis between 1660 and July 1667, and then publish it three times per week (after the addition of the "Extraordinary" Thursday issue) until the end of 1669, then the total number of different issues published throughout the decade under study can be put around 1170. All of the surviving issues have been digitised by the National Library of the Netherlands and are now available online through the database of delpher.nl, which I have used to access the issues quoted in the present study.

the so-called *Rampjaar* (year of disaster).²¹ The protection of this lucrative trade against the corsairs of Barbary, created the context for Michiel de Ruyter's two expeditions against the corsairs of Barbary – the first in 1662 and the second in 1664 – both sparking large public interest.

A justification of the geographic limits of the present study is also in order. Any study seeking to deal with Mediterranean news (and not simply news *in* the Mediterranean) has to try and “cover” as much of the Mediterranean basin as possible, to ensure that its findings can provide some sound generalization. Writing about the whole of the Mediterranean has always been an immensely challenging task: Mediterranean historiography has always tended to concentrate on its coasts rather than the open sea.²² This study does not deviate from this rule: I have concentrated on news conveyed through Mediterranean port-cities, since they provided most of the news that reached the Dutch Republic. Hence, I have chosen to omit non-maritime cities like Milan and Rome: the news from the latter was almost always pertaining to the ceremonies of the papal court and the Pontiff's recreational activities in the company of foreign envoys. I have also chosen not to include port-cities past the Straits of Gibraltar like Tangier or Lisbon – and thus settle for a strictly “geographically defined” Mediterranean – since their news was also “Atlantic” news.

In the confines of this study, I will claim that Mediterranean news – as it appears through the news stories of *Haerlemsche Courant* in the 1660s – shows a remarkable resilience, with cities such as Venice rivaling (in the total number of news-stories conveyed) the emerging northern European news markets. More importantly, I will argue that this “survival” of the “old Mediterranean world” (as opposed to northern markets and the colonial world) in the Dutch press in the 1660s, can be attributed to the fact that Mediterranean news suited the needs of the emerging early modern periodicity and news-publishing marketability in an exceptional way. To begin with, the two topics of Mediterranean news covered more regularly (reporting on the Corsairs of Barbary and reporting on the Cretan War) presented Casteleyn with a stream of news stories which ran for literally decades – meaning therefore that he would always have something to publish, on topics with which readers would have already been familiar. Moreover, the fact that the Mediterranean

²¹ Jonathan Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade 1585-1740*, Oxford, 1989, 203-211.

²² See David Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*, Oxford, 2008, xviii-xix.

was still one of the “frontiers” of early modern European imagination, permitted an inventive blend of literary genres in the texts of the news, thanks to the old formulas of anti-Muslim “constructions of otherness” – thus furnishing appealing narratives to Dutch readers. Modern scholarship on the Mediterranean has described this “frontier” as a permeable “middle ground” of cross-confessional co-existence where people displayed divided loyalties and fluid identities.²³ This image is nowhere to be found in the *Haerlemsche Courant*: Casteleyn’s Mediterranean was the Mediterranean of Christian-Muslim “battlefields” and not “bazaars”.²⁴ In fact, I will argue that anti-Muslim opinion-making may not always be visible in the texts themselves, but it is discernable in the patterns of reporting. This last point is also important concerning the nature of the *Haerlemsche Courant* itself: in his study of early modern newspapers as a source for economic history, the French scholar Michel Morineau referred to the *Haerlemsche Courant* (and the papers following its paradigm) as a source of credible and “dry information” owing to its neutral style of reporting, by presenting the news without commentary.²⁵

The first chapter – meant to be read more as descriptive introduction in Mediterranean news – is dedicated to the “mechanics” of the news stories published in the *Haerlemsche Courant*. Emphasis will be placed upon the types of news, Casteleyn’s news-collecting network and the itineraries (both literal and linguistic) travelled by the news stories – which will present us with a unique insight into the networks of the dissemination of information between Mediterranean port-cities and the Dutch Republic. I will attest the remarkable resilience of Mediterranean news, with Venice and Livorno being the main “suppliers”, and I will lay out the (seemingly neutral) strategies of repetitive reporting in Casteleyn’s news stories. The next two chapters place more emphasis on the texts themselves, but move beyond a simple analysis of discourse. Chapter Two deals with news pertaining to the corsairs of Barbary in the western and central Mediterranean. I will provide a succinct account of

²³ Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Princeton, 2000; Eric Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: nation, identity, and coexistence in the early modern Mediterranean*, Baltimore, 2006; Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: the Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and cross-cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period*, New Haven, 2009.

²⁴ For the discussion on the nature of cross-cultural contacts in the early modern Mediterranean see Eric Dursteler, “On Bazaars and Battlefields: Recent Scholarship on Mediterranean Cultural Contacts”, *Journal of Early Modern History* 15/5, 2011, 413 – 434.

²⁵ Michel Morineau, *Incroyables gazettes et fabuleux métaux. Les retours des trésors américains d'après les gazettes hollandaises (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles)*, Cambridge, 1985, 48.

Dutch-North African relations in the seventeenth century, thus explaining the basis of the Dutch reading public's interest in the corsairs and I will argue that reporting on the corsairs of Barbary fitted perfectly the needs of periodicity, as it provided a steady flow of news stories containing incidents of captures of cargo, naval skirmishes and agonizing tales of slavery. I will also stress that the anonymity of the corsairs along with the repetitive nature of reporting actually constituted a form of commentary. Next on, I will explore the changes in vocabulary and the content of the news stories in the wake of Michiel de Ruyter's expedition against the corsairs in 1662 and during the course of the second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667): the borrowing of elements from other literary genres in Casteleyn's news stories will become apparent. Chapter Three deals with how the *Haerlemsche Courant* covered the Cretan War (1645-1669). After providing an account of Dutch involvement in this conflict, I will argue that the repetitive nature of reporting on this topic – narrating endless skirmishes in the eastern Mediterranean through the prism of what appears to have been a set of Venetian “forward-looking statements” – fitted the needs of periodicity much in the same way that reporting on the corsairs of Barbary did.²⁶ Last but not least, I will argue that the last year of the siege of Candia was perhaps the main topic of news in the Dutch press of 1669. This had been the result of fortuitous factors (the lack of warfare elsewhere in Europe) but also of careful editorial strategies: Casteleyn had been preparing the ground for the ultimate story of Christian-Muslim standoff to be told and managed to capitalize on it by advertising the rest of his publications. At the same time, the *Haerlemsche Courant* managed to accommodate the contributions of the Dutch (and other Protestants) against the Ottoman army in Crete. In the end, the needs of periodicity and the abundance of stories of heroism in the Christian-Muslim frontier accounted for the survival of Mediterranean news in the Dutch press of the 1660s.

²⁶ Will Slauter, “Forward-Looking Statements: News and Speculation in the Age of the American Revolution”, *Journal of Modern History* 81/4, 2009, 759–92.

1. The “mechanics” of news

1.1 Types of news.

Early modern newspapers tended to concentrate on the publication of foreign and not local news. This was largely because most of them were published under the protection (and guarantee of monopoly) of the local authorities who would rather not stimulate public debate by allowing readers access to the sensitive issues of government. To be sure, the Dutch Republic was usually much more tolerant than France or the Southern Netherlands when it came to publishing, but the city-magistrates were equally unwilling to see local politics being discussed.²⁷ The *Haerlemsche Courant* was not exceptional compared to other seventeenth-century newspapers in this regard and Mediterranean news was one of Casteleyn’s newspaper’s categories of foreign news.

One of the characteristics which allows the Mediterranean to stand out as a separate geographic entity of foreign news is the primarily maritime character of its information flows and this is attested in the fact that the news provided by Casteleyn was mostly geared to violence at sea (and its terrestrial extension), commerce and naval armaments. Throughout the 1660s, numerous accounts of violence at sea involving opposing Christian and Muslim fleets made their way into Casteleyn’s newspaper. These, along with standard commercial news were of great interest to a wide range of individuals in the Netherlands, from merchants who had invested in the Republic’s trade (and those regulating it), to the sailors’ family members.²⁸ To be sure, different readers would be attracted to different kinds of news, as is the case with the reading of newspapers today. Moreover, news stories (always datelined with the name of the port-city they were conveyed through) would sometimes feature more than one thematic category of news.

It would be perhaps better to explore these thematic categories through the port-cities which best represented each category. In the pages of *Haerlemsche Courant*, the center specializing in commercial news is Livorno (or Leghorn). The datelined news

²⁷ Arblaster, *From Ghent* 264-265.

²⁸ For patterns of reading and readerships in the Dutch Republic in the the second half of the seventeenth century see Jeroen Blaak, *Literacy in Everyday Life: Reading and Writing in Early Modern Dutch Diaries*, Leiden, 2009, 112-187.

stories from Livorno usually start with the arrivals and departures of Dutch or other nations' ships.²⁹ The arrivals of unusually large cargoes (or losses thereof) were also of great interest. At the same time, Livorno's news-networks were the main providers of news concerning the activities of the corsairs of Barbary.³⁰

When it came to war and diplomacy, it was Venice and Genoa that took the lead. The *Serenissima* had been at war with the Ottoman Empire since 1645 and its possessions in the eastern Mediterranean had become battlegrounds for long periods of time. The numerous movements of troops and ships from the port of Venice en route to the Levant and the bloody skirmishes during the siege of Candia on the island of Crete would become a steady occurrence in the pages of Casteleyn's newspaper.³¹ The same applies for the various envoys exchanged between the city and the powerful sovereigns of Europe - the Pope included.³² As for Genoa, it should be noted that it actually provided little news pertaining to the maritime world of the Mediterranean: many reports on commerce and piracy are featured in its news stories, but most of them actually have to do with its northern neighbours and Spain.³³ In the cases of Toulon and Marseille (i.e. the bases of the French Mediterranean fleet) the main interest is always naval armaments, involving mostly the construction of galleys.³⁴ These must have been of great interest to the Dutch reading public as France was an ally of the Republic during the second Anglo-Dutch war (1665-1667).

Naples is a more complex case. Next to the reporting of purely maritime news (such as commerce and piracy), the readers of Casteleyn's newspaper could read stories narrating the lavish ceremonies involving the Spanish viceroys and the daily lives of the strong men of the Catholic church: that the galleys of Spain brought 24

²⁹ HC, 18-12-1663, No. 51, Dings., Livorno 26/11, *Van Smirna is hier den Fregat Europa gekomen, op den 21 Passato van daer vertrocken, als wanneer daer binnen quaemen de twee Convoyers met de Ionathan en Postilion van Amsterdam.*

³⁰ HC, 18-12-1663, No. 51, Dings., Livorno 26/11 [...] *Barcke van Tripoli melt, dat de Rovers daer noch alle binnen waren [...] Van Algiers is de Continuatie, van 't op-brengen van verscheide Schepen meest Engelse.*

³¹ For one of the many examples see HC, 7-6-1667, Venetien 20/5, [...] *aen d'ander zijde heeft men een genereuse wackerheydt onder 't naerstigh bestier van den Generael, den Marquis Villa, welke met 2000 uytgelesene Soldaten, veel Paerden en geode Sommen Geldt.*

³² HC, 14-3-1669, No. 11, Extr. Dond.

³³ HC, 30-6-65, No. 26, Dings., Genoua 30/5, [...] *3 Galeyen van Sardegna die nae Spagnie gaen om te voeren de nieuwe Vice-Roy.*

³⁴ HC, 5-6-1660 Sat., Marseilje 18/5 [...] *Voor 4 dagen zijn van Thoulon 10 Oorloghschepen t'zeyl ghegaen: en werdt heden noch een Esquadre gereet gemaect: haer Desseyn wert heel secreet gehouden / gevende voor sy tot assistentia vande Venetianen warden gesonden.*

chests of clothes for cardinal d'Arragon because he had lost his *guardaroba* at sea, was information deemed worthy of sharing.³⁵ At the same time, the outskirts of Naples (and southern Italy in general) was one of the borders of early modern European imagination: A place infested with bandits who organize joint raids with Muslim pirates against their fellow Christians³⁶ but also where *curiosa* are more likely to happen, like the one reported in Diestri (in the region of Apulia), where blood rained from the skies “to a general shock of the people”.³⁷ Lesser cities that provided datelined news-items, like Malaga or Smyrna, do not seem to have provided some special category of news.

Whatever the “specialization” of each port-city, Casteleyn’s news-collection was tuned to follow certain topics of special Dutch interest. Foremost among them was the Republic’s convoy system: for the protection of Dutch shipping from the corsairs of Barbary and other threats in the Mediterranean, the Directorate for the Levant Trade organized a convoy-system in cooperation with the Admiralties, with the costs being covered by the sums amassed through the *Convoyen en licenten* system.³⁸ Along with the reporting focused on the arrival of Dutch ships and cargoes, keeping track of the itinerary and status of Dutch convoys in the Mediterranean was one of the newspaper’s primary concerns. Not surprisingly, most of the cities which appear at the beginning of every news entry were actually frequent call-in stations of the Dutch convoy system. The Tuesday issue of the first of January 1669 is a case in point: a report from Messina, dated 21st of November informed readers that the Dutch convoy from Smyrna had reached the island of Corfu, where it would wait for the warship “*De Zeven Provintien*” in order to continue its route back to the Republic.³⁹ In the

³⁵ HC, 20-12-61, No. 51, Dings., Napels 22/11, *De Galeijen / hier uyt Spangien gekomen / hebben mede gebracht vier-en-twintigh kassen met kleden / voor den Cardinael d'Arragon / voor die geene welcke hy ongeluckigh op Zee heft verlooren*. In this regard, the news from Naples resembles that from Rome, covering every aspect of life in the Papal court.

³⁶ For such reports in the Haerlemsche Courant, see HC, 26-7-1661, No. 30, Dings., Napels 28/6. For the same connection in the French press see Turbet-Delof, *La presse* 50.

³⁷ HC, 24-3-1665, No. 12, Dings., Napels 24/2 [...] *In de Stadt Diestri / in de Pugila (sic) / soude drie Weecken achter een Bloet geregent hebben / tot algemene schrick voor't Volck*.

³⁸ For the Dutch convoy system in the Mediterranean see Roijen Weber, *De beveiliging van de zee tegen Europeesche en Barbarijsche zeeroovers 1609 – 1621*, Amsterdam, 1936, 154-156.

³⁹ HC, 1-1-1669, No. 1, Dings., Messina 21/11 [...] *na Corfu, alwaer sy 't Schip de seven Provintien, met een Convoyer sullen verwachten*. The warship in question - certainly not the famous Dutch flagship with the same name - could have been the *Zeven Provinciën* (40) built by the Admiralty of Amsterdam in 1665. We can't be entirely sure for this either, since according to some accounts the said ship had been renamed to St. Jan Baptista in 1667, see Anselm van der Peet and Annette de Wit, *'Schepen van geweld': acht keer Zeven Provinciën*, Franeker, 2002, 34 – 35.

same issue, a correspondent from Zante (1/12) was reporting that the convoy still laid in waiting, while a report from Naples (4/12) was confirming that “*De Zeven Provintien*” had just left the harbor heading to join the convoy. Meanwhile, there was a report from Alicante (3/12) further west that the convoy of Rotterdam (i.e. the convoy organized by the *Directie* of Rotterdam) was beginning its journey home with five ships after having called in at Marseille.⁴⁰ For early modern standards, this must have been a fairly accurate and (seemingly) consistent coverage of the movement. The second topic of special Dutch interest was following the actions and location of Dutch naval squadrons sent against the corsairs of Barbary. This will be dealt with at length in the next chapter.

1.2 Casteleyn’s news-collecting network and the itineraries of news.

The question of the provenance of the *Haerlemsche Courant*’s news stories is a particularly difficult one. Besides his relentless energy and entrepreneurial spirit, one of the crucial elements of Casteleyn’s recipe of success that his twentieth century biographers did not fail to comment upon, was the fact that he had “the best correspondents in his service”, allowing him access to the state-secrets of far-flung places in an unparalleled fashion.⁴¹ In the 1660s, Dutch merchant communities and consuls - or semi-official agents of the Dutch Republic - existed in every major Mediterranean port-city.⁴² It is not impossible that some of the news stories appearing in the *Haerlemsche Courant* were dispatched directly to Casteleyn by correspondents who were part of (or were affiliated with) the respective city’s “Dutch nation”. For example, we do know that during the first half of the seventeenth century Daniel Nijs also acted as post-master between the Dutch Republic and Venice.⁴³ However, it is impossible to establish the number of news that reached Casteleyn’s establishment by the means of manuscript correspondence. Some of the stories may have been copied

⁴⁰ Ibid., Alicante, 3/12 [...] *Rotterdams Convoy* [...] *by haer hebbende 5 Coopvaerders* [...] *van Marseilje is voor 5 Dagen van hier nae’t Vaderland verrocken.*

⁴¹ Friedrich Kossmann, *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, vol. IX, Leiden, 1933, 132.

⁴² Maurits Ebben, “Uwer Hoog Moogenden onderdaenigsten dienaers. Nederlandse consuls en Staatse diplomatie in Spanje, 1648-1661”, *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 127/4, 2014, 649-672 and esp. the table on page 662.

⁴³ Maartje van Gelder, “Changing tack: the versatile allegiances of Daniel Nijs. A Netherlandish merchant and information broker in early modern Venice”, *Dutch Crossing* 30/2, 1996, 243-251 and esp. 244.

from other European newspapers. Others may have been conveyed by various postmasters of the German and Southern Netherlandish postal networks who were in contact with Casteleyn's network. We will never get to know the identities of news-writers, in the same way that early modern readers of newspapers did not know them.

	1660	1661	1662	1663	1664	1665	1666	1667	N/A	1669	City Total
Venice	19	26	10	7	2	14	64	59	-	161	362
Genoa	2	5		2	-	1	9	18	-	61	98
Livorno	5	4	2	5	-	2	10	5	-	45	78
Marseille	5	2	7	1	-	1	4	11	-	33	64
Naples	2	11	1	2	-	3	10	12	-	10	51
Messina	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	26	30
Malaga	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	5	-	8	20
Smyrna	2	-	-	1	-	-	7	-	-	6	16
Alicante	-	1	2	-	-	2	1	-	-	5	11
Toulon	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	11
Algiers	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	5
Candia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5
Con/pole	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	3	5
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5
Tunis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	3
Tripoli	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Year Total	36	50	24	20	-	26	116	113	-	381	766

Table 1. Datelined news entries from Mediterranean port-cities in the *Haerlemsche Courant*. All port-cities with at least one entry have been included.

Through Table 1, it becomes easily discernable that virtually all of Casteleyn's datelined entries have been conveyed through port cities in the northern (and Christian) shore of the Mediterranean. The undisputed fulcrum of the system is the Italian peninsula, with Venice, Genoa, Livorno, Naples and – to a much lower degree – Messina accounting together for the dispatch of nearly 81% of all the news stories in this study (see Chart 1 below). In comparison, the dispatches from French and Spanish port-cities amount to 10 and 4% respectively. The only significant source of news based in the Ottoman Empire was Smyrna (Izmir), the focal point of Dutch trade in the eastern Mediterranean after the decline of Aleppo.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Daniel Goffman, *Izmir and the Levantine World 1550-1650*, Seattle, 1990, 140. Perhaps a better survival rate of the *Haerlemsche Courant* would have furnished a much more important position to news from Smyrna.

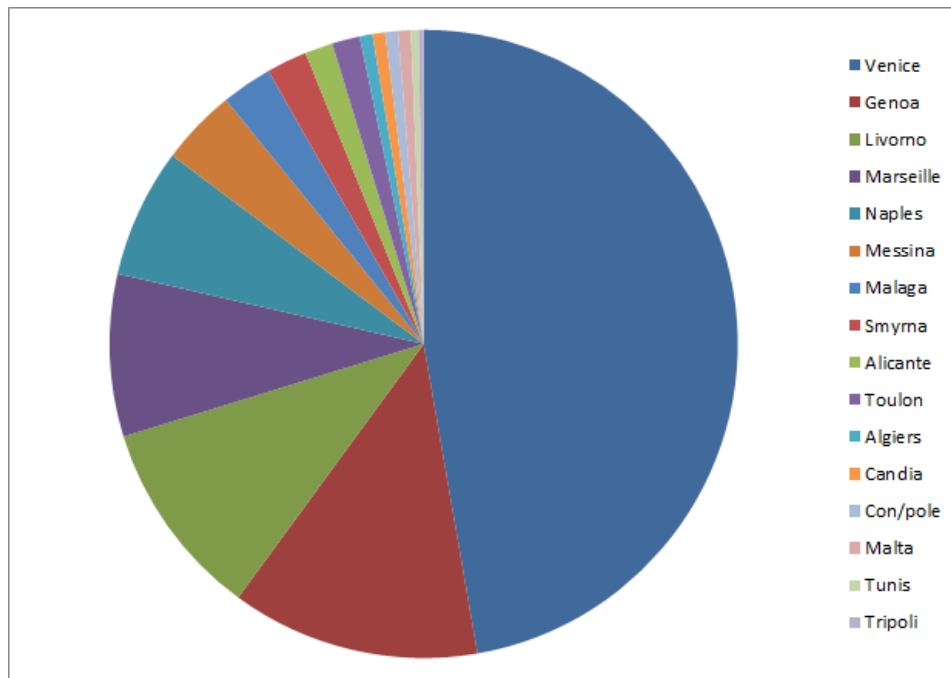


Chart 1. A comparison of the percentage of the total number of news stories conveyed per port-city between 1660 and 1669.

It is essential to note that the news stories collected through Venice alone account for around 43% of all news items. Furthermore, Venetian pre-eminence in every single one of the ten years studied, is a rather safe indication that a larger survival rate of the *Haerlemsche Courant* would convey the same picture. Conveniently enough for the purposes of this study, Paul Ries has studied the news reports that appeared in some of Germany's major newspapers in the year 1669 – the year for which the *Haerlemsche Courant* shows the highest survival rate. According to Ries' findings, Venice was the major source of news of the *Europäische Mitwochentliche Zeitung* (the newspaper connected to the Imperial Postmaster), the second largest source of news of the *Nordischer Mercurius* and the third largest of the *Ordinaris Diengstags Zeitung/ Wochentliche Donnerstags Zeitung*.⁴⁵ The importance of Venice as a news conveyor holds true for the Dutch press since its early decades: in 1636, eleven out of the thirteen surviving issues of the *Courante Uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.* contained news from Venice.⁴⁶ By the 1660s, Venice had eclipsed Vienna as a conveyor of

⁴⁵ Paul Ries, "The Anatomy of a Seventeenth-Century Newspaper", *Daphnis: Zeitschrift für Mittlere Deutsche Literatur* 6/1-2, 1977, 171-232 and esp. 187.

⁴⁶ There is however a crucial difference with the 1660s: in 1636, only two issues contained news which dealt with developments in the Mediterranean, with the rest of them reporting on French-

information from southern Europe, while at the same time, it rivalled London in the total number of news stories conveyed (see Table 2). New alternative routes such as the connection between Constantinople and Marseille seem to have played a very minor role.⁴⁷ That been said, one should not be too quick to claim the decline of Venice as a source of news (especially those from the East) because of its economic decline and the consequences of the long sixth Ottoman-Venetian war (1645-1669).⁴⁸ All of this is in stark contrast to the findings concerning the Dutch press 31 years later: in 1700, Venice did not even make it in the top 10 of the major providers of news of the *Haerlemsche Courant*.⁴⁹ As will be shown, this was largely because news from Venice did no longer fit the needs of periodicity the way they used to.

Year	London	Vienna	Venice
1660	25	10	19
1661	32	13	26
1662	8	8	10
1663	8	3	9
1664	1	2	-
1665	12	5	14
1666	98	32	64
1667	95	32	59
1668	-	-	-
1669	166	61	161

Table 2. A comparison of the number datelined news stories from three major European cities, as they appear in the *Haerlemsche Courant*.

Despite her preeminence in supplying Mediterranean news, Venice is actually a very interesting case of a major hub of news gathering (and book-printing) where –

Spanish relations. See Courante Uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c, 1-3-1636, No. 9 and Item, 18-10-1636, No. 42, which contain news from Constantinople.

⁴⁷ Cf. with Ghobrial, *Whispers* 65 and 159-163. As the seventeenth century progressed, newly established news-agencies in northern Europe got larger numbers of subscribers, many of them below the Alps. The service run by Lieuwe van Aitzema – with many subscribers in Italy - is a case in point, which suggests a slow dislocation of news flows from their traditional routes. See Marika Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad: Haagse boekcultuur in de Gouden Eeuw*, Hilversum, 1997, 235-269.

⁴⁸ Dursteler, "Power and Information" 602.

⁴⁹ Joop Koopmans, "Supply and Speed of Foreign News to the Netherlands during the Eighteenth Century. A Comparison of Newspapers in Haarlem and Groningen" in Joop Koopmans (ed.), *News and Politics in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)*, Leuven-Paris-Dudley, 2005, 185-202 and esp. 199.

against all odds – newspapers never acquired a strong position even until late in the seventeenth century. This phenomenon can be partly explained by the (notoriously heavy handed) attitude of the Venetian state when it came to protecting state secrets: despite the suggestions of intellectuals like Paolo Sarpi, allowing a broader part of the public to participate in public discourse was deemed too dangerous by the patrician elite.⁵⁰ In most of the Italian peninsula, sensitive information (the “news that mattered”) had to circulate in the manuscript form of *avvisi* well into the eighteenth century, with the best paying subscribers having access to material of the highest quality.⁵¹ Especially in the period 1661-1666 (a five-year period that overlaps with half the years examined in this study) there had also been a production of *avvisi* in print, the so-called *avvisi a stampa*.⁵² It is not entirely impossible that some of them may have been sent to Haarlem where they were translated to Dutch. In the third chapter I will explain how the interest of the Dutch public in the siege of Candia can be held responsible (to a large extent) for the survival of Venice as a major center of news well into the 1660s. For the moment, it suffices to remark that the dominance of Venice in the reports found in Casteleyn’s newspaper guaranteed that the Dutch reading public (and the wider European readership) would get a very “Italian” perspective of Mediterranean news.

Turning to the itineraries of news, it can be noted that the networks of Mediterranean port-cities sometimes possessed an impressive geographic reach of news-collection. For instance, in March 1666, news that the Dutch had attacked the ships of the English East India Company reached Venice through Aleppo and were then communicated across the Alps.⁵³ There are some very clear – and at the same time predictable – patterns on the basis of which Casteleyn’s possible correspondents collected news from virtually the whole of the Mediterranean (see Map 1. below). For

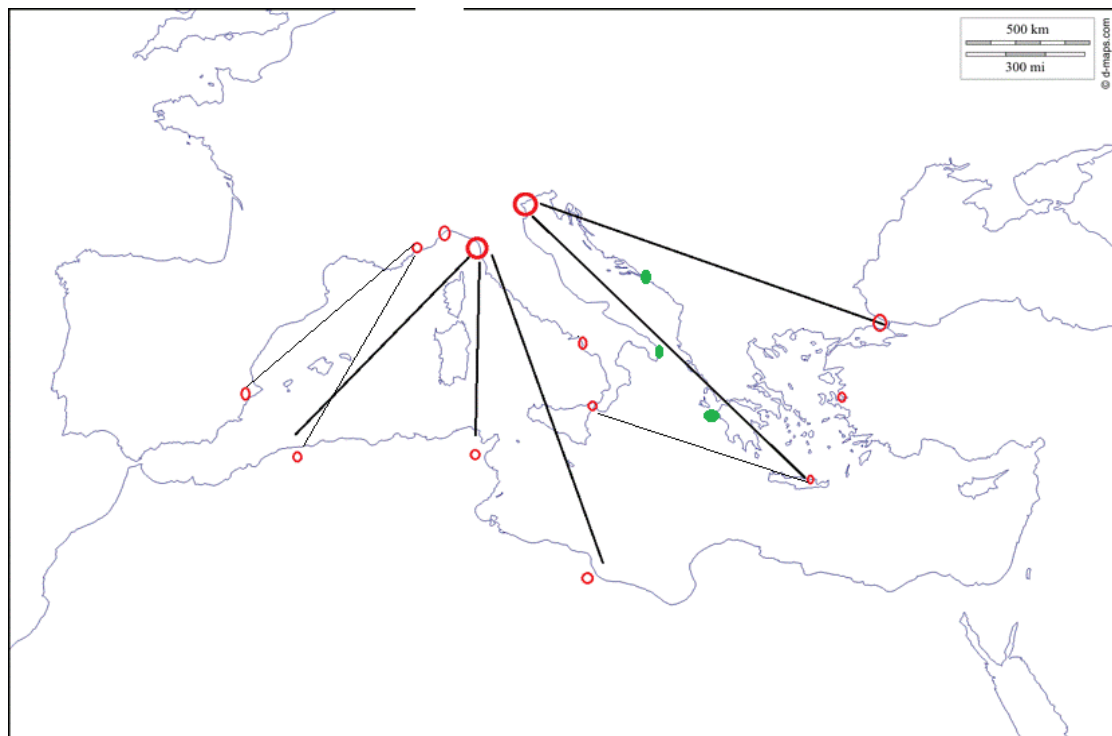
⁵⁰ For this debate see Filippo De Vivo, “Paolo Sarpi and the Uses of Information in Seventeenth-Century Venice”, *Media History* 11, 2005, 37-51. De Vivo remarks that the very nature of decision-making in Venice - with hundreds of people sitting on different councils - in fact made the leaking of important documents very easy. For the general attitude of the Venetian state when it came to the control of the press see Mario Infelise, *I padroni dei libri. Il controllo sulla stampa nella prima età moderna*, Rome and Bari, 2014.

⁵¹ Mario Infelisi, “Roman *Avvisi*: information and Politics in the Seventeenth Century”, in Gianvittorio Signorotto and Maria Antonietta Visceglia (eds.), *Court and Politics in Papal Rome, 1492-1700*, Cambridge, 2002, 212-228.

⁵² Nicola Tranfaglia, *La stampa italiana dal Cinquecento all'Ottocento*, Rome and Bari, 1976, 40.

⁵³ HC, 18-9-1666, No. 38, Sat., Venetien 3/9 [...] *Alhier is Tydinghe over Aleppo, dat de Hollanders in Indien de Engelse Schepen beset hadden.*

example, most of the news from Ottoman lands (and the eastern Mediterranean in general) were conveyed through Venice. On the other hand, as we have already mentioned, Livorno – and not Naples – was the major conveyor of news from the Barbary Coast owing to its cosmopolitan character and its commercial relations with the corsair hubs of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli. Malaga, Alicante and Marseilles usually collected news from the western Mediterranean, but occasionally ships on the Smyrna-Marseille route could bring news from the Ottoman Empire directly to France.⁵⁴



Map 1. A schematic appreciation of news flows between Mediterranean port-cities as they appear in the *Haerlemsche Courant* throughout the 1660s. The green dots are intermediary stations with no datelined news items.

Not only did most Mediterranean news pertain to the maritime world, but furthermore, in the vast majority of cases, they had also travelled at least part of their itinerary by sea. The maritime transmission of news rested largely on established shipping connections: news from the Barbary Coast almost always reached Livorno through “a small ship just 9 days out of Algiers” or “a barque from Tripoli which

⁵⁴ See for example HC, 16-2-69, No. 7, Sat., Marsielje 29/1 [...] *een Schip van Smirna melt dat seecker Scheepje van Enchuysen, van Livorno nae Smirna vertrocken, en daer tot Reede komende, en sijn Geschut lossende, met het afschieten van sijn latest Stuck was in de brant geraeckt, soo dat men vreest 't selve sal vergaen zijn.*

reports that all of the corsairs have returned to port”.⁵⁵ This maritime transmission of news was sometimes fundamental to its content, even more so when news stories covered events on the open sea in which individual ships were both actors and transmitters of news: in May 1663, some Muslim pirates stopped a ship named St. Claes while it was en route from Amsterdam to Venice. The pirates maltreated the skipper and took the vessel’s flag. Then, they simply let the ship proceed with its itinerary without taking part of the cargo. The St. Claes entered the harbor of Genoa and reported the incident.⁵⁶

If the vast majority of the news in question reached Casteleyn’s bookshop by traveling most (or at least part) of their itinerary over the waters of the Mediterranean and not on horseback through a postal route, then the exact opposite was the case once they were dispatched to their final recipient in the Netherlands: in all but very few cases in the stories studied, the end product would be sent by post. This was the fastest, easiest and most reliable way to communicate news from the Mediterranean across the Alps and it is no coincidence that the Italian cities retained such a strong presence in the business of news networks.⁵⁷ This also held especially true for the terrestrial connections between Venice and the Low Countries, as a reliable commercial and postal route had been established between the two as early as in the Middle Ages. The crucial need of the Hapsburg dynasty for quick and effective communication between their main imperial centers of Brussels, Madrid and Vienna, in conjunction with their constant involvement in the Italian peninsula and their desire for privileged access to the Papal court in Rome, made the improvement of the transalpine postal system an absolute necessity.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ HC, 23-6-1663, No. 25, Sat., Livorno 4/6 [...] *Engels Scheepje in 9 Dagen van Algiers hier gekomen* ; HC, 18-12-1663, No. 51, Dings., Livorno 26/11 [...] *Barcke van Tripoli melt, dat de Rovers daer noch alle binnen waren.*

⁵⁶ HC, 5-6-1663, No. 23, Dings., Livorno 12/5 [...] *kleyne Scheepje, St. Claes ghenamert voerende geen Schut, en met Deelen geladen van Amsterdam per Venetien gedestineert, is van de Turcken gejaegt en achterhaelt, die den Schipper seer qualijck hebben ghetracteert, zyn Vlagge afnemende, hebben hem laten passeren [...] en is also tot Genua gekomen.*

⁵⁷ Pettegree, *The Invention* 54-57; Arblaster, *From Ghent* 40-41.

⁵⁸ Paul Arblaster, “Posts, Newspapers, Newsletters: England in a European System of Communications” in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News Networks in Seventeenth Century Britain and Europe* New York, 2006, 19-49 and esp. 21; John Allen, *Post and Courier Service in the Diplomacy of Early Modern Europe*, The Hague, 1972, 97-107.

By the 1660s however, the system was functioning at its finest, with more postal connections in Germany and the Low Countries than ever before.⁵⁹ Thus, the majority of the dispatches sent by Casteleyn's Venetian correspondents usually took between 15 and 21 days in order for them to get published in the *Haerlemsche Courant* – most of them usually made it in the Saturday edition. This period of roughly two weeks is also in agreement with Braudel's "isochronic lines" centering around Venice: it usually took two weeks on average for news from the Mediterranean to reach the *Serenissima* and another two weeks for it to reach northern Europe by post.⁶⁰ It would take nothing less than the advent of steam and the telegraph in the nineteenth century for a faster transmission of news to be achieved on this route.⁶¹ Thus, with the danger of stating the obvious, we can attest that the technological limitations of the age contributed to Venice's survival as a conveyor of news.

To be sure, geographic boundaries and long distances were not the only difficulties which Mediterranean news had to transcend. Linguistic boundaries are also interesting to consider. Consider the following case from 1660:

*From Alexandretta after 27 days we have Captain Richard, who came here from Candia where he had been 17 days ago and he reports that the Greeks told him, that 20 Sfakians had joined the Venetian army, with which they took part in the siege of Canea*⁶²

Readers in the Netherlands would get to consume this piece of news in Dutch, but many scenarios could hold true concerning its linguistic itinerary and the alterations between vocal and written transmission. To begin with, it's rather unlikely – although not entirely – that Captain Richard knew Greek. The presence of Sfakians⁶³ in the Venetian army could have been communicated to him thanks to a presence of a bilingual Greek sailor on Richard's ship or through the mediation of a *drogman* (translator), but this is in fact the simplest scenario. The "Greeks" (an umbrella-term

⁵⁹ Arblaster, *From Ghent* 40-41.

⁶⁰ Braudel, *La Méditerranée* 366-367.

⁶¹ Pettegree, *The Invention* 167-181.

⁶² HC, 23-10-60, No. 43, Sat., Livorno 4/10 [...] *Van Allexandrette hebben wy in 27 daeghen Capiteyn Richart, die tot Candia is naerder gheweest, van waer hy heden in 17 daeghen komt, rapporteert van de Griecken verstaen te hebben, als dat 20 Usfasiotten sigh by het Leger van de Venetianen hebben vervoeght, waer mede sy ghesamentlijck Canea hadden belegert*; Canea is modern-day Chania, on the western part of Crete.

⁶³ Sfakia is a Greek community in the mountains of Southwestern Crete, famous for its rebellious tradition throughout the long period of Venetian and Ottoman rule on the island (1204-1898).

in the sources of this period) in question may have easily been Greek-speaking Catholics in the service of Venice and equally fluent in both Greek and Italian – the later being a much more popular language in the early modern Mediterranean. Whatever the original language of this communication, issues of translation would have arisen as soon as Casteleyn's correspondent came in contact (if he really ever did) with Captain Richard. Even if the two could converse directly, the text prepared for dispatch across the Alps may well have been in Italian if this was the correspondent's native tongue. Then, it would have to be translated again from Italian into Dutch in Haarlem or Amsterdam. In the end, it could take a large number of potential stages of linguistic mediation before Casteleyn's end product was ready.

Interestingly enough, not all of the voices read in the news entries were necessarily Christian: the very few datelined entries (no more than four) from the three corsair cities of North Africa pose a particularly intriguing question. The most interesting case of all is the following, covering the events after the departure of De Ruyter from Tripoli in 1662:

After Vice-Admiral de Ruyter left from here, one of our two Corsairs who was still outside [the harbor] came back while the other fought with a Dutch ship near Calabria, caught fire and blew up⁶⁴

This is one of the just two reports datelined from Tripoli. The use of the personal pronoun “we” when referring to the ships of Tripoli may be an indication that this piece of correspondence was penned by a Muslim. Uncommon as it might have been, this scenario is not impossible: in 1680, the *Gazette de France* may also have had a Muslim correspondent.⁶⁵ The person in question could well have been an Italian or even a Dutch renegade – one of the many that maintained contact with the Republic long after their conversion.⁶⁶ Although the early modern world possessed a rather small degree of linguistic standardization (especially when it came to oral communication), the maritime world of the Mediterranean stands out for its use of the

⁶⁴ HC, 7-10-1662, No. 40, Sat., Tripoli 5/9, *Nadat den Vice-Admiraal de Ruyter van hier vertrocken was / is een van onse twee Capers / die noch uyt was / weder binnen gekomen / near de andre is omtrent Calabria / met een Nederlander vechtende / in brandt gheraeckt / en alsoo op gespronghen.*

⁶⁵ Turbet-Delof, *La presse* 80. This is but an isolated case, as it occurs just once in the *Gazette*.

⁶⁶ Maartje van Gelder, “The Republic's Renegades: Dutch Converts to Islam in Seventeenth-Century Diplomatic Relations with North Africa”, *Journal of Early Modern History* 19/2-3, 2015, 175-198.

(numerous) variations of *lingua franca*.⁶⁷ Indeed, a persistent feature of all the information flows we have come across in this study is that their transmission across linguistic and cultural lines simply “happens”: interpreters or translators are never considered worth mentioning. However, this anonymity of both the news-writers and their mediators, was a necessary editorial strategy aiming at credibility.

1.3 Periodical reporting and the establishment of credibility.

Ever since the early seventeenth century, periodicity was slowly becoming the norm in the publication of printed news. The publishers’ need to fill every issue, along with the abundance of available information (for those who could afford it) meant not only that early modern readers could have access to more news, but also that they could follow developments over long periods of time – a process leading to the birth of “contemporaneity”.⁶⁸ In the 1660s, many of Casteleyn’s Mediterranean news stories still made sense in their own right and could be read as stand-alone texts. In other cases however, it was possible to follow developments on a topic throughout consecutive issues, with the latest news-stories starting “in medias res”. Take for example the following story on French-Genoese animosity regarding trading rights with the Levant in 1667, published with an interval of 15 days:

[...] furthermore we are not on good terms with France because despite the old treaties where we promised to not come in the Levant unless under the French flag, we have sent an ambassador in Turkey⁶⁹

[...] Stefano Doria, destined as Resident of this Republic in the French court [...] to prove that this Republic is not obliged to trade with the Levant under any flag other their its own; on which research is done in the archives⁷⁰

⁶⁷ For an impressive history of linguistic mediation in the Mediterranean (spanning no less than three millennia) see John Wansbrough, *Lingua Franca in the Mediterranean*, London, 1996. For the early modern period specifically see Daniel Panzac, “La Lingua Franca: Un Util de Communication”, in Markus Koller and Vera Constantini (eds.), *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community Essays in Honour of Suraiya Faroqhi*, Leiden, 2008, 409-422; Eric Dursteler, “Speaking in Tongues: Language and Communication in the Early Modern Mediterranean”, *Past & Present* 217/1, 2012, 47-77.

⁶⁸ Dooley, “Introduction” 1-10.

⁶⁹ HC, 31-5-1667, No. 22, Dings., Genoua 30/4 [...] *also wy met Vranckrijck niet seer wel en staen / te meer / om dat wy tegens de oude Accoorden / belovende in de Levant niet te komen / als onder de Franse Vlagge / een Ambassadeur en Resident nae Turckyen hebben gesonden.*

⁷⁰ HC, 14-6-1667, No. 25, Dings., Genoua 14/5 [...] *Stefano Doria, gedestineert voor Resident wegens dese Republijcque aen 't Fraensse Hof [...] beweerden, dat dese Republijcque niet gehouden is onder een anders Vlagge, als haer eygen, in de Levant te handelen; nae welcke saecken op heden in de Archiven werdt gesocht.*

In the period under study here, the two topics of Mediterranean news which were followed more thoroughly in the *Haerlemsche Courant* were the Cretan War and the activities of the corsairs of Barbary. Both topics will be dealt with more extensively in the following chapters. For the moment, it suffices to remark that they fitted the needs of the nascent periodicity in an exceptional way, thanks to their long duration as historical phenomena. The Cretan War had been raging ever since 1645, and would reach its more dramatic phase in the late 1660s, culminating with the fall of Candia in 1669. Reports on the corsairs of Barbary had been a feature of European printed news since at least the 16th century and would witness even more interest on behalf of the Dutch public in the 1660s, due to the expeditions of Michiel de Ruyter.⁷¹

That been said, Casteleyn was able to provide readers with news on topics with which they had already been familiar for years. Due to its two main topics, Mediterranean news in the *Haerlemsche Courant* presented the image of a sea plagued by an eternal “Christian-Muslim struggle”. As this “struggle” had essentially been a deadlock for most of the 1660s (with neither combatant achieving significant gains before 1669), the result was a very repetitive narrative with minor developments in every issue. If one of Casteleyn’s subscribers in 1663 was to pick up an older issue of the *Haerlemsche Courant* (say, one from 1661), and cross-check the latest news from Candia with those in the older issue, he wouldn’t notice many differences. This is an essential feature of Mediterranean news in the 1660s that can in fact be observed in other European newspapers as well. Compare the two following news-stories, the first published in the Italian newspaper *Il Rimino* in April 1663, and the second one published by Casteleyn in December 1661:

A vessel which had passed by the Armada came to this port, and it has reported [...] the Captain General with 30 galleys [...] is about to attack the galleys of the Bey [...] and assign what remains of the Galleys to Napoli di Romania. The letters of Candia [...] say that up to now there have been no Turkish reinforcements [...] the [Turks] see in contrast that the Venetians receive assistance continuously[...]⁷²

Letters from our Armada from the 29th of October [...] that our [Captain] General had captured a Turkish ship and wanted to go to Napoli di Malvasia [...] the (Turkish) galleys that came in Canea brought few soldiers and few provisions. The inhabitants of Candia persist in their affection and trust for this Republic (i.e. Venice) [...] ⁷³

⁷¹ See Chapter Two.

⁷² Quoted in Tranfaglia, *La stampa* 41, *serra tocco questo Porto Vascello d’armata, qual ha rifferto [...] Il Capitano Generale intanto con 30 Galere sottili [...] Galere Beiliere, si fosse portato per combatterle*

Periodicity was not without its problems. The switch from manuscript news to printed news (meant to be consumed by a large public) presented publishers with the issue of credibility. In the exchange of private news-correspondence, it was the “honour” of a correspondent which guaranteed the credibility of the information he conveyed. This, however, was not an option in newspapers with anonymous news-writers. Therefore, in order to establish their readerships’ trust in the texts themselves (and not in some eponymous writer) news publishers strived to present their news as devoid of unauthorized commentary and strictly following the conventions of partiality and truthfulness.⁷⁴ Casteleyn’s strategy was not exceptional in this regard as he strived to give the impression his news stories were published in the (supposedly) epistolary form they had reached him (or his sources). It is thus no surprise that many a time we come across phrases such as “as was mentioned in my last [letter]”.⁷⁵

That some of the anonymous news-writers were clearly telling only one part of the story was not deemed problematic. Sticking to (what would have been interpreted as) objectivity, Casteleyn did not mind repetition in the same issue or having his readers settle for either version of the reported events. In some cases, two different news reports from the same port-city had the same dispatch dates and covered the exact same event, but conveyed different information. The following stories, published in the same issue, describe a fire in the Christian quarter of Constantinople in 1660:

<p>In Galatta (a place on the right side of Constantinople where many Christians live) there was a terrifying fire, and it has destroyed ten thousand houses and more</p>	<p>With letters from Constantinople it has been communicated that in Top Hane there was a terrifying fire that did not only destroy a large part of this place but</p>
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[...] *Le lettere di Candia [...] dicono che fin a quell'hora non era pervenuto alcun soccorso a Turchi [...] vedendo all'incontro, che Veneti riceuenano continue assistenze.*

⁷³ HC, 20-12-61, Dings. No 51, Venetien 2/10, *Brieven uyt onse Armade / van den 29 October / melden / dat onsen Generae(sic) een Turcks Schip / dat genomen hadde / ten Oorlogh toe-gerust hebbende / meynde near Nappoli di Malvasia te gaen [...] Galeyen in Canea waren ghekomen / in hebbende een weynigh Volcks / en weynigh Vivres. D'Inwoonders van't Ryck Candia / persisteren in de Affectie en Vetrouwigheydt aen dese Republyk.*

⁷⁴ For an extensive discussion of this phenomenon see David Randall, *Credibility in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Military News*, London 2008, 102-146.

⁷⁵ HC, 14-6-67, No. 25, Dings., Venetien 27/5 [...] *t Schip van Ragousa / in mynen latest gemelt.*

over has done great damage⁷⁶

also passed the walls of Galatta and turned this city into ashes: only two buildings, the Jesuit church and a Muslim mosque survived [...] and there were more than ten thousand large houses that were destroyed⁷⁷

The fact that Casteleyn wanted to give the impression that he didn't alter anything in the reports he published, largely obscures his editorial strategies and his newspaper's biases.⁷⁸ Moreover, Casteleyn's pretension to partiality and the lack of commentary (usually but not always) in the texts themselves, had led Michel Morineau to describe the *Haerlemsche Courant* (and the papers following its paradigm) as a source of credible and "dry information" owing to its neutral style of reporting.⁷⁹ In the following chapters however, it will become apparent that there are possible ways for us to discern both engagement, commentary, intertextuality and elements of fiction, for which Mediterranean news was a particularly favorable field.

To recapitulate this chapter, Casteleyn's newspaper featured a vast number of foreign news from the whole of the Mediterranean basin throughout the 1660s. Most news-stories were of maritime interest and they traveled vast distances, crossing linguistic barriers and confessional lines to reach Casteleyn's bookshop in Haarlem. The vast majority of these stories was collected through the news-networks of Christian port-cities, with Venice and Livorno providing most of the datelined news reports – a clear manifestation of the importance of the "old Mediterranean world" as a conveyor of news in the nascent early modern "public sphere". The nature of the

⁷⁶ HC, 6-7-1660, No. 27, Dings., Smirne 10/5, *Tot Galette (een plaets gelegen recht over Constantinopolen waer veel Christenen woonen) is een Schrickelijcken [Brandt onts]taen, ende heeft over de tien duysent Huysen wegh-g[enomen] en wyders groote schade gedaen.* Ironically, two weeks after the publication of the issue reporting this event, a second fire broke out in Eminönü (district opposite of Galatta), destroying two-thirds of the city and leaving as many as 40,000 dead, see Marc David Baer, "The Great Fire of 1660 and the Islamization of Christian and Jewish Space in Istanbul", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36/2, 2004, 159-181 and esp. 159.

⁷⁷ HC, 6-7-1660, No. 27, Dings., Smirne 10/5, *Met Brieven uyt Constantinopolen adviseertmen / dat in Toppene een schrickelijcke Brant is ontstaen / die niet alleen een groot ghedeelte der selver Plaets heeft weg-genomen / maer oock de Muyren van Galata gepasseert en deselve Stadt geheel in Assche gestalt: alleen twee Huysen / de Jesuyten kerck / neffens een Turckse Mosken / blijven staen: [...] zijnde meer dan thien duysent principael Huysen [...] gheraectt.*

⁷⁸ It is worth reminding, however, that some of these news entries were simply the printed product of lively discussions in the Grote Markt of Haarlem or in Casteleyn's shop itself

⁷⁹ Michel Morineau, *Incroyables gazettes et fabuleux métaux. Les retours des trésors américains d'après les gazettes hollandaises (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles)*, Cambridge, 1985, 48.

reporting on the two main topics of Mediterranean news in the *Haerlemsche Courant* (the Cretan War and the corsairs of Barbary) was highly repetitive for years on end and it thus fitted the needs of the nascent phenomenon of periodicity. Finally, as it was customary in the seventeenth century, Casteleyn published his news stories while sticking to the rules of maintaining partiality and credibility – a tactic which has helped to obscure (in the eyes of scholarship) Casteleyn's editorial strategies of commentary.

2. The western Mediterranean: reporting on the corsairs of Barbary.

2.1 The Dutch Republic and the corsairs of North Africa.

The battle of Lepanto (1571), between the Holy League and the combined Ottoman fleets, was to be the last of the major battles of the galley era. With the withdrawal of Spain from large scale operations, the continuation of the struggle in the Mediterranean was left to corsair fleets that were to pursue a maritime “Holy War”.⁸⁰ Throughout the early modern period, hundreds of thousands of Christians were captured and sold off as slaves along the coast of North Africa – or Barbary is it was known to Europeans – by the corsairs of Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli and Morocco. In theory, Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli were all under the suzerainty of the Sultan in Constantinople. In practice, the three cities possessed a high degree of autonomy and their fleets continued to defy the treaties between the Ottoman government and the Christian maritime powers as late as the 1830s.

Robert Davis has put the total number of Europeans enslaved in Barbary between 1500 and 1800 to “certainly a million and quite possibly as many as a million and a quarter”.⁸¹ In the period examined in this study (1660-1669), the total number of slaves in all three major corsair hubs combined can be put between 14 and 46 thousand.⁸² To be sure, corsair activity and slave raiding were by no means a Muslim monopoly. On the northern shores of the Mediterranean, Christian navies had the same objectives, with the galleys of Malta, Livorno and France capturing thousands of Muslims in numerous raids.⁸³ On both sides of the religious divide, slaves were in high demand as oarsmen for the galley fleets, as the transition to sailing warships in the Mediterranean would not occur before the late seventeenth century.

When Abraham Casteleyn started publishing his paper in 1657, the Dutch Republic had already been familiar with the threat of corsair activity along the coast of North

⁸⁰ The bibliography on North African corsairs and their activities against European shipping is vast, as the topic has attracted attention as early as the first decades of the nineteenth century. The general outlines of the corsair republics’ history in the period under study here can be found in John Wolf, *The Barbary Coast: Algiers under the Turks, 1500 to 1830*, New York, 1979, 222-267.

⁸¹ Robert Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slaves in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500-1800*, Basingstoke, 2003, 23.

⁸² I have combined the minimum and maximum values given in tables 2 and 3 of Davis’work for Algiers and Tripoli/Tunis respectively, see Davis, *Christian Slaves* xxi- xviii.

⁸³ Nabil Matar, *Britain and Barbary 1589 – 1689*, Gainesville, 2005, 111.

Africa for at least seventy years. Although common ground could be sought in the mutual hostility against Spain, a pattern of confrontation was to emerge as soon as the Dutch started trading with the Mediterranean. On one hand, the Republic would stick to demanding the traditional mainstay of its commercial supremacy: the principle of “free ship, free goods”. On the other, the corsairs would maintain that cargo belonging to their Christian enemies was legal prey. Initially, the Dutch had been forced to use the French flag when trading in the Ottoman domain. This is because the French had acquired a set of legal and commercial privileges, the so-called “Capitulations” that allowed them to trade freely in Muslim areas. The Dutch managed to acquire a set of Capitulations of their own with the dispatch of Cornelis Haga as first ambassador of the Republic in the Ottoman Empire in 1612 but this did not bring any significant changes in the attitude of the corsairs. Preying on Dutch ships continued and the release of their enslaved crews without compensation remained out of question.⁸⁴

Under the instructions of Haga, the States-General decided to send a diplomatic representative directly to Algiers: the man chosen for the task was Wijnant de Keyser, who was authorized to negotiate directly with the Algerian government. In the long run, it was to no avail. A second mission was organized by Cornelis Pijnacker in 1626, but was again in vain. Realizing the limited effects of diplomacy, the States-General opted for the solution of armed convoys.⁸⁵ Accordingly, the Directorate for the Levant Trade (*Directie Levantse Handel*) was instituted to regulate commerce in the Mediterranean and – along with the Admiralties – provide revenue for the armament of warships that would accompany the Dutch *fluyts* through the Straits of Gibraltar until they reached Smyrna. Until the 1660s, hundreds of Dutchmen had been captured as slaves in Barbary and tales of Dutch captivity provided some unique accounts of North African slavery.⁸⁶

In the period under study here, the most important development in Dutch-North African relations were the two expeditions headed by Michiel de Ruyter against the corsairs in 1662 and 1664. During these missions he was authorized to retaliate

⁸⁴ In fact, things could only get worse considering that the Dutch had concluded the Twelve Years Truce (1609-1621) with Spain and therefore had no common enemy with the corsairs anymore.

⁸⁵ Weber, *De beveiliging* 145.

⁸⁶ Herman Hardenberg, *Tussen Zeerovers en Christenslaven. Noordafrikaanse Reisjournalen*, Leiden 1950, 7-35.

against the three cities, conclude peace if that was possible and to release as many Dutch slaves as he could.⁸⁷ Again, De Ruyter’s expeditions – a continuation of diplomacy through other means – did not produce lasting results.⁸⁸ Thus, the corsairs continued to regularly appear as enemies in the press of the Dutch Republic.

2.2 Reporting on the corsairs: detail and abstraction.

If reporting on the siege of Candia was the main focus of news stories from the eastern Mediterranean, then the depredations by the corsair hubs of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli were the main interest of news stories from the western/central Mediterranean. It is important to note that – in their capacity as vassals of the Sultan – the corsairs were also occasionally present in the eastern Mediterranean throughout the 1660s, taking part in the operations against the Venetians: they thus function as one of the elements that provides Mediterranean news with a degree of thematic “unity”. Table 3 shows the total number of reports dealing with Muslim violence at sea west of Sicily in the *Haerlemsche Courant* between 1660 and 1668.⁸⁹ In most cases, the reports mention the city of origin of the corsair vessels. When the origin is not known (or not worth reporting) the corsairs are mentioned under the generic term “Turkse Roovers” (Turkish Robbers) or “Barbarisse Schepen” (Ships of Barbary). As can be gleaned from the table, most reports were datelined from Livorno, with Marseille coming up second.

	Livorno	Marseille	Alicante	Mallega	Genoa	Naples	Venice	Total
Algiers	12	7	-	1	2	-	1	23
Tripoli	10	-	-	-	-	1	1	12
Tunis	5	1	-	-	-	-	1	7
Undef.	3	3	3	2	2	5	4	22
Total	30	11	3	3	4	6	7	62

Table 3. Reports involving Muslim piracy in the western and central Mediterranean, 1660-1668.

⁸⁷ Alexander De Groot, “Ottoman North Africa and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries” in *Revue de l’Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 39 (1985) 131-147 and esp. 139.

⁸⁸ I wish to thank Maartje van Gelder for pointing this out to me. A stable diplomatic solution to the Dutch-North African confrontation would have to wait until the missions of Thomas Hees, see Caroline Coffrie, *Gezant in Barbarije: Thomas Hees, Commissaris van de Staten-General in Algiers, 1675-1680*, Amsterdam, 2010.

⁸⁹ The year 1669 has been left out.

To begin with, the *Haerlemsche Courant* tried to provide an accurate picture of the number and names of Dutch vessels that were captured or attacked by the corsairs. Such news items were essential not just for the merchants who had invested in the *Straatvaart* but also for the sailors' family members and those connected with maritime business in general, such as insurers or the shipping industry's labor recruiters. The accuracy and detail of some lists of "prizes" taken by the corsairs (or their pretension thereof) is rather impressive. Sometimes the lists mention the names of the captains as well.⁹⁰ Thus, when reporting on the fates of Dutch shipping in the Mediterranean, Casteleyn's paper tried to publish news stories that maintained the greatest factual accuracy possible. This care for detail and truthfulness was not deemed essential when describing the corsairs themselves, indeed – as we shall see – it might have been unprofitable politically and commercially.

In the reports published by Casteleyn, certain trends are clearly discernable. In many cases, the names of Christian naval commanders operating against the corsairs are mentioned as necessary details. After all, some of them like Chevalier Paul of France and Admiral Sir John Lawson were famous in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic.⁹¹ In the case of Muslims, the names of captains or admirals are always omitted or simply unknown. To be sure, this anonymity could be attributed to the bland itinerary of news, or it might simply have been the result of a conscious tactic of Casteleyn's correspondents.⁹² In any case, it reflects the fact that most of these reports were gathered by the information networks of Christian port-cities like Livorno and Marseilles, which also happened to have their very own corsair fleets preying on Muslim shipping. More importantly, aggression against merchant shipping and slave raiding were almost always portrayed as exclusively Muslim occupations. On the other hand, slave redemptions through ransoming was a charitable work performed by Christians. Thus one report from Marseille makes mention of the no

⁹⁰ See for example the long list published in HC, 23-4-1661, No. 17, Sat., Algiers 24/3 [...] *Het Schip de Wortel, Schipper Dirck Wortel, van Lampsmoer Het Schip de Prins, Schipper Heyn Dam, van Schiedam Het Schip den Hovelinck, Shipper Ian Iansz. Poort, van Enckhuysen Het Schip de Smit, Schipper Meynert Iansz., van Hoorn, Het Schip de Olijff-Boom, Schip Daniel Pietersz. Van Gracht.*

⁹¹ See for example HC, 28-10-1662, No. 43, which contains a report on Lawson's activities in the Mediterranean.

⁹² That it was Casteleyn's personal editorial strategy that led to this anonymity is something entirely possible as well.

less than one hundred Frenchmen who were ransomed by redemption orders in Algiers in December 1669.⁹³

In the previous chapter we noticed the effort of Casteleyn to publish the reports of his correspondents in verbatim, without strong vocabulary and commentary. A study of an eighteenth-century Dutch news-book has revealed that the reports pertaining to Barbary generally used a neutral vocabulary, which was dropped only when open hostilities broke out between the Republic and Algiers.⁹⁴ Likewise, in times of “peace” between the Republic and the corsairs, the *Haerlemsche Courant* used a seemingly neutral vocabulary, devoid of negative adjectives. However, it could be argued that the anonymity of the corsairs’ commanders and their ships, the horrific accounts of Christian slavery and the presence of renegades among them, were necessary in the construction of the corsairs’ “otherness”. The repetitive nature of violent skirmishes at sea actually served as a form of editorial commentary, as only one side featured as the aggressor.

Modern studies on the nature of reporting on the war in Iraq have noted a similar pattern: even when vocabulary is neutral, the constant repetition of a pattern, with anonymous “insurgents” being the aggressors, is actually a form of opinion-making commentary and an element of fiction in news stories.⁹⁵ Thus, in general, the stories published in the *Haerlemsche Courant* are in line with the extremely negative depictions of the Muslim world in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic.⁹⁶ The corsairs of North Africa appear with all the stereotypical traits that are meant to portray them as cruel enemies of Christendom. Most importantly for the purposes of this study, reporting on the corsairs of Barbary fitted perfectly the needs of periodicity: hardly a fortnight would go by without a report on violence at sea being published. Throughout the 1660s – as well as before and long after this decade –

⁹³ HC, 28-02-1669, No. 9, Extr. Dond., Marsielje 10/2, Wy hebben Advys van Algiers, dat de Religieusen [...] daer den 21 December waren aengekomen [...] met over 100 Slaven waren vertrocken; terwijl eenige andere noch borge waren gebleven voor eenige jonge Fransse Gevangene.

⁹⁴ Joop Koopmans and Cedric Regtop, “Zeeschuimers en verachtelijke Barbaaren”? Nederlandse nieuwsfragmenten over Barbarije in de achttiende eeuw”, *Tijdschrift voor Zeegeschiedenis* 21/1, 2002, 34 – 48.

⁹⁵ Jaramillo, Deborah Lynn, *Ugly War, Pretty Package: How CNN and Fox News Made the Invasion of Iraq High Concept*, Bloomington, 2009, 52.

⁹⁶ Alexander de Groot, “De Turk in Nederlandse ogen” 109-117, in *Wij en het midden-oosten: midden-oosten en islamstudies in ander perspectief* [Middle East Studies: Whence and wither], No 1 (1975); Hans Theunissen, “Barbaren en ongelovigen: Turcica in de Nederlanden 1500-1800” in *Topkapi & Turkomanie: Turks-Nederlandse ontmoetingen sinds 1600*, Amsterdam, 1989, 37-53.

publishers like Casteleyn were able to provide their readerships with snippets of news of essentially the same, eternal story, consisting of various random encounters at sea.⁹⁷ That been said, the Mediterranean as it appears in the pages of Casteleyn's paper is a maritime space where two opposing sides are in constant confrontation. This is exactly the view that scholarship on the early modern Mediterranean has recently managed to call into question: rather than an impermeable warzone, the Mediterranean appears to have been a "frontier" where complex realities such as cross-confessional co-existence and co-operation were the norm.⁹⁸

In this preliminary examination of news stories from Barbary in the *Haerlemsche Courant*, one of the two main characteristics of Mediterranean news has become discernable: its repetitive nature. We have also noted that the lack of "strong vocabulary" against the corsairs does not equal to lack of commentary. The following two case studies will show how the *Haerlemsche Courant* could also turn into an engaged instrument of opinion making (appealing to Dutch readers) through the employment of extreme constructions Muslim "otherness". The first case study concerns the expedition of Michiel de Ruyter against the corsairs in 1662. The second deals with the inventive blend of anti-Barbary and anti-English discourse during the second Anglo-Dutch war (1665-1667).

2.3 De Ruyter and the corsairs in 1662.

To begin with, the survival rate of the *Haerlemsche Courant* for 1662 is disappointingly low. However, it's worth noting that seven out of nine surviving issues of this year contain news related to the corsairs of Barbary and that all seven include reports on the progress of De Ruyter's squadron.⁹⁹ These numbers, along with the chronological range of the issues, between January and December, are an

⁹⁷ Cf. for example the following: HC, 8-5-1660, No. 19, Sat., Venetien 23/4, [...] *De Corsaren uyt Barbarijen hebben wederomme eenighe Schepen / van diveersche Natien / in de Zee weck-ghenomen: ende het Schip Sint Jacob / komende uyt Canarien / in de grondt gheschooten*; HC, 23-02-1666, No. 8, Dings., Napels 24/1, *Het is nouwelijcks te schrijven hoe stout de Barbarisse Rovers warden, hebbende onlanghs weggenomen een Scheepje, hier dicht onder de Wal, met Vivres*. This gave contemporaries a feeling of "contemporaneity", in the same way we experience it when being informed of the latest series of explosions in Syria.

⁹⁸ For an extensive discussion, see the Introduction in Greene, *A Shared World*.

⁹⁹ HC Issues: 14-01-1662, No. 2, Sat.; 14-2-1662, No. 7, Dings.; 18-2-1662, No. 7, Sat.; 7-10-1662, No. 40, Sat.; 31-10-62, No 44, Dings.; 23-12-1662, No. 51, Sat.

indication that the expedition against the corsairs of Barbary in 1662 had been one of the major topics of news in the Dutch press for that year.



Fig. 1. The Dutch squadron in the roads of Tripoli, as painted by Reinier Nooms (ca. 1662-1668). Nooms had followed De Ruyter's expedition as an "embedded artist". Rijksmuseum Amsterdam-Wikimedia Public Domain.

During the first phase of the expedition (early 1662), news stories appearing in Casteleyn's newspaper emphasized its necessity for religious reasons: in the same fashion as with the reporting on the siege of Candia, the stories covering the progress of Dutch naval squadrons in the Mediterranean make reference to the united "body of Christendom" against the Muslim corsairs. Thus, in January 1662, the *Haerlemsche Courant* was informing readers that the corsairs had done "a lot of damage to the Christians" and that "a league of the Christian Princes against the corsairs is of great need".¹⁰⁰ In February 1662, one of Casteleyn's Amsterdam correspondents paid special attention to the arrival of news (through England) which confirmed that a severe storm in the harbor of Algiers had sunk 11 warships along with 13 captured prizes, while the city's coastal defenses had been seriously damaged. The story concludes with the comment that "on this occasion, the Christians ought to find

¹⁰⁰ HC, 14-01-1662, No. 2, Sat., Amsterdam 13/1 [...] *groote schade die de Turckse Roovers dit jaer aen de Christenen hebben gedaan [...] Soo dat de Ligue van de Christen Princen tegens dese Roovers seer van nooden is.*

favorable ground and get the upper hand against the corsairs”.¹⁰¹ At least some of the issue’s readers would have drawn up a connection with divine providence – as was usual in early modern reading. More importantly, in such cases we are also confronted with “forward-looking statements”, i.e. predictions and wishes about the future in news stories that originally refer to events set in the past. This sort of news narrative has been identified as containing elements of fictional commentary because of its speculative nature.¹⁰²

Although quelling the corsairs was indeed the primary objective of the 1662 and 1664 expeditions, secondary objectives were not absent from the Dutch agenda.¹⁰³ For example, it appears that De Ruyter’s presence in the Mediterranean in 1662 was also meant to work as a show of force against the Knights of St. John: it was certainly perceived as such by the Grand Master of the Order, when – in mid-March - he was informed of the presence of 15 Dutch ships outside Malta’s port.¹⁰⁴ No mention of this stop of De Ruyter’s fleet is mentioned in the *Haerlemsche Courant* – but this could simply be attributed to the newspaper’s survival rate for 1662. More famously, the fleet under De Ruyter that would eventually sail against the Royal African Company (in the Guinea Coast) and then cross the Atlantic to attack the English possessions in the Americas in 1665, had initially been sent to cruise the Mediterranean in 1664 in order conclude peace treaties with the corsair states and ransom as many Dutch slaves as possible.¹⁰⁵

Apart from citing the noble reasons behind the 1662 campaign, slight changes appeared in the usage of vocabulary used in Casteleyn’s paper, as part of its discourse of justification. Colley has noted that “the resonance between Barbary as a geographical signifier and the insult “barbarian” was a gift of which generations of

¹⁰¹ HC, 18-2-1662, No. 7, Sat., Amsterdam 17/2 [...] *Tijdinghe over Engellant [...] dat door Storm de Moulje van Algiers is ingestort / waer door in deselve haven / met deselve Storm / elf Oorlogschepen / en 13 Prijzen waren vergaen. De Roovers waren hier over soo ontstelt / dat sy vreesden haere Plaets niet te sullen kunnen defendeeren [...] By dese occasie behoorde by de Christenen yets voordeelighs van die Roovers bedonghen te worden.*

¹⁰² Slauter, “Forward-Looking Statements” 759-765.

¹⁰³ In fact, all major European powers used the threat of Barbary as an excuse for the expansion of their naval armaments.

¹⁰⁴ Johanna Maria van Winter, *Sources concerning the Hospitallers of St. John in the Netherlands 14th-18th centuries*, Leiden and Boston, 1998, 146, doc. 171, Grand Master Cotoner to the Landgraf von Hessen, 18-3-1662, *L’admiral Ruyter estant venu le Mois passe, mouiller avec quinze Vaisseaux de Guerre devant ce port .*

¹⁰⁵ Koelmans and Verhoog, *De reis van Michiel Adriaanszoon De Ruyter in 1664-1665*, Zutphen, 2005, 56-62.

polemicists made abundant and predictable use”.¹⁰⁶ In the 341 issues consulted for the needs of this study, the word “Barbarian” occurs in three different news stories to refer to the corsairs of Barbary. Not unexpectedly, two of them appear in reports dealing with De Ruyter’s expedition.¹⁰⁷ Another example of changes in vocabulary concerns the use of the word “pirates”. As we mentioned before, in most cases the corsairs are referred to as the “Turkse Roovers”, i.e. ‘Turkish Corsairs’. The first and only time that the word “Pirates” is used to describe the corsairs can be found in a story published in February 1662, reporting on the dealings for the creation of a league of a “League of Pirates”.¹⁰⁸

As the expedition progressed, news stories in the *Haerlemsche Courant* made sure to portray the threat of the corsairs as steadily increasing. In October 1662 - with De Ruyter somewhere between Tunis and Algiers – a report from Venice mentioned that:

*In Tripoli they have begun public Celebrations for the agreement of a League between the Corsairs of Algiers, Tunis, Biserta, Santa-Maura and Castel-Nuovo in order to sail against the Christians with 50 ships [...] and the High-command will alternate between them in monthly turns*¹⁰⁹

The veracity of the story is hardly tenable – especially the part concerning the alteration of the high command. Despite the fact that the corsair states had occasionally some differences between them, they were all nominally under the suzerainty of the Sultan – the need for a “league” would have been peculiar altogether.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, it is rather unlikely that most readers of Casteleyn’s

¹⁰⁶ Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World*, New York, 2002, 44.

¹⁰⁷ In late 1661, as the Dutch squadron was about to set sail: HC, 12-11-61, No. 46, Sat., Marseilje 25/10, *Men heeft [...] tijdinghe [...] als of de Barbaren te Algiers*. The third, is a 1669 report from Marseille informing readers that seven ships of the royal fleet were being prepared in Toulon “in order to make their way to Tunis as soon as possible, to renew the Peace with these Barbarians(Barbaren)”, see HC, 19-12-69, No. 51, Extr. Dond., Marseilje 3/12 [...] *Tot Toulon leggen 7 Coninghs Oorloghschepen gereet, die met den eersten na Thunis gaen, om de Vrede met die Barbaren te vernieuwen*.

¹⁰⁸ HC, 18-2-1662, No. 7, Sat., Marseilje, 24/1 [...] *Die van’t Gheberght hebben gheweygert hen te engageeren in de Ligue van de Piraten van Algiers Tunis en Tripoli*.

¹⁰⁹ HC, 31-10-1662, No. 44, Dings., Venetien 13/10 [...] *In Tripoli zijn publijcke de Vreughde-vieren aengesteken / daer over / dat tusschen de Corsaren van Algiers / Tunis / Biserta / Sancta Maura ende Castel-Nuova een Ligue was gheslooten / omme met 50 schepen geduurigh in Zee te kruysen op de Christenen [...] als mede dat het Oppercommando yder een Maent by beurt soude bekleeden*.

¹¹⁰ See for example the episode where an Ottoman pirate crew initially heading to join the corsairs of Tunis decided that Algiers would serve their ends better: Marinos Sarriyannis, “Images of the Mediterranean in an Ottoman Pirate Novel From the Late Seventeenth Century”, *Osmanlı Araştırmaları / The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 39, 2012, 189-204 and esp. 194.

newspaper were familiar with places like Castel-Nuovo (i.e. modern Herceg Novi in Montenegro) - a small nucleus of pirate activity on the Adriatic coast. That been said, this piece of news would have served the purpose of presenting the united Muslim corsairs threat as stronger than ever, thereby elevating De Ruyter's mission to the level of a crusade.

On the 23rd of December 1662, as De Ruyter was about to visit Algiers – the most important corsair hub – the *Haerlemsche Courant* featured what is perhaps the most representative piece of its anti-corsair discourse:

*A ship came here from Alicante, bringing letters from the 13th of last month (November) reporting that the Vice-Admiral [De Ruyter] was headed to Algiers, from where there was news that the Corsairs are unusually strong equipped at Sea and that many new Ships are being built [...] and a Renegade will command a newly-built Ship and according to their custom, a Sheep was slaughtered as offering; but still the Ship wouldn't slide into the sea and so they cut a Christian slave in four pieces and they threw one [piece] in front [of the ship], one behind and two pieces on the sides; and thus the Ship was brought in the water: truly Barbarous cruelty mixed with foul Superstition*¹¹¹

As in so many other cases, the veracity of this story is hard to confirm. To begin with, the slaughter of a sheep before the launching of a new ship was by no means an uncommon practice in the Ottoman world and this pagan-style ritual was to become a steady “topos” of the representation of the corsairs of Barbary, especially in the French press.¹¹² As in virtually every other case reported in Casteleyn's newspaper, the figure of the renegade is anonymous and malicious, leading the “infidel fleets” against his erstwhile coreligionists. Extreme anti-Christian cruelty was the necessary supplement to a story meant to move readers – and assure that the issue would sell. Thus, in its reporting on events along the North African coast in 1662, the

¹¹¹ HC, 23-12-1662, No. 51, Sat., Marseijle 5/12, *Van Alicanten is hier een Scheepjen aengekomen / brengende Brieven van den 13 passato (13 November) van daer meldende / dat den Heer Vice-Admiraal nu al een geruymen tijdt nae Algiers was vertrocken / van waer aldaer tijdinge was / dat de Rovers ongemeen sterck ter Zee toe-rusten / ende veele Scheepen op nieuw bouwden [...] dat een Renegaet sullende commandeeren een nieuw gebouwt Schip / na haer gewoonte / een Schaep hadde geoffert; doch het Schip in't af-loopen niet wel willende swaeyen / had men eenstonts een Christen Slaef in vier stucken gehouwe / een vierendeel voor / een achter / en twee ter zijden't Schip doen werpen; en had men doen voort het Schip in't Water gebracht: waerlijck Barbarisse wreedtheyt met vuyle Superstitie ghemenght.*

¹¹² Turbet-Delof, *La presse périodique* 105.

Haerlemsche Courant furnished with what could be described as a semi-literary genre, not dissimilar of that of the contemporary travel accounts.

2.4 The “English Turk”.

The Dutch Republic had many a time joined forces with England and France in order to combat the corsair threat: the years leading up to the second Anglo-Dutch war (1665-1667) are one such occasion. Admiral Sir John Lawson was sent to the Mediterranean on a punitive expedition in the name of the English crown in 1662 and Admiral Sir Thomas Allen did the same in 1664. The struggles and successes of English naval squadrons in the Mediterranean did not go unnoticed in Casteleyn’s newspaper. Far from it, readers could find detailed accounts of the number of Muslim prizes captured.¹¹³ Be that as it may, Dutch-English antagonism is clearly discernable even in these news stories – which are supposedly covering the “struggle against the common foe”. The successes of the Dutch are presented as the measure for those of the English. For example, the Saturday edition of the 28th of October 1662 informed readers that Admiral Sir John Lawson had careened and victualled his squadron in Toulon and was now ready to continue his work against the corsairs at sea. In the very next issue, a report from Cadiz mentioned that Lawson’s fleet’s destination was Tripoli, where he was to see “*if he can achieve more than De Ruyter*”.¹¹⁴

The first Anglo-Dutch War (1652-1654) had seen at least one important naval action in the Mediterranean: the Battle of Livorno on the 4th of March 1653. Despite the death of Admiral van Galen, the skirmish had been enough to secure Dutch pre-eminence past the straits of Gibraltar.¹¹⁵ The Second Anglo-Dutch War was devoid of significant events in the Mediterranean – although it had been Allen’s attack on the

¹¹³ See for example HC, 17-12-1661, No. 51, Sat., Alicante 7/11, *Teghenwoordigh is hier Tijdinghe, dat de Engelsche drie Turcksche Roof-schepen tot Majorke hebben op-ghebracht.*

¹¹⁴ HC, 28-10-1662, No. 43, Sat., Marsielje 10/10 [...] *Vice-Admirael Lawson hebbende sijn gherevictuailleert [...] tot Toulon is met zijn by-hebbende Schepen weder in Zee gesteecken*; HC, 31-10-1662, No. 44, Cadix 1/10 [...] *Den Engelsen vice-admirael Lawson is na Tripoli / omme te sien / of hy meer als de Ruyter sal kunnen te weeg brenghen.*

¹¹⁵ Roger Charles Anderson, “The first Dutch War in the Mediterranean”, *The Mariner’s Mirror* 49/4, 1963, 241-265. The Dutch victory was celebrated in the work of quite a few painters – among them Reinier Nooms. Along with the vistas of De Ruyter’s fleet laying outside the ports of Barbary, it’s one of the very few instances where Dutch naval painting has paid attention to the Mediterranean. A scene of the battle is also engraved on van Galen’s grave monument in the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam.

returning Dutch Smyrna fleet in December 1664 that prompted the States General to issue the official declaration of war.¹¹⁶ Throughout the conflict, neither England nor the Republic dispatched significant naval forces past the Straits and so attacking each other's trade was left to privateers.¹¹⁷ That been said, the Mediterranean as a news-region was relegated to a secondary position, since the main events of the war occurred in the North Sea and the colonies. However, the *Haerlemsche Courant* managed to include reflections of the Dutch point of view of the conflict in its news from Mediterranean port-cities. A most inventive strategy was the blending of the anti-Muslim "Barbary discourse" with anti-English propaganda. Dutch privateers from Zeeland (referred to as "adventurers", as was the norm throughout the seventeenth century) are depicted fighting to the last man against both the north-African corsairs and the English at the same time. The following report from Malaga in 1666 is the most telling example:

The English are in great cooperation with the Turks, that are to be seen 14 [ships] strong outside this City: the Turks, using the English Flag, mix with the ships of the said Englishmen and make the area unsafe [...] Captain Peter Willemsz. from Middelburg, Adventurer, fought against both a large English Ship and a Turk near Cape St. Vincent, and held firm for so long, that out of 150 Men he was left with only 7 all of them wounded – and finally they had to give up [...] and they were given to the Turks, to be sold as slaves: so hard is the fate of the Christians in the hands of others¹¹⁸

English involvement with the politics of North Africa became inevitable as soon as Charles II was accorded Tangier through his marriage to Catherine of Braganza in

¹¹⁶ The declaration was drawn up in January 1665, see Gijs Rommelse, *The Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667) raison d'état, mercantilism and maritime strife*, Hilversum, 2006, 120-121.

¹¹⁷ Jonathan Israel "Trade, Politics and Strategy: The Anglo-Dutch Wars in the Levant (1647-1675)", in Alastair Hamilton (ed.), *Friends and Rivals in the East : Studies in Anglo-Dutch relations in the Levant from the Seventeenth to the Early Nineteenth Century*, Leiden – Boston – Köln, 2000, 11-24 and esp. 21.

¹¹⁸ HC, 6-3-1666, No. 10, Mallaga 2/2 [...] *De Engelsse, [...] hebben grote gemenschap met de Turcken, die haer 14 sterck in't gesicht van dese Stad laten sien: de Turcken, met de Engelse Vlagge op, vermengen haer onder meer gemelde Engelsse en leggen dicht [...] onveyl maken [...] Capit. Pieter Willemsz. Van Middelburgh, Avonturier, is by de Cap St. Vincent gheweest tegens een groot Engelsch Schip en een Turck, en soo Langhe ghediffendeert, tot hy van 150 Man maer 7 meer over had, en die noch alle gequests, heeft sigh endelingh moeten opgeven, [...] aen de Turcken overgegeven, om voor slaven verkocht te warden: Dat seer hart van Christenen met den anderen gehandelt is.*

1662.¹¹⁹ Charles' dealings with local Muslim rulers in the area could serve as a first class target for his Christian enemies. With the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Dutch War, the "Story of the two Ambassadors" started circulating in the Republic. In this story, Charles II summons the help of the "Turks" in order to enslave his fellow Christians and England is renamed "New Turkey".¹²⁰ Another famous example of this connection is the poem titled *De Havenshendery te Bergen in Noorwegen*, by the famous playwright Joost van den Vondel. Among other incidents, Vondel refers to the English attack against a VOC fleet in Bergen (but also that on the returning Smyrna fleet) and brands England as the "New Algiers".¹²¹ In this respect, Casteleyn's newspaper follows a polemic genre which combined the traditional literary "topoi" of Muslim otherness with the prevalent anti-English sentiment in the Dutch Republic.

The careful use of the reporting of news from Barbary during the second Anglo-Dutch War can also be seen in the timing of their publication. In the Tuesday edition of the 5th of July 1667 the readers of Casteleyn's paper would find a news story from Malaga reporting that some liberated slaves who had just arrived from Algiers "informed us that the said corsairs are about to resume hostilities with the English".¹²² Interestingly enough, this issue was published just five days before the diplomats meeting in the castle of Breda were about to produce (after months of negotiations) the final text of the peace treaty between England and the Dutch Republic.¹²³

At this point, some concluding observations can be made concerning this chapter. News stories dealing with the corsairs of Barbary fit in a pattern that suited the needs of early modern periodicity, containing vastly repetitive news from one of the "frontiers" of early modern European imagination. During De Ruyter's expedition, all the familiar "topoi" (and necessary tools for the construction of "otherness") are discernable in news stories dealing with the corsairs of Barbary: anti-Christian

¹¹⁹ For a study of English relations with North Africa in the aftermath of the acquisition of Tangier, see Matar, *Britain and Barbary* 133-160.

¹²⁰ Wim van Nispen, *De Teems in Brand: Een verzameling teksten en afbeeldingen rond de Tweede Engelse Zeeoorlog (1665-1667)*, Hilversum, 1991, 16-18.

¹²¹ Joost van den Vondel, (multiple eds.), *De werken van Vondel, Tiende Deel 1663-1674*, Amsterdam, 1937, 184, *De Nijt zwoer Smyrnes oogst te sleepen / En d'Indiaensche geur en lucht / Naer nieu Algiers, daer 't hof noch zucht*.

¹²² HC, 5-7-1667, No. 27, Dings., Mallaga 7/6 [...] *De Turcken doen hier omtrent veel quaets. Met eenige Slaven / van Algiers gekomen / werdt ons bericht / dat dito Rovers stonden / om met de Engelse weder te breecken*.

¹²³ The final text was ready on the 10th of July, see Rommelse, *Anglo-Dutch* 184-186.

cruelty, treachery and superstition are the mainstays of their image. As the reporting on the Anglo-Dutch War shows, the end product of some of these news stories poses a complex question when it comes to defining their “genre”. This elusiveness of definition, along with the fact that a large part of the reporting on the corsairs of Barbary included the sort of commentary that appealed to a Dutch readership (thereby guaranteeing marketability), renders precarious Morineau’s description of the *Haerlemsche Courant* as “a source of dry reporting”.

3. The eastern Mediterranean: reporting on the Siege of Candia.

3.1 The Dutch Republic and the Cretan War (1645 – 1669).

The partition of Byzantine lands in the aftermath of the fourth Crusade (1202-1204) had bequeathed Venice with numerous possessions in the eastern Mediterranean. The *Serenissima* had been allotted the islands of Crete and Euboea, as well as parts of the Peloponnese which were to function as focal points of the city's maritime and commercial supremacy.¹²⁴ The island of Crete and its capital Candia (modern day Heraklion/Iraklio) soon developed into Venice's most prized dominion.¹²⁵ In the seventeenth century – after the elapse of four hundred years and no less than four wars pitching the “Most Serene Republic” against the Ottoman Empire – the “Kingdom of Candia” (the name by which the whole of Crete was referred to) along with a couple of small islands in the Aegean Sea were the last remnants of the old Venetian maritime empire.¹²⁶

Due to the strategic position of Crete almost right in the middle of the Constantinople-Alexandria route (which kept the Ottoman capital fed), Venetian possession of the island had grown precarious. The Ottomans only had to wait for an excuse: in the autumn of 1644, the corsairs of Malta set upon an Ottoman ship which was carrying high-ranking officials of the Sultan's court on their way to Egypt - the newly appointed *kadi* of Mecca being also among the passengers. As the incident took place in the vicinity of Crete, Venice was accused of harboring the Maltese aggressors in defiance of earlier agreements.¹²⁷ Thus, in the spring of 1645, an Ottoman expedition set sail for the island and managed to overrun Venetian defenses, occupying most of the hinterland in less than a year. The Ottoman troops were not so fortunate under the walls of Candia, which the Venetians were determined to hold at

¹²⁴ Lane, *Venice* 42-43. For an alternative discussion of Venetian empire-making after the Fourth Crusade see, Ruthy Gertwagen, “Venice's policy towards the Ionian and Aegean islands, c. 1204–1423”, *The International Journal of Maritime History* 26/3, 2014, 529–548.

¹²⁵ Sally McKee, *Uncommon Dominion: Venetian Crete and the Myth of Ethnic Purity*, Philadelphia, 2000, 1-22.

¹²⁶ For the Ottoman-Venetian wars but also the two sides' peacetime contacts see Anna Della Valle, *Venezia e i Turchi : scontri e confronti di due civiltà*, Milan, 1985.

¹²⁷ Kenneth Setton, *Venice, Austria and the Turks in the Seventeenth Century*, Philadelphia, 1991, 104 – 137.

any cost. The capital of the island would only surrender in 1669 after twenty-one years of siege, making the siege of Candia the longest siege in history.¹²⁸

The lengthy siege of Candia was followed with interest in early modern Europe, where it was viewed by many contemporaries as a common Christian struggle against Muslim aggression. Throughout the war, Venice received material and moral support from all over Europe – earning this conflict the appellation of the “last Crusade”.¹²⁹ For example, despite the so-called “Fraternal Alliance” between France and the Ottoman Empire, the period between 1640 and 1670 constitutes a “parenthesis” in this special relationship: the French mounted two expeditions in 1660 and 1669, aiming to assist Venice by relieving the siege of Candia.¹³⁰ Moreover, volunteers and mercenaries from as far as Scandinavia joined the ranks of the Venetian and Maltese fleets in order to join the “fight against the Turks”.¹³¹ On the other hand, the Cretan War posed a challenge for all mercantile states that traded with the Mediterranean and therefore sought peaceful relations with the Sultan. Thus, despite public enthusiasm for the Venetian cause, England tried to remain as aloof of the conflict as possible, due to its civil turmoil and the considerations of the Levant Company.¹³²

Before we move on to examine how the *Haerlemsche Courant* covered the Venetian-Ottoman standoff, it’s imperative to examine whether or not the Dutch public had some sort of special interest in the lengthy siege. The Dutch stance towards the Cretan War was not free of ambivalences and inconsistencies, as it displayed what appears to have been a typical trait of early modern diplomacy, i.e. the need to appease public opinion while at the same time operating on the basis of *raison d'État*.¹³³ Dutch-Venetian relations have received attention as early as the nineteenth

¹²⁸ For a succinct account used primarily by modern Turkish historiography see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi: XVI* [Ottoman History], Ankara, 1954, 142-146. For some Ottoman sources on this conflict see Ilias Kolovos – Marinos Sarriyannis, “Othomanikes Piges gia ton Kritiko Polemo: A Review” [Ottoman Sources for the Cretan War], in (ed.) Stephanos Kaklamanis, *O Kritikos Polemos apo tin Istoría sti Logotexnia (1645 – 1669)* [The Cretan War from History to Literature], Iraklio, 2008, 183 – 214.

¹²⁹ Özkan Bardakçı and François Pugnère (eds.), *La Dernière Croisade. Les Français et la guerre de Candie, 1669*, Rennes, 2008.

¹³⁰ The French had also participated in the Battle of Saint-Gothard (1664), assisting Austria against the Ottomans, see Bardakçı and Pugnère (eds.), *La Dernière Croisade* 61-77.

¹³¹ Janus Møller Jensen, *Denmark and the Crusades 1400-1650*, Leiden and Boston, 2007, 294-295. See also page 319 for the Knights of St. John in Scandinavia.

¹³² For English (un)involvement in this conflict see Basil Gounaris, “See how the Gods Favour Sacrilege”: *English Views and Politics on Candia under Siege (1645-1669)*, Athens, 2012.

¹³³ Gounaris, *English Views* 1-20.

century. This is quite reasonable considering that (at least) in the first half of the seventeenth century both states shared a maritime orientation, as well as similar Republican values and a common hostility against Spain.¹³⁴ However, we can safely argue that the timing of the outbreak of hostilities in Crete was not fortuitous for Venice: the Dutch Republic had concluded peace with Spain in 1648 and its commerce was greatly benefitting from the disruptions of Venetian trade with the Levant. In fact, Jonathan Israel has claimed that Dutch primacy in Mediterranean trade should be placed in the period between 1647 and 1672, which roughly corresponds with the timespan of the Cretan war.¹³⁵ To make matters worse, the First (1652-1654) and Second (1665-1667) Anglo-Dutch Wars made sure that very little northern European military support would be available for Venice in those years. Right until the end, Venice played the card of “the common Christian religion” and petitioned the States-General for direct involvement in the conflict. The Dutch government did allow Venetian agents to recruit troops and order munitions in its territory, as – especially after 1648 – there was a large number of mercenaries readily available in the Republic.¹³⁶ On the other hand, it was only logical for the designers of Dutch policy that refraining from direct involvement against the Ottomans was the right path for maintaining their lucrative Levant trade: as Aitzema noted on the occasion of a visit of a Venetian envoy in 1646, any help offered to Venice would be “*an offense against the Turk [...] and the Navigation and Commerce in the Levant would suffer*”.¹³⁷ Throughout the conflict, the States-General settled for strict adherence to neutrality, denying direct forms of military or naval support.

As one could imagine, official policy was very difficult to implement in the Levant and various Dutch actors took on different roles. For example, Giacomo Stryker, Dutch consul in Venice, as well as other members of the “Flemish nation” contributed to the Venetian war effort by providing large sums and arranging for the dispatch of

¹³⁴ Johannes De Jonge, *Nederland en Venetie*, The Hague, 1852, v-x; van Gelder, *Trading Places*.

¹³⁵ Israel, *Dutch Primacy* 203-204.

¹³⁶ Jan Poelhekke, “Enkele aantekeningen over Lieuwe van Aitzema”, *Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen*, 22, 1960, 403-446 and esp. 410-411.

¹³⁷ Lieuwe van Aitzema, *Saken van Staet en Oorlogh In en de omtrent de Vereenigde Nederlanden*, deel. III, The Hague 1669, 105, *Om dat het tot offensie van den Turck was; vreesende dat de Navigatie ende Commercie in de Levant daerom soude te lijden hebben*.

ships and provisions in Candia.¹³⁸ As far as shipping is concerned, we should note that both the Ottomans and the Venetians made use of Dutch merchantment, the requisition of which (again by both sides) was not uncommon. Daniel Panzac has studied the contracts made on behalf of captains of ships commissioned by the Venetian government to transport victuals and troops to Candia: Panzac mentions no numbers, but – apparently – Dutch names appear much more regularly on the list than English or French names.¹³⁹ Moreover, some Dutch merchantmen were used by Venice as warships, after the necessary addition of extra cannon. Such was the case of the ships *Madonna della Vigna*, *Salomons Gerecht* (Solomon’s Judgement) and *Abrahams Offerande*, all of which helped the Venetian fleet score a major victory against the Ottomans in the bay of Focchies (near Smyrna) in 1649.¹⁴⁰ Joost van den Vondel, the most renowned playwright of the Dutch “Golden Age”, dedicated a poem to the Venetian victory, in which “the *Lion of Holland does not want any more Christian blood to be spilled*” and so “*it runs alongside the Lion of Saint Mark*”.¹⁴¹ The abovementioned naval action found its way into the fine arts as well. In 1656, Jan Abrahamsz. Beerstraten produced a painting of the combined Dutch-Venetian fleet battling off the Ottomans (see Fig. 2).¹⁴²

The discourse of anti-Catholic “holy war” in the Dutch Republic had not disappeared after the peace of Westphalia: in milder forms, it survived at least as late as the Nine Years War (1688-97).¹⁴³ As I hope became clear in the previous chapter of this study, anti-Islamic “crusade discourse” in the name of a “united Christendom” had by no means retreated either and the Dutch public (a large part of which was Catholic or crypto-Catholic) was proud of the Republic’s assistance to Venice. This is attested in a variety of sources, but it was especially pamphlets (whose publication could not be controlled by the local authorities) that accommodated the staunchest

¹³⁸ This was meant to help Stryker achieve admission among the ranks of the Venetian patriciate. Alexander Cowan, “Foreigners and the City: The Case of an Immigrant Merchant” in Alexander Cowan (ed.) *Mediterranean Urban Culture: 1400 – 1700*, Exeter, 2000, 45-55 and esp. 50.

¹³⁹ Daniel Panzac, *La marine ottomane. De l’apogée à la chute de l’Empire (1572-1922)*, Paris, 2009, 150.

¹⁴⁰ De Jonge, *Nederland en Venetie* 247.

¹⁴¹ van Lennep, Jacob (ed.), *De werken van J. van den Vondel* vol. XV – XVI, Leiden, 1888, 124, *De Leeuw van Hollant, niet gezint / Meer Kristensch bloet te storten / Loopt met sint Markus Leeuw voor wint*.

¹⁴² Ger van der Most, *Jan Abrahamsz, Abraham, Anthonie Beerstraten: kunstschilders uit de zeventiende eeuw*, Noorden, 2002, 43.

¹⁴³ David Onnekink, “The Last War of Religion? The Dutch and the Nine Years War” in David Onnekink (ed.), *War and Religion after Westphalia, 1648 – 1713*, Burlington, 2009, 69-88 and esp. 87.

pro-Venetian texts. For example, in 1660, some of Francesco Morosini's reports to the Venetian Senate were published in the Netherlands in the form of an anonymous pamphlet under the title "Successes of the weapons of the Christians against the Turks".¹⁴⁴



Fig. 2. The *Madonna della Vigna* - a Dutch merchantman in the service of Venice - is to be seen on the left foreground. Jan Beerstraten, 1656. Rijksmuseum, Wikimedia Public Domain.

The precariousness of the Dutch Republic's ambivalent stance was shown most evidently in May 1663: a small flotilla of Maltese, Venetian and Livornese ships captured the Dutch merchantman *Keyser Octavius* as it was about to sail between Alexandria and Constantinople, laden with merchandise belonging to Ottoman merchants and dignitaries. The fact that little resistance was shown by the ship's captain, along with the history of the assistance of Dutch ships to Venice, led the Ottomans to imprison Lewin Warner (Dutch ambassador to the Porte) in Adrianople and to impose a fine of 78.445 *leeuwendaalders* on Dutch merchant communities residing in the Levant.¹⁴⁵ Without necessarily contributing to a decrease of Dutch

¹⁴⁴ S.n., *Notabel Schryvens uyt Venetien, Volgens de Brieven van den Generalissimus Morosini, Aen d'Heeren Senaet vande Serenissime Republycque, Aengaende de Successen vande wapenen der Christenen, tegens de Turcken in't Coninckrijck Candia, Gedrukt in't Jaer ons Heeren 1660*, s.l., 1660. This pamphlet had originally been published in Venice that same year.

¹⁴⁵ Klaas Heeringa, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van den Levantschen handel*, vol. II, The Hague, 1917, 10; Zeki Çelikkol – Alexander de Groot – Benjamin Slot (eds.), *Lale ile başladı: Türkiye ve Hollanda arasındaki dört yüzyıllık ilişkilerin resimli tarihçesi* [It started with the tulip: a documentary history of

involvement in the conflict, the *Keyser Octavianus* incident was the last in a long series of events which made sure that, by the 1660s, the Dutch reading public had already developed a strong interest in the latest developments of the Cretan War.

3.2 Reporting on the Cretan War.

The very first surviving issue of the *Weeckelycke Courant* – i.e., Casteleyn’s first newspaper and predecessor of the *Haerlemsche Courant* – dated August 26th 1656, featured a story from Venice which dealt with a rather curious episode, in the context of the latest Venetian effort to recapture the stronghold of Canea (modern day Chania) by laying siege to it.¹⁴⁶ In order to survive a recent outbreak of the plague, the defenders paraded a huge effigy of Muhammad through the city streets. When this pious device failed to produce the desired result, the Ottomans turned to the Christian population of Chania and asked them to pray to their god to the same end. In a couple of days, the sickness ceased, “to the amazement of the Turks”.¹⁴⁷ From the publication of this story in 1656, until the news of the fall of Candia in the fall of 1669, reporting on the Cretan War would become a steady feature of Casteleyn’s activities.

We can discern certain areas of reporting: Venice, Dalmatia, the Aegean, Crete and Constantinople. News from a certain reporting area featured more or less the same content (in a largely repetitive fashion), but did not appear in any specific order in the news stories. The first area of reporting, Venice, furnished news concerning military preparations and naval armaments in the *Arsenale* of Venice, as well as the huge sums funneled to that end.¹⁴⁸ News stories from the front in Dalmatia contained an endless

four centuries of relations between Turkey and the Netherlands], Ankara, 2000, 68. I have not been able to trace any reports of the incident in the Dutch press, which shows an extremely low survival rate for the year 1663. The 1664 edition of the Casteleyn brothers’ *Hollandse Mercurius*, however, included a lengthy description of the incident and its aftermath, see Pieter and Abraham Casteleyn, *Hollandse Mercurius behelsende het gedenckweerdigste in Christenryck in het laer 1663*, Haarlem, 1664, 76-77.

¹⁴⁶ Unlike Candia, Chania was seized by the Ottomans in 1645 during the initial phase of their advance.

¹⁴⁷ *Weeckelycke Courant*, 26-08-1656, *Een groot Beeld van Mahomed [...] dat in Processie voor de Stadt doen omdraghen [...] Tot verwonderinghe der Turcken / de sterfte aldaer opgehouden*. Although of anecdotal nature, this episode is not necessarily fictional: many of the defenders may have actually been recent converts to Islam and they would have been familiar with the “iconic” Greek Orthodox religious customs, see Greene, *Shared World* 45-77.

¹⁴⁸ HC, 02-03-1666, No. 9, Dings., Venetien 13/2 [...] *Tot onderstant, soo van de Vloot als anders, heeft den Raedt hier geresolveert te senden 170000 Ducaten*.

stream of skirmishes back and forth across the front line, as well as incessant speculation concerning where the Ottomans would attack next.¹⁴⁹ In the Aegean, the movement of the Venetian armada around the Greek islands was followed closely, along with the occasional skirmishes on the open sea.¹⁵⁰ The situation in Constantinople received a lot of attention as well. The strategy of the Sultan's dignitaries, the imposition of new taxes in order to finance the war effort and the assembly of troops and ships to attack Candia are covered with sometimes unique (pretension to the) insights into the minds Ottoman officials: thus, according to a report from 1660, the Grand Vizier had not paid attention to the fleet because he was "planning to fight the War on Land offensively and the [war at] Sea only defensively".¹⁵¹ To be sure, the main focus area of reporting on the Ottoman-Venetian war was the situation on the island of Crete. The arrival of reinforcements and provisions for both sides, Ottoman advances and Venetian counter-attacks around the walls of Candia were followed in every possible detail.

As we have mentioned in Chapter One, the *Serenissima* was also fighting the war on the field of information, by propagating her victories in order to garner European support. Much of what was brought in the city's news market (and exported through it) was regulated by the authorities.¹⁵² In fact, many of the stories appearing in the *Haerlemsche Courant* could have been written by Venetian correspondents who made use of the news found in government proclamations. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the Venetian forces were referred to as "our side" (*d'onse*) and that news of a Venetian victory or an Ottoman retreat was "perfect news".¹⁵³ Throughout the 1660s the *Haerlemsche Courant* was telling the story exclusively from the Venetian side. Moreover, the stories conveyed through Venice suited Casteleyn's editorial strategies, as the sheer duration of the conflict suited perfectly the needs of periodicity, much in the same fashion that news from Barbary did. Casteleyn had a relentless stream of reports pertaining to warfare on sea or land (or both at the same time, preferably)

¹⁴⁹ For one of the numerous Venetian counter-raids see HC, 28-05-1661, No. 22, Sat., Venetien [...] *In Dalmatien hebben de onse by Spalato by de 150 ghedoodt / ende by de 200 ghevanghen.*

¹⁵⁰ See for example HC, 1-09-1665, No. 36, Dings., Venetien 15/8 [...] *Den Capiteyn Generael [...] heeft zijn Armade aenstonchts verdeelt in verscheyde Posten [...] blijvende den Generael self by Scio.*

¹⁵¹ HC, 29-06-1660, No. 26, Dings., Venetien, 12/6 [...] *om dat hy van voornemen was den Oorlogh te Lande offensive / en te Waeter defensive alleen te voeren.*

¹⁵² De Vivo, "Paolo Sarpi" 37-38.

¹⁵³ HC, 2-11-1660, No. 44, Dings., Venetien 15/10 [...] *Heden hebben wy perfecte tijdinghe uyt het Rijck Candia.*

whose repetitive nature made them appealing to readers. As can be glanced from Table 3, the number of Venetian news stories containing reporting on the developments of the siege grew as the siege was drawing to its end.

Year	Candia	%
1660	8	44.4
1661	16	64
1662	2	22.2
1663	2	22.2
1664	-	
1665	6	42.8
1666	35	54.7
1667	59	81.3
1668	-	
1669	140	87.5

Table 4. Left column: the number of datelined news stories from Venice which contained reports on the developments in Crete. Right column: their percentage of the total number of stories from Venice. No issues of the *Haerlemsche Courant* survive for 1668, while the only surviving issue published in 1664 contains two stories from Venice which mention nothing of Candia.

It is important to remark that although many of these stories appealed to a “common Christian struggle” against the Ottomans, their vocabulary was rather neutral. However, much as in the case of the reporting on the corsairs of Barbary, we can discern certain patterns of reporting that amount to a form of commentary. Venetian commanders like Marquis Villa, Antonio Barbaro and Francesco Morosini appeared in the texts eponymously and their stories were told in full, from their election in Venice to their deeds in the field.¹⁵⁴ Likewise, the names of Christian captains and Maltese corsairs appear very frequently in the news stories.¹⁵⁵ On the contrary, Ottoman actors were always nameless and they are simply referred to under the umbrella term “Turken”. The grand vizier Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Pasha – a major figure in seventeenth-century Ottoman history and eventual conqueror of Candia –,

¹⁵⁴ HC, 10-3-65, No. 10, Dings., Venetien, 20/2 [...] *Antotnio Barbaro verkoozen tot extraordinaris Provediteur van Dalmatien*.

¹⁵⁵ HC, 23-02-1666, No. 8, Dings., Venetien 5/2. [...] *Den Malthesissen Capiteyn Bocquincourt / hem van een gantse Vloot Turckse Schepen overvallen vindende*.

the principal Ottoman officers and admirals, as well as Sultan Mehmed IV were never mentioned by name.¹⁵⁶

Another *leitmotiv* found in Venetian reports from Constantinople is the portrayal of the Ottoman Empire as a state experiencing constant turmoil due to the burden of the war effort. It has long been established in scholarship that Venice's anti-Ottoman discourse (portraying the Ottomans as decayed and tyrannical) from the fifteenth century onwards was one of the means of early modern "constructions of otherness" against the Islamic world.¹⁵⁷ Thus, in Casteleyn's newspaper, the government in Istanbul was portrayed as struggling with the city's rebellious militia, while revolts of local governors like the one headed by the "Bassa of Babylonia" (with the corresponding Biblical connotation) were threatening the very existence of the state. As for the Sultan's court, this was the stage of petty jealousies which led to gruesome beheadings and it's never uncommon for the grand vizier in Crete to not be able to get his officers to follow his orders.¹⁵⁸ Mehmed IV himself was often portrayed as a weak man, sharing his empire's decay: when not plagued by court intrigues, he had to deal with unfortunate (and ominous) accidents. Thus, in March 1666, a story from Venice recounted the following: during one of his hunting excursions, Mehmed had the misfortune of falling into a river along with the horse carrying him. No less than 30 members of his court drowned in their effort to save him, but – showing up on time – a humble shepherd managed to pull him out of the water.¹⁵⁹ After this lengthy concatenation of calamities suffered by the Ottomans, it would make perfect sense to Dutch readers that (always according to Venetian reports) the people of Constantinople were growing so tired because of the protracted war that "as they wish for the return of peace".¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ Both Mehmed IV and his Grand Viziers were well known in Europe. See Ghobrial, *Whispers* 121-125.

¹⁵⁷ Lucette Valensi, *The Birth of the Despot Venice and the Sublime Porte*, Ithaca and London 1993, 69-79.

¹⁵⁸ HC, 27-5-1664, No. 22, Dings., Venetien 9/5 [...] *waer uyt den Grooten Heer, nieuwe Ialousie scheppende, hadde den ghemelten Persoon laten onthoofden*; HC, 19-01-1666, No. 3, Dings., Venetien 1/1 [...] *dat den Primo Vizier / willende na Canea / de andre Officiers hadden geweygert te volgen*

¹⁵⁹ HC, 16-3-66, No. 11, Dings., Smirna 17(?) / 1 [...] *is met sijn Paert door een Brugh in de Revier gevallen, en sijn wel dertigh van sijn gevolgh, die hem salveeren wilden, verdroncken; maer een Schaepherder [...] daer uyt ghetrocken*. Mehmed IV was known as *Avci* (the hunter), as hunting was his favorite pastime.

¹⁶⁰ HC, 31-8-1666, No. 36, Dings., Venetien 13/8 [...] *Van Constantinopolen heeft men oock niet anders / las dat het Volck daer den Oorlogh seer moede was / wenschende om Vrede*.

This brings us to another pattern of reporting: many of these news stories were narrating events set in the past while at the same time including prophecies and wishful thinking for the future. It is impossible to determine whether this had been the result of Casteleyn's editorial strategy or a general trend among his sources, but many snippets of news from Candia definitely fit into the pattern of "forward looking statements". Thus, in July 1666, readers were informed that – owing to the fact that it was low on provisions – the Ottoman army besieging Candia would last for no longer than "30 or 40 days" and that its eventual destruction "will bring great Respect" for Venice.¹⁶¹ The year 1666 in particular had seen a massive resurgence of eschatological visions not only in Europe but also in the Ottoman Empire. It was in early 1666 that Sabbatai Zevi, self-proclaimed "New Messiah" of the Jews and leader of the Sabbateans, reached the peak of his influence – before eventually being forced to embrace Islam later on the same year. Throughout 1666, the *Haerlemsche Courant* featured several stories covering the progress of Zevi's movement. Nearly all of them were conveyed through Venice and they contained quite a few mentions of Jewish rebellions being prepared all over the empire, serving as an indication that Zevi was about to "give [the Jews] a new Law and according to his Prophecy the Turkish Empire will come to an end and then his reign will soon begin".¹⁶² These stories must have drawn the attention of Dutch Jewry, as Casteleyn's newspaper was also sold in Amsterdam. Moreover, they knitted perfectly with the narrative of Ottomans weakness and hence served as a prediction of Venice's victory.

Thus, as we have already noted in Chapter Two, commentary in the Mediterranean news of the *Haerlemsche Courant* should not be sought solely in the texts of the news stories. There are certain recurring patterns of reporting (extreme repetitiveness, Ottoman anonymity, wishful thinking or speculation) which can be only discerned through the study of multiple issues - and these patterns pointed readers to a certain direction. With these means, the stage had been set for the *grand finale* – the fall of Candia – to be sold as Casteleyn's ultimate publishing product.

¹⁶¹ HC, 31-7-66, No. 31, Sat., Venetien 16/7 [...] *dat'er niet boven de 30 a 40 Dagen meer Provisie in was; [...] vervallen, dat selve grote Respect soude aenbrengen.*

¹⁶² For the rumor that a Jewish revolt was underway in Palestine, see HC, 02-03-1666, No. 9, Dings., Venetien 13/2 [...] *dat men hier heeft gesproken van een oproer der Ioden in Arabia Petrea; [...] maer echter met geen genoegsame gewisheyt;* HC, 19-10-1666, No. 42, Dings., Smirna 28/8 [...] *een nieuwe Wet geven sal. Propheteert dat het Ryck des Turcks uyt sal zijn / en't zijne in't kort beginnen.* For elements of millennialism in Zevi's movement see Georges Koutzakiotes, *Attendre la fin du monde au XVIIe - Le messie juif et le grand drogman*, Lyon, 2014, 15-56.

3.3 The surrender of Candia: a seminal event in the Dutch press of the year 1669.

The last year of the siege of Candia was the most dramatic in terms of the intensity of the fighting and the numbers involved. The events of 1669 are perhaps the most extensively as well as most accurately documented events of the Ottoman-Venetian war. In the following pages, it will become clear that news from the siege of Candia was also one of the most seminal topics – if not the most seminal – in the Dutch press of 1669. This can be attributed to two important factors. To begin with, the culmination of a standoff that had already lasted for more than twenty years was to draw immense public interest. The conjuncture of European diplomacy must have been of equal importance: news from the Mediterranean had been relegated to a status of lesser importance in the *Haerlemsche Courant* during the second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667), as most of the events of the conflict occurred in the North Sea. The year 1669 however, was special in the sense it was one of the very few years that saw almost zero fighting between European states. The so called “War of Devolution” – which saw Europe’s eyes fixed on Louis XIV’s effort to claim the Spanish Netherlands – had been concluded by the spring of 1668. Thus, apart from the Ottoman-Venetian war, the only ongoing military stand-off in the continent was that between the Cossacks and the Crimean Tatars – a conflict of minor skirmishes and border raids, far away from the main networks of news-collection.¹⁶³

As for Casteleyn, covering the events of a siege drawing to its end must have been seen as particularly profitable, considering that descriptions of battles were particularly appealing to his readership. As a matter of fact, no less than 250 out of 381 Mediterranean news stories published in the *Haerlemsche Courant* in 1669 contained news pertaining to the siege of Candia. One hundred sixty-one of them came through Venice, as 94 out of 135 surviving issues of 1669 contain news stories from the *Serenissima*. Moreover, there is a visible change in the way that Mediterranean port-city networks collected news and this largely due to the increase of the importance of news from the siege. For example, datelined news from Messina had first started appearing in the *Haerlemsche Courant* in 1667 and dealt mostly with

¹⁶³ This was in fact a proxy war fought by the vassals of the Polish Commonwealth and the Ottoman Empire respectively.

events such as the aftermath of the eruption of Mount Etna or the itinerary of the Dutch convoy. In 1669 however, news conveyed through Messina were almost always geared to reporting on the latest developments on the island of Crete. More importantly, the same change can be confirmed for Livorno, which – until 1668 – usually covered the western Mediterranean with a special emphasis on the corsairs of Barbary.¹⁶⁴

Changes are also visible in Casteleyn's editorial and news collecting strategy. In the first chapter, we noted that Casteleyn may have been subscribed to multiple Venetian providers of manuscript newsletter services. Whether or not most of the datelined news stories from Venice were sent by post directly to Casteleyn or he simply collected and translated them from other European newspapers is still impossible to answer. What can be said in this case however, is that there is an obvious change in the volume and pattern of news collection. Between 1660 and 1668 the *Haerlemsche Courant* usually featured two Venetian news stories per week. In 1669, Casteleyn managed to provide three datelined stories featuring news from Candia in 14 of his newspaper's issues.¹⁶⁵ It is also essential to attest that the mounting public interest on the siege led Casteleyn to invest in the promotion of his other publishing activities that contained information on Candia, through advertising.¹⁶⁶

As a rule in the *Haerlemsche Courant*, the news stories with the oldest datelining were published in chronological order in the left column of the front page of every issue. That been said, the deviation from this rule is rather telling. The Saturday edition of January 26th 1669 featured the news from Italy (the oldest news as always) on the right column of its back page, where one would usually find news from the Netherlands. The last news story before the advertisement section was informing readers that the defenders of Candia had carried out a successful sortie which had forced the Ottoman army to temporarily lift-off the siege - but also that this was a rumor with little credibility due to the lack of corroboration.¹⁶⁷ Right underneath,

¹⁶⁴ In 1669, 30 out of 45 news stories from Livorno contained news from Candia.

¹⁶⁵ Not a huge number, but indicating nonetheless.

¹⁶⁶ For advertisement in seventeenth-century newspapers see Michael Harris, "Timely notices: The uses of advertising and its relationship to news during the late seventeenth century", in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers and Society in Early Modern Britain*, London, 1999, 141-156.

¹⁶⁷ HC, 26-1-1669, No. 4, Sat., Venetien 11/1 [...] *den Uytval was gedaen dat de Turcken gedwongen waren gewoorden [...] de Belegeringh te quiteeren; maer op heden begint men dat geloof al te verliesen vermits van gene [...] Confirmatie.*

Casteleyn was advertising his (and his brother's) yearbook, namely: *The nineteenth issue of the Hollandse Mercurius; containing what has happened in the year 1668 and until the year 1669, with the events of the Siege of Candia, and also Images* [of it].¹⁶⁸ More importantly, readers could consult a map of the city, with a very accurate depiction of the main fortifications and a legend explaining the lay out of the Christian forces defending the city (see Fig. 3).¹⁶⁹ In the eyes of the Casteleyn brothers, the ideal reader (and consumer) would build up his reading by consulting a detailed report of past events leading to the news stories that he would consume in the newspaper. Moreover, the Casteleyn brothers' yearbook contained more resolute commentaries of events than those found in the *Haerlemsche Courant*. Thus, the *Hollandse Mercurius* of 1669 ended with the following statement: "in the next issue, we hope to still be able to write, that Candia has remained Christian. THE END".¹⁷⁰ Therefore, the siege of Candia suited the needs of periodicity not only thanks to its duration, but also thanks to the opportunities it offered to publishers like Casteleyn in raising the marketability of their publications.

As for the technical part of the abovementioned advertisement, it was important for readers to know the geography and fortifications of Candia, as one of the main topics of interest while covering the siege in the *Haerlemsche Courant* in 1669 were the fierce skirmishes around the St. Andrea and Sabionera bastions – the first located on the northwestern part of the city and the second on the northeastern, where the fortifications meet the sea.¹⁷¹ Grand Vizier Köprülü had concentrated his army's efforts on these two strongpoints and a vast number of mines and countermines had been dug around them by the opposing sides. The concentration of the Ottoman efforts against St. Andrea and Sabionera was meticulously documented in the

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., *Mede uytgegeven werden het negentiende Deel van den Hollandtsche Mercurius; behelsende't gepasseerde van den laere 1668, tot den laere 1669, met de voorvallen van 't Beleg van Candia, en een Afbeeldstel daer neffens.*

¹⁶⁹ Abraham and Pieter Casteleyn, *Hollandse Mercurius behelsende het gedenckweerdigste in Christenryck in het laer 1668*, Haarlem, 1669, 122.

¹⁷⁰ Casteleyn, *Mercurius* 190, *verhoopen in't toekomstige noch te schrijven, dat Candia is gebleven constant aen Christen rijck tot eengoeden*. To be sure, we should not exaggerate the connection between news from Candia and advertisement in Casteleyn's newspaper. In 1669, the most advertised book in the *Haerlemsche Courant* was the *Vremde geschiedenissen in de Koninckrijcken van Cambodia en Louwenlant in Oost-Indien* (Strange histories in the Kingdoms of Cambodia and Laos in the East-Indies), set between 1635 and 1644. See the issues of the year 1669, HC 22-6 (No. 25), 9-7 (No. 28), 20-7 (No. 19).

¹⁷¹ Dragos Cosmescu, *Venetian Renaissance Fortifications in the Mediterranean*, Jefferson, 2016, 93-97.

Haerlemsche Courant with sometimes two news stories covering the same skirmish, with the aim of determining the exact place of the fighting and the number of losses. Thus, in the issue of the 7th of September, the first news story from Venice confirmed previous reports that the latest sortie of the defenders had taken place around Sabionera, while the second would inform readers that “the Turks lost six thousand men and had to leave behind all their Guns and Baggage”.¹⁷²

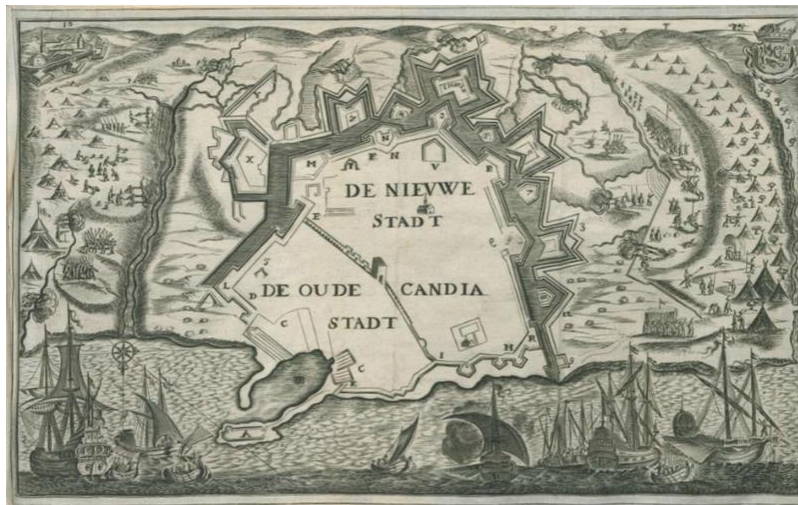


Fig. 3. The fortifications of Candia as they appear in the *Hollandse Mercurius* of 1669. The bastion of Saint Andrea is to be seen in the bottom right corner of the city-walls.

Apart from the reporting on certain skirmishes, Casteleyn’s newspaper also followed the fates of the different European military detachments. Particular attention was paid to the contribution of a 6,000 strong French army under the Duke de Navailles-Beaufort who was sent to Candia by Louis XIV in June 1669. Various stages of the French expedition’s itinerary were covered by Casteleyn’s newspaper: a news story from Toulon, reported that the troops were about to sail for Candia, carrying with them the Papal standard - which was to provide the French with “a lot of courage to go and fight for the common Christianity”.¹⁷³ A story from Messina,

¹⁷² HC, 7-9-1669, No. 36, Sat., Venetien 24/8 [...] *dat deselve mede soude gheschiedt zijn van de sijde van Sabionera*; *ibid.*, Venetien 24/8, *Men schrijft [...] van verscheyde Oorden de Tydinge van de latest-gedachten grooten Uytval; en dat de Turcken, met verlies van 6000 Man, al haer Geschut en Bagagie [...] hebben moeten quiteeren.*

¹⁷³ HC, 20-6-1669, No. 25, Extr. Dond., Toulon 3/6 [...] *De Galeyen verrocken van hier met den Standart van den Paus; en ons Volck betyght in 't general een bysondere groote couragie / omme te gaen vechten voor de gemeene Christenheyt.*

confirmed that before continuing eastwards, the French armada had joined forces with the galleys of the Papal States and those of Naples.¹⁷⁴ The arrival of the French in Candia provided the necessary numbers and thus the appropriate setting for news stories narrating impressive battles with hundreds of dead. Furthermore, the presence of French troops in Candia, meant that news from the siege could now also be funneled to the Dutch Republic through Paris, as the French government tried to promote its involvement, much like Venice and Rome were controlling information to advertise their victories against the Turks in Europe. An Amsterdam correspondent of Casteleyn remarked that letters arriving from France were declaring with certainty that Christian arms would prevail thanks to French support.¹⁷⁵ Things were actually about to get worse.

As the Ottoman mines and canon emplacements were steadily getting closer to the city's fortifications, sorties were deemed necessary by the defenders. On the 25th of June, a strong night sortie was carried out, spearheaded by the French troops. Although many casualties were inflicted on the Ottoman army, the defenders were also deprived of some of their most able fighters.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, the duke of Beaufort perished in battle, never to be seen again. The mysterious circumstances surrounding the duke's death gave rise to a series of theories throughout the ages: most famously, one of those theories has identified Beaufort as the "man in the iron mask".¹⁷⁷ Casteleyn's newspaper featured several stories on Beaufort's fate: the initial rumours that he had been taken prisoner were contradicted by a story reporting that the men of the Grand Vizier had found his beheaded body.¹⁷⁸ To be sure, Beaufort's death was but the first major disappointment for the French in Candia. In late July, the French flagship *Theresa* exploded with almost total loss of life of its 300 strong crew. The explosion was caused either by Ottoman canon fire or by the accidental ignition of the

¹⁷⁴ HC, 22-6-1669, No. 25, Sat., Messina 14/5 [...] 7 Galeyen van Maltha / sullen alhier verwachten de Galeyen van Napels / van den Paus en die van Vranckrijck / om gesamentlijck na Candia te gaen. Van Catania ... den Bergh Etna geen meer Vier uytwerpt.

¹⁷⁵ HC, 28-9-1669, No. 39, Sat., Amsterdam 27/9 [...] De Fransse Tydingen / van de groote Avvantagie / die de Christenen op de Turcken voor Candia souden hebben gekregen / soo abundant / en tamelijk assureant / geschreven uyt Vranckrijck.

¹⁷⁶ Hasiotis, *O Polemos* 340-349.

¹⁷⁷ Michel Vergé-Franceschi, *Le Masque de Fer enfin démasqué*, Paris, 2009, 219-230.

¹⁷⁸ HC, 31-8-1669, No. 35, Sat., Marsielje 13/8 [...] of gedachte Duc gevangen was; maer den Visier seyde van hem niet te weten [...] daer men wel sijn Lichaem vont, maer't Hooft daer af gehouwen; HC, 7-9-1669, No. 36, Sat., Venetien 24/8 [...] 't Hooft van Duc de Beaufort / nevens van andere principaele Fransse Dooden / aen den Grooten Heer geschick.

ship's gunpowder. The incident was indeed one of the most remarkable ones in the history of the siege and both versions surrounding the cause of the explosion found their way in Casteleyn's newspaper.¹⁷⁹ This series of calamities (in conjunction with the rising number of casualties) dealt a serious blow to French morale. Indeed, in early August, the French troops started abandoning Candia.

It was not long before Francesco Morosini realized that the Venetians would not be able to hold out for long without French support: surrendering the city on favorable terms was deemed to be the best option. Thus, a treaty guaranteeing the safe departure of the remaining troops and inhabitants was signed between the two parties on the 16th of September.¹⁸⁰ As was common for the way that news traveled in the early modern period, the *Haerlemsche Courant* was still publishing reports of the bloody skirmishes around the bastions of St. Andrea and Sabionera – and the last Venetian efforts to relieve the city – as late as the 22nd of October.¹⁸¹ Then, in the Saturday edition of the 26th of October, the first news stories from Venice were informing readers that Morosini had surrendered Candia, “albeit on honorable terms”.¹⁸² For Dutch readers, Köprülü's ceremonial entry in the city through the breach of St. Andrea – for obvious symbolic reasons – and the conversion of churches into mosques must have marked the definite conclusion of the drama:

*On the 4th of October the Grand Vizier came in Candia not through the main Gate, but through the Breach of St. Andrea [...] he prayed in the church of St. Francis, which has now become a Turkish Mosque*¹⁸³

News from Candia continued to feature in the pages of Casteleyn's newspaper after the siege. The perilous journey of Venetian (and Greek) refugees back to Venice – with ships running aground or being captured by pirates –, the accusations against

¹⁷⁹ HC, 14-9-1669, No. 38, Sat., Venetien 30/8 [...] *by ongeluck het Vier geraeckt is van't eygen kruyt van den Franssen Vice-Admirael / zijnde een Schip met 54 Stucken en 300 Man / 't selve is met Volck en al in de Locht gevlogen*; HC, 17-9-1669, No. 38, Dings., Venetien 31/8, [...] *onder het schieten geraeckten het Schip de Theresia in brant, en vloogh op met 300 Man, (gereserveert alleen 7) en 60 Metale Stucken.*

¹⁸⁰ Hasiotis, *O Polemos* 350.

¹⁸¹ HC, 22-10-1669, No. 43, Dings., Venetien 4/10 [...] *noch een Convoy sal gaen tot Secours van Candia.*

¹⁸² HC, 26-10-1669, No. 43, Sat., Venetien 11/10 [...] *dan op eerlijcke Conditien.*

¹⁸³ HC, 19-11-1669, No. 47, Dings., Venetien 1/11 [...] *Den Primo vizier den 4 October binnen Candia ghekomen zijnde niet door de gemeene Poort / maer door de Bresse van St. Andrea [...] De kercke van St. Francisco / nu een Turcksse Moschee gheworden / alwaer sijn Devotien pleegde.*

Francesco Morosini for his stance during the last phase of the siege and the negotiations for the conclusion of the Ottoman-Venetian war, were all to remain topics of interest at least until the end of the year.¹⁸⁴ In fact, the last issue of the *Haerlemsche Courant* for 1669 – a Saturday edition dated December 28th – featured a lengthy letter written by a “German Lord”, describing the fighting and the circumstances of the last phase of the siege.¹⁸⁵

Although the *Haerlemsche Courant* featured stories which tended to emphasize the successes of “united Christian arms” in Candia, this study’s account of the coverage of the siege would be incomplete without mention of the occasional accommodation of a more Dutch/Protestant point of view of the conflict in the pages of Casteleyn’s newspaper. There are but a few examples of this point of view, but the tendency becomes clearly visible during the last year of the siege, as the fighting was reaching its most intense levels. Thus, in late August, a news story from Amsterdam informed readers that a Dutch ship – which had just reached the port of Texel – reported that while cruising off Cap Bon (Tunisia) it had come across “ten Algerian corsair ships who were on their way to Candia, and they were very damaged, in the front as well in the back, because they had fought against four Dutch ships”.¹⁸⁶

The contribution of Dutch/Protestants within the walls of Candia had to be presented in more indirect terms: as the French were disembarking back in Marseille, a news story from Venice confirmed that many Reformed soldiers had started arriving in the city, in order to serve the Venetian Republic by their own free will.¹⁸⁷ Furthermore, as the fighting was drawing to its end, Casteleyn published letters from the troops of Lüneburg fighting in Candia on the front page of his paper, on two

¹⁸⁴ HC, 26-11-1669, No. 48, Dings., Venetien 8/11 [...] *De Persoonen, die op 't Schip van Candia by Cerigo zijn gebleven, waren meest Vrouwen en Kinderen, en waren van 200 geen 150 geberght*; HC, 5-12-1669, No. 49, Extr. Dond., Venetien 15/11 [...] *waer in tegens den voorsz. Generalissimus schijnt te willen klagen*; HC, 21-12-1669, No. 51, Sat., Venetien 6/12 [...] *tot Larissa ekomen zijnde de Bescheyden, afgesonden van den Primo Visier aen den Grooten Heer, van de gemaecte Vrede, deselve aldaer seer aengenaem waren geweest.*

¹⁸⁵ *Copie van een Brief, van een voornaem Duyts Heer, nu uyt Candia in Italien aengekomen, raeckende de wyse van's overgaen der Stadt Cadia.* The letter covers more than one fourth of the whole issue.

¹⁸⁶ HC, 29-8-1669, No. 35, Extr. Dond., Amsterdam 27/8 [...] *by Caep de Bon geweest is by 10 Algierse Rovers die na Candia wilden, zijnde zeer ontramponeert, so aen haar staende als haar loopende Want, seyde, dat sy waren Slaeghs geweest tegen 4 Hollandtsche Schepen.*

¹⁸⁷ HC, 15-10-1669, No. 42, Dings., Venetien 27/9 [...] *wel-geoeffende Soldaten, also veele Gereformeerde Officiers zijn, welcke vrywilligh haer aengepresenteert hebben, omme dese Republijcke te komen dienen.*

occasions.¹⁸⁸ The mercenary armies of the (Lutheran) Duchy of Brunswick-Lüneburg were especially known for their Huguenot soldiers: lots of Huguenots had been attracted to the duchy long before the revocation of the edict of Nantes, thanks to the fact that Eleonore d’Olbreuse – the duke’s spouse – was a patron of the French Reformed faith.¹⁸⁹ Most famously, Eleonore’s half-brother, Jean Desmier had died fighting in Candia in 1668.¹⁹⁰ Some of these Lüneburg detachments had been recruited by Venetian agents in the Dutch Republic in 1669 – with the silent consent of Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt.¹⁹¹ It is interesting that one of the abovementioned letters provides an insight absent in the reports from Venice, namely, the problems in cooperation and mutual distrust that the defenders faced. Thus it is mentioned that all of the work of the Lüneburg soldiers was sometimes met by unfair laughter on the part of the Italians.¹⁹² In any case, a similar line of paying special attention to the “Reformed contribution” was also evident in the *Hollandse Mercurius*. In the issue of 1669, the Casteleyns argued that most of the 1,200 French troops fighting in Candia (before the arrival of Beaufort’s reinforcements) were *Gereform:Officiers* and all of them resolute fighters.¹⁹³

As a concluding remark for this chapter, we can note that news from the Cretan War in the 1660s largely resembled the reporting on the corsairs of Barbary. Casteleyn had a steady flow of repetitive reports on a topic readers had been familiar with for decades and so news from Venice became a steady feature of the *Courant*’s issues, largely guaranteeing the survival of the *Serenissima* as a conveyor of information to the northern European news market. Once more, commentary is discernable mostly in the patterns of reporting and not so much in the actual vocabulary employed in the news stories - with speculation and “forward-looking statements” constituting elements of fiction. As the fighting was drawing to its end in 1669, editorial strategy – fitting the

¹⁸⁸ HC, 1-8-1669, No. 31, Extr. Dond., *Copie van een missive van een van de Lunenburghse uyt Candia, den 25 Mey [...] dat wy io de gevaerlijkste hoewel aensienelijckste Oort, namentlijk, op de Post van St. Andrea*; HC, 15-8-69, No. 33, Extr. Dond., *Copie van een van de Lunenburghse Troupen uyt Candia den 16 Juny [...]*.

¹⁸⁹ Andreas Flick, “The court at Celle ... is completely French”: Huguenot Soldiers in the Duchy of Brunswick-Lüneburg” in Matthew Glozier and David Onnekink (eds.), *War, Religion and Service: Huguenot Soldiering, 1685-1713*, Aldershot, 2007, 195 – 212.

¹⁹⁰ Flick, *The court* 210.

¹⁹¹ Petrus Johannes Blok, *Relazioni Veneziane. Venetiaansche berichten over de Vereenigde Nederlanden van 1600-1975*, The Hague, 1906, 289.

¹⁹² HC, 15-8-1669, No. 33, Extr. Dond., *Copie [...] also alle onse arbeyt by de Italianen met belacchen werdt beloont*.

¹⁹³ Casteleyn, *Hollandse Mercurius* 190, *alle wackere verstandige Krijgsluy*.

needs of periodicity – privileged news from Candia, as dramatic stories involving European celebrities like Beaufort (fighting “in the name of Christendom”) were to be told, while at the same time reserving space for the Dutch/Protestant contribution. In the end, these strategies would benefit the sales not only of Casteleyn’s newspaper, but also his other publications.

Conclusion

Throughout the 1660s, Casteleyn's bookshop in the center of Haarlem published thousands of news stories conveyed through Mediterranean port-cities. Venice and Livorno maintained a remarkable share of the news market, despite the rise of new hubs of commerce (and information) in northern Europe. The survival of the "old Mediterranean world" in the early modern European news market and – through the later – in the nascent "public sphere", was not simply due to historical and cultural reasons (such as the religious and artistic radiation of Italy) or a byproduct of northern European commercial penetration past the straits of Gibraltar. Through the study of the *Haerlemsche Courant* – i.e. the Dutch Republic's most famous newspaper (both in the Netherlands as well as in the rest of Europe) – I have examined Mediterranean news as foreign news, in order to explain its remarkable survival in the mid-seventeenth-century early modern press, with news from the last year of the siege of Candia (1669) receiving massive attention.

I have argued that the main two topics of Mediterranean news covered in the *Haerlemsche Courant* – the corsairs of Barbary and the siege of Candia – fitted perfectly Casteleyn's needs for periodicity thanks to their sheer duration as historical phenomena. No issue would be left unfilled as long as the postal routes over the Alps furnished Casteleyn with a steady flow of reports on topics with which contemporary readership was familiar with and which gave the impression of an eternal Christian-Muslim struggle in the Mediterranean basin – a sea of "battlefields" and not "bazaars". The marketability of such news was exceptional, as its origins were in one of the "frontiers" of early modern imagination, allowing for sometimes extreme representations of "otherness": such was the case of anti-corsair discourse in the wake of De Ruyter's 1662 expedition and the depiction of the English as Muslims during the second Anglo-Dutch War. Even when they were absent in terms of vocabulary, commentary and elements of fiction were present in the patterns of reporting, such as the repetitive nature of Muslim anonymity and the inclusion of "forward-looking statements", as – for example – those in the news stories covering the progress of the defenders of Candia. Moreover, Casteleyn knew how to make the most of Mediterranean news by stressing the importance of the Dutch/Protestant contribution to the common Christian cause and employing strategies which aimed at the marketability of his other publications. These observations largely contradict Morineau's appraisal of the *Haerlemsche Courant* as a source of "dry reporting". In the end, the needs of periodicity in conjunction with the Christian-Muslim "frontier" nature of Mediterranean news in the 1660s largely benefitted the survival of the "old Mediterranean world" in the early modern European news market.

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