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## The Ideology of Rebellion: Philippe de Marnix, Sieur de Sainte Aldegonde, and the Dutch Revolt

Fred Edwin Beemon  
*University of Tennessee - Knoxville*

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Fred Edwin Beemon entitled "The Ideology of Rebellion: Philippe de Marnix, Sieur de Sainte Aldegonde, and the Dutch Revolt." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in History.

John Bohstedt, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

John R. Finger, Michael McDonald, Paul Barette

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

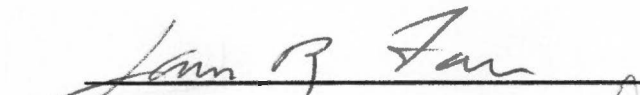
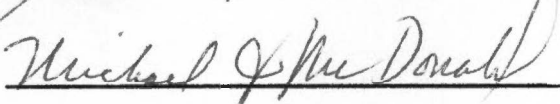
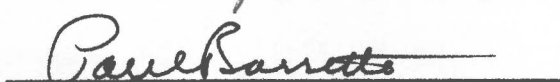
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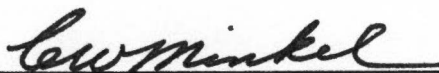


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THE IDEOLOGY OF REBELLION: PHILIPPE DE MARNIX,  
SIEUR DE SAINTE ALDEGONDE, AND  
THE DUTCH REVOLT

A Dissertation  
Presented for the  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Degree  
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Fred Edwin Beemon

August 1988

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## ABSTRACT

By situating the language of Philippe de Marnix in its cultural context, I identify his ideology of rebellion which for him justified the Dutch Revolt. Marnix's problem was to accommodate Calvinist freedom of conscience in a society which traditionally linked heresy and sedition. According to the accepted theory of correspondences, God created the universe, and thus earthly order corresponded to heavenly order. To disturb the peace and order of society was to do the work of the Devil and threaten total destruction--the apocalypse--strict conformity to secular and sacred authority, which were seen as united to preserve order was required.

This dissertation reveals a shift in the concept of order. Marnix justified the Calvinist rebellion against Catholicism on the grounds Catholicism did not correspond to God's spiritual order. He then justified the Dutch Revolt against Philip II by claiming that Philip caused a disturbance of earthly order (peace and prosperity) by attempting to suppress Calvinism. Thus, Philip was a tyrant to be removed legitimately by the States of Holland and Zeeland. Marnix separated the link between sacred and secular order. He reserved religious conscience to private order, which was not subject to public interference so long as temporal disorder was not created. This separation of sacred from secular order was institutionalized in the Dutch

Republic, which allowed individual freedom of conscience, whereby being a good subject or citizen did not require conforming to a state or provincial church.

Traditional historiography of a Calvinist ideological justification of rebellion has focused on France and consequently dates its emergence only after the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572. However, if one studies the Low Countries and the works of Marnix, one finds a Calvinist ideology of rebellion articulating a new separation of sacred and secular order fully in place by 1567.

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## INTRODUCTION:

## LANGUAGE, THOUGHT AND CULTURE

As a historian of thought, it has long seemed obvious to me that there is a direct relationship between thought and language. The act of thought, beyond the apprehension of sense impressions, is not possible without language. The recording of thought was only possible by the use of symbols before the invention of the electronic recording devices of today. These symbols can either be the plastic arts or a system of notation. In the case of language, the system of notation is writing. The written system of notation acts as a code to convey thought and meaning. The text produced by the writer means something in the code of words. The reader understands something when he decodes the written language. This action of coding and decoding can persuade the writer and the reader of something, thus the acts of writing and reading possess the power both to explain and create change. This process can be successfully understood only in the context of the experiential order of the culture and society in which the language of the text was written and read.

For the historian of thought these textual conditions present a sociocultural hurdle to decoding the historical meaning of the text and the explanation of why the things said were said. Much of the difficulty of interpretation stems from the fact that the historian, as reader, exists in

a particular cultural context, which can be far removed not only in time and space but also in habit of thought from that of the text. A particularly notable example of flawed interpretation arising from this difficulty is the Whig interpretation of English history where nineteenth century historians dragged eighteenth century politics into a nineteenth century context to explain the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

A similar Whiggishness has emerged in the study of revolutions. The idea of revolution, at least since the French Revolution, has become more than a description of events. It has become a myth, particularly in the nineteenth century, that tied revolution and liberty together. To call anything since the early nineteenth century "a revolution is to bestow upon it the ultimate benediction of importance."<sup>2</sup>

In studies of the revolt of the Netherlands from P. C. Hooft to Pieter Geyl, the effect of the myth of revolution and liberty is very apparent. These accounts were usually dominated by the theme of Calvinist republicans seeking

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<sup>1</sup>John Brewer, Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 39.

<sup>2</sup>Perez Zagorin, Rebels and Rulers:1500-1660 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), I, 4-11. Also see the introduction to Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich, eds., Revolution in History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 1-2.

liberty from the Catholic tyranny of Philip II of Spain.<sup>3</sup> This interpretation narrowed the focus of the study of the revolt to a consideration of whether the Dutch revolt was "modern" (moving consciously toward a democratic, national, and constitutional Netherlands), or "conservative" (looking to the political ideas of the past and not consciously producing innovations).<sup>4</sup> In either case, there is the assumption that an inexorable process has led to the present and that the primary role of the historian is to explain how the Netherlands emerged in its present political condition,

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<sup>3</sup>S. Groenveld, "Beeldvorming en realiteit: Geschiedschrijving en achtergronden van de Nederlandse Opstand tegen Filips II," in Geschiedschrijving in Nederland: Studies over de historiografie van de Nieuwe Tijd edited by P. A. M. Geurts and A. E. M. Janssen ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), II, 55-84. The classic expression of this position in English is James Lothrop Motley, The Rise of the Dutch Republic: A History, 3 vols. (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1883). See also, Pieter Geyl, "The National State and the Writers of Netherlands History," in Debates with Historians (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955). In fact, Geyl is not above this theme himself, although as a Fleming, he presented it more as a tragic failure to unite all of the Dutch language speakers in one nation. Pieter Geyl, The Revolt of the Netherlands: 1555-1609 (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1958).

<sup>4</sup>Zagorin, Rebels and Rulers, II, 89-90. Zagorin summarizes the positions taken by a number of Dutch historians on this issue. Also see, Gordon Griffiths, "The Revolutionary Character of the Revolt of the Netherlands," Comparative Studies in Society and History, 2 (1960), 452-472, and the same author's "Democratic Ideas in the Revolt of the Netherlands," Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte, 50 (1959), 50-63. Much of an essay by J. W. Smit, "The Netherlands Revolution," in Preconditions of Revolutions in Early Modern Europe, edited by Robert Forster and Jack P. Greene, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), 19-54, is dominated by this debate.

rather than explain the past in its own terms as nearly as possible. This results in the reading of the language of the past in the sociocultural context of the present, which can lead to the misunderstanding of the meaning of the text, as was done in the Whig interpretation. Further, this has the effect of causing the selection and interpretation of evidence on the basis of how it fits into this process of presentism, rather than on the basis of explaining the past. The Calvinists were the group that received the greatest share of this type of attention at the hands of historians of political thought.

Modern historians from J. W. Allen to Quentin Skinner, who have examined the development of European revolutionary political theory in the sixteenth century, have focused on the Calvinists in the context of whether or not they were modern or conservative. Among those describing a modernizing, or innovative, process we find scholars like Allen and Gordon Griffiths. In Allen's classic study, the Calvinists were portrayed as anticipating modern revolutionary political parties which sought to gain control of the governmental structure as the only effective means to execute the desired reformation of society.<sup>5</sup> Gordon Griffiths' work has been perhaps the most Whiggish of all. His interpretation presented the revolt of the Netherlands

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<sup>5</sup>J. W. Allen, A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century, 3rd edition, (London: Methuen & co. ltd., 1960).

as the anticipation of modern liberal democracy.<sup>6</sup> On the noninnovative, or conservative, side of the argument one find historians like Brian Tierney and Quentin Skinner. Both Tierney and Skinner locate the basis for the modern theory of popular sovereignty and the secular state in preexisting ideas rather than in a process of innovation by the Calvinists.<sup>7</sup>

The basic problem with many of these studies is whether they are reflecting the political culture of the sixteenth century or that of the historian's own time. Are they reading the text of the past in the language and context of the present? Often I think that is the case. One sign of this is that the historians cited often do not distinguish between the sociocultural settings of the various countries. They often discuss political thought as an entity unto itself that is bound neither by time nor the actual political culture of and societal differences between the various countries. These historians have spelled out a canon of basic issues which explain politics, past, present and future, even though these issues may reflect the present

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<sup>6</sup>Gordon Griffiths, Representative Government in Western Europe in the Sixteenth Century: Commentary and Documents for the Study of Comparative Constitutional History (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 299-318. Also see the work of Griffiths cited in footnote 4.

<sup>7</sup>Brian Tierney, Religion, Law and the Growth of Constitutional Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Quentin Skinner, The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

of the historian more than the past he studies. They have cast the politics of the sixteenth century inside particular issues. These issues have included popular sovereignty, nationalism, democracy, political parties, natural law, constitutionalism, religious tolerance and the right to revolution. (These historians have also identified a canon of sixteenth century political tracts and books, which I shall return to later.)

The idea that there is a set of orthodox issues, like those listed above, which order politics and transcend time and place to define political thought has long dominated the study of political theory. This "issue-orthodoxy," as Conal Condren called it, assumed that past political thinkers were concerned with the same issues that later scholars or events have identified. The issues are those that survived or are of significance to the present. They are not necessarily those that were of concern to the past. There is no reason to assume that there is an identity of interest between present-day scholars and the thinkers of the past.<sup>8</sup> For the historian of thought, the proper goal is the meaning of the texts as they were written, not the explanation of the text through an abstract set of issues which were defined later.

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<sup>8</sup>Conal Condren, The Status and Appraisal of Classic Texts: An Essay on Political Theory, Its Inheritance, and the History of Ideas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 44-50.

A solution to the problem of distorting the text of the past by reading with the lens of the present can be derived from the current schools of linguistic philosophy. By examining the work of philosophers like Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jurgen Habermas, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and J. L. Austin, a model of the transmission of meaning in language can be erected. I shall briefly summarize each position, for it is not my purpose to debate the validity of each school, but rather to take a position and then attempt to apply that position to an examination of the writing of Philippe de Marnix during the Dutch revolt.

Generally this debate comes under the rubric of discourse. The idea of discourse is based on a model that is concerned with the nature of language and the transmission of meaning. The elements of this linguistic model are the relationships between the author, the text, the reader, and the cultural context of each in the transmission of meaning. Is the meaning that which the author intends, that which the text contains, that which the reader appropriates, that which the context dictates, or some combination of the above?

Thinkers like Gadamer stress that the author is important in determining meaning and that it is up to the reader to provide a reading of the text to realize the author's intention. In other words, meaning is transmitted when there is a "fusion of horizons between the original

thinkers or texts and their historical interpreters."<sup>9</sup> Another German who shares the concern of establishing the author's intent as the key to meaning is Habermas. But in disagreement with Gadamer, Habermas rejects the idea that the intention of the author is carried by a neutral language. Habermas draws instead on an idea of language developed by Austin. Austin portrayed language as a social instrument that can act on both the hearer and speaker, or reader and writer. That is, text or language itself can determine meaning because it carries a socially determined meaning rather than acting as the neutral bearer of the author's intention. Thus for Habermas both the intention of the author and the context of the language as a system has to be taken into account to determine meaning.<sup>10</sup>

Two other prominent figures in this debate are Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. Foucault argues that meaning is controlled by the sociocultural context. More precisely, meaning is intelligible once one discovers the proper order

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<sup>9</sup>Martin Jay, "Should Intellectual History Take a Linguistic Turn? Reflections on the Habermas-Gadamer Debate," in Modern European Intellectual History: Reappraisals and New Perspectives, edited by Dominick LaCapra and Steven L. Kaplan (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1982), 95.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 86-104. Jay in this essay also offers a brief, lucid summary of the various schools. Also see the very good summaries of both positions by William Outhwaite, "Hans-Georg Gadamer" and Anthony Giddens, "Jurgen Habermas" in The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences, edited by Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).



of things, or perhaps better stated, the rules that control the order. Derrida argues that there is no proper order, thus text cannot be read except as individual interpretation or metaphor. In short, meaning is determined by the reader.<sup>11</sup>

The leading figures in this methodology of discourse as applied to political thought have been Quentin Skinner and J. G. A. Pocock. Their philosophical origins are primarily from the Speech Act school of J. L. Austin, possibly because it is the most historical in orientation. Because this view stresses language as human action, rather than as neutral expression, meaning becomes time and language specific.<sup>12</sup> In looking to the political thought of the past, Skinner and Pocock have shifted the emphasis from the examination of text in isolation to the examination of text in its intertextual context. By examining the language of a text

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<sup>11</sup>David Hoy, "Jacques Derrida" and Mark Philip, "Michel Foucault," both in The Return of Grand Theory, 41-64, 65-82. Most of my observations here are based on the two preceding articles, but also see Hans Kellner, "Triangular Anxieties: The Present State of European Intellectual History" and E. M. Henning, "Archaeology, Deconstruction, and Intellectual History," both in Modern European Intellectual History, 111-136, 137-152; also, Hayden White, "Foucault Decoded: Notes from Underground," Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 230-260.

<sup>12</sup>Martin Jay, "Should Intellectual History take a Linguistic Turn," 87-88; Robert Darnton, "Intellectual and Cultural History," The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States, edited by Michael Kammen (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1980), 340.

in its relationship to other texts of the same time, they have sought to recreate the political languages of the discourse of the time. The central feature of their work is the emphasis on speech acts which convey particular meanings determined by historical time and language.

Though similar, Skinner and Pocock do differ a bit in methodology. Skinner tends to emphasize authorial intention, focusing on the mental world (whose borders are determined by the available world of text) of the author to understand what his intentions were or could be.<sup>13</sup> With Pocock there is a greater emphasis on language itself. In his most recent works, Pocock has reduced his methodology to a short hand of langue and parole in a game of language. The speakers are players in the game; the langue is the rules of the game; and the parole is the individual speech act by the player which conforms to the rules. The history of discourse is the story of the interplay between the speech acts (parole) and the linguistic context (langue). It is the linguistic context that makes the meaning of the individual speech act intelligible. However, this is not a frozen context or structure as the interaction between

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<sup>13</sup>Quentin Skinner, "Motives, Intentions and the Interpretation of Texts," New Literary History 3 (1972), 404-407; Quentin Skinner, "Hermeneutics and the Role of History," New Literary History 7 (1975), 219-228.

parole and langue can produce change in the meaning.<sup>14</sup>

Robert Darnton has praised both Skinner and Pocock for having solved the problems of anachronism in intellectual history and the reductionism of the Marxists and Namierites.<sup>15</sup> As Hans Kellner warned, there is the risk in any structure, be it Marxist, Freudian or discursive, of having the structure impose the order and placement of the evidence before it is fully examined.<sup>16</sup>

Skinner and Pocock have done much to change the way that the history of political theory is approached. As Pocock noted, a change of method for the study of political thought was needed because it was part of "a canon of major works...isolated by academic tradition" which were examined "by the methods of philosophical commentary." In this process, the relationship between philosophy and history had become maladjusted. The philosopher sought formalized thought for the present and the historian sought what it meant in the past. As a result, the historian was presented with a tradition that had developed out of non-historical

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<sup>14</sup>J. G. A. Pocock, "The State of the Art" in Virtue, Commerce, and History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 5-8; Pocock, "The Concept of Language," in The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe edited by Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 29-38.

<sup>15</sup>Robert Darnton, "Intellectual and Cultural History," The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States, edited by Michael Kammen (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 344.

<sup>16</sup>Keller, "Triangular Anxieties," 131.

methods.<sup>17</sup> Here Pocock was addressing the problem of the definition of meaning in political thought as a set of universal issues (for example, liberty versus tyranny, or the idea of state), which explain text regardless of the place or time. Part of this traditional way of examining political thought included the development of a canon of works that were to be consulted to elucidate these issues.

The idea of a canon of superior works that best define political thought is most easily described as the "Great Book" approach to the history of thought. For the early modern period, the authors of these works include figures like Machiavelli, Bodin, Hobbes and Locke. The idea is that there are particular books which are classics that offer a framework for the examination of other texts and best define the issues. These issues are supposedly the ideas that provide a unity for the diversity of texts and represent the goals which all great political theorists have struggled to express.<sup>18</sup> In short, these issues impose the proper order of evidence and questions to be answered. Skinner and Pocock, as well as their followers, have done much to escape this Whiggishness, but they have not escaped the canon of

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<sup>17</sup>Pocock, "Languages and Their Implications: The Transformation of the Study of Political Thought," Politics, Language and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History (New York: Atheneum, 1971), 4-9.

<sup>18</sup>Condren, Status and Appraisal of Classic Texts, 49-84.

political thought in their major works.<sup>19</sup>

They and their followers are moving closer to the danger of reductionism by organizing the evidence on the basis of an abstract structure that reduces "experience to the meanings that shape it. Along with this possibility, a new form of intellectual hubris has emerged, the hubris of the wordmakers who claim to be makers of reality."<sup>20</sup> They have almost reduced what should be an interactive relationship between language and culture to a one way street with all the traffic flowing from language to experience. For example, in a recent work produced by the followers of Skinner and Pocock, four languages of discourse are identified for early modern Europe.<sup>21</sup> If these languages are accepted, the examining of text for meaning becomes a matter of defining the political thought in terms of previously described languages, rather than seeking the setting of each text in its own context. To avoid both the

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<sup>19</sup>For example, Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975) and Skinner, The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978) are largely occupied with an examination of the canon.

<sup>20</sup>John E. Toews, "Intellectual History after the Linguistic Turn: The Autonomy of Meaning and the Irreducibility of Experience," The American Historical Review 92 (October 1987), 906.

<sup>21</sup>Anthony Pagden, editor, The Languages of Political Theory. In this work all of the studies are occupied with aspects of these four languages: political Aristotelianism and natural law; classical republicanism; commerce and commercial society; and the science of politics.

problems of the narrowness of the canon and the threat of reductionism, I think that both the scope of the texts examined and the idea of discourse must be broadened.

Part of the problem of reading the past lies in the texts selected for examination. As Pocock rightly complained, political thought was tied to a particular canon of works that were defined by certain issues. While the idea of a canon can be defended on the basis that the works selected are by the minds that best reflect the group that they belong to,<sup>22</sup> this position exposes the limiting nature of the idea of a canon. This idea supposes that certain writers and certain groups were best qualified and more representative of political theory in any one period. As these are chosen after the fact, there is a tendency to include that which succeeded and exclude that which failed; success defined here as that which most accurately reflects what develops later and failure that which least resembles later developments. It is possible that the works of the losers were as important in their time as those of the winners and thus reflected the period as much as those which became part of the canon. There is also the tendency to include in the canon works that appear to make coherent and original contributions as defined by the set of universal

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<sup>22</sup>Chartier, "Intellectual History or Sociocultural," 28.

issues, like liberty versus tyranny.<sup>23</sup>

The way out of canonical narrowness lies in redefining the works examined in the study of political thought. As indicated above, the study of political thinkers must be expanded to include the less than great and less than articulate spokesmen for even the failed political groups as they too were a part of the political discourse of their time. A second part of the redefinition of works to be looked at must extend beyond that of the political theorists to include the work of the propagandist, as well as governmental documents such as treaties, legislative acts, or royal edicts. All of these were a part of the political discourse of a period. This broadening of texts will aid in giving a fuller study of the actual languages used in the political discourse of the past, and thus give a more reliable guide to meaning.

The solution to the possibility of reductionism lies in a broadening of the idea of the context of the discourse. In Skinner's and Pocock's writings of speech acts as a social activity, they restrict their examination to that of a purely mental life of a restricted intellectual group. They do not take into account social change or political unrest. In short, they do not consider the relationship of

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<sup>23</sup>Condren, Status and Appraisal of Classic Texts, 85-164.

the writer to society at large.<sup>24</sup> In addition, they often do not consider the experience of political institutions and practices to determine the meanings of the languages they find in the political discourse of the past. Both Pocock and Skinner are concerned to place the texts they examine in the proper intellectual framework, but this milieu is largely limited to the textual world. As John Toews suggested, this seems to assume an objective, free scholarly community which examines political thought in a common language with relatively equal participants who are autonomous from outside influences. In the case of Pocock, his theories often seem a reflection of the scholarly "world in which many contemporary Anglo-American historians live or think they live."<sup>25</sup>

The language in a discourse should have its meaning defined socioculturally, rather than in the rarefied, narrow world of texts. The intellectual and textual milieu of the scholar, regardless of time, is but one part of the larger sociocultural world which humanity inhabits. For me, the idea of a discourse<sup>26</sup> rests on the assumption that language

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<sup>24</sup>Jonathan M. Wiener, "Quentin Skinner's Hobbes," Political Theory 2 (1974), 255-258.

<sup>25</sup>Toews, "Intellectual History after the Linguistic Turn," 892-893.

<sup>26</sup>The literature on the idea of discourse is growing at a very rapid rate. In formulating my position I owe a particular set of intellectual debts which I shall attempt to indicate here. From R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946) I have



is a sociocultural product which conveys thoughts. These thoughts are the products of a person acting in historical time. The meanings of these thoughts are conveyed by words. These words are only clear in the sociocultural contexts which determine their meanings. Thus language is a tool which conveys authorial intention, or meaning, to an audience which appropriates the text in a particular context.

Just as the author performs a creative act in writing text, the audiences in turn understand the meaning through

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borrowed the ideas that history is thought; that thought is action; and that the act of thought itself is the proper subject of historical knowledge. To John Dunn, "The Identity of the History of Ideas," Philosophy, Politics and Society, edited by Peter Laslett, W. G. Runciman and Quentin Skinner (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1972), 158-173, I owe the idea of thought as social action that seeks to engage in problem solving. In short, that the author is doing something and that language is the tool. My basic notions of the function of language as discourse and its socio-cultural context is derived from Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language," an appendix to The Archaeology of Knowledge, translated by A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 215-237. My understanding of the cultural context was enhanced by Hayden White, Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism. Finally I owe a debt to two essays which appeared in Modern European Intellectual History, edited by LaCapra and Kaplan. First, to Dominick LaCapra, "Rethinking Intellectual History and Reading Texts," 47-85, for the notion of the expanding of contexts beyond that of authorial intention, modes of discourse to include society and culture and also for the performative (creative) aspect of both the author and the readership. Second, to Roger Chartier, "Intellectual History or Sociocultural History?: The French Trajectories," translated by Jane P. Kaplan, 13-46, for stressing the need in doing intellectual history to be aware that the appropriation of the text is what gives it meaning and that it is necessary to be aware of the relationship of the systems of belief and their social relationships.

the performance of reading, or hearing the work read. This is not to say that there is a single meaning conveyed, but rather that thought and writing are social activities which possess meaning determined by sociocultural context.

The central point of my methodological critique is that historians have tended to analyze political theory through a narrow canon of texts oriented toward present preoccupations when the texts should be more properly viewed as ideological responses to particular political and sociocultural problems. I shall argue that ideology is theory in action, but to be in action implies it has to confront reality (acceptance or rejection), which in turn means to adapt for political ideas not on the basis of validity, but on the basis of acceptability to a society or group. Theory, at least in a scientific sense, is by definition ahistorical in the requirement of its universality. To focus on the theory is to lose track of the historical context and to venture into the land of the philosopher where the concern is to provide a theory which will inform regardless of context. Not to make this distinction is to end up with the wrong-headed lament of a recent book reviewer who complained that an author, because he insisted on tying the ideas of Alexis de Tocqueville to his historical context, lost Tocqueville's theory. "In its place are particular disconnected ideas that, when juxtaposed, seem unoriginal and 'strange.' The promised connection between Tocqueville's ideas and our

world is never forged."<sup>27</sup> The test applied by the reviewer was that of the traditional scholarship on Tocqueville which has made his writing a part of the canon. The reviewer was disappointed to see Tocqueville reduced to a historical figure from his accustomed position of oracle. Rather than being a pure theorist, could it be that Tocqueville was the product of a particular setting with its own political concerns and thus concerned more with ideology than theory?

What most historians of political thought have failed to realize is that what was often produced was ideology, not theory. As Brewer put it, "by asking what an argument does, rather than what it is, we breathe life into it; it is not a fly in amber, but a living developing phenomenon." This removes politics from the scholar's study and returns it to the arena.<sup>28</sup> Unlike theory, ideology deals with the necessity of answering a specific problem with a belief for the moment that permits action.<sup>29</sup> The question that is not asked often enough is why a particular set of ideas was used by a writer at a particular time? By asking this question and using this definition, ideology becomes totally historical in content and context.

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<sup>27</sup>Sheldon Wolin, "Can We Still Hear Tocqueville?" review of The Strange Liberalism of Alexis de Tocqueville, by Roger Boesche, The Atlantic 260 (August 1987), 81.

<sup>28</sup>Brewer, Party Ideology and Party Politics, 34-35.

<sup>29</sup>Clifford Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System" in Interpretation of Cultures (New York: Basic Books Inc.: 1973), 204-220.

The sixteenth century, according to Donald Kelley, witnessed the beginning of ideology, which he described generally as the "pivotal and almost inaccessible juncture between society and consciousness." This joining was the result of the socialization of consciousness, as the private thoughts of the new Protestants became public action explained by an ideology. This process culminated in the uniting of religious interests with social and political interests, which led to the emergence of a party. In order to understand this process, "the complex fabric of late-medieval society (as well as the structure of government)" has to be examined.<sup>30</sup>

The development of an ideology in the setting of a Calvinistic conscience within the cultural order of the Netherlands was precisely the process in which Philippe de Marnix, Sieur de Sainte Aldegonde was involved. His role in the development of an ideology of rebellion was as a propagandist. Jacques Ellul has suggested that to succeed propaganda must use the existing order, "its current myths, opinions and sociological structure," but cast them in such a way that the propagandist, while factually reporting events can appeal to the larger interests of his public, and insist on the purity of his cause, while discrediting his

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<sup>30</sup>Donald R. Kelley, The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 4-5, 42-47.

opponent.<sup>31</sup> For Marnix, this appeal was based in the concern for proper order.

The sixteenth century was haunted by the concern for proper order, which as traditionally interpreted, relied on the unity of the sacred and the secular in Christendom. Proper religious belief and loyalty to the secular authority were equated. However, to accommodate the new Calvinist conscience of a minority of the population in the Netherlands, Marnix would have to change this basic relationship between sacred and secular order. To gain the freedom of conscience desired by the Calvinists, he would have to split the sacred from the secular order. To do this required an ideology of rebellion which simultaneously appealed to secular, as well as religious concerns. Marnix did this by charging, first the Catholics and, then Philip II with tyranny, the willful creation of disorder in their respective spheres. Thus, Marnix's ideology of rebellion argued that the "rebels" were actually those who claimed, incorrectly, to be the restorers of order in both the sacred and secular worlds, that is the Spanish monarchy and the Catholic Church. Marnix's new order was conditioned on the freedom to instruct the conscience in the proper religious belief, Calvinism, without persecution from the temporal authority, and the maintenance of peace and prosperity in

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<sup>31</sup>Jacques Ellul, Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes translated by Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), 34-61.

the temporal world by the temporal authority. Both of these were sacred responsibilities, but unlike the traditional system of order which Marnix challenged, the unity of order between sacred and secular was not required.

The writings of Marnix were in a preexisting discourse of order. To get at this discourse of order in his writings, we must first set the stage of the Netherlands on the eve of the revolt. Then we can introduce the character of Marnix and his background. We will examine his propagandistic writings against the events of 1566-1568 through which the meaning of his emerging ideology of rebellion will appear. Finally, we will examine the application of his ideology in his subsequent role as a representative of William of Orange and the States General in the emergence of the Dutch Republic.

## CHAPTER I

## GOD CREATED THE UNIVERSE, BUT

## THE DUTCH CREATED HOLLAND

While Philippe de Marnix, Sieur de Sainte Aldegonde, was concerned predominately with Calvinism, there were many more factors at work in the Low Countries which would determine his fate and that of the revolt. The Netherlands<sup>1</sup> in which Marnix lived was beset by many different interests, which strained the boundaries of order and authority in the society. He was born to a noble family in Brussels in 1540.<sup>2</sup> The Marnix family had arrived in the Netherlands

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<sup>1</sup>The term Netherlands as used in this work refers to the area that today comprises the Benelux countries, rather than the Kingdom of the Netherlands, unless otherwise stated in the text. Also the term Holland refers to the province of Holland, rather than its modern day use to refer to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

<sup>2</sup>The bibliography of Marnix has been largely dominated by a debate over whether he was more of a nationalist or a Calvinist in his role in the revolt. He has appeared to historians as both a traitor, who put the interest of the Calvinists before that of the nation, and a national hero. Summaries of the positions taken by various historians were nicely done in Gerlo Alois, Marnix l'enigmatique?: A propos d'une nouvelle biographie de Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde (Brussels, 1953) and also in the most recent biography of Marnix, which is little more than a summary of these conflicts, C. E. H. J. Verhoef, Philips van Marnix, Heer van Sint Aldegonde (Weesp: Uitgeverij Heureka, 1985). Another area of debate over Marnix has lain in the realm of intellectual history. This concern has centered on Marnix as humanist and Calvinist and what was usually portrayed as the mutually exclusive nature of these two ideas. A summary of positions by previous historians, and a statement of a position that holds that Marnix represented a mixture of the two is found in W. A. Ornee, Calvinisme en humanisme bij

from Savoy with Margaret of Austria in 1507, when she came to serve as governor in the name of her nephew, Charles V. Philippe's grandfather, Jean de Marnix, served as her secretary and treasurer. Jacques de Marnix, Philippe's father, also served loyally in the court of the Habsburg governors of the Netherlands in various posts.<sup>3</sup>

Not much is known about Philippe's early years.<sup>4</sup> He and his older brother, Jean, received a humanistic education and made the customary tour of schools, as did most sons of the nobility in the Low Countries. By the early 1560s they both had converted to Calvinism. Jean would be killed in

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Philips van Marnix, heer van St. Aldegonde, Voordrachten Gelderse Leergangen no. 16 (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1966).

<sup>3</sup>Verhoef, Marnix, 10; A. A. van Schelven, Marnix van Sint Aldegonde (Utrecht: N. V. A. Ossthoek's Uitg., 1939), 3-5. Frans van Kalken and Tobie Jonckheere, Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde (Brussels: Office de Publicite), 7-8. One of the oddities of the Marnix bibliography is a debate over the nationality of the family. Van Kalken and van Schelven have maintained that they came from Savoy, while Lucien Febvre has maintained they came from Franche-Comté. See Febvre, "Franz van Kalken et les Marnix," Annales 9 (1954), 201-209, and van Kalken's response in "La psychologie des Marnix," Annales 10 (1955), 86-89. The argument was over the area of origin of the family and the effects that had on Marnix's ideas. As for Marnix, he clearly states in one of his pamphlets that his family came from Savoy, but since both of his parents were born in the Low Countries that he regarded himself as a member of an honorable noble family of the Netherlands and thus a native. Philip de Marnix, "Response a un libelle fameux," in Oeuvres de Philip de Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde, edited by Albert Lacroix (Geneva: Slatkin Reprints, 1971), V, 81-83.

<sup>4</sup>The most detailed examination of the early life is Albert Elkan, Philips Marnix von St. Aldegonde: Die Jugend Johannes und Philips von Marnix (Leipzig: Dyksche Buchhandlung, 1910).



1566 at the beginning of the revolt. For Philippe the years between 1565 and 1585 were to be dominated by Dutch revolt against Philip II of Spain. During this time, "his [was] the mind that drafted and the hand that wrote the documents which shaped a nation's history."<sup>5</sup> For most of this period, he served as a close advisor and propagandist for the Prince of Orange, William the Silent. Marnix also represented and negotiated for the States General with Spain and other governments. To understand the writings of Marnix, it is necessary to understand the conditions of the sixteenth century Netherlands.

The Netherlands of Marnix's youth was pulled by multiple tensions, which others have seen, too narrowly, as the localism or particularism in the Low Countries that existed at the beginning of the Dutch revolt. Both J. W. Smit and S. Groenveld find, by stressing particularism, that there was not a revolt, but many revolts based on differing religious, political and economic interests.<sup>6</sup> More recently

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<sup>5</sup>C. V. Wedgwood, William the Silent, William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, 1533-1584 (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1968), 75.

<sup>6</sup> See for example S. Groenveld, "Beeldvorming en realiteit. Geschiedschrijving en achtergronden van de Nederlandse Opstand tegen Filips II," in Geschiedschrijving in Nederland, edited by P. A. M. Geurts and A. E. M. Janssen ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), II, 55-84; J. W. Smit, "The Present Position of Studies Regarding the Revolt of the Netherlands," in Geschiedschrijving in Nederland, II, 42-54; Smit, "The Netherlands Revolution," in Preconditions of Revolution in Early Modern Europe, edited by Robert Forster and Jack P. Greene (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), 19-54.

Simon Schama has countered that none of the factors seen by Smit and Groenveld offered a ready-made answer to the disorders, but rather that the Dutch had cut loose their past and "were now obliged to reinvent it so as to close the wound and make the body politic whole once again."<sup>7</sup>

I think that the sources of tension were more than just the particularisms of religious, political and economic interests. There were also cultural, social, linguistic and geographically determined differences. I believe that there was an emergent pattern of unity before the revolt which focused these tensions around two rival geographic areas. One was centered on the provinces of Flanders and Brabant and the other on the province of Holland. I think that Schama's process of reinvention had begun prior to the revolt. By the end of the century these strains resolved themselves in the creation of a new state, the Dutch Republic, which left a remainder state in the hands of Spain. This was less the result of intention on the part of William the Silent and Philippe de Marnix than the conjunction of movements, events and policy decisions by an array of participants following different interests. In a broad sense, this new state was not just the product of the resistance to the rule of Spain and Philip II, but also an internal clash of cultures, economies, societies and

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<sup>7</sup>Simon Schama, The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), 67-68.

political institutions between the northern and southern Netherlands, which resulted in the formation of two new countries.<sup>8</sup>

This is not to argue that there was an inevitability that this political division would occur. Rather it is to say that the explanation for why the Dutch Republic emerged goes beyond the acts of rebellion to events and conditions that were present before and external to the revolt itself. The revolt was the product of a particular setting.

Much of Marnix's role in the revolt was to cope with and explain the circumstances of the revolt. As a pragmatic propagandist, Marnix used the cultural structure available to him to interpret events from a Calvinist perspective so that this interpretation would be acceptable to other collective interests in society. This meant the development of an ideology of rebellion which can only be understood in the context of the culture of the sixteenth century Netherlands.

When the Marnix family arrived in the Low Countries with Margaret of Austria, the term Netherlands or Low Countries was not much more than a geographic description referring to the low lying lands of the deltas of the

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<sup>8</sup>In a similar conclusion, though for different reasons, H. G. Koenigsburger recently suggested that political stability for Holland was not possible until Flanders and Brabant were cut lose. H. G. Koenigsburger, "Why did the States General of the Netherlands become Revolutionary in the Sixteenth Century?," Parliaments, Estates and Representation, II (1982), 103-111.

Schledt, Meuse and Rhine Rivers. It referred to a triangular piece of land with its base on the coast of the North Sea with no natural borders to define the other sides.<sup>9</sup>

The geographic location of the Netherlands has played a crucial role in the history of the region. Taken from a study of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Audrey Lambert's observations are applicable to the area of the Low Countries as a whole. The Low Countries position in Europe has been a favorable location for the development of urban communities as there was access to sea, land and inland waterways for the development of a transit trade. Subsequently, a manufacturing sector developed for the conversion of raw materials into finished products. This development was not equal throughout the Netherlands but rather was affected by the elevation of the respective areas. The higher areas of Flanders and Brabant and the lower regions Holland and Zeeland developed differently through types of land use and the effects of land reclamation in the never ending battle with the sea, rivers and the subsoil.<sup>10</sup>

There was more reclamation of polders in the northern

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<sup>9</sup>Walter Prevenier and Wim Blockmans, The Burgundian Netherlands (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 12; Omer Vandeputte, Dutch: The Language of Twenty Million Dutch and Flemish People (Lauwe, Belgium: Flemish-Netherlands Foundation, 1981), 8.

<sup>10</sup>Audrey M. Lambert, The Making of the Dutch Landscape: An Historical Geography of the Netherlands, 2nd ed. (London: Academic Press, 1985), 5-8.

Netherlands than in the south. This required greater "organization, discipline and the rational application of resources" in Holland than in Brabant and Flanders. Besides a somewhat different political order in the north, this meant a comparatively later agricultural, economic and commercial development for Holland because of a more extensive and difficult reclamation in a less fertile area.<sup>11</sup>

The importance of reclamation for the evolution of a northern Netherlands state different from the south cannot be overestimated, as it would provide an additional unifying factor for the northern Netherlands against which Marnix's ideology would play. As Simon Schama has noted, at the very time when the political identity of a northern Netherlands nation, centered on Holland and Zeeland, was being formed there was a dramatic alteration of its landscape. The post-revolt Dutch historical consciousness took the reclaiming of land as a sign of God's special grace for the Dutch as only God could create land and the Dutch ability to do the same was a sign of divine blessing on their enterprises.<sup>12</sup> But even on the eve of the revolt, the level of reclamation effort in the province of Holland was equal to that of the

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<sup>11</sup>Prevenier and Blockmans, Burgundian Netherlands, 25-26.

<sup>12</sup>Schama, Embarrassment of Riches, 34-36.

century from 1590 to 1689.<sup>13</sup> This activity of reclamation illustrated a rapidly rising economic area in the prerevolutionary northern Netherlands centered on Holland, which was overcoming its geographic limitations to challenge the older economic and demographic superiority of the south.

By 1500, the two areas with the highest population density also were the dominant economic areas in the Low Countries. The population in the south in Flanders and Artois had reached a density of sixty persons per square kilometer. The only other area in the Netherlands to equal this concentration of population was the province of Holland in the north. The next most populous provinces were Brabant and Hainault at forty inhabitants per square kilometer.<sup>14</sup> While the south had more heavily populated provinces, Holland stood alone as the population center in the north. In the south the population centers were the towns of the Scheldt River delta. The economic center had migrated from Bruges to Middleburg to Antwerp between 1300 and 1500, but it was essentially the same economic structure.<sup>15</sup> The heart of this market in the early sixteenth century was tied to

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<sup>13</sup>J. A. van Houtte, An Economic History of the Low Countries: 800-1800 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), 140-142. Between 1540 and 1565, 37,000 hectares were reclaimed. That rate of reclamation would not be matched again until 1590 to 1689 when 111,500 hectares were reclaimed.

<sup>14</sup>Prevenier and Blockmans, Burgundian Netherlands, 391.

<sup>15</sup> van Houtte, Economic History of the Low Countries, 59-60; Prevenier and Blokman, Burgundian Netherlands, 18-19.

the German continental overland market, and south German capital. The newer trade center of the northern Netherlands, the city of Amsterdam in Holland, was better situated to take advantage of the rising maritime trade of the Baltic and Atlantic than was the older economic center in the south.<sup>16</sup> With its location on the Zuider Zee and through inland waterway connections with Brabant and Flanders, Amsterdam and Holland had displaced the Hansa in the Baltic Sea trade by 1500.<sup>17</sup>

A comparison of the two markets prior to the revolt shows the center of the southern economy, Antwerp, to have peaked even as the northern center, Amsterdam, was growing. During the first half of the sixteenth century the market centered on Antwerp suffered a number of shocks. A prolonged period of general prosperity based in trade, textiles, banking, and Burgundian court consumption was ending.<sup>18</sup> Beginning with the loss of the Portuguese and French spice trades in the 1540s, which was followed by the disruption of the textile trade with England in the 1560s, the commercial economy of Antwerp was harmed.<sup>19</sup> Then, in

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<sup>16</sup>Herman van der Wee, The Growth of the Antwerp Market and the European Economy (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), II, 213-228.

<sup>17</sup>Prevenier and Blokman, Burgundian Netherlands, 19-20; Lambert, Dutch Landscape, 169-172; Van der Wee, Antwerp Market, II, 317-318.

<sup>18</sup>Prevenier and Blockmans, Burgundian Netherlands, 94.

<sup>19</sup>Van Houtte, Economic History, 176, 187-190.

1577, a crippling blow to the financial market in Antwerp was struck by Philip II's declaration of bankruptcy. The financial market had been closely tied to the Habsburgs since the days of Charles V, and as a consequence much of the debt of Philip II was underwritten in Antwerp.<sup>20</sup> As the south lost its economic vitality during and after the revolt, Amsterdam became the new economic center for Europe.<sup>21</sup>

The economic decline in the south added to the latent social tensions in the textile manufacturing sector of Flanders and Brabant. The industrial towns of these two provinces were especially vulnerable at times of economic weakness because of the tendency to specialize. It was not unusual for forty to sixty percent of the working population to be engaged in a particular industry.<sup>22</sup> This was especially true in Flanders among the textile workers who were the most at risk during hard economic times.<sup>23</sup> It has been suggested that the southern Netherlands, while not having an abnormal number of unemployed, probably had the

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<sup>20</sup>Van der Wee, Antwerp Market, II, 213-228.

<sup>21</sup>Fernand Braudel, Civilization and Capitalism 15th-18th Century, translated by Sian Reynolds (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), III, 175-276.

<sup>22</sup>Prevenier and Blockmans, Burgundian Netherlands, 92.

<sup>23</sup>J. J. Woltjer, Opstand en onafhankelijkheid (no place or publisher, 1972), 6.



worst poverty problem in Europe in its large towns.<sup>24</sup> This meant that even the employed textile workers probably had a marginal existence in Flanders. This produced a social structure in the southern Netherlands with a sharply hierarchical social structure where rich entrepreneurs and poor workers were frequently at odds.<sup>25</sup> It was in this region of the Netherlands that the first violence in the revolt would break out.

Marnix's writings reveal another source of tension to have been the divided linguistic culture of the Low Countries. Marnix wrote in both French and a Dutch dialect known as Hollands, as opposed to Flemish. Pieter Geyl stressed the existence of a unity of language among the Netherlanders north of a linguistic line that separated the French speaking south from a Dutch speaking north.<sup>26</sup> This was probably somewhat simplistic. While the majority of the people north of this line spoke some form of Dutch, it was neither a fixed nor a uniform language in 1500. In the middle ages "Dietsch" was a collection of dialects with that of Brabant dominant in the written works by the 15th century.<sup>27</sup> To the north of Brabant, the Dutch speakers

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<sup>24</sup>Geoffrey Parker, The Dutch Revolt (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 25-26.

<sup>25</sup>Prevenier and Blockmans, Burgundian Netherlands, 139.

<sup>26</sup>Pieter Geyl, The Revolt of the Netherlands: 1555-1609 2nd ed. (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1958), 22.

<sup>27</sup>Vandeputte, Dutch, 17.

divided between "Oosters" or East Dutch and the West Dutch of Holland and Zeeland. Also in the north there were German and Fries speakers in the most recently added provinces.<sup>28</sup>

In the sixteenth century the designation of Nederlandsch or Nederduytsch as a language distinct from German had begun to appear. As was typical of other European languages, by mid-century the first spellers, grammars, word lists and Bibles began to appear that would serve to define and unify the language.<sup>29</sup> The dialect that dominated was that of Holland, as it displaced the dialects of the south as the literary form of Dutch. Significantly, in modern day "Dutch", the language is actually called Nederlands or Hollands, as distinct from Brabants or Flemish which are spoken in the south. This again reveals the rise of the province of Holland to a position of dominance in the north, while the southern provinces declined politically and economically.

The significance of language takes on an additional importance when one adds the influence of the printing press and increased literacy. Both of these developments were required to make possible Marnix's propaganda, which after all, was the printed word. As Henry Kamen has asked, "was

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<sup>28</sup> Parker, The Dutch Revolt, 35-36, 282 fn.11.

<sup>29</sup>Vandeputte, Dutch, 19; Pierre Brachin, The Dutch Language: A Survey, trans. by Paul Vincent (Cheltenham: Stanley Thornes Ltd., 1985), 14-16.

it a coincidence that it was the Netherlands, breeding ground of heresies and revolution, that had probably the highest rate of literacy in Europe?"<sup>30</sup> The answer has to be that there was a connection, but this presumes an impact of printed page, a difficult thing to prove. How does one prove that people read and were moved by what they read? Donald Kelley suggests that the people who wrote the tracts and books certainly thought that they were read. Also, it was clear that the published edicts that sought to regulate religion received reactions.<sup>31</sup> But some caveats must be added lest we fall into the trap of assuming that the printing press produced a greater unity in society. While printing did aid in fixing the language to the exclusion of local dialects, it also enhanced social divisiveness between the literate and the illiterate. There emerged a difference between a hearing and a reading public. The reading public was more dispersed and atomistic than the hearing. The lone reader was not as dependent on the community to hear a given message. The printed works allowed a reader to hold opinions and adhere to loyalties that lay beyond the local community. It was easier to join advocates of positions not present in local society and become part of "an invisible

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<sup>30</sup>Henry Kamen, The Iron Century: Social Change in Europe, 1550-1660 (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 273.

<sup>31</sup>Donald R. Kelley, The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 236-237.

public."<sup>32</sup> This atomization of the individual reader made possible a greater stress on the word, private belief, and conscience, as was common to the Calvinists. It also gave individuals access to printed propaganda without making them dependent on anything for information beyond the printed word.

A further linguistic division followed social and political lines. The world of Marnix, Orange and the other noble families was linguistically distinct from that of the burghers. For the Low Countries, the translation of a work from Latin into French was "often pointed away from the urban laity, who knew only Lower Rhenish [Dutch] dialects, and toward relatively exclusive courtly circles."<sup>33</sup> This revealed two different reading publics: one "Dutch" and the other French, which had social and political parallels. The politics of the Netherlands heightened this linguistic division. As the French of the Burgundian court served the unity of the nobility, the "Dutch" speaking burghers tended to be excluded despite their efforts to emulate the aristocrats.<sup>34</sup>

Beyond the linguistic division of noble versus burgher,

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<sup>32</sup>Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 81, 94-95.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 31-32. Also see Prevenier and Blockmans, Burgundian Netherlands, 15.

<sup>34</sup>Prevenier and Blockmans, Burgundian Netherlands, 139.

there were other tensions and divisions reflected in the politics of the Low Countries. All of these tensions were sources of problems during the revolt, not only for Philip II, but also for the would-be rebels. To examine these tensions, which would be available to Calvinist propagandists, we must now turn to the politics of the Netherlands.

The politics of the Netherlands were distinctive from England, or France, as they did not have the unifying tradition of a monarch. Before the arrival of the Duke of Burgundy in the fourteenth century, the Netherlands was a gathering of small independent principalities surrounded by larger and more powerful monarchies. These principalities had remained as they were largely because it was in the interest of France, England and the Holy Roman Empire to see that no one got control of the river delta.<sup>35</sup>

A limited political unity came to the Netherlands with the Dukes of Burgundy, but the unity was only in the person of the duke. Over a period of sixty-seven years, from 1384 to 1451, the dukes acquired the titles of Mechelen, Flanders, Namur, Hainaut, Holland, Zeeland, Brabant, part of Limburg and Luxemburg as hereditary estates. These lands were inherited by Emperor Charles V. Between 1521 and 1543, Charles added the city-states of Tournai and Cambrai, as well as the provinces of the northeastern Netherlands:

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 13.

Friesland, Utrecht, Overijssel, Groningen, the Ommelanden, Drenthe and Gelderland. Before Charles passed these lands on to his son, the future Philip II of Spain, he made them into a single administrative unit in 1548 by persuading the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire to free these lands from their nominal connection to the Empire. These lands, sometimes called the seventeen provinces, were then officially independent of the Empire.<sup>36</sup> This recent, superficial dynastic union of the provinces led C. V. Wedgwood to describe the Netherlands as "neither a State nor a nation, but a tangle of counties, duchies, and seignories" each with its own privileges, nobility and courts. Plus, inside of each of the provinces there were independent cities with their rights, guilds, councils and charters.<sup>37</sup>

The absence of a uniform political order from province to province, or between provinces, made it possible for each province to follow a fairly independent policy. This would serve to increase the power, independence and influence of provinces such as Flanders and Brabant in the south and Holland in the north in their dealings with both the prince and the other provinces.

The political order fashioned by the Dukes of Burgundy and continued by the Habsburgs that governed this welter of medieval governmental forms was composed of three elements:

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<sup>36</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 30-32.

<sup>37</sup>Wedgwood, William the Silent, 33.

the ruler, the nobility (both higher and lower), and the town corporations. The political structure for the ruler and the nobles was based on patronage, while that of the towns found its expression in the assembly of the States of each province, and in the States General composed of the representatives from each province. There was also a division of power and interest that was apparent at times between the north, primarily Holland and Zeeland, and the south, usually Flanders and Brabant.

In explaining the politics of the Low Countries, a few general points should be recalled. In this land with a historically weak central government the provincial states were accustomed to managing their own affairs.<sup>38</sup> For this reason, they played an important role in the political development of the Low Countries under the rulers, whether Burgundian or Habsburg. Secondly, the nature of representation in the states was communal or corporative based on the orders of society, rather than individual.<sup>39</sup> Also, it should be noted that it was considered a mark of a

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<sup>38</sup>James D. Tracy, A Financial Revolution in the Habsburg Netherlands: Renten and Renteniers in the County of Holland, 1515-1565 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 220.

<sup>39</sup>Perez Zagorin, Rebels and Rulers, 1500-1660 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 114; A. R. Myers, Parliaments and Estates in Europe to 1789 (London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 1975), 55; Donald R. Kelley, The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 187.

good king to take advice in consultation with his leading men, since Philip II would later attempt to rule the Low Countries without them. To fail to do this in the middle ages was to bear the mark of a tyrant and to disrupt the idea of the perfect commonwealth. Not that there was an idea of shared government, as the ruler expected the States to be submissive in the granting of extraordinary taxes and military service.<sup>40</sup> Both the nobles and the States found it in their interest to limit the power of the ruler.<sup>41</sup>

In the case of the Netherlands, the States originated at the provincial level. While each province had its own States, the composition varied. For example, Brabant, Artois and Hainault included all three estates (clergy, nobility, towns), while the clergy had no representation at all in Flanders and Holland. One thing that tended to be true of most of the provincial States was the dominance of the towns. In Holland there were seven votes in the provincial states before the revolt: one for the nobility and one for each of the six towns of Dordrecht, Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leiden, Delft and Gouda. In Flanders there were four members, the towns of Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres and the

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<sup>40</sup>J. H. Elliot, Europe Divided, 1559-1598 (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1968), 89-90; Myers, Parliaments, 54-59.

<sup>41</sup>Zagorin, Rulers and Rebels, I, 115.



Franc of Bruges, the Franc representing the nobility.<sup>42</sup> Obviously in both cases, with six votes to one and three votes to one respectively, the towns were in control of the States. To complicate matters further there were some differences that existed between the make-up of the town corporations of the major provinces in the north and the south. As a result of the guild revolts of the middle ages, the cities of Flanders and Brabant had town councils that selected members of the States from the various guildsmen, merchants and patricians.<sup>43</sup> The province of Holland did not have the same experience. As a result, the structure of the city governments was controlled by an urban patriciate. In Holland the town council (vroedschap) was a closed

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<sup>42</sup>H. G. Koenigsberger, "States General of the Netherlands before the Revolt," in his Estates and Revolutions: Essays in Early Modern European History (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), 128. In a recent study of the summonses to the states of Brabant by Emile Lousse, the level of intricacy of the composition of these corporate representatives was made plain. For the six corporations of Brabant a total of 174 people were summoned (81 nobles, 47 prelates and 46 burghers). Generally fewer showed than were summoned (usually only 10 out of 47 prelates and many of the nobles claimed they could not afford to come and were thus allowed to charge their subjects for part of the trip). Lousse, "The Estates of Brabant to the End of the Fifteenth Century: the Make-up of the Assembly," in Politics and Culture in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of H. G. Koenigsberger edited by Phylliss Mack and Margaret C. Jacobs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 97-99.

<sup>43</sup>The classic study of this movement is Henri Pirenne, Early Democracies in the Low Countries: Urban Society and Political Conflict in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance translated by J. V. Saunders (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1963).

corporation of the wealthiest citizens. One was chosen by co-option and membership was for life unless one went insane, moved from the city, or, perhaps worst of all in the eyes of this merchant oligarchy, went bankrupt.<sup>44</sup> Clearly in these three most prosperous and populous of the provinces the nature of representation was different. Again, there was a difference between Holland in the north and Flanders and Brabant in the south. This diversity added to the famed particularism of the Netherlands, but also shows two potentially different power centers in the country.

Over the centuries each of the states had obtained particular privileges or liberties from their rulers. Many of these were recorded in charters that had been granted as the result of town revolts in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Of these, the most important for the future development of political arguments during the Dutch revolt was the joyeuse entree or blijde inkomst of Brabant which was granted by the Duke of Brabant in 1356 to the provincial States. Although the text could be renegotiated, each successor to the ducal title had to swear to uphold this charter. Indeed, after almost a two hundred year history this charter was taken seriously by Charles V and the States

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<sup>44</sup>D. J. Roorda, "The Ruling Classes in Holland in the Seventeenth Century," in Britain and the Netherlands edited by J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossman (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1964), II, 11-113; James D. Tracy, A Financial Revolution in the Habsburg Netherlands: Renten and Renteniers in the County of Holland, 1515-1565 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 47.

of Brabant. Charles V was careful to renegotiate it upon the accession of Philip II to Brabant in 1549.<sup>45</sup> This also showed that both parties were aware of the intense localism of the provincial states and the difficulty of any effort at a centralized government for the seventeen provinces.

The States General of the Netherlands originated in 1464 when the Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, summoned representatives from each of the provincial states to meet with their common prince.<sup>46</sup> From this beginning, the meeting of the States General was to become a regular feature of the Netherlandic political culture. In 1465 Philip the Good again summoned the States General to approve taxes and to recognize his son Charles as his successor, "thus establishing the political and financial competence of the States General."<sup>47</sup> In 1477 Mary of Burgundy was faced with the threat of a French invasion. The States General was

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<sup>45</sup>Gordon Griffiths, Representative Government in Western Europe in the Sixteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 300-303.

<sup>46</sup>John Gilissen, "Les etats generaux en belgique et aux pays-bas sous l'ancien regime," Standen en Landen (Ancien Pays et Assemblees d'Etats) 35 (1966), 406; Myers, Parliaments, 78-79; H. G. Koenigsberger, "States General before the Revolt," 126-127. Myers interprets this as a deliberate policy of trying to create a united assembly for all of their territories. I rather tend to agree with Gilissen that this was the product of the force circumstances and the need for revenue in preparation for war.

<sup>47</sup>Gilissen, "Etats generaux en belgique," 407.

summoned to meet at Ghent. Under the duress of circumstance Mary granted the Grand Charter or Great Privilege. Among other things, this charter provided that the States General could assemble when and where it wanted. In 1488 the States received the additional right to meet at least once a year. It became the custom for the States to meet at least once each year for one month. Between 1464 and 1576, the States General met one hundred and sixty times.<sup>48</sup>

This brief survey of the history of the political institutions of the Low Countries reveals a key traditional theme in the tensions of differing political interests between the ruler and the provinces, as expressed through the States. However, the examination of a political culture only through its institutional structure can tend to make things look too neat. The actual functioning of the States General does not resemble that of a national legislative body. Rather it was a group of delegates from the provincial States who assembled to hear the prince or his representative request revenue and to air their respective grievances. After the prince presented his financial requests, each delegation was met with individually to negotiate the actual sum to be paid. To further complicate matters, the delegates from the provincial States generally did not have any powers to make commitments on financial

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<sup>48</sup>Gilissen, "Etats generaux en belgique," 408; Myers, Parliaments, 79.

matters and had to return to their provincial States to receive instructions.<sup>49</sup> In essence the provincial States retained control by limiting the powers of the delegates to the States General.

The States General was not even representative of all of the provinces at all times as the interests and concerns of the various provinces did not always coincide. Even in 1477, when the Great Privilege was obtained by the States, not all of the provinces were represented. The January sessions that resulted in this charter of privileges were not attended by Holland and Zeeland. Only the southern provinces directly threatened by France attended. The States of Holland and Zeeland never even asked for a copy of the charter. This intense provincialism was emphasized as both Holland and Zeeland received their own charters that included the prohibition of foreigners from serving as magistrates. These foreigners who were banned from service were from Flanders, Brabant and Hainault, all provinces in the south. The loyalty of the provinces was in the dynasty, not in any sense of nationality.<sup>50</sup> Further, the division was centered on two dominate north-south cores in Holland and Flanders and Brabant.

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<sup>49</sup>Gilissen, "Etats generaux en belgique," 418-420; Koenigsberger, "States General before the Revolt," 128-130.

<sup>50</sup>F. W. N. Hugenholtz, "The 1477 Crisis in the Burgundian Duke's Dominions," in Britain and the Netherlands, edited by J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossman (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 196 ), II, 37-43.

A more telling feeling for the political conflict between the north and south and the growing independence of the dominant provinces of the north from those of the south prior to the revolt has been pointed out in a recent study by James Tracy on the development in Holland of a system of selling bonds to finance debt. One interesting feature of this development was the conscious avoiding of the sale of bonds in Flanders and the south. The sale was concentrated in Holland and the provinces of Zeeland, Utrecht and northern Brabant as they drew the capital available in the north to Holland. Indeed Holland proposed a union of the area for military purposes during the Guelders war.<sup>51</sup> It was clear that Holland was consciously establishing a financial independence from the banking circles of Antwerp and the south, while at the same time seeking to increase Holland's dominance in the north. A second feature of this assertion of financial independence was that the purchasers of these bonds were urban magistrates rather than the nobility. In Holland the urban magistrates were replacing the nobility in positions of responsibility and influence. This was all part of a larger social movement as the nobility of Holland retired to their estates.<sup>52</sup> The

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<sup>51</sup>Tracy, Financial Revolution, 122.

<sup>52</sup>Tracy, Financial Revolution, 187-192; also see for a detailed study of this transition of power from a retiring nobility to the urban magistrates in Holland the recent work of H. F. K. van Nierop, Van ridders tot regenten: De Hollandse adel in de zestiende en de eerste helft van de

leadership of the north was moving solidly into the hands of the urban patriciate, who later ruled the new country of the north during the Dutch Golden Age.

Despite the considerable powers of the towns and States, the "tone of political life" was still set by the great lords. They were the ones who served as the closest advisors to the rulers on the Council of State and as the representatives of the ruler in the provinces.<sup>53</sup> Both the Dukes of Burgundy and the Habsburgs followed a policy of centralization based on a system of patronage among the nobility. The most important expression of this came in 1430 with the creation of the Order of the Golden Fleece, which sought to bind the higher nobles to the dynasty. A part of this policy was the maintenance of a brilliant court culture that exceeded its contemporaries in France, England or the Empire in lavishness. The object was to create a nobility dependent on the ducal court.<sup>54</sup> For many of the

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zeventiende eeuw (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1984).

<sup>53</sup>Tracy, Financial Revolution, 114.

<sup>54</sup>Prevenier and Blockmans, Burgundian Netherlands, 139. Also in Prevenier and Blockmans there is extensive coverage of the court culture throughout the work. See also C. A. J. Armstrong, "The golden Age of Burgundy: Dukes that outdid kings," in The Courts of Europe: Politics, Patronage and Royalty, 1400-1800, edited by A. G. Dickens (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977) 55-76. Armstrong, "Had the Burgundian Government a Policy for the Nobility," in Britain and the Netherlands, vol. II, edited by J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossman (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1964), 9-32. H. G. Koenigsberger, "Patronage and Bribery during the Reign of Charles V," in Estates and Revolutions (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), 166-175.

noble families the patronage in the form of ducal service, titles and gifts was essential. This was the secret of the prosperity of such great noble houses as the Croy, Lalaing, Lannoy and, significantly, Nassau, the family of William of Orange. These were the same families that served on the Council of State and held other high offices. The funds that permitted the system of patronage were provided by the taxation of the towns.<sup>55</sup>

The most prized patronage position was that of stadholder. The Burgundian Dukes created the posts to serve as their provincial representatives. By 1543 there were eleven stadholderships among the seventeen provinces and appointment was made directly by Charles V. The stadholders were drawn from the highest nobles, who had served with distinction elsewhere and were members of the Golden Fleece. Their powers varied from province to province depending on the strength of the towns, but the most powerful was the stadholder of Hainault, who was captain-general, commander of citadel at Cambrai, chief judge, and head of the provincial delegation to the States General; moreover he could appoint town magistrates without outside interference. In most provinces the stadholder did not have judicial supremacy, head the States General delegation, or independently appoint town magistrates. The power of the stadholder in Flanders and Holland was restricted. In

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<sup>55</sup>Armstrong, "Burgundian Government Policy," 29.



Flanders the appointment of town magistrates was made by a council of nobles, not the stadholder. In Holland the stadholder was required to consult with local burgers and receive the approval of the ducal court. Even with these limitations this position obviously carried with it great power and influence. In the first half of the sixteenth century there was a tendency by the stadholders to try to expand their individual authority at the expense of first Charles V and then Philip II as both of them were absent from the Low Countries and were represented by a series of regents or governors who acted in their name.<sup>56</sup>

The relationship between the higher nobility and the regents of the first half of the century, Margaret of Austria and Mary of Hungary, was strained. The first problem was that neither of these regents had control over patronage since ultimately both Charles V and Philip II retained control. Margaret and Mary complained that they could not govern without the ability to hand out patronage.<sup>57</sup> Both of the regents attempted to restrain the expansion of powers sought by the stadholders. The stadholders appeared to be trying to make the office hereditary, and some of them were successful. To block this Mary stopped the developing practice of stadholders naming

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<sup>56</sup>paul Rosenfeld, "The Provincial Governors from the Minority of Charles V to the Revolt," Standen en Landen (Anciens Pays et Assemblee d'Etat), 17 (1959), 16-28.

<sup>57</sup>Koenigsberger, "Patronage and Bribery," 167-168.

their successor and even recommended leaving some of the posts vacant.<sup>58</sup>

One of the leading figures among the high nobles grabbing for power was William of Orange and Nassau. He was named stadholder of Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht in 1559. As a great noble he already had considerable influence and his own network of patronage. He maintained a band of soldiers and a large household, as well as close relations with his "cousins" among the other high nobility. In addition, he had access to patronage through his stadholderships in the form of offices and clerical benefices.<sup>59</sup>

By 1564 both Orange and one of his "cousins," Count Egmont, in their positions as stadholders were demanding that all of the officials in their provinces make full disclosures of events only to them and not the central government in Brussels. Orange also sought in 1565 to have himself made the first grandee of Zeeland which would have made him the only noble in the provincial states of Zeeland. In addition, Orange had begun to appoint town magistrates in Holland without consulting Philip II's regent, Margaret of Parma, as required. In short, there was a "wholesale

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<sup>58</sup>Rosenfeld, "Provincial Governors," 37-57.

<sup>59</sup>H. F. K. van Nierop, "Willem van Oranje als hoog edelman: patronage in de Habsburgse Nederlanden?," Bijdragen en Mededelingen Betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden 99 (1984), 651-676.

usurpation of royal patronage" taking place.<sup>60</sup>

Into this volatile mixture of demographic, economic, social and political tensions and strains a newly emboldened religion was introduced in the 1560s. The source of this religion was Geneva and two of the bearers of the flame of Calvinism were Philippe and Jean Marnix. Their return to the Netherlands from their studies at the Geneva Academy was to occur at the same time as many exiled Calvinists returned to the Low Countries. These Calvinists would seek to unite their religious interests with the interests of other groups. This effort would fail initially due to the outbreak of iconoclasm, but the revolt would continue. The revolt would expose and use every division already existing in the land of Erasmus.

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<sup>60</sup>Rosenfeld, "Provincial Governors," 51-54.

## CHAPTER II

THE BEEHIVE WHEREIN OUR BEES DWELL,  
SWARM AND MAKE THEIR HONEY

Philippe de Marnix would define his notion of proper order in both the secular and sacred as he developed his ideology of rebellion, but his concern for order was first revealed in his humanist educational program and his Calvinist theology. The educational program prepared young nobles for a life of political involvement and the theology provided the proper religious life. Like most reformers, he charged the Catholics with the willful deformation of the church of the Apostles. This charge was based on the externals of Catholicism versus the inner faith of the Calvinist. However, in making this charge, he was conscious of the need for temporal discipline to avoid the secular disorder of the Anabaptists, who also claimed an inner faith. His uniqueness lay not in his theology, but in his ability as a propagandist for the Reformed faith. In his role as a Calvinist satirist, he sought to instruct the non-believer in the proper ordering of religion by trying to humorously point out, with everyday references, the differences between the Catholic Church of Satan, which was the source of evil, disorder and the apocalypse, and the Reformed Church of God, which was the source of good and order. The religious environment, like the secular setting,

in which he did this was very unsettled and in a process of transformation.

On the eve of the revolt, the people of the Low Countries were divided by religion. The Netherlands had long been the home of a variety of expressions of Christianity, from the Brethren of the Common Life in the Middle Ages to the Anabaptists of the 1530s. By the 1560s there were three dominant organized groups: the Catholics, the Calvinists and the Anabaptists, the latter having solidified around the figure of Menno Simons. The vast majority of the people still clung to medieval Catholicism while others were clearly influenced by Protestant ideas, but remained in the church. Neither the orthodoxy of Tridentine Catholicism, nor the order of the Protestant sects had yet been enforced. Religious dogma was vague for most people as membership and variety of available beliefs was fluid.<sup>1</sup> Even the spiritualists, in particular Sébastien Franck and David Joris, found followers, as the numerous editions of their works published in Dutch attest.<sup>2</sup> Before the Calvinists arrived, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church had clearly lost the allegiance of most of the Christians either through religious indifference or

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<sup>1</sup>J. J. Woltjer, Opstand en onafhankelijkheid (no place, no publisher, 1972), 6-8.

<sup>2</sup>C. Kramer, Emmery de Lyere et Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde: Un admirateur de Sébastien Franck et de Montaigne aux prises avec le champion des calvinistes néerlandais (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 20-21.

because of hostility to the arrogance and wealth of the clergy.<sup>3</sup> In this atmosphere of anticlericism in the 1550s and early 1560s, the Calvinists began to organize in the south, with the first Calvinist church organized at Antwerp in 1556 and the first Calvinist synod held in 1562.<sup>4</sup> By 1566 about thirteen percent of Ghent's population was Calvinist.<sup>5</sup> Most of the nobility of the Low Countries were committed neither to strict Catholicism nor Calvinism, probably seeing themselves as "liberal, Erasmian Catholics or Lutheran sympathizers."<sup>6</sup>

To staunch this movement away from the Catholic Church was the policy of Philip II, who like Charles V before him, sought to maintain religious unity as part of a more general plan of increased royal authority. Charles had laid out a plan to reorganize the bishoprics of the Low Countries to make the administration more uniform, had issued edicts against the reformers and introduced the inquisition to ferret out the heretics. The edicts forbidding the publication of Protestant literature, meetings and preaching

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<sup>3</sup>J. H. Elliot, Europe Divided, 1559-1598 (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1968), 140.

<sup>4</sup>Woltjer, Opstand, 8.

<sup>5</sup>Elliott, Europe Divided, 140.

<sup>6</sup>Phyllis Mack Crew, Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm in the Netherlands, 1544-1659 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 116. Dr. Mack's ground breaking study was limited to the southern Netherlands, largely the French speaking parts of the country, but this does not detract from her outstanding work.

had been issued in 1550 and were reaffirmed by Philip II in 1559.<sup>7</sup> In fact, Philip, according to the accepted norm of sacred and secular order, was struggling to preserve his authority and the cohesion of his kingdom in the midst of confessional strife in an era when "religion was universally regarded as the basis of a well-ordered society, and the preservation of religious unity was considered essential to the survival of the State itself."<sup>8</sup> Philippe and Jean de Marnix came into this situation when they returned to the Netherlands in 1562, fresh from Jean Calvin's incubator in Geneva.

The Marnix brothers had spent two years in Geneva, where they studied at Calvin's new Academy and completed their formal education. Prior to going to Geneva they had received a humanistic education that was not uncommon for young nobles in the Low Countries.<sup>9</sup> After two years, 1553-1555, at the Collège des Trois Langues at Louvain, they attended the University of Dôle in Franche-Comté. Philippe visited the University of Paris briefly and then the brothers began a tour of Italy which included stops in

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<sup>7</sup>The edict of 1550 is cited in James Lothrop Motley, The Rise of the Dutch Republic 3 vols. (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1883), I, 261-262.

<sup>8</sup>Elliott, Europe Divided, 93, 228.

<sup>9</sup>M. E. H. N. Mout, "Het intellectuele milieu van Willem van Oranje," Bijdragen en Medelingen Betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden 99 (1984), 596-605 provides a description of the typical noble education in the Low Countries and that of the Marnix brothers was very similar.

Pavia, Padua, Venice, Rome and Bologna. During this time both brothers were Catholic, as was their family. Jean pursued the study of law and Philippe, theology. The latter had accepted a prebend as a canon in the collegiate chapter of Ypres as late as 1558 or 1559.<sup>10</sup>

Jean and Philippe de Marnix were the first significant converts to Calvinism from among the nobility of the Low Countries, though their example was followed by a growing number of the lower nobility.<sup>11</sup> The brothers arrived in Geneva when Calvin was at his zenith. It is not known exactly when or why they converted, but the registration of the Marnix brothers as students in the book of the rector of the Geneva Academy in 1560 marked their adherence to Calvinism.<sup>12</sup> Philippe was to develop lasting ties to leading Calvinists such as Theodore Beza and Francois du Jun, who was to play a prominent role in the beginning of

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<sup>10</sup>Frans van Kalken and Tobie Jonckheere, Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde: Le politique et le pamphletaire et le pedagogue (Brussels: office de Publicite, 1952), 8-9; Albert Elkan, Johann und Philipp von Marnix wahrend des Vorspiels der Niederlandischen Aufstandes 1565-1567 (Leipzig: E. Hermann, 1913), 7; A. A. van Schelven, Marnix van Sint Aldegonde (Utrecht, N. V. A. Oosthoek's Uitg. Mij., 1939), 5-11; C. E. H. J. Verhoef, Philips van Marnix, Heer van Sint Aldegonde (Weesp, Holland: Uitgeverij Heurcha, 1985), 10-11; Hans van Werveke, "Marnix' Levensloop en Karakter," in Marnix van Sinte-Aldegonde: Officiel Gedenkboek (Amsterdam and Brussels: Onze Tijd, 1939), 22-25

<sup>11</sup>J. H. Elliott, Europe Divided, 1559-1598 (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968), 95-96.

<sup>12</sup>Gosselinus Oosterhof, La vie litteraire de Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde et son Tableau des differens de la religion (Geneva: Slatkin Reprints, 1971), 16.



the revolt in the Low Countries.<sup>13</sup> Like all of the students they took an oath to the "true worship of God, to live piously and to abjure all papal superstitions," and were trained to spread the Calvinist message through teaching and propaganda.<sup>14</sup>

For Philippe, the conversion to Calvinism completed the formation of his intellectual outlook, a combination of noblesse oblige, humanism, and Calvinism. Marnix himself provides the best clue to how he blended these elements in his treatise, Ratio Instituendae Iuventutis (1584), on the education of the young noble.<sup>15</sup> This work was designed to address the educational needs of the children of the nobility. He prescribed a humanistic education from a Calvinist viewpoint to educate children that would "not only shine in salons and antechambers, but become the honor and

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<sup>13</sup>E. William Monter, Calvin's Geneva (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), 110-113. The school was divided into two sections, a lower primary school and the advanced school to teach theology. The advanced school was intended to attract students from throughout Europe. The faculty of the advanced school included two chairs of theology, which Calvin and Theodore B  za held, as well as three chairs respectively for Greek, Hebrew and philosophy.

<sup>14</sup>Donald R. Kelley, The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 166.

<sup>15</sup>Philippe de Marnix, Seigneur de Sainte-Aldegonde, Oeuvres de Philippe de Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde edited by Albert Lacroix (Geneva: Slatkin Reprints, 1971), VII, 18-107. All references here are to the translation done by Robert M. E. De Rycke, "On the Education of Youth," History of Education Quarterly 10 (Summer 1970), 211-241.

strength of my country, of its citizens and its people."<sup>16</sup> It was necessary to train three things: the soul, the mind and the body. The soul must be educated in piety. The mind must be educated in "judgement, memory and thought to make self-expression just, seemly, and decent." The body must be educated in "hygiene, physical exercise, the beauty of forms, elegance of speech, proper posture and walk."<sup>17</sup>

Marnix recommended the study of ancient Latin and Greek, to instill a graceful elocution, and contemporary vernacular writers, in addition to the study of the Bible, particularly, of course, the New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs. In preparation for a life of political obligation, he advocated practical knowledge in history, geography, politics and ethics.<sup>18</sup> In many ways, his ideas on the humanistic education of the nobility were not much different from those of Montaigne, Erasmus and Vives.<sup>19</sup> The differences were largely due to his piety. In calling for modesty and moderation in dress, food and drink and eschewing all social affectations, for example, Marnix

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<sup>16</sup>Marnix, "Education," 216.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 219.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Van Kalken and Jonckheere, Marnix, 77-83, 87-89; M. A. Nauwelaerts, "Opvoeding en opvoedkunde," in Nieuwe Algemeene Geschiedenis Nedelanden, VII, 272-273; Robert M. E. De Rycke, "A Pedagogical Treatise of Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde: The Ration Instituendae Iuventutis," History of Education Quarterly 10 (summer 1970), 203-210.

showed his Calvinism. Similarly, children should be taught from the earliest age "the fear of God, the true knowledge of Jesus Christ, love of virtue, and hatred of vice and injustice."<sup>20</sup> What resulted was the blending of Baldassare Castiglione's ideas on the model courtier with an emergent piety that forbade games of chance, dancing, and fancy clothing, even on festive occasions.<sup>21</sup>

Marnix was the Calvinistic courtier in his own life, collecting Dürer prints, appreciating music, and, above all building his library.<sup>22</sup> At the time of his death, his library contained about 1,400 books in Latin, Greek, German, Dutch, English, and French, about five hundred of which dealt with theology and religion (including the works of the Church Fathers as well as of the reformers), and another three hundred and fifty with history.<sup>23</sup> In short, Marnix

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<sup>20</sup>Marnix, "Education," 219.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 239-240.

<sup>22</sup>Van Kalken and Jonckheere, Marnix, 10; Govaert, La langue et le style, 18-20.

<sup>23</sup>Catalogue of the Library of Philips van Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde: Sold by Auction (July 6th), Leiden, 1599 (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1964), no pagination. The library also included about fifty medical books, the authors included Galen, Hippocrates, Paracelsus and Raymond Lully. For history there were all the Latin and Greek historians as well as contemporaries like Johannes Sleidan, George Buchanan, Guiccardini and Justus Lipsius. Of the some five hundred books on science and philosophy the ancient works of Pliny and Aristotle and more recent works by Copernicus and Peter Ramus were represented. This was not to mention the Greek playwrights, Hermes Trismegistus, and of course Erasmus.

was the epitome of the sixteenth century humanist with the addition of a Calvinistic theology.

On the basis of his education Marnix could have chosen to become a minister in the church of Calvin; certainly others nobles did.<sup>24</sup> Yet he did not choose the life of a minister. He remained a noble involved in the operation of government and politics, and exercised his obligation as a noble much as his treatise on education had said a noble should spend his life. The goal for education for the nobility was the development of judgement for the use in practical matters of administration of the government.

Marnix's life pulled together the interest in secular affairs, which had been common to humanists from Leonardo Bruni to Thomas More, with the political duties of a noble in a Calvinist framework. These concerns guided his approach to the need for the proper ordering of not only religion, but also secular society. It was not enough to provide merely the proper order of religion, which a theologian would have sought, but it was also necessary to provide a proper secular order of peace and prosperity for practical purposes.

Philippe's political involvement took the form of a revolt against his prince, and he devoted most of his adult

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<sup>24</sup>Phyllis Crew cites the examples of François du Jun and Peregrine de la Grange as French nobles who became Calvinist clergy in the Netherlands Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm, 40.

life to working for the successful completion of this revolt. In a letter to the Duke of Parma written twenty years after the outbreak of the rebellion he suggested the answer to the question of why he spent his life as he did. He stated that from a young age he had been a follower of a religion that was persecuted by fire and blood and that "it was permissible to take up arms against my superiors in order to maintain it."<sup>25</sup> What began as a religious attachment was converted into a political rebellion. As several recent studies that have examined the phenomenon of conversion to Calvinism have observed, Calvin left no choice between right and wrong, or the Gospel and Rome. There was no midpoint to straddle. There could be no compromise on religious doctrine, a not uncommon opinion in the sixteenth century for either Catholics or Protestants. Either one was with the false church of Satan or the people of God. For Calvin, who did not advocate rebellion, the sacrifice of exile or any other punishments because of public confession of the new creed were worth it.<sup>26</sup> This was probably reflective of Marnix's attitude when he returned to the Low Countries in 1562.

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<sup>25</sup>Marnix, Oeuvres, V, 298.

<sup>26</sup>Carlos M. N. Eire, War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 272-275; Perez Zagorin, Rebels and Rulers: 1500-1660 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), I, 151-153; Kelley, Beginning of Ideology, 69-70.

It was in this spirit of no compromise with Catholicism that sometime between 1562 and 1569, Marnix wrote his most famous work Den Byencorf der H. Roomsche Kercke (The Beehive of the Holy Roman Church), published in Dutch in 1569.<sup>27</sup> It went through numerous editions and translations, and thus was well known during the sixteenth and seventeenth century.<sup>28</sup> The French version has even been referred to as the "chef-d'oeuvre de genre."<sup>29</sup> One scholar has gone so far as to suggest that the Byencorf was as well-known at that time as the works of Montaigne and Rabelais.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Philips van Marnix, Den Byencorf der H. Roomsche Kercke edited by W. A. Ornee and S. L. Strengholt (Zutphen : B. V. W. J. Thieme & Cie., 1974); In 1590, a French version of the work was published (Tableau des Differends de la religion). For the Tableau see Marnix, Oeuvres, vols. I-IV. There has been a prolonged debate over exactly when Marnix wrote this work and in which language it was first written. A summary of positions on this issue by various scholars appears in van Kalkan, Marnix, 16-18. Also see Oosterhof, La vie litteraire de Marnix and Marcel Govaert, Le langue et le style de Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde dans son Tableau des diffrens de la religion (Bruxelles: Palais des Academies, 1953).

<sup>28</sup>See J. J. van Toorenenbergen, editor, Philips van Marnix van St. Aldegonde: Godsdienstige en kerklijke geschriften, Aangangsel ('s Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1871-1878), 195-214 for a list of the editions. He lists twenty-nine Dutch editions published between 1569 and 1858; fourteen German editions published between 1576 and 1733; two English editions in 1578 and 1623; and Marnix's own French version in five editions published between 1599 and 1605.

<sup>29</sup>Henri Meylan, Aspects de la propagande religieuse (Geneva: Droz, 1957), xv.

<sup>30</sup>Catalogue of the Library, introduction by Brouwer, 8. I would think that this would be true for the Netherlands and Germany, largely because of language, but I am not so sure about the rest of Western Europe.

The Byencorf was a lengthy satirical attack on the Catholic Church written in reponse to a pamphlet, which appeared in 1562, by Gentian Hervet, a Catholic canon at Reims. The Byencorf appeared after the Protestant reformers had made a shift from polemic to propaganda. The argument had moved from theological tracts to scurrilous broadsides, anonymous pamphlets and derogatory cartoons. Earlier, Luther and Calvin had emphasized rational argument. The former addressed his Freedom of the Christian Man to Pope Leo X, and Calvin, when he dedicated his Institutes of the Christian Religion to Francis I of France, were confident that it was just a matter of time before Rome was won over to the purified doctrine of the reformers. By the 1560s, however, the focus had shifted to propaganda and the swaying of attitudes,<sup>31</sup> and satire and humor were deemed more effective tools than outrage<sup>32</sup> as evidenced by the flood of sixteenth century satires that were produced. Late sixteenth century works like the Byencorf were a different breed of satire from the earlier works like Erasmus' The Praise of Folly in that this new type attacked the entire structure of Catholicism, rather than the personality of the clergy or particular practices.

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<sup>31</sup>Miriam Usher Chjrisman, "From Polemic to Propaganda: The Development of Mass Persuasion in the Late Sixteenth Century," Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte 73 (1982), 175-176.

<sup>32</sup>Kelley, Ideology, 246.

The central theme of the Byencorf, while not original was nonetheless powerful, was that Catholicism was a human invention that had led the faithful away from the true church of the Apostles which was now represented by the Calvinists and Lutherans. The two sides were clearly drawn as the Catholics faced "the Evangelicals of the ancient Apostolic Reformed Religion," and the matter was really quite simple. "God is always God and his truth truth." The two sides might dispute opinions but there was only one true religion, just as there was only one God and one Jesus Christ.<sup>33</sup> Marnix had no doubts that his faith was the correct one.

"What is the principal point of difference between the Roman Catholics and the Lutherans or Calvinists...What is to be the definition and essential properties of the Church of God?"<sup>34</sup> To Marnix these were important questions. But also of interest was that while he did distinguish between the Lutherans and the Calvinists, he portrayed them as being a part of the same movement. Indeed, in this work he revealed no hard and fast difference that would divide the two groups into separate camps.<sup>35</sup> This was probably because at the

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<sup>33</sup>Marnix, Tableau, I, 8-10.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., I, 38.

<sup>35</sup>E. M. Braekman, "Les Courants Religieux de la Reforme aux Pays-Bas," in De eeuw van Marnix, edited by Michel Baedle and Herman van Nuffel (Oostende: Toulon Uitgeverij, 1982), 18, makes the point that until the end of the reign of Charles V all non-Catholics in the Netherlands



time this was written and published Marnix was in exile in the Empire and the Calvinists were seeking support from the princes of the Empire. (At about the same time this was written Marnix also wrote a tract which was not published which attacked the use of images by Lutherans. I shall consider this in the fourth chapter.) In the Netherlands, primarily under William of Orange's sponsorship, several ministers attempted made as early as 1564 to unite the Calvinists and the Lutherans by having them subscribe to the same confession. Those who urged it, saw it as a means of gaining support from the Lutheran princes of the Empire against Philip II. The biggest issue between the Calvinists and the Lutherans was whether they could "safely consider each other true Christians." Because of their experience with the Anabaptists, the Lutherans distrusted anyone not exactly like themselves in doctrine. The Calvinist ministers, on the other hand, felt a need to maintain their religious integrity against the Lutherans. Due to this hesitance those who attempted to unite the two groups failed.<sup>36</sup>

At any rate, Marnix's target in the Byencorf was the Catholic church. Contained in his basic assault on the

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were called Lutherans. The term Calvinist did not appear until 1553. The more common distinction was between those of the Confession (a reference to the Lutheran Confession of Augsburg) and those of the religion (a reference to the Reformed religion or Calvinists).

<sup>36</sup>Crew, Iconoclasm, 91, 104-106.

theology and practices of the Catholic church were the seeds for an attack on the general concept of order in the sixteenth century. According to Marnix, the Catholic church was a violation of God's proper ordering of Christianity. Catholicism was not God's heavenly order, but had been invented by humans who in so doing had left the proper order of the true, universal church which was that of all the saints, sanctified by the alliance of God with the faith and blood of Jesus Christ, who was the head of this universal body. The Catholics worshiped false physical presences either in Jerusalem or Rome, rather than those of spirit and truth.<sup>37</sup> Since Christ was head of the church, the pope was not, nor was Rome the headquarters of it.<sup>38</sup> Further Marnix stated, the judge of scriptural controversies was not the pope and his council as the Council of Trent had decided, but, as in the time of the Apostles, all members of the church. The Catholic model was based on the humanly created external features of the church, not on the spirit and faith in which all the people participated.<sup>39</sup> The true church was not, as the Jesuit Robert Bellarmine defined it, a congregation joined in one faith to take the sacraments under priests and the pope. To Marnix, these were all

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<sup>37</sup>Marnix, Tableau, I, 22.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., I, 23.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., I, 26-27.

meaningless externals.<sup>40</sup> Nor was the true church that of the Scholastics. Christians of the true church "listen to the voice of the Pastor Jesus Christ,..[not] the birds of the Papal forest," who spoke with temporal voices. The true Christians studied the Bible, not the books of the Scholastics.<sup>41</sup> The clear implication was that the Bible was of divine spiritual inspiration, while the works of the Scholastic were the product of human invention.

Again sounding his intransigence on the matter of order, Marnix asserted that the title of the true church had been usurped, which was an act of disorder and thus an act inspired by Satan. This was the "difference between the Church of God and the Synagogue of Satan." The essential form of the church was the spiritual alliance of God with Abraham, Issac and Jacob and their posterity, who were the people of God and his church. This alliance was then transferred to Jesus Christ and to the people that now accept Christ. In other words, the Protestants were the people of God. Further, they had been chosen by the will of God. Because man has two parts, spiritual and physical, the calling by God took two forms. The external face was in the word and other outward signs of alliance with God, while the internal face was the holy spirit, which illuminated the understanding and the knowledge of the word, and educated

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., I, 28-32.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., I, 34-37.

the heart in faith. This was the Church of God.<sup>42</sup> As the successors of Abraham, Issac, Jacob and the prophets, the reformers possessed the true external signs of the Old and New Testaments, the communion of saints, the baptism in the name of the father, son and holy ghost, and the knowledge that at all times God reserved election or grace. But, the word was the only true mark of the church. "In order to judge the true Church, it is necessary to come to the profession of faith, and to the doctrine, which is the witness of the internal faith."<sup>43</sup> All of the ceremony and ritual of the Catholics were human inventions, not expressions of divine order on earth.

How did one become a member of the true church? People had to be instructed in the proper faith. To allow the simple people to choose in matters of religion would be to produce atheism and impiety if each was left to follow his own ideas.<sup>44</sup> Once informed of the proper Godly order of worship, then "[God] without doubt will give his spirit to those who ask for it in sincerity and humility of heart. Because it is promised and promised with solemn oath. The sky and the earth will perish, but his word will never fail."<sup>45</sup> Thus, Marnix, like all good Calvinists, did not

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., I, 38-43.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., I, 46-57.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., I, 6.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., I, 9.

deny that there was a role for an institutional church. It was the job of the true church to educate and discipline the faithful in proper religious training.

The key difference, however, between the Roman church, which according to Marnix had tyrannically usurped the title of church from the true church of the apostles, was that the false church of Rome was a visible one of externals and idols and the true church was an invisible church of internal faith based on a simple heart. In brief, and this is a point of capital importance to Marnix's political as well as theological thought, Catholicism was an improper ordering of the true faith and thus stood in violation of God's divine order.

The attack on Catholicism as a human invention, which had produced an improper ordering of religion, only achieves its true importance when the role of the Catholic Church and its order are recognized in the social setting. The image of society, particularly in the eyes of the church of Rome and its followers, was one of a Christian commonwealth, despite the appearance of the national monarchs. All of the Christians of Latin Christendom were united in a commonwealth headed by the pope. Indeed, the church had come to regard itself as a perfect society, as the Kingdom of God on earth,<sup>46</sup> thus, God's heavenly order was reflected

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<sup>46</sup>Francis Oakley, The Western Church in the Later Middle Ages (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), 27.

on earth in his church. Further, in the late medieval period, the Catholic ritual was a means of reaffirming the order of the universe and the community. Baptism was not only the entrance onto the road to salvation, but also the entrance into the community, which was synonymous with the parish.<sup>47</sup> Consequently, Marnix's attack on Catholicism appeared to Catholics as not only an attack on religion, but on social order as well, since the assumed norm for social order was hierarchy and harmony, which was reflected in the order of the church and society. Marnix's Byencorff, then, might represent an attack on the entirety of the concept of order in Europe in the sixteenth century.

This was a serious problem for Marnix because, order in sixteenth century Europe was seen as divinely ordained. The inherited wisdom held that God had created a universe of natural hierarchy and order and human society corresponded to this order.<sup>48</sup> The universe was an achieved perfection, which was "a manifestation of the wisdom and goodness that created it."<sup>49</sup> Disorder or chaos in this universe did not

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<sup>47</sup>Crew, Iconoclasm, 55.

<sup>48</sup>The classic statement of this view of order is Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936). Also see E. M. W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture (New York: Vintage Books, n.d.) and C. S. Lewis, The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964).

<sup>49</sup>Lewis, Discarded Image, 204.

mean merely confusion, but rather cosmic anarchy.<sup>50</sup> The failure of divine order on earth was the result of the fall of man from God's grace. Disorder was the product of sin.<sup>51</sup> The world was a battlefield between good and evil, God and Devil, or order and disorder. The solution to disorder in this inferior earthly world was an ordained authority which descended throughout the ranks and estates of society to transform "the atomized anarchy and 'Babylonian confusion' of the human condition into a spiritual and organic whole corresponding to the degree and order existing throughout the macrocosm of God's creation." This would achieve a unity of "harmonious submission" in which each individual fulfilled his role within the social organism. Any disturbance, no matter how small, was seen as being tied to a greater correspondence that was equated with the collapse of all social and political authority. This was the "paranoid leap to conclusions" that underlay the fear of human disorder.<sup>52</sup>

The problem which Marnix confronted was how to justify change without creating disorder in the universe. His answer was essentially to accuse his opponents of being the creators of the disorder, while he and the Calvinists were

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<sup>50</sup>Tillyard, Elizabethan World Picture, 16.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 18-21.

<sup>52</sup>Lacey Baldwin Smith, Treason in Tudor England: Politics and Paranoia (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 132-135.

the restorers of order. To do this he used the beehive, the epitome of natural order, and through satire Marnix revealed the Catholic church as a corruption of natural order. The very model of a beehive which Marnix chose to use as his vehicle of attack on Catholicism was seen as just such a harmonious community in the sixteenth century.<sup>53</sup> In a world-view which understood things on the basis of correspondances between the macrocosm of God's orderly creation and the microcosms in nature which reflected God's order, the image of a beehive functioning in other than Godly order was a much more powerful image to the sixteenth century than it would be to our twentieth century eyes.

The beehive image as Marnix understood it and described it was based on the natural history of the ancients. As a good humanist, he very carefully followed the explanation of bees and the beehive contained in Pliny's Natural History in developing his parody.<sup>54</sup> He augmented this with references

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<sup>53</sup>Marnix's use of the beehive analogy, from which the work takes its title, was contained in the end of the book. The earlier chapters were a satirical attack on Catholicism, but did not use the image of the beehive. The earlier chapters were different in the Dutch and French versions, both of which Marnix wrote himself. The French version was longer, though written on the same basic scheme as the Dutch; however, the beehive section was virtually identical in the two works.

<sup>54</sup>Pliny, The Natural History, translated by John Bostock and H. T. Riley, vol. III, 5-24; vol. IV, 339-345 (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1855). Here Pliny described the establishment of hives, the production of honey and wax, the use of flowers and herbs by the bees, the kinds of bees, the king-bee, and diseases of bees. In all of these Marnix slavishly follows Pliny consistently for his basic



to Virgil's Georgic 4, Aristotle's Animals and Columella's On Agriculture.<sup>55</sup> Obviously the selection of the image of the beehive was not casual and the natural history model which he used conformed to the knowledge of the time. An additional context was provided by the role that beehives and honey played in society. The beehive was a much more familiar sight to sixteenth century Netherlanders than to us as honey was still a major source of sweetness.<sup>56</sup> A frequent use of honey and honeycombs was also found in the hagiography of the Low Countries in the case of female saints tasting honey in their mouths at mass, or referring to the sweetness of Christ as being like honey.<sup>57</sup> So the image of the beehive may have had an intimate connection to Catholicism in the popular mind.

Pliny's initial discussion of the bee contained high praise.

Our especial admiration, ought, in justice to be

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structure.

<sup>55</sup>Virgil, The Georgics, translated by Robert Wells (Manchester: Carcanet New Press, 1982); Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella, On Agriculture, translated by E. S. Forster and Edward H. Heffner, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954).

<sup>56</sup>Fernand Braudel, Civilization and Capitalism: 15th-18th Century translated by Siân Reynolds (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979), II, 191. The great boom in refined sugar had yet to take over.

<sup>57</sup>Caroline Walker Bynum, Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 115-117.

accorded to bees, which alone, of all insects, have been created for the benefit of man. They extract honey and collect it, a juicy substance remarkable for its extreme sweetness, lightness, and wholesomeness. They form their combs and collect wax, an article that is useful for a thousand purposes of life; they are patient of fatigue, toil at their labors, form themselves into political communities, hold councils together in private, elect chiefs in common, and, a thing that is the most remarkable of all, have their own code of morals.<sup>58</sup>

When this basic model was transformed into the corresponding parody of the Catholic Church it provided an accessible image that stood in opposition to the brief statement above. Marnix portrayed the beehive of the Catholic church as being unnatural in its order: it did not benefit man. Its honey was polluted, its wax rotten, its members lazy, its councils and leadership corrupt and self-serving, and its morals in collapse. In a world-view which understood things on the basis of correspondances between the macrocosm of God's orderly creation and the microcosms in nature which reflected God's order, the image of a beehive functioning in other than Godly order was indeed a powerful image.

The power of Marnix's message gained force not just from the context of the ancient's natural history, but also from the language employed. The language of Marnix in the Beehive was likely derived from Rabelais,<sup>59</sup> and at least one

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<sup>58</sup>Pliny, The Natural History, IV, 5.

<sup>59</sup>There are a number of studies that examine this aspect of Marnix's work. Among them L. Sainéan, L'influence et la réputation de Rabelais (Paris: Librairie

author has suggested that the inspiration for the use of the model of the beehive derives from Rabelais as well.<sup>60</sup> Pliny had mentioned that bees enjoyed the tinkling of brass, and Marnix used the idea that the clerical bees of the Roman hive were pleased and accompanied by the ringing of bells,<sup>61</sup> paralleling Rabelais' description of the ringing island in Gargantua and Pantagruel. Rabelais also parodies the clergy as different types of birds, comparing the Monkbirds to the drones among the bees and the Popehawk to the king of a beehive.<sup>62</sup>

Marnix described the origin of the beehive of the Catholic church as a corrupt human invention, rather than divine creation.

The beehive in which our bees dwell, swarm and make their honey is made of tough and strong Louvainish or Parisian rods and twigs, which at Louvain are commonly called Sophismata or Quotlibeta. They are mostly found by the basketmakers of the Roman Church such as Joannem Scotum, Thomam de Aquino, Albertum Magnum, and other creatures who are their equal in the subtlety of this art. These rods must be made fast by binding them together with crude Jewish or Thalmudic cables. Then a cleaving plaster is applied. The plaster is made of old rubbish or chalkdust (with which the old decayed Councils of earlier times had also been mortared) well beaten

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Universitaire J. Gamber, 1930), 261-302; Oosterhof, La vie littéraire de Marnix; Goveart, La langue et style de Marnix.

<sup>60</sup>Oosterhof, La vie littéraire, 76.

<sup>61</sup>Marnix, Byenkorf, 168.

<sup>62</sup>François Rabelais, The Five Books of Gargantua ad Patagruel translated by Jacques Le Clercq (New York: The Modern Library, 1936), 695-696.

and cleaved into powder and thinly wrought with chopped straw, which apothecaries call Palea Decretorum. The chalk is wetted with the scum of the old masters and also mixed with the new chalk of Trent. This is wrought together with sand which is dug from the well of human superstitions. The same is mixed with the sand which the old heretics bound their ropes with. Here you may also mix some Jewish lime or Bitumen, which is a very tough and cleaving material that bound the city and tower of Babylon and was drawn from the pool or dead moor of Sodom and Gomorra. This will make such a strong mortar that neither the sun, nor the rain will split it.<sup>63</sup>

Clearly, this was an attack on the doctrinal history of the church. The Scholastics, regardless of philosophical school, and the Universities of Louvain and Paris had

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<sup>63</sup>Byenkorf, 156-157. De Byencorf dan, daer onse Byen in wonen, swermen ende hare Honich maken, wordt met taye ende stercke Lovensche of Parisische Hordern ende Teenen onder een gevlochten: sy noemense ghemeynlijck te Loven Sophismata oft Quotlibeta, ende men vindtse by de Corfmakers der Roomscher Kercken veyl: als by Joannem Scotum, Thomam de Aquino, Albertum Marnum ended andere dierghelijcke, die seer subtijl in deser Conste gheweest zijn. Dese Horden alsoo gevlochten, moet men noch tot meerder dichtickeyt te smaen binden, met grove Joodtsche ofte Thalmudische kabelen, ende dan daer over een clevende Mortelplaester trecken, chemaect van oude Puyne ofte Kalckscherven (daer de oude vervallen Concilien voortijds mede ghemetselt waren) wel cleyn tot pulver ghestooten ende dunne ghewrocht, met ghecapt stroy, dat de Aptekers noemen, Palea Decretorum, begietende het t'elcken met schuym der oude Leeraers; ende daer onder oock wat nieuwe Calcks van Trenten vermengt, ende alsoot'samen ghewrocht met Zant, dat uyt de gheborste Putten der menschelijcker Superstitien ghegraven is: of van dat Zant, daer de oude Kettes hare Snoerkens mede pleghen te binden. Ghy moeght hier in oock wat Jodenlijms oft Bitumen vermenghen, welck is een seer taye clevende materie, daer de Stadt ende Thjoren van Babylon hier voortijden mede ghemetselt waren, ende wordt gheharlt uyt de Poel oft Doode Meyr van Sodoma ende Gomorra: want hier mede sult ghy een alsoo stercke Mortel hebben, dat het met gheene hitte der sonne, noch natticheyt des Reghens weycken noch splijten en sal.

selected the internal structural components of the beehive during the Middle Ages. Then this basic skeleton had been overlaid by a plaster of superstition, heresy and false church decrees. All of this was a way of saying that the Roman Church was not the church of the Apostles and scripture, but of human creation and development. Of course, this message was standard for sixteenth century reformers, but Marnix's genius lay in the power of paradoxical propaganda, as he was able to take the accepted notion of order in Catholicism, and later that of Philip II, and turn it against itself. Marnix would do this first with this perverted beehive that was the product not of natural divine creation, but of unnatural human creation.

Marnix next turned his attention to the bees which inhabit this beehive. After examining the legendary sources of the bees in Greek myth and the Biblical mentioning of bees by Moses and David, the origin of the current bees was traced to Rome. "Our bees were first bred in Rome during the time of Numa Pompilius. They lasted for several hundred years and multiplied very well. Then when they had almost perished a new type arose during the days of Phoece, Emperor of Rome."<sup>64</sup> Numa Pompilius, king of Rome from 715 B.C. to

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 159. Doch evenwel zijn onse Byen wat verschillende van de selve. Want dese zijn aldereerst te Romen opgevoedt geweest, in de tijden van Numa Pompilius, ende hebbender menige hondert Jaren daer nae gheduer, ende aijn seer vermenichfuldicht gheweest: doch daer nae zijnde bynae het gheslachte heel vergaen, soo zijn sy naederhandt op een ander aert wederom opghestaen, ontrent de tijden

673 B.C., was credited with founding the Roman state religion, and Phoce was Emperor of the East Roman Empire from A.D. 602 to 610.<sup>65</sup> By associating the bees with these rulers, Marnix was claiming that the clergy of the Catholic Church were non-Christian in origin as they began as the clergy of the ancient Roman religion, and were revived in a different form by a Roman Emperor when they were on the verge of extinction. Certainly this clergy could not be the heirs of the Apostles and the representative of God's divine order as the ministers of his church.

As further proof that the Catholic clergy was not legitimate, Marnix engaged in a satirical description of the harmonious function of the beehive of the clergy. To do this he followed Pliny, Aristotle and Columella in describing the different types of bees with different functions, adding his own correspondance of bees to clergy. They were divided into two basic types: a tame, or domestic bee which moves among people and a wild, or angry bee with a sharper stinger which are called by "the Greek word Monachi" (monks) and live by themselves. The wild bee was recognized by the hood on its head.<sup>66</sup> Both wild and tame types were further divided into four manners of bee. The fattest and the best were the ones that dwelled closest to the king bee.

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Phoce des Keysers van Romen.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 189-190.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 160.

They were identified by their "red scarlet wings."<sup>67</sup> In other words, at the top of the church hierarchy are the pope and the cardinals, who were fattened and maintained by the labors of the others in the beehive.

A second type of bee was more like the wasp, horsefly and hornet, but like the horsefly, this bee preferred not to bite horses and cows, but sheep.

In this they are contray to the ordinary sort of honeybee, which carefully avoids the sheep for fear of becoming stuck in the fleece. But this kind knows a good solution to that. First they eat away the wool, then the skin and lastly suck out the blood of the sheep, to which they are wonderfully addicted. Because of this biting of sheep (Bijtschapen) some are called bishops (Bisschoppen)....Because the wound can only be remedied by golden salve, they are of the genus of wasp, which Aristotle and Pliny call by the Greek word Ichneumones, that is to say inquisitors, or after the Latin Inquisitores....They are the most bloodthirsty. They are of both types both tame and wild, but the wild are always the more fierce and deadly. They become bred or engendered even like Aristotle tells of his Ichneumones. Namely, they take the very venomous spider called the Phalangia (which one finds very many of in Spain at the old Inquisition walls and posts) and drags it into their holes....There they set or brood over them and bring forth their genus.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 161.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 161-162. Waer in sy een contrarie aert hebben van de ghemeyne Honich-byen, welcke de Schapen seer vermijden, van vreesse dat sy in de Wolle verwert mochten blijven. Maer dese weten goeden daedt daertoe. Want sy bijten haer eerst de Wolle af, ende daernae het vel, ende ten laetsten suygen sy het bloedt uyt, daer sy wonderlijk op verleckert zijn: ende worden derhalven Bijtschapen van somminghe ghenoeemt, oft om de cortheyt der sprake, Bisschoppen....Want de Wonde en can sonde Gulden Salve gheensins ghesenen worden: Sy zijn van het

Behind the plays on words are a number of important messages, which tie the image of this perverted beehive tightly to the well-known anticlericism of the sixteenth century. Most notably was the attack on the clergy for working more at enriching themselves than for tending the spiritual needs of the people, as the clergy had come to see ecclesiastical office as a property right with a source of income, rather than a duty.<sup>69</sup> In this the inquisitors of the church and some of the bishops were like the wasps of the natural world, attacking and bleeding the sheep, or the people of God. These wasps were not the shepherds of God's flock, but the enemy that sought to victimize it. These wasps were a part of the disorder of the world and thus evil. In this passage, there was also the suggestion of an alternative natural model for the church, that of the shepherd and the flock. This was not a hierarchical model with ranks of superior sheep, but rather of the individual

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gheslachte der Wespen, die Aristotle ende Plinius met een Griecx woordt noemen Ichneumones: Dat is soo veel te segghen als Ondersoeckers, oft soo men het int Latijn wil uytlegghen, Inquisitores...ende zijn seer bloedtdorstich. Sy zijn oock van beyder aert, somminghe tamme, somminghe wildt: maer de wilde zijn altydt feller ende moordadigher. Sy worden gheteelt oft ghegenereert, effen ghelijck als Aristoteles van sijne Ichneumoner verhaelt: namelijk, als dat sy nemen seer fenijnighe Spinnecoppen, ghehaemt Phalangia, (welcke men seer veel in Apaengien vindt aen de oude Inquisitie mueren ende balcken) die draghen sy in hare Hoken:...soo broeden sy daer over, ende brenghen hare gheslachte alsoo voort.

<sup>69</sup>Oakley, Western Church, 30-31.



sheep grazing on its own under the watchful eye of the shepherd. This natural model fit the concept of the church urged by Marnix of a gathering of the faithful with Christ as the head of the flock.

A third sort of bee was the kind Aristotle called Pheres, who, for Marnix, were the same as "thieves and vagabonds...and have a great broad belly, which is usually black." In a return to the charge of enrichment by office, they hold dear the "prebends and fat beneficed honey."<sup>70</sup> These bees were the parish clergy and their hierarchy. As thieves and vagabonds, these clergymen was being portrayed as a source of disorder because of their corruption in seeking money over spiritual duty. Also, the vagabonds could be a reference to the absentee clergy, who assumed a post only to hire someone else of lesser qualifications to actually serve as priest.

The fourth sort of bee, the "Mendicantes", was the least profitable to the hive. They were "buzzards or drones." "They have no sting, and will not work, but live on the labor of the others." The wild mendicants "swarm door to door...to fill their bags, and therefore are called Mendicantes, or beggars." The tame drones remain in the hive and live "without working or doing any good. Because when they would do good, they usually miss (missen), and are

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<sup>70</sup>Ibid. 162.

therefore called massbees (Misbyen)."<sup>71</sup> Even the last variety of bee was portrayed as a source of disorder, a beggar, who even when they attempted to do good by saying mass, would miss.

The whole attack on the third and fourth types of bees as thieves, beggars and vagabonds had more than the immediate significance of the anticlericism that was explicit in the attack. There was also the implicit linking of the Catholic church with the subculture of the poor, who were a great source of social disorder in the sixteenth century. As a propaganda device, Marnix was identifying the Catholic clergy with a behavior that was both familiar and distasteful to the dwellers of urban areas. The towns were confronted by "regular invasions...not purely by beggars from the surrounding areas but by positive armies of the poor" during hard times. The problem for the towns was to put the poor "where they could do no harm,"<sup>72</sup> as a result of this in Amsterdam they built a prison for "all vagabonds, evildoers, rascals and the like."<sup>73</sup> Similar institutions

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 163-164.

<sup>72</sup>Braudel, Civilization and Capitalism, I, 75.

<sup>73</sup>Simon Schama, The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1987), 17. This appears in a chapter entitled "Moral Geography" which deals with this problem and the attempts in Amsterdam to provide not just a place to put these troublemakers, but an attempt to reform them in part through the use of a "drowning chair" which involved a notion of expiation via water. Also see, Natalie Zemon Davis, "Poor Relief, Humanism, and Heresy," in Society in

appeared in other Netherlandic towns, as the poor relief system of the church appeared to fail and the secular authority of the town stepped-in.

Marnix's next charge against these clerical bees deals with procreation and a continuation of the appeal to anticlericism.

Now further, concerning the nature of these bees, there is a difference between the males (Manneken) and females (Wijfken), particularly among the wild. They love to go together, yet they do not procreate their race. They must all equally become engendered and breed with their king, as Aristotle and Pliny<sup>74</sup> have markedly written. Because without this king, they cannot bring forth their own kind.<sup>75</sup>

Marnix used this model of sexuality as a way of attacking clerical celibacy. In the choice of vocabulary of man and wife for male and female, he showed his skill at satire. Here were these supposedly celibate members of the clergy

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Culture in Early Modern France (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 17-64, for a discussion of the efforts of the bourgeoisie of Lyon to deal with this problem.

<sup>74</sup>Pliny, Natural History, IV, 16. Pliny stated, as did the other ancients, that the queen bee was a male. Pliny further stated that this king bee was of such immense size so as to permit him to carry out his duties of mating without being exhausted and that all the other bees were female.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 165. Nu voorts, aengaende de natuere van dese Byen, daer is wel een onderscheyt van Manneken ende Wijfken, in sonderheyt onder de wilde: ende sy gaen seer gheerne te samen, doch en genereren d'een van den anderen hare gheslachte niet, maer sy moeten alle gelijk van haren Coninck ghegenereert ende gheteeft worden: soo als Aristoteles ende Plinius merckelijck beschrijven. Want sonder desen Coninck en connen sy haers gelijc niet voortbrengen.

having sex like man and wife, yet they do not produce children, without the intercession of the pope. He seemed to be accusing these male and female bees of the Roman church with being unnatural in breeding. Again a charge of the clergy going against the natural order.

Marnix next turned his attention to the government of the hive. "In their (the clerical bees) rules they are like the common honey bee because they all have one king. They cannot abide without the king, whom they call Papa, that is to say Pater Apum, the father of bees." This king bee has a triple crown (the papal tiara), was accompanied by great numbers of retainers (cardinals) and, rarely left the hive. On occasion there was more than one king which produced schisms and wars.<sup>76</sup> Here Marnix does not criticize the natural order of having a king. In fact, the opening sentence quoted above, indicated that having a king was natural because like "the common honey bee" the hive of Rome had a king. The problem was that the beehive of Rome had a usurper as king, not a natural king like the common honey bee. Thus the pope, while attempting to appear as part of the natural order, actually deceived the people because Christ was the head of the true church. The problem was not having a king, but having an illegitimate king.

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<sup>76</sup>Marnix, Byenkorf, 166-167. In haer Regiment zijn sy den ghemeynen Honich-byen seer ghelijck want sy hebben alle eenen Coninck, jae en connen sonder Coninck niet geherden: welcken sy noemen Papam, ghelijck als oft men segghen wilde, Pater Apum, dat is te seggen, De Vader der Byen.

This would later prove of crucial importance to Marnix in the ideology of secular rebellion against Philip II.

But what of the product of the beehive of the Roman church? What of the religion, or honey, that was intended to be of sweetness and nourishment to mankind? Like other honey bees, these moved among the flowers of spring to make their honey. On the flowers they found

the honeydew which falls from heaven on the prophetic and apostolic flowers, and becomes commonly called Manna coeleste or Drosomeli. The cake is found in Calabria, but now it is also in Germany, France, England, and yes it is also common in our Low Countries.<sup>77</sup>

Just like God had provided manna, which tasted like honey, for nourishment of the children of Israel as they wandered in the wilderness,<sup>78</sup> now God had provided nourishment for man in the honeydew that was to be gathered from the scripture of the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New Testament. These prophetic and apostolic flowers and their honeydew were now found in many places in Europe. But the bees of the Roman hive take this pure manna into their hives and pollute it with

the turbulent and muddy waters from the Tiber at

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 169. Honichdau, dat uyt den Hemel valt op de Prophetische ende Apostolische boomen, ende wordt ghemeynlijck ghe-naemt Manna coeleste oft Drosomeli. Het plach in Calabria veel ghevonden te zijn, maer nu is het oock in Duytslandt, Vrancrijck, Enghelandt, jae oock in onse Nederlanden seer ghemeyn.

<sup>78</sup>Exodus 16:11-36.

Rome, the Seine at Paris, and also the Dijle at Louvain. Then they change it. They distill it in the hood of a doctoral gown for so long and so much that the entire natural substance is lost. And they think they have drawn out the Quintam Essentiam.

They mix this Quintam Essentiam with a plaster cake and it is made thusly: take a half pound of blue Councils, which is allowed to lie three days and three nights in Roman or bastard wine, or if you cannot get any Roman or bastard wine, then take the best Vinum Theologicum that can be found, or the wine of the whore of Babylon which is poured out to the kings and princes....then place in a Parisian mortar and grind together with strong Roman dung. Then stain though Spanish linen, or the tendency of the inquisition. Then mix with the saliva of the ancient doctors and stir in the beeswax with which the bulls of Rome are sealed (as much as is needed) until a plaster cake is made. The apothecaries call this plaster cake Pastillus, or Bolus Fidei Romanae. This cake and a little of the aforesaid Quinta Essentia of the honeydew...[are] the foundation of the work of the bees.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 170-171. Turbel ende onclare water, dat sy of uyt den Tiber te Romen, oft uyt de Seyne te Parijs, oft oock wel uyt de Dilie te Loven scheppen. Ende dan zijnde alsoo versonden, distileren syhet in een Clocke oft Doctours covel, soo lange ende soo veel, dat de natuerlijcke Substantie heel wech zy, ende dat sy daer de Quintam Essentiam uyt ghetrocken hebben.

Desen Quintam Essentiam vermenghen sy met een Plaester-koeck die sy aldus bereyden: Recipe een half pondt blauwe concilien, die sult ghy dry dagen ende dry nachten laten weycken in stercken Romenye oft Bastaert: oft cont ghy gheenen Romenye noch Bastaert krijghen, soo neemt van den besten Vinum Theologicum die ghy vinden cont, oft van den Wijn daer de Babelsche Hoere den Coninghen ende Vorsten plach van te tappen.... [S]tooten in eenen Parijsschen Mortier, ende t'elckens begieten met stercke Romsche Dreckedick ende Drecketalen, ende door eenen dunnen Spaensche Doeck oft Stromijn der Inquistie doorgedaen, ende met wat Seevers van de oude Leeraers vermengt, ende onder een geroert, sult ghy met Wasch, daer men de Bullen van Romen mede beseghelt, (soo veel alst noodich is) tot een Paester-koeck maken: welcke Plaester-koeck van de Apotekers genaemt wordt Pastillus, oft Bolus Fidei Romanae; ende

This passage focused an attack on communion in the Catholic church. The role of the Eucharist in late medieval Catholicism was paramount among its recipients at mass. As cited earlier, in the hagiography for female saints in the Netherlands the wafer often tasted of honey. By the late middle ages the eucharist was surrounded by an "aura of majesty." As the preparer of this feast on the body of Christ, the power of the priest had been raised to an awesome level. "To eat God, therefore, was finally to become suffering flesh with his suffering flesh; it was to imitate the cross."<sup>80</sup> In Catholic dogma, this was the theory of cosmic correspondances writ large. The priest summoned down the actual presence of the spirit of God from on high and encapsulated this spirit in the temporal existence of the bread. Marnix viciously assaulted this doctrine as nothing more than the perversion of the scholastics of the universities of Paris and Louvain and Rome as well. They had corrupted God's message, the manna, into the wine and bread of communion. Marnix charged that by corrupting the manna and honeydew of God's nature with earthly invention-everything from church councils to scholastic writings and papal bulls - the Romans Catholics had lost the truth and ended up with a corrupt pill and wine that were the basis of

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desen Koeck een weynich begoten met de voorsz. Quinta Essentia van het honichdau...het Fondament daer de Byen op wercken.

<sup>80</sup>Bynum, Holy Feast and Holy Fast, 54-59.

the Roman church, and which theologically separated the Catholics from the Reformed at the most basic level. This corruption of the natural order no longer corresponded to the divine. The proper order of Christianity, on the other hand, was available in its raw form as scripture without the need for human distillation.

This metaphor of a recipe and the identification with food, as a propaganda tool, may have also constituted a special appeal to women. Food and cooking were identified with women. The preparation of food was traditionally associated with women as their proper social function.<sup>81</sup>

Marnix gave further consideration to both the wax and the honey that these bees produced.

The wax that these bees make, known as papal bull wax, costs a great deal and they hold it very dear, more dear than even gold, because it is very strong. What does this wax have? It has many advantages. Because it has the power to let one eat flesh during Lent without harm. It allows the marriage of whom you please, even if it is your sister, without becoming a heretic.<sup>82</sup>

The center of the mockery was the papal bulls which claimed

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid., 189-194.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., 176. Het Wasch dat dese Byen wercken, werdt ghenamt Bullenwasch, ende wordt seer hooghe gheacht ende duyre vercocht, jae veel duyrdet, dan of het tegen Gout ghewegen werde: Maer het is seer crachtich, want wie van dit Wasch heeft, die heeft veel voordeels, want hy mach in de Vasten vleesch eten sonder schade: Hy mach trouwen ende byslapen die hy wil, jae al waert sijn eyghen Suster, sonder daerom voor een Ketter gherekent te worden. Hy is oock voor het Vagevyer alsoo wel bewaert, als die teghen den donder eet Mostaert.



to grant dispensation from the natural to permit the unnatural, for example, marrying one's sister. Marnix assumed that this was natural law, and no piece of paper from the pope could change that. Indeed, dispensation altered the correspondence of divine and natural, and was thus disorderly.

Returning to the subject of the honey produced by the Roman hive,

there are some lands where no other honey is used, than that of these bees. There it is esteemed very highly as in Spain. It is also used a great deal in Germany and France, but there its use is going down. Similarly in the Low Countries the use is going down, but the Spanish have undeniably brought whole shiploads from Spain so that once more it is used. Still, however, people have discovered that it is unnatural and unhealthy; yes, very harmful and poisonous to eat.<sup>83</sup>

Here, more clearly than anywhere else, Marnix made his attack on the unnaturalness, which was to say disorderly nature, of the Catholic Church. The honey, doctrine, of the Catholics was unnatural and a source of disorder. The teachings were poisonous to man because it led him away from salvation. This was the ultimate end of disorder in the

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid., 176-177. [D]aer zijn sommige Landen daer men geen anderen Honich en ghebruyckt, dan van dese Byen, ende wordt daer seer groot gheacht, als in sonderheyt in Apaengien. Men plach het oock seer te ghedruycken in Duytslandt ende in Vranckrijck, maer het is daer seer afgegaen, gelicjk als het oock in de Nederlanden was, maer de Spaengiaerts hebbents onlancx heele schepen uyt Spaengien ghebracht, soo dat het wederom seer gebruyckelije is. Doch evenwel heeft men met ervarentheyt bevonden, dat het is onnatuerlijck ende ongesont, jae seer schadelijck ende vergiftich ghegh'eten.

mind of the sixteenth century - destruction itself.

What was the antidote for this?

The only remedy is to vomit all that they (the consumers of the poisoned honey) have ingested, but they go on to be very sick. And they now administer early every morning a fully raw and pure syrup of the heavenly honeydew, of which we have already spoken. After they have used this for a time, and they have prepared their body, so they should take a draught of the juice of Gratia Dei, and of Palma Christi, with the help of God, they should attain good health.<sup>84</sup>

In other words, the remedy to the poison of Rome was the purity of God's heavenly honey, scripture, and the grace of God attained by a properly prepared person, those with faith. Only then would the proper order be regained after a period of disorder, brought on by the perversion of the Catholic church.

In concluding his book, Marnix overtly stated his reason for writing it. The purpose was instruction, to enable the reader to tell the natural bees from the unnatural.

I have wished to warn you, dear reader, about the nature and appearance of these bees so that you could tell them from the common honeybee, and not

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<sup>84</sup>Ibid., 179. Het eenich remedie is, datmense sal doen overgheven al wat sy hebben inghenomen (maer daer willen sy seer qualijck aen). Ende daer nae salmense alle morghenstondt een Syrope van het Hemelsche Honichdauwe, daer wy te vooren van ghesproken hebben, heel rouwe ende onversonden ingheven, ende nae dat sy dit een wijle tijdts ghebruyckt hebben, ende dat hare lichaem daer mede bereydt is ende welgesuyvert, Soo sullen sy eenen Dranck innemen van het sap van Gratia Dei, ende van Palma Christi, ende alsoo met der hulpe Gods, sullen sylichtelijck tot goede gesontheyt gheraken.

think that they are all alike, when they are different. Everybody, who has understood this, should mark it well himself. Therefore, we will not longer be annoying and end our beehive. Everybody read, mark, and exam the events and allegations cited in Scripture, as against the events from other books. I hoped here to balance great usefulness and to bring out folly. God, the Lord, wants all of us to be enlightened through his Holy Spirit and warns us about the strength of error through his eternal truth, wisdom and son Jesus Christ.<sup>85</sup>

In sum, there was an improper order represented by the bees of Rome. As a perversion of nature, these bees would lead one into error and deny one the enlightenment of God's eternal order, which was the proper order. The Catholic church had disrupted the correspondance of nature and the divine and brought evil and disorder to the world.

Central to the understanding of the Byencorf were two broad issues of capital importance to Marnix. First,

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<sup>85</sup>Ibid., 181. Hier van hevve ick dy willen vermanen, lieve Leser, op dat du de natuere ende gheleghentheyte van dese Byen soudest connen onderscheyden van de ghemeyne Honich-byen: ende niet dencken, dat sy in allestucken over een comen, want sy zijn in veeldingen verschillende. Maer een yegelijck die wat verstants heeft, sal het uyt zijn eyghen selfs wel connen mercken. Daerom en willen wy dy niet lander verdrietich wesen, ende willen desen onsen Byencorf een eynde maken: Een yeghelijck lese het ende mercke, ende in sonderheyt overlegghe alle de Ghetuygenissen ende Allegatien, die hier, soo uyt de Schrift, als uyt andere Boecken byghebrocht aijn: Ick hope hysalder groote nutticheyt ende soericheyt uyt halen. Godt de Heere wil ons alle t'samen verlichten door sijnen heylighen Gheest, ende beware ons voor de cracht der dwalinghen, door sijne eeuwighe Waerheyt, Wijsheyt ende sone Jesum Christum.

Marnix, like so many reformers,<sup>86</sup> saw the pope as the antichrist or satan, the father of evil, who had usurped the church, and as such was a tyrant who oppressed the consciences of men. Marnix repeatedly tied the pope, as the Antichrist, to the apocalypse.<sup>87</sup> The image of the antichrist, whose appearance according to the New Testament and St. Augustine marked the destruction of the world, was an old one in medieval Europe that stemmed from the Jewish tradition of God's people suffering under the tyranny of the ungodly. This was a common image used by the Catholic church against false priests and dissemblers during the middle ages.<sup>88</sup> For the Calvinists of the Low Countries, as well as Marnix, the threat of the Antichrist had special meaning as they came to identify themselves with the Jews of the Old Testament in their confrontation with Catholicism. Thus, what acts were possible to remove this tyranny? Second, if the true religion was the internal enlightenment of the individual conscience by God, what, then, was the proper and necessary ordering of human society and God's church?

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<sup>86</sup>Walter Klaasen, "Eschatological Themes in Early Dutch Anabaptism," in The Dutch Dissenters: A Critical Companion to Their History and Ideas, edited by Irvin Buchwalter Horst (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), 18.

<sup>87</sup>Marnix, Tableau, I, 169, 178-179, 204, 235, as examples.

<sup>88</sup>Horst Dieter Rauh, Das Bild des Antichrist im Mittelalter: Von Tyconius zum deutschen Symbolismus (Müster: Aschendorff, 1973), 528-540.

Both of these questions dealt with the concern for order. If Catholicism was an improper ordering of religion imposed by the pope and the Catholic clergy and true Christianity was a matter of internal spirit, then how does one achieve the proper order of religion without committing the errors of temporal human power? This raised for Marnix and the Calvinists the central question of temporal authority. Could a non-purified magistracy correct these religious errors?<sup>89</sup> Worse yet for the reformers in dealing with temporal authority, Marnix defined the true church as a group of the spiritually enlightened. The Calvinists were not the only reformers who advocated this idea. The fact that the spiritualists of the radical reformation had a similar position presented Marnix and other Calvinists with a quandry. Just as Marnix had claimed the Catholic Church was a human invention, so too the spiritualists represented by Sebastian Franck and Sebastian Castellion could lay claim that the church of Calvin, like all churches, was only a human invention and the true church was invisible. This was unacceptable to the doctrine of Calvin which was so concerned with the proper organization and instruction of the people of God. The marks of the true church as defined by the Calvinists included the true preaching of the word of

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<sup>89</sup>Alaistair Duke, "The Ambivalent Face of Calvinism in the Netherlands, 1561-1618," in International Calvinism: 1541-1715 edited by Menna Prestwich (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 129.

God, the proper administration of the sacraments, and, the mark that set them off from the Lutherans, Zwinglians and Anglicans, the proper ecclesiastical institutions (pastors, deacons and elders).<sup>90</sup>

For the Calvinists, the true church revealed itself to the secular world by having the proper visible, external order which maintained discipline among its members. In fact, it was this link of the reformation of a spiritual religion of conscience to the need for proper public worship that involved Marnix in political rebellion for twenty years. The need for public practice of Calvinism required not only the aforesaid attack on the Catholic church, but also required a distancing from the temporal disorder of the Anabaptists and other radicals, especially after the violence and perceived disorder at Mûnster. The Calvinists of the Netherlands, including Marnix, saw the Anabaptists as dangerous deviants and anarchists. These Calvinists were preoccupied by the Anabaptists because their language was Dutch. This concern was not as great among French Calvinists as the Anabaptists never made the leap over the language barrier into French and thus had not spread into France. Significantly, it left the Dutch Calvinists much more concerned with church discipline.<sup>91</sup> Calvinist

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<sup>90</sup>Robert M. Kingdon, Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement, 1564-1572 (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), 37.

<sup>91</sup>Duke, "The Ambivalent Face of Calvinism," 116-124.

ministers strove constantly to convince temporal authorities that they should not be identified with the chaos of Mûnster.<sup>92</sup>

In the early 1560s the Anabaptists of the Netherlands became a serious source of concern to the Calvinists. Menno Simons had kept the spiritualistic tendencies of his followers in check, but with his death in 1561 a resurgent spiritualism appeared. Inspired by the writings of Sebastian Franck in recent Dutch translation, a faction of Anabaptists challenged the heirs of Menno for control of the movement. These Mennonites pointed more and more toward individual spiritualism and away from the more disciplined organization of Menno made cohesive by use of the ban.<sup>93</sup> Driven by a concern over the potential temporal disorder of the spiritualists, Marnix wrote a letter to Theodore Beza dated January 10, 1566, asking Beza to write a refutation of the spiritualists, specifically the followers of Johan Tauler, Sebastian Castellion and Sebastian Franck. They all advocated an invisible church of the spirit. To Marnix, this threatened the very basis of religious order and the Protestant cause.<sup>94</sup> In 1595 after his retirement from political rebellion in a tract entitled Ondersoekinghe ende

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<sup>92</sup>Crew, Iconoclasm, 178-179.

<sup>93</sup>George Huntston Williams, The Radical Reformation (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), 499-504.

<sup>94</sup>Marnix, Oeuvres, VI, 114-118.

grondelijcke wederlegginge de geesterijvische leere  
 (Examination and Refutation of the Teaching of the  
 Spiritualists), Marnix expressed himself at length on the  
 fear that Anabaptists and spiritualists would subvert public  
 order. They were a threat to undermine the purity of  
 scripture, remove the fear of God, the love of piety and  
 eventually destroy all institutions and legal governments.<sup>95</sup>

For Marnix the concern for temporal and religious order  
 was to be the fuel that ignited the fire of rebellion  
 against the rule of Philip II in the Low Countries.  
 Calvinism had to stand for order, but unlike Catholicism,  
 Calvinism was the "proper" Godly order and Catholicism was  
 the improper, evil order of tyranny. But, to transform this  
 religious ideology of order into a secular ideology to  
 remove a tyrannical temporal prince was a slow and difficult  
 task, if possible at all. Beginning in earnest with the  
 events of 1566-1567, the transition that would be required  
 to produce a secular ideology of rebellion was made.

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<sup>95</sup>Marnix, Ondersoekinghe ende grondelijcke  
wederlegginge der geestrijvische leere in Van  
 Toorenenbergen editor, Godsdienstige en Kerkelijke  
Geschriften ('s Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1871), II, 1-  
 240. C. Kramer has dealt at length with the debate that  
 flourished around Marnix in the 1590's over this particular  
 tract in Emmery de Lyere et Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde: Un  
admirateur de Sebastion Franck et de Montaigne aux prises  
avec le champion des calvinistes neerlandais (The Hague:  
 Nijhoff, 1971).



CHAPTER III  
OF THE FIDELITY, AFFECTION AND OBEDIENCE OF THOSE  
OF THE LOW COUNTRIES TOWARDS THEIR  
NATURAL PRINCE

Leonard Kreiger wrote that the principal issue of the Reformation was not religious liberty versus political authority, but at first a restated older religious authority (Scripture) versus papal tradition; then the issue of authority became the respective alliances of the different religious authorities with temporal authorities, which gave the religious authority the power to function.<sup>1</sup> In an age when the concept of temporal order, as an extension of a correspondance to heavenly order on earth, rested to a large degree on the idea of the union of church and state and heresy was linked to sedition, the union of a new religious authority with political discontent was a potent mixture. This conflict would play itself out in a struggle between two concepts of order. The first was the existing idea of order, as expressed by Philip II and his representatives, which sought a union of church and state as the means to maintain order. The other was the new order of Marnix, which would call for the separation of this unity of the sacred and secular so as to preserve both temporal and

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<sup>1</sup>Leonard Krieger, "The Idea of Authority in the West,"

religious order. The discourse between the two sides of Philip II and his government on one hand, and Marnix and the rebels on the other, was in the same vocabulary of sovereign duty, maintenance of order in the provinces and obligation to God. The language was the same, but the positions were in opposition. On the side which Philip saw as both heretical and seditious, political antagonisms were wed to religious dissent. The opponents of Philip's centralization of authority were to complain that Philip had violated the old privileges by not consulting with the States General nor any other group in the Low Countries, when he enforced his crackdown on religious dissent. They claimed that it was their duty to advise on the new religious policies, such as the establishment of new bishoprics. The problem of religion was thus tied to the constitutional problem of who was to exercise political authority. The state was rising in power, but it was an open question as to who would profit --the crown's interests or the old privileges of the States.<sup>2</sup> The nobles and their supporters could either obey Philip and enforce the laws against heresy, or they could leave the laws in abeyance and be charged with disobedience and, potentially, treason.<sup>3</sup> The new element in this

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<sup>2</sup>E. H. Kossman and A. F. Mellink, eds., Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 9-10.

<sup>3</sup>Geoffrey Parker, The Dutch Revolt (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 67.

struggle between prince and States was introduced on the side of Marnix in an idea of the liberty of conscience. With the Protestant Reformation, beginning with Martin Luther, whose "innovation" was freedom of conscience in the doctrine of justification by faith, there was an appeal to the authority of conscience, against the authority of custom, tradition and law in the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>4</sup> This produced a new problem in the concept of order of sacred and secular being united. The problem was how did one have both freedom of conscience and worldly order? This was the basic problem confronting Marnix as he moved into the realm of politics.

Marnix first addressed this problem of religious conscience and political order in a book entitled Vraye narration et apologie des choses passées au Pays-Bas, touchant le Fait de la Religion en l'An M.D. LXVI. par ceus qui font profession de la religion reformée au-dit pays, which was written and published in 1567.<sup>5</sup> In this work he sought to both describe and justify the events that lead up to and included those of the year 1566 when the rebellion

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<sup>4</sup>Donald R. Kelley, The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 59-60.

<sup>5</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration et apologie des choses passées au Pays-Bas, touchant le Fait de la Religion, en l'An M. D., LXVI. in Philips van Marnix van St. Aldegonde: godsdienstige en kerkelijke geschriften, edited by J. J. van Toorenenbergen ('s Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1871), I, 35-133.

began. This work defended the political rebellion of the nobility and also the religious rebellion of the iconoclasm of 1566. At the time he wrote the work, the rebellion had been temporarily defeated, as the first phase of the revolt came to an end. Marnix was in exile in Germany and the rest of the leaders were either dead, in prison or exile. Considering the context, the work was written in a more moderate tone than was the Byencorf.<sup>6</sup> Then, again, maybe it had to be moderate as the rebels were in search of allies beyond the minority of Calvinists in the Low Countries. They needed to mobilize the discontent of a broader group of people than religious dissidents to have a successful revolt.

The political and religious discontent in the Low Countries had been growing since 1555, when Philip II replaced his father, Charles V, as the ruler of the Netherlands. Philip basically followed the centralizing policies begun by his father, but where Charles had met with success, Philip was to meet failure after failure. The recognition of these failures was indicated by Marnix in the Vraye narration as he compared Philip II unfavorably to Charles V, whom he referred to as being fondly remembered. Marnix excused Charles V's introduction of the placards against heresy and the use of the inquisition as being

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<sup>6</sup>Grosselinus Oosterhof, La vie litteraire de Marnix Sainte-Aldegonde et son Tableau des Differens de la Religion (Geneva: Slatkin Reprints, 1971), 25.

necessary against the sedition of the Anabaptist, who would "abolish entirely the authority of the Magistrate, and introduce a community of property." In brief they would introduce a "confusion of all things."<sup>7</sup> By 1555 the tide of heresy in the Low Countries had been stemmed and the relationship of the prince with the States General and the nobility was good. Charles left Philip with only the problem of finances. Between 1555 and 1564 both Philip's relationship with the States and the nobility deteriorated. In 1557 Philip declared bankruptcy, as a consequence of this in 1559, the States General in exchange for the "Nine Years Aid" was able to gain control over the collection of the aid through a committee of the States. With Philip's constant involvement in Spanish affairs, the Low Countries came to feel that they were subsidizing Spain and its interests. When Philip left for Spain in 1559, never to return to the Netherlands, these fears were confirmed for many. In his narration, Marnix pointed out this long absence of their king.<sup>8</sup> When Philip left, he placed the government in the hands of his half-sister, Margaret of Parma, and Antoine Perrenot, later Cardinal Granvelle. Margaret, Granvelle and Philip attempted to govern without consulting the nobility.

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<sup>7</sup>Marnix, Vraye Narration, 40; also see pages 53-54 and 59 where Marnix cited the Old Testament example of King Rehoboam who behaved more harshly toward his subjects than did his father. This was an obvious comparison to Charles and Philip.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 42.

This angered the members of the Golden Fleece who were entitled to seats on the Council of State and felt they should be consulted. Philip also left three thousand Spanish troops behind. Both of these measures of authority were removed after Philip declared bankruptcy again in 1560 and suffered military reverses in the Mediterranean against the Turks. The States General refused to release the funds collected under the "Nine Years Aid" until the troops were removed. On January 10, 1561, the troops left for the Mediterranean. This was a major victory for the States General over Philip's government. In 1564, under the pressure of a boycott of the Council of State by the Counts Orange, Egmont and Horn and a refusal of the States of Brabant to release their tax collection, Granvelle was forced into exile in Burgundy and was never to return to the Low Countries. Again, the policies and policy makers of Philip II had been successfully resisted.<sup>9</sup> It was not that Philip was more oppressive than his father, but that he was weaker and vacillating. His slowness to act destroyed the confidence in him to bring order and prosperity. His weakness was the product of a system based on patronage which he sought to undermine as he attempted to centralize power. This action estranged the very men on whose goodwill Philip's regime rested.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 37-55.

<sup>10</sup>Kossman and Mellink, eds., Texts, 6-7.

In his account of the government under Granvelle, Marnix protested that the people of the Low Countries had been loyal despite the "project of Cardinal Granvelle to reducé the Low Countries by conquest." The country had been desolated, consciences abused and Spanish laws, ordinances and customs had been introduced. All of this went against the ways of the Low Countries, yet the people had remained loyal to their "natural prince."<sup>11</sup>

The removal of Granvelle in 1564 symbolized the relaxing of the old edicts of Charles V against heresy and was the signal to many of the Calvinists in exile, including Jean and Philippe de Marnix, to return home and increase their efforts to organize a Calvinist church in the Low Countries.<sup>12</sup> In doing this, the Calvinist clergy was concerned to appear as good citizens and avoid the stigma of the Anabaptist at Münster.<sup>13</sup> As we have already seen, Marnix excused the persecution of the Anabaptists by Charles V as necessary to preserve public order.

In 1562 the Reformed (Calvinists) of the Netherlands wrote to Philip II to deny the charge that they were guilty of sedition or fanaticism and to proclaim their loyalty to

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<sup>11</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 46-47.

<sup>12</sup>Kossman and Mellink, eds., Texts, 6-7.

<sup>13</sup>Phyllis Mack Crew, Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm in the Netherlands: 1544-1569 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 137.

Philip. Enclosed with the letter of innocence was a copy of the "Belgic Confession of Faith of 1561," which was written by Guy de Brés and François Junius.<sup>14</sup> Marnix's basic views on government and religion as expressed in the Vraye narration were in accord with the Belgic Confession. In 1566 the synod of Antwerp adopted the Belgic Confession which became the doctrinal standard of the Netherlandic Calvinists.<sup>15</sup> According to the confession, God had established the government of kings, princes and magistrates because of man's depravity. Government was to punish the bad and praise the good. In religion, it was the duty of government to protect the ministry, prevent idolatry and false worship. It was the duty of all followers of the confession to obey the government so long as it was not repugnant to the word of God. The confession also decried the Anabaptists as seditious people who would "confound that decency and good order which God hath established among men."<sup>16</sup>

The composition of this first Calvinist creed in the Low Countries represented an effort at solving the problem of cohesion among the followers of Calvin. In 1564, William

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<sup>14</sup>Arthur C. Cochrane, editor, Reformed Confessions of the 16th Century (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966), 185-186.

<sup>15</sup>John T. McNeil, The History and Character of Calvinism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 261.

<sup>16</sup>Cochran, Reformed Confessions, 215-216.



of Orange and his brother, Louis of Nassau, proposed a possible union of the Reformed and the Lutherans. In pursuit of this aim, Guy de Brés and Charles de Nielles were invited to develop a confession agreeable to both groups. The consistory in Antwerp sought this alliance despite the protest of Beza from Geneva. The Calvinists of the Low Countries needed the aid of the nobility if they were to advance their cause. Many of the nobility of the Netherlands were closer to Germany and Luther in family and religion than France and Calvin. This division between French and Germanic languages, as well as social and occupational groups, appeared among the Calvinist exiles in Geneva, who were French speaking and well-bred intellectuals, while those in England, Emden and Germany were mostly Flemish speaking artisans or Catholic clergy.<sup>17</sup> This division may account for the reason that between 1564 and 1572 the Geneva Company of Pastors did not follow events in Germany and the Low Countries as closely as they did in France, nor did they "attempt to exercise as much supervision over them as they did in France."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Crew, Iconoclasm, 104-106; also see Alastair Duke, "The Ambivalent Face of Calvinism in the Netherlands: 1561-1618," in International Calvinism: 1541-1715, edited by Menna Prestwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 127, where Marnix was cited as being a champion of unity in 1571 of these two groups, who until then subscribed to separate French and Dutch Confessions.

<sup>18</sup>Robert M. Kingdon, Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), 14.

With the removal of Granvelle and the consequent slackening enforcement of the edicts against heresy, the Council of State decided to send Lamoral, the Count of Egmont, to Spain to present the case to Philip II for moderating the edicts. Philip II had no desire to moderate the edicts against heresy, but he did concede to Egmont the convening of a council of theologians in the Low Countries to consider whether the laws against heresy could be changed without encouraging the spread of heresy. Egmont was also to seek the approval of Philip for the role for the Council of State in the government of the Low Countries. Philip insisted that there not be any precipitous change in either the religious or political order that he had left in 1559. Egmont returned to the Low Countries and assured his fellow nobles on the Council of State that Philip had agreed to relax the laws against heresy and had approved of the supremacy of the Council of State.<sup>19</sup> In Marnix's account, Egmont and the other representatives reported that Philip did not

intend to constrain his subjects in such a servitude, but rather that he sought the sweet and proper means to put religion in good order. Nevertheless, he intended to establish the bishops, maintain the Council of Trent and introduce the Spanish Inquisition as it appeared in the letters to the Duchess of Parma.<sup>20</sup>

This appeared to be another triumph for the would-be ruling

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<sup>19</sup>Parker, The Dutch Revolt, 64-65.

<sup>20</sup>Marnix, Vraye Narration, 43.

nobility of the Low Countries. A question that cannot be answered here is who was actually being duplicitous Philip II or Egmont? In Marnix's account it was Philip. If it was Philip he did not carry out the game for long. On May 13, the day after Egmont had announced his version of Philip's decisions, letters arrived from Philip that among other things provided for the execution of six repentant Anabaptists. The edicts were not to be weakened or changed as long as Philip was in control. These letters discredited Egmont in the eyes of his fellow nobles.<sup>21</sup>

The intransigence of Philip II and his policy of the unity of secular and sacred order was made clear in one of a series of letters to Margaret of Parma written on October 17, 1565. Known as the Segovia Letters, they arrived in Brussels in early November and were released to the provincial and local authorities on December 18. In the longest of these letters, Philip praised the council of theologians who had convened in Brussels in May for being "men of such quality and zeal for our religion." He also made it clear that he had no intention to ask the advice of the Council of State, the Stadholders, nor of the States either General or provincial, since, as he put it, "this would be a considerable waste of time since my mind is made up." The introduction of the Tridentine reforms in preaching, education and the ending of clerical abuses would

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 65.

go forward. The Inquisition was to be supported fully, "for this makes for the strength and maintenance of religion." The execution of heretics was to be continued, though consideration might be given to doing this in private as the convicted were dying as martyrs. By implementing the above Margaret and the nobles, who were with her, could "keep [the king's] provinces in justice, peace and tranquility." By doing this, Philip asserted, "they will do their duty according to their rank and to the obligation they have to serve God and me, and to further the common welfare of the provinces in the Netherlands on which they are themselves dependent."<sup>22</sup>

A significant number of the nobility, including Marnix, would choose to disobey the wishes of Philip. The nobles concern for preserving what they regarded as the proper political order used a vocabulary stemming from the old privileges of feudalism and charters, which Philip had sworn to uphold. So the key problem, at this time, became how to mesh freedom of conscience with the old prescriptive rights. All of these appeared in Vraye Narration as the basis for the justification for political resistance by the nobility.<sup>23</sup> Chief among the charters that Philip had

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<sup>22</sup>J. S. Theissen, editor, Correspondance Française de Marguerite d'Autriche Duchesse de Parme avec Philippe II (Utrecht: Kemink et fils, 1925), I, 99-103. Also excerpted in Kossman and Mellink, Texts, 53-56. I have used the translation of Kossman and Mellink.

<sup>23</sup>Marnix, Vraye Narration, 48-49.

agreed to was the Blijde Inkomst or Joyeuse Entree of Brabant. This charter provided that Brabant was to be ruled in the absence of the Duke of Brabant by the governess general with the advice and consent of a council of seven natives of the Low Countries. It also provided for the dismissal of any officials to whom the council and States of Brabant objected. Should the agreement be contravened in any way the States or members of the States had the right to remonstrance. If the matter could not be resolved, the members would owe the Duke no service or obedience until the policy objected to had been reversed and abandoned.<sup>24</sup> On this basis Marnix and the nobility in general would claim that the Tridentine reforms had been introduced "unconstitutionally" because the States had not been consulted on these new laws.<sup>25</sup>

The other area of remonstrance against the policies of Philip II was that of Calvinist religious conscience. An early form of this appeared as a plea for religious toleration of the Reformed by Philip II in the Brief discours envoyé au roy Philippe nostre sire et souverain Seigneur. This short work was written by François Du Jon, a Calvinist minister at Antwerp. It was written at the end of

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<sup>24</sup>Gordon Griffiths, ed., Representative Government in Western Europe in the Sixteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 346-350.

<sup>25</sup>C. V. Wedgwood, William the Silent, William of Nassau, Prince of Orange: 1533-1584 (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1968), 62.

1565 in close consultation with Louis of Nassau, the brother of William of Orange. This work stated the basic Netherlandic Calvinist position on social and religious order, to which Marnix also adhered. It stressed the depraved nature of man and the need for discipline and the public practice of religion, but at the same time violence could not compel a change in conscience. The conscience of man had to be subject to the public discipline of religion to maintain order in society. As a practical matter, the immediate problem for du Jun was to seek relief for the Calvinists from the inquisition and heresy laws, while at the same time gaining the right of public practice for the Calvinists. In an echo of Marnix, the way out was to attack the spiritualists and Anabaptists as creating "absolute atheists without faith and without law" because they taught "that one should not serve God outwardly in any form or discipline, but only in spirit and liberty....In a word, their impiety is boundless, they despise God and the authorities." The problem for the people of conscience, the Calvinists, who had a religion of external discipline was that they saw abuses in the Catholic church but were not allowed to adopt any other religious discipline. "In such circumstances they consider it legitimate to conform outwardly to the rule of a Church, which they reject provided their hearts are pure." This leads to a "lapse into evil atheism" and creates sedition as with the

Anabaptists at Münster. "There is no better means (if one considers the matter without prejudice or passion), to exterminate such heresies than to permit, nay expressly to command that all who profess the religion called reformed or evangelical, assemble openly and keep a strict discipline." If this was done there would no longer be sedition but "instead there will be only two ways of public worship in public sight, each of them in keeping to the obedience due to God and the king." To fail to do this would only create disorder and drive the king's people into exile in other countries at the price of the ruin of their own country.<sup>26</sup> Clearly this tract advocated freedom of conscience, but only when there was proper discipline by a publicly practicing church, which maintained secular order.

In the Vraye narration, Marnix addressed the issue of sacred and secular order repeatedly. At the beginning of the work he makes a very clear division between the realm of the sacred, the conscience, and the realm of the secular, the material world. The Calvinist sought "only to be allowed the free conscience to serve God according to his word and to use for the rest our bodies and property to the service of his Majesty."<sup>27</sup> Further, they had been loyal to

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<sup>26</sup>Kossman and Mellink, Texts, 56-59. See also, A. A. van Schelven, "La notion politique de la tolérance religieuse," Revue historique 171 (1933), 304-305; P. A. M. Geurts, De Nederlandse opstand in de pamfletten, 1566-1584 (Nijmegen: Centrale Drukkerij, 1956), 7-8.

<sup>27</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 39.

their natural prince "even against the witness of their conscience."<sup>28</sup> At the end there was a final plea, "we only beseech that in liberty of consciences we be allowed to publicly invoke the name of God and serve him according to his word and pray in our assemblies for the prosperity and grandeur of his Majesty."<sup>29</sup> Philip II and his representatives turned a deaf ear to these pleas and unrest continued to fester.

Philippe and Jean de Marnix were prominent in the organizing of the rising tide of protest by the lower nobility. They were present at a meeting held at the house of the Count Culemborg in Brussels on November 2-3, 1565, along with about twenty other Calvinist sympathizers. At this meeting it was decided to form a league of nobles to work for the ending of the inquisition and the moderation of the heresy statutes.<sup>30</sup> Jean and François du Jun collaborated to flood the country with pamphlets, ballads, cartoons and songs in support of Calvinism.<sup>31</sup> In December 1565 this new Union of the Nobles met at the home of Jean de

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 41, 81.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 132.

<sup>30</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 69.

<sup>31</sup>Crew, Iconoclasm, 6. She clearly cited the involvement of Marnix of Thoulouse (Jean) in the spreading of materials, but in the index to her book there was not a distinction made between Marnix of Aldegonde (Philippe) and Marnix of Thoulouse so there may be some risk that the two brothers were not separated successfully in Crew's work.



Marnix in Brussels to sign a statement of unity to protest the introduction of the Inquisition in the Low Countries. This was the famous Compromise of the Nobility, which provided the first formal statement of the lower nobilities' political and economic complaints. Philippe de Marnix would use the sentiments expressed in the Compromise repeatedly. The idea of the Compromise originated with Jean de Marnix and his fellow Calvinist Nicholas de Hames, herald-at-arms of the Golden Fleece.<sup>32</sup> The actual drafting of the Compromise has been ascribed to both Philippe de Marnix and Jean, though it was probably Jean who drew it up.<sup>33</sup> The Compromise was signed by about four hundred nobles. This represented about ten per cent of the total number of nobles. The higher nobility, or the *grandees*, such as Orange and Egmont refused to sign though they did lend support by refusing to carry out the orders of Philip II.<sup>34</sup> The signers of the Compromise were a mixed bag of the lesser nobility, though the majority of them were from the northern Netherlands. Even nobles like Hendrik Brederode and Louis of Nassau, who were among the signers, were not regarded as *grandees* despite their large land holdings and titles. Some were Protestants, some Catholic, some anticlerical and some

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<sup>32</sup>Kossman and Mellink, Texts, 59.

<sup>33</sup>p. A. M. Geurts, De Nederlandse Opstand in de Pamfletten: 1566-1584 (Nijmegen: Centrale Drukkerij N. V., 1956), 4; Wedgewood, William the Silent, 75.

<sup>34</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 48, 69.

Erasmian in religion. Whatever their religion, they felt their place in society was being questioned and responded on the basis of local and family interests.<sup>35</sup>

The Compromise, just like du Jun's tract and Marnix's Vraye narration, warned of the destruction of the Netherlands. The blame was laid on foreign advisors who were misleading the king and thus causing Philip II to violate his oath to uphold the laws and customs of the Low Countries.<sup>36</sup> By contrast in Marnix's account, the bad foreigners seeking the destruction of the Low Countries were discussed, but they were not credited with deceiving Philip II.<sup>37</sup> This was probably because by 1567 it was obvious that Philip was behind the policy of religious repression and the introduction of the Spanish Inquisition. This had been revealed in letters mentioned by Marnix from Philip to Margaret of Parma.<sup>38</sup>

The Compromise continued that because Philip had been deceived he had not mitigated the heresy edicts, but instead had introduced the Spanish Inquisition. The introduction of the Inquisition was "against all laws, both human and

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<sup>35</sup>Sherrin Marshall Wyntjes, "Family Allegiance and Religious Persuasion: The Lesser Nobility and the Revolt of the Netherlands," The Sixteenth Century Journal, 12 (Summer 1981), 43-60.

<sup>36</sup>Marnix, Oeuvres, 19. Also see Kossman and Mellink, Texts, 59-62 for a translation of the Compromise.

<sup>37</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 46-47.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 43.

divine, and surpassed the greatest barbarisms practiced by tyrants."<sup>39</sup>

This could only lead to "the great dishonoring of God's name and to the total ruin and desolation of all of the Netherlands." Not only will the Inquisition subject the burghers and other inhabitants of the country to the slavery of the Inquisition, but "even the magistrates, officers and nobles" will be subject to it. Eventually, "it will destroy all law and order,..weaken the old laws, customs and ordinances...and remove all of the liberty of opinion of the States of the country."<sup>40</sup> The very order of society was being destroyed by this tyranny of the inquisitors perpetrated by the greed of the evil advisors of the king. The nobility of the Low Countries had the same feeling of paranoia, which Lacey Baldwin Smith identified in Tudor England, by thinking that political events were driven by greedy plotters who would disrupt the cosmic order by seeking power and wealth. In Smith's terms, the nobles were accusing the king's advisors of treason, which sprang from the deadly sins of pride, envy and greed. The seditious were accused of seeking a short-cut to power and riches, and thus would destroy all earthly order.<sup>41</sup> Not only would Catholicism and the glory of God be diminished,

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<sup>39</sup>Marnix, Oeuvres, V, 19.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 19-20.

<sup>41</sup>Lacey Baldwin Smith, Treason in Tudor England: Politics and Paranoia (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 134-138.

but the king will be in danger of "losing his whole estate" as trade will stop and the people will "be incited to sedition."<sup>42</sup>

For Marnix in the Vraye narration, the Inquisition was the source of the secular and sacred tyranny time and again. Marnix attacked a sensitive spot for Philip, given his struggles with the Turks in the Mediterranean, when he wrote that it was better to be under the rule of the Moslem Turks than to suffer the greed and cruelty of the Inquisition as they ruined the entire country.<sup>43</sup> What made the Inquisition a tyranny was its illegal usurpation of power. Marnix enumerated the reasons for the illegality of the Inquisition. For Friesland, Overijssel and Holland, they were confederates of the Holy Roman Empire and as such were entitled to "the privilege of the pacification made in Germany, without suffering the yoke of the Spanish Inquisition, which is repugnant to all old rights, customs, usages and privileges." This was an obvious reference to the Religious Peace of Augsburg which gave control of religion to the local ruler. Brabant and Flanders were also covered because they had been annexed to the Empire along with the rest of the Low Countries. (This was at best a convenient fiction, as one recalls that Charles V had had the Low Countries removed from the administrative control of

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>43</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 63-64.

the Empire.) The Inquisition was also in violation of separate charters for both Flanders and Brabant. Lastly, there was the feudal right by which "the Lord could lose his right to the fief by the same occasion of disloyalty by which the vassal could lose his fief to the Lord." Because the acts of the Inquisition against "the bodies and properties of the vassals of his Majesty, they would have just title to forget their duty of fidelity."<sup>44</sup> It was the lord who was in rebellion against the proper order of the cosmos, and his vassals had the right by refusing loyalty to restore order.

Despite Marnix's attempt at a feudal justification for withholding loyalty, the signers of the Compromise were not willing to go that far. They called themselves "faithful vassals of his Majesty and nobles, who are in effect assistants of his Majesty." They claimed they were bound by their duty and service to maintain the king's authority and also to protect the safety of their lives and properties (corps et biens) from the Inquisition which sought to take their lives and property under the guise of defending the Catholic religion. To accomplish this they had formed "a sacred and legitimate confederation and alliance" to stop the introduction of the Inquisition.<sup>45</sup> If any persecution of "our brothers and allies" occurred, then "we have

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 48-49.

<sup>45</sup>Marnix, Oeuvres, V, 20.

promised to assist them with our lives and properties."<sup>46</sup>  
(They also promised to follow "the common opinion of all brothers and allies, or of those whom we delegate" to maintain the union.<sup>47</sup>)

In light of the frequent use of the terms "corps and biens" as a pledge, it is worth examining the use of the same terms by Marnix in the Vraye narration. Marnix wrote of being "allowed freedom of conscience in order to serve God according to his word and employing the remainder of our lives and properties to the service of his Majesty."<sup>48</sup> There was the suggestion that by this pledge they would be removing their lives and properties from the service of the king to the service of God. That would be putting the material world into the service of God against the king, which would be an expression of returning the temporal order to its proper correspondance with the heavenly and cosmic order.

The confederates of the Compromise stated that their purpose was not rebellion but to "maintain the king in his estate and to keep order and peace, while suppressing all seditions, popular uprisings, monopoly, factions and partiality."<sup>49</sup> They cited the model of the kingdom of

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid., v, 21.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 22.

<sup>48</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 39.

<sup>49</sup>Marnix, Oeuvres, v, 21.

Naples,<sup>50</sup> where the introduction of the Spanish inquisition had been successfully resisted by a similar coalition in 1547.<sup>51</sup> "In this and similar cases, it is wrong to claim that the crime of rebellion has been committed because" the source of this resistance was the "holy zeal and laudable desire to maintain the glory of God, the king's Majesty, the public peace and the safety of our lives and property."<sup>52</sup> They were not rebels, but rather restorers of temporal and sacred order.

The Compromise was drawn by a Protestant faction of the lesser nobility, of which Phillippe was a member. They were aware that they had to appeal to a predominantly Catholic faction. For this reason, the Compromise was framed against the Inquisition, which was seen by the nobles as a foreign intrusion on their rights, rather than as a call for religious freedom. This union of the lesser nobility was the culmination of a process of uniting political malcontents and religious dissidents that had been merging since the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis of 1559. The inquisition posed a threat to both factions. On the political side the inquisition claimed powers to summon and try heretics that exceeded those of the traditions of the Netherlands. For example, the inquisition could examine

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 21.

<sup>51</sup>Kossman and Mellink, Texts, 61.

<sup>52</sup>Marnix, Oeuvres, V, 22.

anyone without revealing the grounds for suspicion. This was clearly forbidden by the Joyeuse Entree. Also, the Edict of Worms from the days when the Low Countries were considered a part of the Holy Roman Empire had vested the power to try heresy cases in civil courts, not church courts. A final example was that the penalty under the edicts of Charles V against heresy was the confiscation of property, while the penalty for heresy under the Spanish Inquisition was death because heresy was regarded as high treason. The introduction of the Inquisition appeared to the lesser nobles of the Low Countries as a violation of their privileges, both real and imagined.<sup>53</sup> This was the source of discontent to which Philippe and the other Calvinists had to appeal.

With the signing of the Compromise the Protestant nobility had succeeded in bringing a unity to a significant percentage of the nobles against both the religious policy, in the form of the Inquisition's temporal punishments, and the attempt at centralization of power of Philip II, as both appeared to the nobles to be an have been introduced in violation of their privileges. It was this group, doubtless with Philippe among them, which was to act on April 5, 1566 by presenting a petition of remonstrance (Smeekschrift) to

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<sup>53</sup>Alastair Duke, "Salvation by Coercion: The Controversy Surrounding the Inquisition in the Low Countries on the Eve of the Revolt" in Reformation, Principle and Practice: Essays in Honour of A. G. Dickens edited by Peter Newman (London: Scholar Press, 1980), 137-156.



the regent, Margaret of Parma in Brussels. The petition was drawn up by Jean de Marnix and presented for the initial consideration of William of Orange and others of the nobility at Orange's main palace in Breda in March. Jean proposed that the petition be presented to the regent. William's brother Louis of Nassau, who had retained Philippe de Marnix as an advisor, proposed that the wording be toned down and shortened. Jean de Marnix then took the petition to Hoogstraten to show it to two of the higher nobility, Meghen and Egmont. Neither of them supported the petition and left immediately to forewarn Margaret. The lesser nobles resolved to acquire as many signatures as possible to their Request and then present it to the regent. On April 5, Brederode with the accompaniment of about three hundred armed lesser nobles forced their way into the presence of the king's regent. Neither the higher nobility nor the government had been able to stop them. This group of "Beggars", "les Gueux" as one of Margaret's ministers called them, had committed a revolutionary act. Margaret's authority was compromised and the prestige of the Union of Nobles was enhanced as Margaret was forced to accede to the "Request".<sup>54</sup>

#### Marnix's account of the presentation of the Request

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<sup>54</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 70; Geurts, Pamfletten, 11-15. Geurts deals with the publication and distribution of the text of the Request, as well as the writing of it. The Request was printed and distributed to publicize the program of the Confederation.

takes the form of a denial that this was an act of rebellion.

The nobles, who have been called Beggars, whether in jest or mockery, do not refuse to be beggars. In truth they will be poor, which is to say, they will suffer the destruction of all of their property and possessions in order to give faithful service in all matters to his Majesty.<sup>55</sup>

Far from being Beggars, Marnix stated, those who presented the request were "the flower of their age." The arms they carried were no more than "those a gentleman would ordinarily carry." The rumors that have reached the King of Spain that they came to sack Brussels were wrong as was proven by their "humble and modest arrival". "The presentation of the said Request was not only not to be blamed with sedition or rebellion, but to the contrary, it bore witness to their humility, modesty, subjugation and fidelity towards his Majesty and his Regent."<sup>56</sup>

Marnix continued, the motive for presenting the request, beyond the desire to serve the king, was to preserve their lives and property. This confederation of lesser nobility was concerned because their homes and lands were more exposed since they lived in the open fields. Thus they were less able to defend their property from rebellions of the common people. (Part of this fear may have been driven by the growing number of poor and vagabonds during

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<sup>55</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 52.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 56-57.

the period as was discussed in Chapter II.) Also, the Inquisition and the edicts against heresy presented the risk that they might be falsely accused by someone who desired to gain control of their property through its confiscation.<sup>57</sup> Significantly, there was no expression of concern for freedom of conscience or any other high ideals. It was purely a matter of seeking protection for both themselves and their property. This was no doubt an indication of the need to bring together a set of secular motives to form the confederation. From the language of the Request and the composition of the Confederates, we can conclude that property considerations outweighed those of religious conscience. Clearly, the Marnix brothers, as well as the other Calvinists, felt that the rest of the lesser nobility would not respond positively to the demand for freedom of religion, in part because the Calvinists had earlier not gained their support when they asked the government for the free practice of their religion. This fact would indicate that the interest of the Calvinists in their freedom of worship had to take a back seat to the property considerations of the lesser nobles to crystalize the political and economic discontent of the lesser nobility into action. This fear was driven by a concern that they, even if good Catholics, might be falsely accused of heresy by someone seeking to seize control of their property, or

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<sup>57</sup>Marnix, Oeuvres, V, 27.

worse yet the Inquisition might cause a spontaneous revolt of the lower orders of society with the consequent destruction of property regardless of the religious conscience of the property owner.

The motives for the Request, as Marnix described them, received a theoretical justification that went beyond the fear of the participants' own ruin. Because of the problems of the Low Countries and seeking to serve and obey the King and

as they were conscious of their obligation before God and man: they were only endeavoring to find all means which were legitimate and conformed to both human and divine right to induce his Majesty to have pity on his poor subjects and not to burden them with the Inquisition, which they saw as the true ruin of his royal authority and of all his states [estats]. They remained obligated inasmuch as they were required by their office to prevent all forms of seditions, tumults and popular excitements.

to present "a very humble request to his Majesty."<sup>58</sup> In Marnix's justification of the petition the Confederates had done no more than to exercise their office, or vocation, to which both God and temporal order had called them, to prevent rebellion.

Marnix also added a legalistic argument. He cited the Joyeuse Entrée as allowing the presentation of petitions. In Philip II's promise to uphold the Joyeuse Entrée, "he had declared that it was permissible for

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<sup>58</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 51.

prelates, barons, nobles, towns and franchises to give notice of their grievances and complaints."<sup>59</sup> Marnix then cited historical precedents. The Duke of Burgundy, as a predecessor of Philip, had received a remonstrance on many points concerning the general welfare of the country from a great number of his vassals and did not think that it was rebellion.<sup>60</sup>

To this example, Marnix added Biblical authority. Twice he cited the example of King Rehoboam who denied a request presented not by two or three hundred men, but by all the people of Israel. Because of this, Rehoboam made the judgment that the Israelites were rebellious or seditious. To Marnix this was God's example of what happened to kings who found their subjects presenting petitions to be rebellious.<sup>61</sup> This example selected by Marnix certainly seemed appropriate to the circumstances. The story carried a most emphatic warning to Philip II. In the story the people of Israel, who had been ruled by Rehoboam's father, Solomon, came to seek a relaxation of the "cruel yoke" that Solomon had laid on them during his reign. Having received advice from two factions, Rehoboam disregarded the advice of the elders to serve the people and speak kindly to them, and replied that he would make the burden on the people even

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 58-59.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 59.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 53-54, 59.

heavier, as he had been advised to do by the other faction of young men. With this the kingdom of Judah and Israel were divided as the house of David refused to remain under Rehoboam's rule due to his "heavy yoke." Rehoboam then planned to make war on the Israelites to compel them to return to his kingship. At this point, God intervened and commanded Rehoboam and the house of Judah not to make war on Israel.<sup>62</sup> Reflected in this selection was not only the parallel of a father, Charles V, being succeeded by a son, Philip II, who sought to be harsher than his father, but also a tale of a king refusing the advice of the elders, nobles of the Netherlands, while heeding advice from rival sources much as Philip did from Alva's faction in the Spanish court. By heeding the advice of suppression, which Alva advocated to Philip, Rehoboam had lost part of his kingdom and God had intervened to allow it to happen because the king had refused to entertain the petition of his people. Marnix's message to Philip and others was clear, not to heed the advice of the nobles and the Request was to risk the lose of Philip's temporal kingdom, as Philip was deviating from the correspondence to divine order of God's wishes by not consulting with the leading men of the Low Countries as a good prince should.

In contrast to Marnix's multiple justifications, the "Request" framed the role of the Confederates only in the

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<sup>62</sup>1 Kings 12:1-24.

vocabulary of vassalage. In presenting the petition the Confederates noted

the people of the Low Countries have always been renowned for their great fidelity to their Seigneurs and natural Princes and the nobles were in the first rank since they had never spared either their lives or property to preserve and increase the grandeur of their rulers. And now as very humble vassals of his Majesty, wanting always to continue to do better and better, so that day or night we are ready to serve him with our lives and property, and considering the current state of affairs, we prefer to risk the anger of some people than to hide from your Highness things that might later turn to the prejudice of his Majesty with regards to the disruption of the peace and quiet of these countries.<sup>63</sup>

The tone was that of "faithful vassals" doing their duty in warning their lord of events of which he was not aware. The lord's authority and provinces were at risk of being lost to public disorder and the Inquisition and edicts against heresy were the cause of this danger. They acknowledged that the Inquisition and the edicts concerning religion were just a continuation of the policies of Charles V, for whom they had the highest regard, and that Philip had the best intentions. But as the petition said, "different times call for different policies."<sup>64</sup> While the meaning of this was not spelled out, it must be a reference to the legitimate need for the placards and Inquisition against the seditious Anabaptists, as we have already noted Marnix explaining in

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<sup>63</sup>Marnix, Ouevres, V, 25.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 26.

the Vraye narration. But, now the Low Countries were not faced with sedition because of the Calvinists. The sources of the sedition were the edicts and the foreign Inquisition and to preserve order they must be suspended.

The Confederates expressed the hope that either the Grandees or the States of the Country would make a remonstrance to the Regent and they only acted because the others had not. The illegitimate introduction of the Inquisition was stirring the people to disorder. This action by the government was dislocating the proper order. Thus, these nobles had been compelled to act as "the evil is augmented day by day so that the danger of sedition and general revolt is at the door, and we have deemed it our duty, following our oath of fidelity and homage together with our zeal for his Majesty and the Country" to come forward at this time.<sup>65</sup> If the inquisition and the edicts were not suspended and disorders were to break out they could not be blamed for they had "done all we can do according to our duty by presenting this request."<sup>66</sup>

Both Marnix and the Request made a reference to the loyalty of the people of the Low Countries to their natural Prince. In the Request it only occurs once at the beginning, but in Marnix's Vraye narration the term natural prince occurred several times and called for some definition

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 26.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 28.



of the term. On each occasion where Marnix made reference to the natural Prince it was tied to loyalty or counterpoised to rebellion. One should notice

the fidelity, affection and obedience of those of the Low Countries to their natural Prince in which they have preferred to bathe their hands in the blood of their brothers and friends, and in truth their own infants, even against the witness of their consciences, than to be free of a single point of obedience that they would render to their Prince.<sup>67</sup>

Nor had there been a single word of sedition to pass their lips against their natural Prince.<sup>68</sup> Again, the enemies of the house of Burgundy (a reference to the kings of France and the wars recently ended in 1559) have "sounded the hearts of the inhabitants of the Low Countries" to make them leave the fidelity that they ought to give to their natural Prince.<sup>69</sup> The nobles and the people have been accused by the king's representatives of seditious rebellion against their "king and natural Prince."<sup>70</sup> In each case listed above, Marnix was at great pains to deny that they were in rebellion against their natural Prince. This was because Philip II was the "natural Prince", and as such was a part of the natural order. A natural prince, as an ideal standard of conduct against which Philip could be compared,

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<sup>67</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 41.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 42.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 47.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 52-53, 131.

would rule according to the natural order of divine and temporal correspondences. God would will the preservation of temporal order, that was peace and prosperity, and thus a natural prince's duty was to preserve temporal order. Conversely, the prince who violated the natural order would be a tyrant and thus not a natural Prince. If the prince was unnatural, he was acting against both divine and human order, then obedience would be a different matter. Obedience to a prince who disturbed the secular order would not be required. To be disobedient to a tyrant would not be an act of willful sedition or rebellion, but an act of restoring order to its proper and natural state. This was the argument which Marnix would later make against Philip II.

At this point neither the lower nobility nor Marnix was prepared to label Philip II a tyrant, nor were they willing to accept the label of rebel. As Marnix explained, despite "an intolerable servitude" which had threatened "all their privileges, immunities and liberties" by the introduction of Spanish laws and customs, subjected their property and the lives of themselves and their families to the Inquisition, brought desolation to the country, and from the Calvinist perspective oppressed their consciences, the people had remained "faithful and loyal subjects of the King". Those that charged them with "defection from their good King and natural Prince" were wrong. They were merely following

their rights and customs,<sup>71</sup> which was the proper temporal order. The final step to admitting rebellion against a tyrant was a difficult one to take.

The repeated use of the term "natural Prince" carried with it another possible meaning. The references to the "natural Prince" may have been a veiled charge of being a foreigner as applied to the person of Philip II. This meaning is problematic because while the nobles criticized Philip's advisors for introducing Spanish law and customs, especially in the form of the Inquisition, they did not directly accuse Philip of responsibility. But on the other hand, a part of both the Request and Marnix's work was the praise of Charles V as a good ruler. Because Charles was raised and spent most of his life in the Low Countries, he was regarded as a native. Also, he at least gave the appearance of following the practices of the Low Countries, while the Confederates and Marnix clearly did not think that Philip and his advisors were following these practices.

The Request cited the failure of action by the high nobility (stadholders and members of the Golden Fleece on the Council of State) and the States. This rhetoric showed the clear division of power that the lesser gentry felt existed in the Low Countries between the States, the grandees and themselves. They saw themselves as the last resort to bring the attention of the ruler to the problems

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 47-49.

of the country and they sought to do so in a proper manner according to custom and tradition in order not to appear as rebellious. Beyond bringing the notice of difficulties, they saw no greater role for themselves as an independent agency. As a result they called for the assembly of the States General.

The request that the States General be called by Philip II for advice and consent on new religious ordinances was a "constitutional" action. The States General had long ago (1488) won the right to meet when and where it pleased and had met on a regular and continuing basis (see Chapter I). The lesser nobles were clearly calling for the consultation of a group which by custom and charter had the power to act. Uppermost in the minds of the lesser nobles was the restoration of proper order. This can be seen in Marnix's accounting for the role of the States. With the assembling of the States General, temporal order would return and everybody could return to their normal "trade, or profession."<sup>72</sup> This would be a reflection of the redress of the disturbance of the cosmic order by the proper restoration of order on earth.

Margaret's response to the Request issued the next day claimed the support of the grandees. This claim took the form of a plan for the moderation of the edicts which she and the stadholders, the knights of the Golden Fleece

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 64.

and the members of the Councils of State were already prepared to submit to the king. She stated that she would seek to use her office to get the king to consider the request of the petitioners, but that she did not have the authority to suspend either the Inquisition or the edicts of religion. Besides, "it is not becoming to leave the country without law in religious matters." She said that she would order the Inquisition "to proceed discreetly and modestly." In exchange for her willingness to help, she "takes it for granted that the petitioners are firmly determined to make no innovation at all in the ancient religion of these provinces but will maintain and conserve it with all their power."<sup>73</sup> Under these guidelines, Catholicism was to be the solely acceptable public religious practice and the unity of sacred and secular (church and state) order would be preserved.

On the ninth of April Margaret signed the Moderation which stopped the persecution of private beliefs, but still prohibited the public gatherings of heretics. Religious beliefs, as long as they were kept private, would not be persecuted, but public worship by Protestants was prohibited. This instrument was circulated to the provincial States where it was greeted with a warm welcome. It had accomplished its purpose: the political and religious moderates in the Low Countries were won over to the

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<sup>73</sup>Kossman and Mellink, Texts, 65.

government. These moderates included the bishops of Arras and St. Omer in the States of Artois and the bishop of Ypres in the States of Flanders. Among the high nobility and court advisors, Philippe de Croy, duke of Aerschot, Peter-Ernest, count of Mansfelt, and Joachim Viglius supported this relaxing of the persecution of heretics.<sup>74</sup> Most of these accepting moderates were from the southern Netherlands.

Marnix van St. Aldegonde, in the hindsight of the Vraye narration, clearly did not accept the Moderation as a proper political action. The Moderation was outside of the realm of proper political order. Marnix complained that instead of calling the States General, as the Confederates requested, the Duchess of Parma had substituted the Moderation for the request of the States to give "free advice and opinion." This was in violation of "all time-honored [ancien] rights, customs and privileges."<sup>75</sup> By failing to summon the States General "according to the time-honored customs and usages of the country", the matter of religion would not be brought to the "legitimate knowledge of judges, other than the bishops or officials."<sup>76</sup> Here Marnix was putting the States General on the same "constitutional" level as the Catholic hierarchy and royal

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<sup>74</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 70-71.

<sup>75</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 65.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 69.

officials on matters of religion. This would later be a key position for the development of Marnix's ideology and the Dutch Republic, as the settlement of religion would be placed in the hands of the States.

Marnix was even more critical of the Moderation as a failure to moderate the religious edicts, which Margaret claimed to have done. The Moderation was nothing more than a "refreshing, or rather a reinforcement of the old placards." Because public worship by non-Catholics was forbidden, property and lives could still be taken, as well as books, songs and heretical writings. A sentence of death could be given to anyone suspected of heresy against "the doctrine of the Roman Church." Also there was no relief for the simple-minded "who would fall in error by pure simplicity, ignorance, circumstance, or by fragility of sex or age, rather than by malice of spirit." Not only were the ignorant subject to punishment, but also those of "faith and doctrine other than the Roman." This was true even of faiths that had been practiced in this country until then. They were prohibited from "assembly, the exercise of religion, books, disputes, paintings and images made to the disadvantage or dishonor of the Ecclesiastical Order, just like in the past." This was "nothing more nor less than the old Placcards."<sup>77</sup>

After making this general attack on the Moderation,

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 67.

Marnix, for one of the few times in the Vraye narration, singled out "those of the Religion" (the Calvinists) for particular consideration. In the case of the Calvinists, "extraordinary power had been given to the Seigneurs and particular vassals to ban those of the Religion...without regard for the limits of their jurisdiction." Margaret had given this authority to "all stadholders, counselors, captains, bailiffs, prévôts, and their lieutenants, also to all burgermasters, mayors, municipal magistrates, men of the law, and all principal officers of the villages, also all vassals having jurisdiction" to suppress the Calvinists. If the officials refused to carry out this order, they would lose all of their property.<sup>78</sup>

Two groups were dissatisfied with the policies of the Margaret. One group was some of the high nobility. Chief among these were William of Orange, the count of Egmont, and the count of Horn. On April 9 Orange complained that the king had neither listened to him, nor kept him informed of public affairs, as a prince should. Orange also resented the rumors that were being circulated at the Spanish court that his family were heretics and that Orange was plotting in Germany against Philip II. Orange announced that he was leaving the service of Philip and retiring to Germany. The counts of Egmont and Horn joined Orange in this declaration. Margaret was trapped. She was dependent on the high

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 68.



nobility to control the rebellious lower nobility of the Compromise and had to have the high nobility to enforce the Moderation. To keep them at court, Margaret offered to seek additional titles, land and money for the threesome. She also offered to reform the government with the king's permission so that all government decisions would be taken by the Council of State, which was composed of the grandees.<sup>79</sup> She had bought the loyalty of the grandees with promises of patronage and participation in the government. Those who were the most difficult to convince held titles in the northern Netherlands. Orange was stadholder of Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht. Egmont, as a descendant of the Dukes of Gelderland, held vast lands in Gelderland in addition to being stadholder in Flanders and Artois. The Count of Horn's title also derived from the north.<sup>80</sup>

The other dissatisfied group were the Calvinists. While halting the persecution of beliefs that were not publicly expressed, Margaret was continuing to punish the public practice of Calvinism. By doing this she effectively prevented the Calvinist ministers from entering into the "social and spiritual functions of the Catholic clergy." If the Reformed began to perform marriages, engage in charity or provide education, they would intrude on the

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 71-72.

<sup>80</sup>Motley, Dutch Republic, I, 186-187.

powers of the conformity of government and religion.<sup>81</sup> Restriction of these functions to the Catholic church, which the government perceived as the only legitimate religion, was directly tied to the concept that the unity of the sacred and secular was required to maintain order in society. The message that Margaret sent was received differently by the Calvinists. Some Calvinists saw this as an opportunity for expansion. While she had not granted the tolerance of public practice of religion, she had granted a toleration of private belief. In the second half of the sixteenth century the idea of tolerance was one of permission or concession concerning religion, rather than an idea of approval. It meant enduring a different religion.<sup>82</sup> Margaret certainly did not intend to endure the practice of Calvinism, but the idea of private belief was all the encouragement that the Calvinists needed as more exiles from the Low Countries returned home from England and Germany and began to organize in earnest. Between the Calvinists and Margaret there was a clear disagreement. Margaret sought to preserved social and political order and thus had yielded on private belief, while the Calvinists were intent on going public.

A prime mover in the formation and promotion of the

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<sup>81</sup>Crew, Iconoclasm, 13.

<sup>82</sup>Joseph Lecler, Toleration and the Reformation (New York: Association Press, 1960), I, x.

Calvinist church was Philippe de Marnix. During the period of the Compromise, Philippe served as a religious advisor to Louis of Nassau and Hendrik van Brederode, who, along with Jean de Marnix, served as the leaders of the opposition to the government. In his role, Philippe served as a liaison between the Union of the Nobility and the consistories of the Reformed. He was particularly involved with the synod of Antwerp and the expansion of Calvinism.<sup>83</sup>

The city of Antwerp and its synod were a hotbed of Calvinist activity. Before 1566 an organization of consistories had taken place in west Flanders, Hainault and Antwerp, but generally the Calvinists were only rudimentarily organized. There was a shortage of trained ministers and most congregations were small.<sup>84</sup> More important than these activities were the growing open air meetings, the so-called hedge preachings. Started by reformers other than Calvinists, (the first of them was done by a former monk with Lutheran sympathies), they soon became the major device for promoting Calvinism in 1566. In May and June, the Calvinists were meeting clandestinely in Antwerp. After a series of meetings the consistory of Antwerp decided to "go public" and more ministers were

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<sup>83</sup>A. A. van Schelven, Marnix van Sint Aldegonde (Utrecht, 1938), 22-25; Albert Elkan, Johann und Philipp von Marnix während des Vorspiels der Niederländischen Aufstandes: 1565-1567 (Leipzig: E. Hermann, 1913), 25; Oosterhof, La vie litteraire de Marnix, 19.

<sup>84</sup>parker, Dutch Revolt, 72-73.

summoned from exile.<sup>85</sup> Once the public preaching started, Calvinist ministers drew increasingly large numbers of people outside of the towns. On June 30 an estimated 30,000 people attended one such meeting outside Antwerp.<sup>86</sup> Ominously, by July the people going to the hedge preaching marched "in battle formation" to the field to hear the sermon. The people of Antwerp came to these meetings fully armed.<sup>87</sup>

Needless to say, Marnix felt called upon to defend these armed meetings in his Vraye narration. Why did those of the Religion carry arms? Because there was the example of Vassy in France where the Duke of Guise had massacred the Calvinists. It was necessary to carry arms to prevent the "sedition or rebellion" of a massacre. Also Marnix stated, it was necessary to carry arms to protect themselves from those who had no public authority, vagabonds and robbers. (As cited in chapter two, a growing number of poor were roaming the countryside, which struck fear in the hearts of the burghers.) The arms were carried only for defense and thus to prevent violence. In places where the Magistrate assured protection from robbers and brigands, they had given up their arms.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>Crew, Iconoclasm, 7.

<sup>86</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 73.

<sup>87</sup>Crew, Iconoclasm, 8.

<sup>88</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 96-97.

On July 9 the grandees on the Council of State discussed the problem of the armed meetings. Orange pressed for a reliance on the Beggars (the lesser nobility of the Compromise) to control the crowds at the preachings. Margaret agreed to send Orange and Egmont to meet with them. About two hundred of the Beggars were then assembled at St. Trond (St. Truiden).<sup>89</sup> Both Philippe and Jean de Marnix were present with the Beggars at St. Trond, where Philippe continued in his role as religious advisor to both Brederode and Nassau.<sup>90</sup> A group of representatives from the consistories had gathered with the nobles of the Compromise. The Protestant nobles, both Lutheran and Calvinist, agreed to defend the Calvinist hedge preachings in exchange for money donated by the consistories. This money would later be used to raise German troops for the rebellion, though it was not clear if this was the plan from the beginning or not. In exchange, the ministers agreed to keep the peace and to do nothing against the king or local magistrates.<sup>91</sup>

On July 18 Orange and Egmont met with a delegation of twelve of the Beggars from St. Trond at the town of Duffel. At this time the confederated nobles presented a "second Request" which demanded full toleration of non-Catholics and a promise to summon the States General. All fourteen of

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<sup>89</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 73.

<sup>90</sup>Elkan, Marnix Vorspiel, 26-27.

<sup>91</sup>Crew, Iconoclasm, 8 and footnote 20.

them then went to meet with Margaret to present this new petition. They met with her on July 30 in Brussels. Margaret temporized and persuaded the delegation to delay for twenty-four days while they waited for the reply of Philip II to the first petition.<sup>92</sup>

In his account of the meeting of Orange and Egmont with the "gentlemen of St. Trond," Marnix claimed that Egmont assured them that they could remain armed at the hedge preachings to prevent another Vassy and to defend themselves against robbers, and others who did not have public authority who threatened the assemblies of the people. Marnix claimed this was only reasonable because of "natural law and conformed to the common sense of all nations, that one could legitimately repel illegitimate violence...and if one could say that such defense was against the word of God, then one could condemn all good laws and order."<sup>93</sup> A stronger defense of conforming to both secular and sacred order through their correspondance could not have been mounted by Marnix. Good temporal laws and actions conformed to divine law and the actions of the hedge preachers and the Beggars conformed to the orders of natural law, common sense and God, while those of Margaret and the government did not conform and thus were the source of disorder.

While all the authorities were waiting, violence broke

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<sup>92</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 73-74.

<sup>93</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 95.

out as a wave of iconoclasm that was to sweep the Low Countries started. The central government, the grandees and the Beggars had all lost control of the situation as the seriousness of the circumstances escalated towards full scale armed rebellion. While the political dissidents appeared prepared to wait, the more radical of the Calvinists acted with violence in a religious revolt.

## CHAPTER IV

## THOU SHALT NOT MAKE GRAVEN IMAGES

When violence broke out in the Low Countries, it came in the form of iconoclasm, in which the experience of the northern and southern Low Countries would be significantly different. Marnix was a staunch defender of these first acts of organized and repeated violence by the Calvinists in the Dutch revolt. Their attacks were on the statues, altars and other images used in Catholicism. In a larger cultural frame the iconoclasm represented a phase in the gradual shift from a culture that transmitted ideas by images to that of a print culture which used words.<sup>1</sup> Also, the sixteenth century would see the last days of the use of mental images as memory aides, as they would be replaced by printed records.<sup>2</sup> As a result of the iconoclasm and the following out-break of rebellion, Marnix would, consciously or unconsciously, attack the idea of the correspondence of the sacred and secular orders as necessary to maintain peace on earth. To preserve order and peace, Marnix would split the old correspondence into separate spheres of secular and

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 34-35.

<sup>2</sup> See Frances A. Yates, The Art of Memory (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966) and Jonathan D. Spence, The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci (New York: Viking, 1983).



sacred order, because subjects of a different religion could be just as good as those subjects who conformed to the ruler's religion.

Through the attacks on religious images, the armed rebellion against the rule of Philip II was triggered. For some, mostly Calvinists, the tie between the temporal and spiritual rebellion was made fast, but for the moderate, non-Calvinist nobles the iconoclasm was unacceptable and drove them from the revolt for the moment. As the moderates among the nobility and the magistracy recoiled in horror at the violence and apparent disorder of the iconoclasm, the essential question for Marnix was: who were the disturbers of order, the iconoclasts, or the functionaries of Philip's government? By asking which group was really in revolt, Marnix formed the basis of his propaganda and ideology of rebellion.

As early as 1562, the consistories of the exiled Flemish Calvinist churches in London and Sandwich, despite a minority opposed to violent actions, approved armed resistance in response to Margaret of Parma's repression of the Reformed in the Low Countries. In the southern Low Countries, on July 12th at Boeschope, in west Flanders, Ghilein Damman preached a sermon for the English refugee church with armed men present marking "the official start of armed resistance." At the conclusion of the sermon, the

images at nearby shrines were destroyed.<sup>3</sup>

In the southern textile region of west Flanders in August of 1566, the iconoclasm began anew, but this time it was to spread throughout the Low Countries. On August 10, outside of the monastery of St. Laurence at Steenvoorde, Sebastian Matte, a preacher recently returned from three years exile in England, delivered a sermon which was followed by the smashing of all of the images in the monastery. The next day Matte preached in Poperinghe, and this time a crowd of one hundred purged the town of religious images. From here his disciples spread throughout Flanders in an iconoclastic fury. A band of between fifty to one hundred men moved from town to town casting down the idols of Catholicism. Many of them had recently returned from exile and had been recruited by the consistories of Antwerp and other towns. Others were "unemployed manual workers, drunkards, whores and boys in their early teens." They were paid by the Calvinists at about the rate of an unskilled laborer. As a general rule the local magistrates offered no resistance.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>M. F. Backhouse, "The Official Start of Armed Resistance in the Low Countries: Boeschepe 12 July 1562," Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte 71 (1980), 198-226. Also see, Phyllis Mack Crew, Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm in the Netherlands: 1544-1569 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 44, 98.

<sup>4</sup>Geoffrey Parker, The Dutch Revolt (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 75-80. As an example, on August 20 about twenty to thirty men under armed guard went through the town and countryside and systematically destroyed the

To the north, in the province of Holland the iconoclasm began in an orderly manner after the news arrived that Antwerp had been "cleansed." On August 23, the clergy removed the images in Amsterdam, an act which was duplicated over the next ten days in Delft, The Hague, Leiden, Brill, Alkmaar and Heenvliet. Unlike the south, the iconoclasm in the north was carried frequently with the cooperation of the local magistrates, rather than having a uninvited mob enter the church and smash the images. Under the control of the magistrates indiscriminate destruction was avoided, though in some places, like Horn, the Catholic clergy successfully resisted the removal. For example, at The Hague and Delft two members of the Reformed told the President of the Court of Holland that they had a warrant to purge the churches. The President approved and told them to do it "without causing a commotion." In fact, twelve men were paid out of the pocket of the President to carry out the orders. In other cases, as with Brederode and Culembourg, the nobles of Holland, unlike nobles in Flanders, had the images, altars, vestments, service books and organs removed from churches on their domains.<sup>5</sup>

This destruction of images played a central part in the

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religious images. The magistrates remained passive. Herman Van Der Wee, Antwerp and the European Market (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), II, 234-235.

<sup>5</sup>A. C. Duke and D. H. A. Kolff, "The Time of Troubles in the County of Holland, 1566-7," Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis 82 (1969), 321-324.

theology of Calvinism. Carlos Eire has recently demonstrated in an examination of iconoclasm in Switzerland that Calvinism rejected the external imagery of much of late medieval piety in favor of the internal spiritual emphasis of reformers like Erasmus, as language became "the primary link between the human and the divine."<sup>6</sup> Reformers like Luther and Calvin went beyond the indifference of Erasmus to the external materialism of medieval Catholicism to a denouncing of it as evil and of human invention. While none of the major reformers advocated iconoclasm, it became the most visible expression of the "revolt against Rome." The followers of Calvin held that correct worship could not use any material props. Because Calvin's God was spiritual and transcendent, not immanent on earth as in medieval Catholicism, no carnal conception of Him was possible, as that would diminish God. The Calvinist concept of God required the destruction of the idols.<sup>7</sup>

What worried the reformers, Marnix included, was that the simple worshipper would mistake the image for the heavenly being and thus be guilty of idol worship, which was clearly forbidden in the Ten Commandments and elsewhere in the Bible. In an unpublished tract, "Van de beelden afgheworpen in de Nederlanden in Augusto 1566" (Of the

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<sup>6</sup>Carlos M. N. Eire, War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 41.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 40-74, 199-217.

images destroyed in the Netherlands in August 1566), Marnix argued exactly that point, and concluded that the use of images in any form of Christian worship or study was idolatry and against God's order and authority.<sup>8</sup>

The worry of mistaking the religious images for the Calvinist, spiritual, transcendent God was a rejection of not just what they saw as the externals of Catholicism, but also a beginning of the rejection of the entire idea of the correspondence of heavenly and earthly order which underlay the system of order in the late middle ages. (See chapter two for an extended discussion of the idea of correspondences.) What surer test of the idea of this correspondence than the iconoclasm which tested the Calvinist ministers' claims "against the magical efficacy of the [Catholic] Church's ornaments and rituals."<sup>9</sup> In terms of the notion of cosmic order, the destruction of a temporal image, without the invoking of the immediate wrath of God, might well prove that it did not correspond to a heavenly order. Also, the idea that the macrocosm of God's order could be reflected in a microcosm of images on earth was too risky. To misidentify the earthly image as divine in itself was idolatry and would risk your soul to eternal damnation.

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<sup>8</sup>Marnix, "Van de beelden afgheworpen in de Nederlanden in Augusto 1566," in Philips van Marnix van St. Aldegonde: Godsdienstige en kerkelijke geschriften, edited by J. J. van Toorenenbergen ('s Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1871), I, 6-12.

<sup>9</sup>Crew, Iconoclasm, 24-25.

As such it was the duty of the king and magistracy to remove the idols from the churches as the Jewish leaders of the Old Testament had done.<sup>10</sup> But what if the temporal rulers did not act? Then this "cult of purified religion was easily transformed...into a cult of violence."<sup>11</sup> From its base in the Calvinist idea of God and the objections to idolatry, the iconoclasm undermined the medieval system of order based on correspondence. A new order in religion was required even if it took violence to achieve it. The conflict between the old correspondence of sacred and secular order and what would be the new order of separating the two in the ideology of Marnix became more apparent in his defense of the iconoclasts.

Marnix took up his defense of the iconoclasts in his Vraye narration et apologie.<sup>12</sup>

There remains to deal with the breaking of images, which those of the [Calvinist] Religion are charged with more than any others. The accusers interpret this act as a force of public violence, an act of sedition and a manifestation of disturbance of the entire political order...[for which] his Majesty cannot receive any other satisfaction than the ruin and extermination of

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., I, 13.

<sup>11</sup>Donald R. Kelley, The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 100.

<sup>12</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration et apologie des choses passées au Pays-Bas, touchant le Fait de la Religion en l'An M.D. LXVI, in Philips van Marnix...Schriften, edited by van Toorenbergen, I, 35-133.

the greater part of his subjects.<sup>13</sup>

These the charges, which Marnix challenged and denied were very reflective of the sentiments in the medieval order of correspondences which Lacey Baldwin Smith found in Tudor England. The need for the correspondence in order between God's heaven and earth required the strict submission to political authority. Disobedience was an affront to God and king, which would lead to the collapse of the entire political and social order. Treason started in an evil heart, and sedition was the result of pride, envy and greed. The seditious, so the thinking went, were seeking a short-cut to power and riches and were in league with the Devil. The only solution was to root out the social evil and destroy it.<sup>14</sup> Clearly from this perspective, the Calvinist iconoclasts were seen as threatening all of social and political order. But was the iconoclasm really a threat to create disorder or a response to prior disorder? What were the conditions which formed the back drop to Marnix's defense?

The iconoclasm and the passive response of the magistrates and the general population reflected a general breakdown in authority. Immediately, the destruction showed a people "radically estranged from the traditional role of

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 98.

<sup>14</sup>Lacey Baldwin Smith, Treason in Tudor England (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 134-138.

religion,"<sup>15</sup> but the estrangement was more than just religious. Following the unusually harsh winter of 1566, the economy in the south was under stress as wages fell and prices rose. After a period of prolonged growth the economy was sinking.<sup>16</sup> By May and June economic activity in Antwerp was at "a standstill." Consequently, the skilled workers saw their standard of living decline and many suffered the anxiety of joining the ranks of the poor. The "revolutionary ferment always present amongst the lowest classes became a very real threat to social order."<sup>17</sup> Margaret, the nobles, and the magistrates by hesitating in confronting the complaints about the Inquisition and the edicts against heresy presented the Netherlands with a temporary vacuum of authority.<sup>18</sup> It was into this gap of authority, both political and religious, during a time of economic distress that the Calvinist preachers appeared.

The true mass movement which involved the people of the Netherlands at this time was the attendance at the hedge preachings, not iconoclasm. The Calvinist ministers were

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<sup>15</sup>E. H. Kossman and A. F. Mellink, eds. Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974) 10-11.

<sup>16</sup>Herman Van Der Wee, "The Economy as a Factor in the Start of the Revolt in the Southern Netherlands," Acta Historiae Neerlandica 5 (1971), 64-65.

<sup>17</sup>Herman Van Der Wee, The Growth of the Antwerp Market and the European Economy (The Hague: Marinus Nijhoff, 1963), II, 232-234.

<sup>18</sup>Duke and Kolff, "Troubles in Holland," 329-332.



the unquestioned leaders at the hedge preachings. To the audience, they appeared as "defenders of the traditional social and political hierarchy." They told the people what they wanted to hear, and not everyone present was a Calvinist. The ministers appeared to be a "genuine center of authority." The unmolested meetings were also an implicit display of power with the presence of armed men. The message of the preachers was that an open clash with Catholicism could not be controlled. The hope was expressed that a grant of tolerance would save the people from the Inquisition and preserve the authority of local magistrates, nobles and guilds. In place of the instability of temporal authority, the preachers offered a belief in the stability of God's higher sacred order and authority.<sup>19</sup>

The response to the iconoclasm revealed divisions in the resistance to the central government of Philip and Margaret. This split was not only evident among the nobility, but also further separated the provinces of the north from those of the south. The direction of both splits made Marnix's task both as a propagandist and later as a politician more difficult as he sought to preserve these unities for the rebellion. The iconoclasm in Flanders and the southern provinces polarized the people of the south more than those of Holland and the north. The burgers of the north seemed to be less frightened by the appearance of

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<sup>19</sup>Crews, Iconoclasm, 3, 37, 151-181.

the Calvinists.<sup>20</sup> Further, the iconoclasm divided the political and religious resistance as the unity that had been provided by the fear and hatred of the inquisition was destroyed.<sup>21</sup>

This was true in part because on August 23 Margaret, the grandees, the nobles of the compromise and the Calvinists had reached an Accord. This Accord provided for the freedom of worship by Protestants in all areas where they presently existed. Everywhere there was talk of a religionsvrede (religious peace) modeled after the Augsburg settlement in Germany.<sup>22</sup> Margaret appeared to have surrendered to Orange, Egmont, Horn and Hoogstraten on the issue of the freedom of the Reformed to practice their religion. Moderate public opinion was satisfied.<sup>23</sup> Orange was the first grandee to act. He introduced the settlement in Antwerp on September 4 as both Calvinist and Lutherans were permitted public worship, only the Anabaptist were excluded. Horn and Egmont followed suit by permitting Calvinism in both Tournai and Ghent.<sup>24</sup> Despite this the iconoclasm continued. The persistent destruction "sickened

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<sup>20</sup>J. J. Woltjer, Opstand en onafhankelijkheid, (n.p.: n.d.), 24-25.

<sup>21</sup>Duke, "Salvation by Coercion," 137-138.

<sup>22</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 81.

<sup>23</sup>Woltjer, Opstand, 14.

<sup>24</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 81.

the majority of moderate-minded citizens" and the political opponents of Margaret turned "in fear and disgust" to the Regent and respectability.<sup>25</sup> This permitted Margaret to move to a renewed policy of suppression.<sup>26</sup> On September 13, with Orange absent, the grandees in the Council of State and Margaret denounced Orange's actions at Antwerp. He permitted Protestant worship inside the town which Margaret had sought to avoid. Orange had overstepped his bounds and exceeded her wishes.

Marnix specifically addressed the iconoclasm in Antwerp. He protested that all the Reformed sought was permission from the magistrate to use an existing church in their worship, which meant one cleansed of idols for proper worship of God. This destruction of images was an expression

of a manifest providence of God, which had shown there was detestation and horror in the abominable idolatry, which has been committed around the images, to the great dishonor of the name of Christ and all of Christianity. He wanted to expose in opprobrium and mockery the prudence of men, who always feebly established new services according to their mad (folle) imagination. Because one had wanted notwithstanding that this was contrary to the express commandment of God ...[and] in the fashion of the ancient pagans (against whom Justin, Lactance, Origien, Augustine and other saintly fathers wrote).<sup>27</sup>

The iconoclasts, according to Marnix, were expressing the

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<sup>25</sup>Wedgwood, William the Silent, 89.

<sup>26</sup>Woltjer, Opstand, 14.

<sup>27</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 100-101.

will of God and God's order. Thus, it was not the Calvinists who were the source of disorder, but the Catholics.

The disorder created by the human inventions in the religion of the Catholics had caused

the poor people to commit, and still to this day it continues, the horrible and abominable idolatry since the introduction of these statues, at which all men who fear God must shiver with astonishment. Because one sees daily that they kiss the stone and the wood, light the candles, offer the incense, ..., say the Pater Nosters and Ave Marias, get on their knees and, before opening their hands, attribute the entire miracle to superstition.<sup>28</sup>

The idolatry of the Catholics had caused the simple people to violate the commands of God. By worshipping statues, not God, they gave the statues the powers of God.

But even worse,

they say that these are representations of God, but if they desire to adore God in images and remembrances, why don't they adore the living images? God himself pronounced that man was made in his image. Meanwhile, they without conscience burn at a small fire the image of God shining in a man endowed with reason and intelligence. If he has struck the nose of a trunk of wood, they would cry murder and say that one has committed the crime of divine and human lèse majesty.<sup>29</sup>

This was a very telling point in Marnix's defense of the iconoclasts. The demand by the Catholic authorities to punish the iconoclasts as heretics led Marnix to respond that they were burning the true image and likeness of God--

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid. 101-102.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 102.

man--for having attacked the false images of wood and stone. Who then represented the true order of God? Which group was guilty of lèse majesty and its attendant disorder? Clearly, Marnix thought that it was the Catholics who were guilty of sedition and rebellion against God and mankind and not the Calvinists.

Marnix next turned to the matter of what were the proper "remembrances of God" and how they should be worshipped.

If it is necessary to kneel before the remembrances of God, why don't they prostrate themselves before the sun, the moon, the sky and the earth and before all living humans? Why do they only adore the work of images, which are only their works? Because certainly one would know to deny that the works represented by the creator are one's own works. In truth, it is better to worship the ox and the cows in the manner of the Egyptians...than to give homage to wood....[And then to say that the wood] was like God, who is an infinite spirit, incomprehensible, author of life, giver of all good and creator of all things.<sup>30</sup>

This was a stark denial of both the external material order of medieval Catholicism and of the ability of man to construct a material sacred order that corresponded to God's order. God had created the universe and all that was good in it. Man was incapable of replicating this order from his own imagination because it was a source of error and disorder. Man could only create false gods.<sup>31</sup> Here was an implicit attack on the whole idea of medieval order based on

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 102-103.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 105.

correspondances in Catholicism between heavenly spirit and earthly images. If God was spirit, how could depraved man give God material form on earth?

What was to be done about the humanly created false gods? Of course, they must be removed, but who was empowered to do it? The standard answer of the reformers from Luther to Calvin had been that the magistrates had the power and obligation to remove the idols. Marnix answered:

it is the proper office and duty of the magistrate to knock down all instruments of idolatry, which have been erected by the public authority, even when the anger of God is contained in all the people.<sup>32</sup>

The office of magistrate was empowered by God through the calling (vocatio) to the sword.<sup>33</sup> There was no idea of popular sovereignty here. The power of removal rested with the magistrates who received their power from God, not the people. Indeed, as we have seen, frequently in the north the iconoclasts sought and gained the cooperation of the town government or local noble in removing the images since this was seen as the legitimate way to do it.

But what if the magistrates refused and the people acted without them? Could Marnix find justification for the people to act and not be charged with sedition? Indeed, he could

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 107.

<sup>33</sup>Richard Benert, "Inferior Magistrates in Sixteenth Century Political and Legal Thought" (Ph.D. diss., U. of Minnesota, 1967), 76.

In the first place, there are many images and altars in churches, which have been erected and paid for by particular people. And how can the public authority of the magistrate be introduced there, if they [the donors of the images and altars] do not lose their right and authority which they have towards these things? It appears that anyone could, even in his house, erect an altar, chapel and images such as he wished. It is clear that when he would remove or knock down his altar or chapel he could then be charged with heresy, but certainly one has never known this to be joined to rebellion or sedition. Moreover, it would not be a violation of a private thing. Nevertheless, consider that several good bourgeois in the popular trouble knocked down or removed the images and altars which they themselves or their ancestors had erected. This as much as denies that they could be blamed for having violated the majesty of the King, or the public authority of the Magistrate....After having recognized that this was idolatry, they [the donors] would have been guilty of divine lèse majesty. Moreover, they would have seen the occasion when the name of God was profaned and dishonored according to the appetite of their grotesque figures.<sup>34</sup>

Marnix conceded that public order was subject to the magistrate, but he also allowed private order, not subject to the public authorities, could erect or tear down images and chapels as the individual conscience dictated. Perhaps the Catholic authorities can cry heresy, but they cannot claim this an act of sedition or rebellion. There was a difference between acts of religious conscience and public disorder. Private conscience, for Marnix, had to conform to God's order. In fact, to fail to act according to one's conscience in matters of religion was to be guilty of the ultimate rebellion - the rebellion against God's order in

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<sup>34</sup>Marnix, Vraye narration, 107-108.

favor of the false order of idolatrous religion. This was the major step in severing the unity of sacred and secular order into separate spheres of private conscience and public conduct, or heresy and sedition. Marnix still had to account for why iconoclasm by individuals was approved by God as legitimate.

Marnix then argued that for Christianity to be properly ordered, his ever present concern, the people had to destroy the idols. He pointed to Biblical examples to support his case of the people acting against the will of the temporal authority. The prophet Elijah had incited the people to destroy their idols, against the authority of the king. He had even removed all the priests and prophets of Baal. Gideon had done the same against the public authority in pulling down the altar of Baal.<sup>35</sup> The duplication of action Marnix traced between the ministers of Calvin and the Jewish leaders of the Old Testament in inciting the people of God to iconoclasm was obvious.

What moved the iconoclasts of the Low Countries to action? According to Marnix, "they were pushed by a single movement of the spirit of God." How else can you explain

that in four or five days the women, children and men, without authority, without arms, and small in number, people who for the most part came from contemptible and low condition, have been able to tear down and ruin nearly all of the images, altars, and ornaments of the temples in the Low

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 108.



Countries?<sup>36</sup>

In short, this extraordinary event was the result of the will of God. Marnix's explanation for the inactivity of the magistrates took no account of the hesitancy to act and the gap in authority, rather it was the "finger and power of God" which made the Magistrates "dizzy" and prevented them from stopping God's work. "Certainly if a sparrow cannot fall to earth without His will and ordinance, how does one think that such an incredible" event like the iconoclasm can take place.<sup>37</sup> This was God's order being imposed by the people who were moved by the spirit of God. (Incidentally by parallel, this was a power that Marnix never granted to the people in the secular political order, as only duly constituted secular authorities could redress secular disorder.)

Far from being rebellion and disorder, then, this was the establishing of Godly order according to God's will and ordinances.

The profession of the reformed religion was joined in the said young men and children by an instinct and movement of their conscience. I say, that it was necessary after knowing the word of God and how it dishonored the divine majesty with images. They were pushed by zeal and inflamed with a vehement ardor to show ...their repentance from error. Like a married woman, who by seduction and fraud had been abandoned as a whore, after coming to the true knowledge of her sin, returns in grace to her marriage...and burns the rings and jewels

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 109.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 109-110.

which she received in her whoredom. Because we know by the word of God, that we are conjoined with Jesus Christ, like to our own spouse, which repudiates spiritual whoredom....[When his people fall into] vile debauchery, have abandoned their spouses for whores and allow their inventions and good intentions of their heart [to be images] of wood and stone, as said by the Prophets, and then comes to know of his sin by the word of God, that he shows this by the breaking of images and other instruments of the whore.<sup>38</sup>

In this spiritual marriage of man to God through Christ it was possible to be seduced by the whore of Babylon, who was the pope and the Roman church. The fleshy externals of the Roman church were like the flesh of a whore who lured the purity of the soul of the Christian away from the true internal spiritual order of God. However, once the true order of God was made known to the conscience of the believer, there was no choice but to act on the inspiration of God and destroy the decorative externals of the whore to show the internal purification of your conscience. Thus, it was the hand of God acting through the iconoclasts in the destruction of the false god of images.

After discussing the importance of instructed conscience, Marnix returned to the relationship between the temporal order of the magistrate and the sacred order of the conscience of the people. The people, now aware of their remorseful consciences, had patiently waited for the magistrate and the king to exercise their legitimate vocation to remove the idols. But Marnix asked,

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 115-116.

Why is it necessary at present to await the authority of the magistrate, when we deem that God alone in power, without others, is the judge of the truth? ....And could we call it not rebellion and sedition, but rather a very ardent and inconsiderate zeal? ...There is a difference between withdrawing from the obedience and subjection to your king and breaking a trunk of wood, when one repents for having been subject to idolatry and rendering obedience to the devil and false gods.<sup>39</sup>

Once a person's conscience had been instructed it could no longer subject itself to obeying false religion. This did not mean that the person was unwilling to subject himself to the obedience of his prince and the magistrates, but if subjecting himself to temporal authority in matters of religion meant obeying the devil and disobeying God, his conscience must obey God, and this was not temporal rebellion. In fact, Marnix was quick to point out, "in all other points and in all other times, we have always shown loyalty and obedience to his majesty."<sup>40</sup>

Marnix maintained that the iconoclasts were not in rebellion or creating disorder even though it was

true that many had abandoned their first religion founded on the authority of the pope and the Roman church in order to embrace that which they had found to be only and simply propped on the authority of the word of Jesus Christ, who is the cornerstone of the edifice and the true foundation of the ancient catholic church of the prophets and apostles.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 116-117.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 117.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

It was not an act of temporal rebellion to return to the true church of Christ. It was merely conforming to the proper order of religion based on the word, rather than the false idols of the Roman church.

If it is rebellion to want to save your soul and to simply obey the word of God and the voice of the true shepherd (pastor) Jesus Christ, without accepting nor obeying the voice of outsiders, who boast of being the church of God and in the meanwhile remove themselves from knowing the word of God in order to follow the authority of their own inventions, then it is certain that all of Germany is in revolt, as is France, England, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Poland and infinite other countries. In short, it is necessary to conclude that all of the Christians of the past in the ancient church, that generally all the sheep of the shepherd of the son of God had revolted and rebelled against their princes and magistrates when they had wanted to adhere to their religion...It is even necessary to say that all the prophets and apostles, in truth even Jesus Christ himself, had been not only rebellious and seditious, but also the leaders and authors of rebellion. And in fact, they were accused and even condemned for such by the judges, who based their arrests and judgments not on the point of the disobedience to the word of God, but on the transgression of statutes and ordinances of their fathers and ancestors and on the violation of the edicts of Caesar.<sup>42</sup>

Here was a clear statement of a different order that stood in contrast to the idea satirized in Den Byencorf. The true church of God was not a hierarchical order with a pope at the top, but rather a gathering of believers tended by Jesus as their leader. This was not a material, visible gathering but one of the spirit, with Christ as its head.

In addition, this ordering was instructed by words not

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 117-118.

images. There was a purity ascribed to language in Marnix's writing, which reflected the humanist conception of language as a conveyer of truth, when the language had not been corrupted by time and human invention. To Marnix and others, this pure ancient language of God condemned the use of images and idols. Thus the use of images was a source of corruption and disorder of the purity of language which perverted the message by misleading the viewer. The solution to this disorder was to destroy the corruption of the images in order to return to the purity of the word of God. In this Marnix compared the iconoclasts to Christ, the prophets and the apostles as a way of demonstrating the purity of the Calvinists' act in returning the proper order to Christianity. Just like their ancient models, the Calvinists had been accused of violating human order and laws which stood in violation of the word of God. In neither the ancient nor the modern case were the violators of these human inventions guilty of temporal rebellion or sedition, but only of obedience to the word of God which was the highest source of truth. This was what Marnix meant by freedom of conscience. Not the freedom to believe whatever one chose, but to believe the correct word of God against external oppression which represented the corruption of God's true words.

What then was to be the relationship between God's religion and the temporal authority over the issue of

rebellion? To answer this question Marnix invoked the image of the scales of justice. Our king must hear the cause of his people from them and not their accusers

in order to judge them not according to the false scales of humans, but according to the true and infallible scales of the word of God. And rather than to condemn his humble and obedient subjects of rebellion at the request of their accusers, only because they seek with all their heart the road to salvation. They have wanted to remove all of the abuses and superstitions introduced by the greed and ambitions of the popes, which until now have been dangerous even to the most powerful of Christian kings, in order to join with others in the simple doctrine of the prophets and apostles. His majesty should call to mind all of the good duties of obedience and loyalty that they have made and shown in the past, that they are still prompt and prepared to make.<sup>43</sup>

In a very general sense, Marnix said the Calvinists would gladly render unto Caesar what was Caesar's and unto God what was God's. He protested that in all matters except religion they had been obedient to the king. In religion, they had to be obedient to God. Their actions in each sphere respectively should be judged by the appropriate laws and scales of justice: human laws for temporal matters and God's law for spiritual matters. There was a complete separation of authority between the sacred and secular expressed here. The conflict arose because the magistrate sought to apply human laws to God's order and thus falsely accused the iconoclasts of rebellion, when all they were doing was carrying out God's wishes. Here Marnix finished

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 119.

untying the knot which held sacred and secular order together. He then turned to assure Philip II that this ending of conformity would not produce bad or seditious subjects.

If only the king would look to the other nations he would find "that his majesty has in the Low Countries just as many loyal and good subjects as any other king who wears a crown in Christendom." Marnix cited the Germans and the French as having always been praised for their loyalty to their kings.<sup>44</sup> Yet the French Wars of Religion had begun anyway because the Catholic nobility had violated a royal edict of limited toleration for the Reformed by physically attacking the Calvinists and in doing so the Catholics were guilty of disorder. By usurping the power of the magistrates the Catholics were the ones guilty of sedition and rebellion, not the Calvinists who were acting in an orderly and legal fashion. Indeed, behind this disorder and rebellion was a Catholic conspiracy, not only against the Calvinist Huguenots, but against the political order of the kingdom as well. In this Marnix was turning around the usual conspiracy charge which the Catholics tended to lay at the feet of an international Calvinist movement. Marnix was again charging the Catholics with violating the order of

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 120-122.

heaven and earth, but this time in France.<sup>45</sup>

If religious war can occur in France, it also can in the Low Countries, especially if the king was misled by evil councilors and introduced force to check the spread of Calvinism. The use of force prompted a veiled threat by Marnix of temporal destruction. It is worth quoting at length.

God shows us again and again that it is he who advances this religion [Calvinism] against all efforts of mortal humans. What duty of opinion does one hold who counsels his majesty to come with assistance in order to extinguish all, when in truth it is at the price of the ruin of all his subjects? Do they seek to make God's war and pull Christ to their side by the force of arms? When all the time God will be maintained by the virtue of his spirit and by the sword of his word against all human audacity and violence.

But if they do not respect so many and manifest examples, nor the clear and apparent evidence of the judgement of God, nor consider and dread the misfortune of events on the side of all those who seem to undertake these pursuits, nor are they able to turn aside such dangerous counsel and advice, then still less do they consider the consequences which could ensue.

If his majesty came with the force of arms, it would be necessary either that his subjects receive them and allow them to execute his will, or else that they oppose them. Whichever way this happens, it can only result in a miserable and certain ruin of general desolation....[If the people resist the king's forces,] they will be constrained and forced to receive the aid of foreigners, who once here would not want to leave. And certainly if the country wanted to offer resistance, it is very true that the king's power

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 123-126. Marnix also alleged that it was similar in other countries. The conspiracy of Catholics could be seen. In Naples the Inquisition had been introduced; in England the attempt had been made to destroy Protestantism; and in Scotland the suppression attempts continued.



would surpass that of his subjects, but it would be at great hazard.

Because the events of war are very uncertain, and daily one sees that God does not always give victory to those who appear the strongest in human appearance, but to those who seem good.<sup>46</sup>

If it came to force, Marnix quite prophetically pointed to several weaknesses in the king's position, beyond violation of God's will.<sup>47</sup> Since so many troops would be required to subjugate the southern Low Countries, Holland and Zealand could become the crucial leaders of the resistance. Furthermore, to maintain the necessary number of troops, the king would have to rely on Spanish and other foreign soldiers. All of this would produce

an intolerable tyranny, which would be exercised against everyone,..ruining the entire country. Those who could foresee this would choose a quick death with the hope to allow to their children the ancient liberty, rather than wait for a more miserable servitude of a thousand deaths.<sup>48</sup>

In brief, the use of force would fail, and fail it did to hold all of the Low Countries, for reasons Marnix predicted. The emergent power of Holland and Zealand, which displaced Flanders as the dominate region in the Low Countries, never fell totally under the control of Philip II once the

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 127.

<sup>47</sup>It was prophetic considering this was probably written between May of 1567 and August of 1568 while in exile. The evidence for this was that the Duke of Alva arrived in August of 1568 with Spanish troops, an event that had not happened at the time this was written.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 128.

rebellion began. In their war against Philip, the rebels received aid from England, and to a lesser extent from France and the Empire. Beyond the perceived violation of medieval privileges, many of the policies of Alva and his successors were harsh and brutal as thousands were tried and executed for heresy and treason and Spanish troops repeatedly mutinied and sacked towns when they went unpaid due to Philip's continual bankruptcies.

But what if the people of the Low Countries chose the other alternative and allowed the king's troops to enforce his will against the rebels without resistance? What would happen then? Marnix answered, this also would lead to the destruction of the king's own subjects. The king "would have to strike at the arms and legs of his own body. Blood would be spilled from his own veins."<sup>49</sup> Here Marnix was using the familiar correspondence model of natural order of a king being the head of a body and the people the rest of the body. To use temporal force to redress sacred concerns, even if not resisted, would be destructive to the body politic and temporal order.

Marnix found other reasons for Philip not to use force. In short, the king could ill afford to lose the support of the Low Countries if he hoped to achieve his dynastic goals. The Netherlands had been very important in the wars with France that recently ceased at Cateau-Cambresis (1559).

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 128.

Also, they were a source of revenue for that crusade against Islam and the Turks that both Charles V and Philip II held so dear. Throughout Philip II's reign his policies in Western Europe and the Mediterranean were a balancing act with the struggle against the Turks often of prime importance. During the early 1560s, Philip had been preoccupied with the building of Spanish strength in the Mediterranean.<sup>50</sup>

Could Philip, even if successful in forcefully exterminating Calvinism, afford the ruin of the "most beautiful pearl of his crown?" This would delight Philip's greatest rival, as the king of France could strike the kingdom of Navarre and Flanders. But worse, the Iberian peninsula may be threatened. The Turks could invade Catalonia and the frontier provinces, while the Jews and Moors, who have been forced into Christianity, could use this occasion to join with the Moors in Africa to introduce paganism in all Spain. Marnix darkly warned, "what then would it have profited the king to have ruined his subjects and friends, and rendered himself so exposed, that he could not resist his enemies?" It was on the consideration of things like these that "the safety and grandeur of his majesty is totally dependent."<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>J. H. Elliott, Imperial Spain: 1469-1716 (New York: The New American Library, 1963), 228-229.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 129-130.

It would be difficult to describe for Philip II and Spain a more personal apocalypse than that written by Marnix. Indeed leaving aside the French threat, Philip was faced by just such a threat. Malta was under siege by the Turks, and a plot was uncovered in 1565 when three Morisco spies were arrested in the midst of a plot for the Turks to land in Granada if Malta fell. In fact, "the grim picture in Philip's mind of a triumphant Islam raising the crescent once again on Spanish soil, was by no means entirely fanciful in the circumstances of 1565 and 1566."<sup>52</sup> As usual, the most effective propaganda used available facts and fears.

Why was Philip faced with such problems? Marnix responded, for willfully creating temporal disorder among the people in his threat to resist God's order as expressed by the Calvinists in the Low Countries, rather than maintaining temporal order and peace. Philip risked losing everything, just as the idea of order and correspondances in sixteenth century thought said he would. If Philip used secular political forces to block the proper sacred order all he would succeed in doing was creating temporal disorder, then he would pay the price of losing his secular possessions and power though the resistance of the not only the Calvinists, but also the non-Calvinists of the Low Countries and Spain because Philip II would be acting as a

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<sup>52</sup>Elliot, Imperial Spain, 236.

tyrant by promoting disorder among his people, not peace by violating the proper order of the laws, customs and privileges of the provinces. It was implied that it was of no great consequence what religion Philip had, so long as he did not seek to use his temporal power to create disorder by resisting God's order of worship. The rulers job was to maintain temporal order by not being a tyrant and a part of this temporal order was not interfering with sacred or religious order. If the ruler chose to resist, then he chose to be in rebellion against God and would be punished by the lose of his temporal authority and possessions.

Marnix would close the Vraye narration by applying his ideology. He showed a way out of tyranny and disorder to the rebellious Philip and his advisors. Allow the Calvinists freedom of public worship, if Philip did this he would disconnect the unity of sacred and secular order that Philip thought necessary to maintain peace in his territories. By giving up this correspondence of order, peace could return, and Philip would retain his temporal authority because Philip's rebellion would have ended. Specifically, Marnix requested that Philip

imitate the clemency and good nature of the late Emperor Charles, his father, of high memory, who formerly accorded to the princes and people of Germany and, following in the same vein, that necessity and experience have shown to the king of France that it is the only and sovereign remedy to all troubles, seditions, public calamities and the

great spilling of blood.<sup>53</sup>

Marnix asked for a religious peace like that of Augsburg granted by Charles V in the Holy Roman Empire, which essentially allowed the princes to chose between Catholicism and Lutheranism in their territory. This was an imperfect model for Marnix's purpose as it made no allowance for Calvinists and also, recalling that Philip was the prince in each province of the Low Countries (as Duke of Brabant, Count of Holland, etc.), it was not clear how Marnix thought this would work to create Protestant provinces. Certainly, Marnix did not assume that Philip would create Protestant provinces as prince. Marnix was probably assuming that William of Orange and the other high nobles, as stadholders, would chose the religion, and thus would have created some exclusively Protestant and some exclusively Catholic provinces in the Netherlands.

In exchange for the liberty of worship, Marnix was prepared to guarantee obedient subjects in all temporal matters.

We promise on our side to vow to God and witness on our consciences to render to the king all obedience and fidelity, to dedicate and consecrate our lives and our goods to his very humble service. And if anyone finds among us or ours, one who is unmindful so far as to not want to render obedience, or tries in any manner to trouble the peace and tranquility of the public, we will not refuse an exemplary punishment, according to the demands of the crime. We offer to help with all that is in our power to aid in

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 131-132.

this.

We only solicit that in liberty of conscience we have public power with his grant to invoke the name of God and to serve according to his word and to pray to him in our assemblies for the prosperity and grandeur of his majesty.

And that such was our intention and will, thus we have declared and take as witness the sovereign God, sole scrutinizer of our hearts and thoughts.... With all our heart we detest all rebellion, sedition and mutiny. We subject ourselves voluntary to all political ordinances, to which we know that God has subjected us....And solicit the all powerful Lord God, that he will manifest our justice and reveal by his fair judgement the false villainy and lies of those slanderers and disturbers of public peace: so that the truth is known....Amen.<sup>54</sup>

The Vraye narration closed with a plea that the rulers and people of Europe know that the Calvinists were not the rebels who disturbed public order, but rather it was those who accused them of disorder who were the source of chaos. Marnix's plea went unheeded as intransigence on both sides led to prolonged rebellion and the enactment of Marnix's ideology of rebellion in the policy of the revolt.

In Madrid Philip II and his advisors had been considering the situation in the Netherlands since the spring of 1566, long before the outbreak of violence. Now in the fall, the fateful decision was taken to send Spanish troops to suppress the Netherlands. These troops left for the Netherlands in the spring of 1567. In the meanwhile, the Calvinist opposition, under Brederode and Louis of Nassau, started to gather troops to its banner. Margaret

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 132-133.

sent troops to troublesome areas and punished the leaders of the iconoclasm. In December, she made attending a Calvinist service a capital offense and began a siege of the Calvinist city of Valenciennes. The relief force raised by the Calvinists at Watterlos was routed by government forces, which virtually destroyed Calvinism in Flanders. On March 13, 1567, the majority of the Calvinist forces were surprised at Oosterweel and most of them were killed, including Jean de Marnix. As an expression of loyalty to Margaret's attempted settlement of the religious dispute and in response to the armed Calvinist rebellion, half of the troops for Margaret at this battle had been provided by Egmont. By mid-May of 1567, the first phase of the rebellion was over. The grandees had been separated from the Calvinists' cause and the Calvinists who remained in the Netherlands had been suppressed.<sup>55</sup> Orange had played out his cards. At the time of Oosterweel, he appeared to be siding with the government, but he had followed a role of placing himself between the Beggars and the Catholics. He had attempted to mediate between the two sides, but failed as the courts in Brussels and Spain lost confidence in him and he could not meet the demands of the religious dissidents. His efforts were directed at maintaining his position in the Netherlands. He delayed as long as he could hoping for a favorable turn of fortune's wheel to restore

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<sup>55</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 82-99.



his position before deciding to abandon the Netherlands for Germany and exile.<sup>56</sup> These actions would not leave Orange as the automatic leader of the revolt, as many Calvinists, including Marnix, distrusted him for not joining in the armed struggle on the side of the Reformed.

The Duke of Alva arrived in August with the Spanish troops to implement a policy that would be "a uniquely sorry combination of incompetence, brutality and fanaticism" that would unite an opposition "of varying persuasions and often faltering resolution behind the banner of Faith, Fatherland and Freedom."<sup>57</sup> By mid-September, Margaret, to show her opposition to Alva's policies, resigned leaving Alva and his appointees in unopposed control of the Low Countries. Both Egmont and Horn were in prison and Orange was in exile in Germany. The reign of terror of the Council of Troubles held sway in the Netherlands. The Council would eventually try over 12,000 people on charges connected with the revolt of 1566-1567, executing over 1,000 and dispossessing almost 9,000. Orange was among those convicted of treason, though in absentia.<sup>58</sup> On August 17, 1568 Philippe de Marnix, Sieur de Sainte Aldegonde, was convicted and sentenced to

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<sup>56</sup>Guy Wells, "The Unlikely Machiavellian: William of Orange and the Princely Virtues," in Politics and Culture in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of H. G. Koenigsberger, edited by Phylliss Mack and Margaret C. Jacobs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 91-94.

<sup>57</sup>Schama, Embarrassment of Riches, 113-114.

<sup>58</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 108.

perpetual banishment and confiscation of all property. By that time he was in exile in Emden in Germany at the château de Lützbourgh.<sup>59</sup>

In Emden, Marnix would continue to write his propaganda and prepare to aid in remounting the rebellion. During this time of exile he would come to serve William of Orange. But the basic ideological work had been done before this linking with Orange. Marnix's ideology of rebellion had formed, it only remained to put it into political action. With the iconoclasm the first acts of continuing violent rebellion had occurred and the foundation of the ideology was laid. The religious rebellion was not a religious revolt, but a restoration of religious order in its attack on the externals of Catholicism. This restoration of order had to come by the separation of temporal and sacred order in Marnix's ideology of rebellion. Philip would ultimately be called a tyrant for creating temporal disorder by not following the laws, customs and privileges of the Low Countries. Philip was a tyrant, just as surely as the pope, but Philip's charge paradoxically stemmed from attempting to maintain a unity of religion and state as the medieval ideology of order required. The difference for Marnix was the pope and Catholicism had failed in spiritual order, while Philip II had failed to maintain peace and prosperity which was the proper role of a natural prince. The

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<sup>59</sup>Oosterhof, La vie litteraire de Marnix, 26-27.

practical problem that remained was the realization of this new order, contained in Marnix's ideology, which separated, rather than unified, the secular and sacred orders in the rebellion and its successor state, the Dutch Republic.

## EPILOGUE:

WE ARE NOT DEPOSING THE KING BECAUSE  
HE IS NOT OF OUR RELIGION

Between 1572 and 1580, Marnix would put his ideology of rebellion into practical action as he turned it into policy. He had to appeal to temporal discontent and accommodate Calvinism at the same time. As a result, his ideology broke the connection between the sacred and secular order to provide for freedom of conscience, which eliminated the link between heresy and sedition. With the creation of the Dutch Republic, though at the time the participants did not know they were creating a new state, the ideology of Marnix found its expression in a "constitution," the Union of Utrecht, providing for both a provincial church and for freedom of conscience for the individual dissenter. This effectively challenged the notion that being a good subject required a commonalty of religious conscience with the government, which was the position represented by Philip II and his forces in this struggle of orders. To enact his ideology of rebellion Marnix formed an alliance with William of Orange. Marnix and Orange represented a strong union of the Calvinist struggle and the political struggle of the nobility against Philip II's policies.<sup>1</sup> In doing this, they

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<sup>1</sup>Gerhard Güldner, Das toleranz-problem in den Niederlanden im ausgang des 16. jahrhunderts (Lübeck: Matthiesen Verlag, 1968), 43-45.

embraced each others' cause - Marnix adopted Orange's political program and Orange propounded freedom of conscience for the Reformed and Marnix's program for the separation of the political and religious orders.

By August of 1567, the first phase of the Dutch revolt had ended in disaster for the Calvinists and William of Orange. Their forces had been defeated in the field, most of the leadership was in exile, and those who remained in the Low Countries were confronted by the stern policy of the Duke of Alva, who had arrived with Spanish troops to suppress heresy and sedition. In Alva's own words, "it is infinitely better to preserve by war for God and the king an impoverished and even ruined kingdom, than to preserve it in its entirety without war for the devil and his disciples."<sup>2</sup>

In view of these conditions, the Protestant nobility represented by Marnix and Orange needed to recreate their movement. When the Compromise of the Nobility (1566) was drawn-up, they had sought to appeal to the predominately Catholic nobility for support. The Protestant nobility had used the fear and hatred by the majority of the Catholic nobility of the Inquisition, as an abuser of noble privilege and producer of economic and social disorder in the country, as the lever to move the moderate Catholic nobility into action. This provided the best chance for a unity between

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<sup>2</sup>Quoted in Joseph Lecler, Toleration and the Reformation, translated by T. L. Weston (New York: Association Press, 1960), II, 201.

political malcontents and religious dissidents. In the wake of the iconoclasm, this unity was shattered.<sup>3</sup> The recreated rebellion would not successfully return to the soil of the Low Countries until the fishing village of Brill in Holland was taken by the Sea Beggars in 1572. Here they found a fertile bed from which to spread the seeds of rebellion in Holland and Zeeland, whose provincial States would provide the political and economic focal point for the later creation of the Dutch Republic.

The successful return of the rebellion in the north owed at least part of its success to Alva's program, which was to model the government after that of Castile. He sought to rule through a council of foreign advisors, to limit the role of the States to that of the Cortes in Castile, and to enforce religious orthodoxy. In the process of implementing his policy he angered many residents of the Low Countries. He had the popular Counts of Egmont and of Horn condemned and executed, an act which cost him the loyalty of the moderate Catholic nobility who had been repelled by the iconoclasm but still favored a softer policy toward the rebels. Many of the nobles were disturbed by Alva's installation of new bishops under the old plan of ecclesiastical reform without receiving the approval of the

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<sup>3</sup>Alastair Duke, "Salvation by Coercion: The Controversy Surrounding the Inquisition in the Low Countries on the Eve of the Revolt," in Reformation, Principle and Practice: Essays in Honour of A. G. Dickens (London: Scolar Press, 1980), 137.

nobles, which they felt it was their privilege to give. Alva also disturbed the town burghers by levying the famous tenth penny tax (a sales tax) without the customary approval of the States General. In addition, through the arrests and trials of thousands of suspected heretics and rebels, the Council of Troubles touched many families. As a further burden, the common people were also forced to quarter the 70,000 Spanish tercios and Italian mercenaries whom Alva brought with him.<sup>4</sup>

Alva's policy, just like that of his successors Don Luis de Requesens, Don Juan of Austria and Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma was a direct reflection of the struggles over policy at the court of Philip II. Philip's court was divided into two factions over the issue of the Netherlands. One was led initially by Alva and sought to suppress provincial liberties throughout Philip's empire. The other faction, initially lead by the Duke of Eboli, favored respecting provincial privileges and a negotiated settlement. Alva's appearance in August of 1567 reflected the triumph of his faction at court, but his apparent failure led to his removal in 1573 and a policy of conciliation with Requesens. Upon the death of Requesens in 1576, Don Juan, another conciliator, assumed command. However, by the time Don Juan arrived reconciliation was no

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<sup>4</sup>J. J. Woltjer, Opstand en onafhankelijkheid (n.p., n.d.), 17-18.

longer possible due to the violent mutiny of the Spanish troops at Antwerp. After the failure of Don Juan to settle the revolt, in 1579 Philip returned to the Alvaesque solution, but without the resort to force in the areas under control in the south, when he summoned Cardinal Granvelle to return to power in Madrid, and the Duke of Parma succeeded the dying Don Juan in the Low Countries. This would be Philip's policy for the remainder of his reign.<sup>5</sup>

Orange and his followers, including Marnix, worked long and hard from exile to mount an invasion into the Low Countries, most of which had been brought to heel by Alva. In the spring of 1572 an elaborate five-pronged invasion was planned with the aid of the French Huguenots and the support of Elizabeth of England. However, success came not from Orange's plan, but from the Sea Beggars who were turned out from their protection in England by Elizabeth. The Beggars promptly moved across the channel to seize Brill, while the men of the village were out fishing.<sup>6</sup> Orange's invasion failed in the south, but by August of 1572, thanks largely to the Sea Beggars, much of Holland and Zeeland was held by

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<sup>5</sup>J. H. Elliot, Imperial Spain: 1469-1716 (New York: The New American Library, 1963), 256-264. This was the same Granvelle who had overseen the policy of suppressing the heretics and political malcontents of the Low Countries prior to 1564.

<sup>6</sup>Geoffrey Parker, The Dutch Revolt (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 123-126.



supporters of Orange.<sup>7</sup>

Confronted with the success of Orange in Holland, Alva sought to save the situation by summoning the States of Holland to meet at the Hague on July 15th, but the gathering of the States was subverted by the supporters of Orange. The towns which had gone over to Orange exploited this summons and diverted the meeting from the Hague to Dordrecht. The noble representatives and those of twelve of the eighteen towns complied with the request to meet in Dordrecht on the fifteenth.<sup>8</sup> Four days later, Phillippe de Marnix addressed them, and as the representative of Orange, laid out the Orangist program. The States were to recognize Orange as "their legitimate governor in the name of the king of Spain," and return to the "ancient splendor and prosperity and the old liberties of our ancestors." Alva was accused of having invaded the country with Spanish soldiers. The country must be freed of this tyranny of Alva. To complete "this work of God," and save the country from economic ruin and restore prosperity, it was necessary that the States pay for Orange's soldiers, sailor and ships engaged in the war. This had to be done because if help was

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 144.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid. The composition of the States of Holland had changed from six to eighteen towns, while the nobility retained one vote, James D. Tracy, A Financial Revolution in the Habsburg Netherlands: Renten and Renteniers in the County of Holland: 1515-1565 (Berkeley: University of California, 1985), 200.

sought from the king of France or Queen of England, the Low Countries would risk "the public danger of falling to the power of foreign masters." In sounding his theme, of the separation of the sacred and secular order, Marnix guaranteed the free exercise of religion for both the Reformed and the Catholics in public and private and in churches and chapels without interference.<sup>9</sup> The States accepted Orange's program. On July 22nd, they confirmed Count Lumey van der Mark, the leader of the Sea Beggars at Brill, on the basis of his commission from Orange, as the lieutenant-governor of south Holland. On July 23rd, the States voted Orange 500,000 florins in taxes. In 1574, a similar arrangement was reached with the States of Zeeland.<sup>10</sup> Orange, as stadholder of Holland and Zeeland, in cooperation with the States had gained control of most of Holland and Zeeland.

In this speech to the States of Holland and Zeeland, Marnix had laid the blame for the destruction of people and property on Alva, not Philip II. Orange had been restored to the title of Stadholder in Holland and Zeeland, both of which he had held prior to the first phase of the revolt, in the name of the king. Orange, Marnix and the States of

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<sup>9</sup>Philippe de Marnix, "Discours prononcé a l'assemblée de Dordrecht au mois de juillet 1572," Oeuvre de Philippe de Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde, edited by Albert Lacroix (Geneva: Slatkin Reprints, 1971), V, 345-354.

<sup>10</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 144-145.

Holland and Zeeland, in their own minds, had returned to the proper political order of king, stadholder and States while resisting the evil disorder and tyranny of the foreign invader, the Duke of Alva. In addition, there was the promised implementation of the division of order which had come to form the core of Marnix's ideology - the separation of the secular order and the sacred order, the uncoupling of heresy and sedition. The restoration of secular order would insure prosperity, and freedom of worship for Catholics and the Calvinists would insure sacred order. The restoration of order and peace would fulfill "this work of God" in both realms. The only thing missing was agreement from Philip.

Both Orange and Marnix had no hesitancy in accepting the rule of Philip as long as he conformed to this new order. In a letter to his brothers dated November 13, 1573, William of Orange spelled out his conditions for returning to obedience to the king. On the secular side, Philip II must remove all Spanish and other foreigners from the Low Countries. The old rights, liberties and privileges must be restored. As for the sacred, "the free exercise of the word of God, according to his commandment," must be allowed.<sup>11</sup> This was essentially a reiteration of the program of Dordrecht.

While both Marnix and Orange had endorsed the same

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<sup>11</sup>G. Groen van Prinster, ed., Archives ou correspondance de la maison d'Orange-Nassau, lère série, (Leiden, 1841), IV, 237-238.

program an interesting difference was revealed when on November 4, 1573, Marnix had the misfortune to be captured by the Spanish outside of Rotterdam.<sup>12</sup> While a prisoner for several months, Marnix corresponded with Orange hoping for a prisoner exchange (the method by which he would eventually gain his release), but also offering a plan for reconciliation with Philip II. On November 29, Marnix had told his captors that Orange would lay down his arms and leave the Low Countries in return for the guarantee of freedom of conscience for the Reformed.<sup>13</sup> A promise of freedom of conscience would restore temporal order, as far as Marnix was concerned, and the rebellion would be at an end. Marnix appeared ready to sell-out Orange's political program in return for freedom of worship.

On December 4, Marnix wrote to Orange to propose a settlement with Philip II, hoping to save the country from entire ruin. The effort to suppress Calvinism has been "the only and unique source and the principal motive for the debasement of the people...[and] the cause of all the disorder." As a result, "we complain ourselves that all religion has been profaned, all piety put under foot, and all true knowledge of God extinguished...[just as in the past] by means of long wars...bringing back chaos and

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<sup>12</sup>E. H. Kossman and A. F. Mellink, eds., Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 109.

<sup>13</sup>Marnix, Oeuvres, V, 153-154.

confusion to the world."<sup>14</sup> With the war had come the destruction not only of the country, but also God's order and the threatened return to cosmic chaos - the apocalypse was at hand, as the price of rebellion. The remedy, according to Marnix, was to return to Philip II and depend on his clemency, as God would touch his heart to remove the "sinister impression" which the king has of us, to grant Calvinists freedom of conscience. This was the way to save the country.<sup>15</sup>

In response Orange told Marnix not to despair, stating that it appeared that Marnix wished him to make an unsure peace that would ruin, rather than save the country. He added that he had shared Marnix's letters with the States and others and all concluded that, while, as they "have been expressly commanded by God" it was the duty of Christians to seek peace, they must continue to fight to protect themselves from "the innumerable cruelties, unjust decisions, brutalities, and other outrages perpetrated contrary to all divine and human rights." It was better to endure the war than make a false peace. Besides, who knows what would happen if resistance stopped with the country so full of Spanish soldiers.<sup>16</sup>

By the first of the following year, 1574, it was

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., VI, 187.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., VI, 188-191.

<sup>16</sup>Kossman and Mellink, Texts, 109-112.

apparent that the efforts of Orange and his followers in Holland and Zeeland were being rewarded. The failure of Alva's policy of repression was recognized as the conciliatory Don Luis de Requesens arrived to replace Alva. Requesens was confronted by continued military defeat by the Orangists, but even worse were the repeated mutinies of unpaid Spanish soldiers which led to the sacking of several towns in the Low Countries. Requesens despaired that God had deserted the Spanish side. What with Philip's impending bankruptcy and the threat of the Turks in the Mediterranean, he lamented that Spain could not afford to continue to fight. Philip and Requesens were thus moved to conciliation talks. The Protestants were offered six months to leave the country. The Council of State in the Low Countries, who acted as Philip II's governing body, refused to believe that religion was what separated the two sides. Philip II had offered to withdraw the Spanish troops and restore some old liberties, but the center of the rebellion, Holland and Zeeland, under the leadership of Orange refused.<sup>17</sup>

In an expression of exasperation with the representatives of Philip II, Jacques de Glimes led a coup for the States of Brabant which toppled the Council of State. Following this, the States General issued a summons to all of the provincial States, significantly except for Holland and Zeeland, to return to the system of 1548-1549

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<sup>17</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 164-171.

(i.e. before Philip II's accession) and to consult for their mutual defense. By August the fifteen provinces represented in the States General accepted the appeal of Orange to meet to negotiate with Holland and Zeeland. Marnix represented Orange in these negotiations. While the representatives of the States General and Marnix negotiated, Don Juan of Austria was on his way to renew the struggle for Philip II. The negotiations by the States and Orange were hastened by the Spanish Fury on November 4, 1576, the day after Don Juan's arrival in Luxembourg. In one of the bloodiest events in the sixteenth century, Spanish troops assaulted Antwerp. The Fury lasted several days as 1,000 homes were destroyed and 8,000 people killed. On November 8, the States General ratified the Pacification of Ghent with Orange.<sup>18</sup> In a revolutionary move no one chose to acknowledge, the States-General, in cooperation with Orange as Stadholder of Holland and Zeeland, had exercised sovereignty in all but name by their actions.

The Pacification, as negotiated by Marnix and the States General of the fifteen provinces, called for a return to the political form of Charles V and loyalty to Philip subsequent to the removal of all foreign troops. Freedom of conscience was provided for the Reformed as all placards against heresy and the edicts of Alva were suspended. However, the States General arrogated to itself the

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 170-178.

determination of the religious settlement in Holland and Zeeland. The Catholic suspicions about the Calvinists intentions were revealed as the people of Holland and Zeeland were forbidden to do anything against Catholicism outside of their own area.<sup>19</sup> For Marnix this must have been a satisfactory settlement, as he would later rise repeatedly to defend it. He had gained what he felt necessary in the negotiations. It provided not only for the restoration of temporal order to the period before Philip II, but, more importantly, it provided for the retaining of Protestantism in Holland and Zeeland, as well as freedom of conscience for the Reformed in the other provinces. In a reflection of his ideology, there would be a temporal unity of the seventeen provinces, while there was a sacred division based on freedom of conscience and the restoration of secular order.

The settlement was to be short-lived, as events and divergent interests of the north and south worked to undermine it. In negotiations with the fifteen provinces Don Juan agreed to accept the Pacification with the proviso that the States maintain Catholicism, recognize Don Juan as governor general when Spanish troops had left, pay the Spanish army's bills, and dissolve themselves to allow Don

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<sup>19</sup>Gordon Griffiths, ed., Representative Government in Western Europe in the Sixteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 433-447. Orange retained his position as stadholder of Holland and Zeeland. It also provided for the mutual release of prisoners, the compensation for confiscated property, and other general terms of settlement.



Juan to summon a new assembly according to the form of Charles V's day. The States agreed to this Perpetual Edict without consulting Holland and Zeeland, and Orange. The Orangists did not approve of the Edict.<sup>20</sup>

Don Juan and Orange attempted a settlement in a meeting at St. Geertruidenberg in May 1577. As usual, Marnix was at Orange's side. The negotiations failed over the issue of religion. Don Juan's side did not trust Orange to abide by the decision of the States General on the issue of religion, if Orange disliked it. Orange and Marnix accused Don Juan of seeking to reintroduce Catholicism throughout the Low Countries to the exclusion of Calvinism.<sup>21</sup>

As the Pacification of Ghent was doomed over religious differences, Marnix's ideology became firmer as events provided a context for attacks on the tyranny of Don Juan, the evil nature of Spaniards, and ultimately the tyranny of Philip II himself. The division between sacred and secular authority which Marnix's ideology envisioned (with its provision for a free conscience not subject to temporal interference) did not fit into the concept of order which Philip II called for in the unity of heresy and sedition. In the continuation of the Dutch revolt the States, especially of Holland and Zeeland, would come to exercise

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<sup>20</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 181-182.

<sup>21</sup>Marnix, "Relation des conférences de Gertrudenberg," Oeuvres, V, 160-173.

sovereignty, which Marnix would acknowledge and incorporate into his ideology.

On the heels of the failure to reach a satisfactory arrangement with Don Juan, the States General, before the delegates from Holland and Zeeland arrived, appointed a new governor general, the Archduke Matthias of the Holy Roman Empire, a nephew of Philip II. Matthias would remain in this position from 1577 until 1581, but was never much more than a figurehead. Matthias had been chosen by the leading Catholic nobles in the States General with the idea of using the forces of the Empire to aid in ejecting the Spanish troops from the Netherlands. At this time Orange, riding a wave of growing popular enthusiasm, was able to circumscribe the authority of Matthias, and eventually reduce the influence of those who had selected Matthias. However, Orange's problem was not Matthias and the States General, but Don Juan and his Spanish troops. In January of 1578, Orange and the States suffered a devastating defeat at Gembloux in the south at the hands of the true representative of the king, Don Juan. Orange, Matthias and the States General were forced to flee north to Antwerp.<sup>22</sup>

Subsequent to this defeat, Marnix was sent on May 7th to the Diet of Worms to seek aid. Here the ideology and propaganda developed over the years were put to use to try to sway the electors and other leading nobles of the

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<sup>22</sup>Parker, Dutch Revolt, 183-186.

Holy Roman Empire to aid the embattled States, Orange and Matthias. Marnix began with the familiar litany of the representatives of the Philip II from Alva to Don Juan as the source of all the troubles and that the people of the Low Countries had been loyal and patient in the face of these creators of disorder. Indeed, the people had always been loyal to the kings "who preserve and maintain to the people the manners and customs, laws, ordinances and privileges of the countries." Because of the disorders of the king's representatives it had been necessary for the States to act

according to the duty that they hold to the country, parents, wives and children ...[and] according to the ordinance and law of nature, which is imprinted on the hearts of all animals, the recommendation and need of their preservation and safety, had constrained them to have recourse to the final refuge of arms.<sup>23</sup>

The States had been forced to act in self-defense against the aggression of the king's representatives, who had created this disorder. The States had been doing nothing more than responding to their duty to protect the community and obey the natural law of self-preservation. The States were not the rebels, but the agency seeking peace and tranquility in the face of Spanish persecution, which violated their duty and natural law.

If the States were not rebels, then what were they

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<sup>23</sup>Marnix, "Oraison des Ambassadeur du Serenissime Prince Matthias...", Oeuvres, V, 132-133.

doing naming Matthias as governor general, and thus the king's representative, without consulting the king? Marnix's defense was that the selection of Matthias was a sign of loyalty to Philip. Because Matthias was a Habsburg, like Philip II, he had an alliance with Philip "of blood and patronage." Besides, the selection of Matthias was legitimate according to the normal temporal order of the Low Countries. Under the privileges of Brabant (the joyeuse entrée) it was expressly provided that if

a representative of the prince, or the prince himself, violates the laws and rights of the country, it is in this instance permissible not only to the States in general, but also particularly to those who are members, to refuse all homage and obedience to the king until he has corrected his mistake.

If the king refused to comply, he could be deposed. Marnix then cited the historical example of Jean, Duke of Brabant, who had been deposed in favor of his brother. These privileges of Brabant had been made universal in the Low Countries by means of "treaty and public covenant" by Mary of Burgundy, the wife of Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor.<sup>24</sup>

Marnix then moved to close the issue of legitimacy with a flourish. Legitimacy was based on a claim of restoring the proper secular order to the Low Countries, the status quo antebellum which existed prior to the disruption of

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., v, 132-135. These were references to the "constitutional" basis the rebels claimed stemming from the declarations that had been extracted from the Dukes of Burgundy during the fifteenth century in times of crisis. See chapter one for these accounts.

order by the evil representatives of the king. Marnix stated that there was no better way to return the Low Countries "to their duty and obedience towards their legitimate Prince and natural Lord, the king of Spain" than by forming an alliance with the Habsburgs through Matthias and by an alliance with the Holy Roman Empire to expel the Spanish. Also, the preservation of Roman Catholicism required a moderate governor, an obvious contrast, in Marnix's eyes, to the immoderate Don Juan. By replacing Don Juan if the States have erred in taking Matthias as governor general, it is "that they have taken for the Spaniard, a German, for a bastard, one who is legitimate, and for the enemy of liberty, they have chosen a governor, liberator and protector of their freedom." This contrast of Matthias and Don Juan leaves no doubt as to whom the disturber of proper order was. Indeed, Marnix argued, the selection of Matthias conformed to the will of Philip II, as Don Juan had said that the king would give the States another governor general agreeable to the States who was of royal lineage and would maintain Catholicism and the dignity of the king.<sup>25</sup>

In contrast to Matthias and order, Marnix associated Don Juan and the Spanish with disorder, indeed with evil. The "Spanish are no less men of war than the Turks," and they "maintain their religion like the Turks." In fact,

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., V, 136-137.

the Spanish were so evil that they had made peace with the Moslem Turks so that they could oppress the Christians in the Low Countries. Furthermore, the Spanish were tyrants by nature who hate "legitimate Republics."<sup>26</sup> (Here Marnix was not calling for a republic, but a return to the customs, laws and privileges of the Low Countries, which the Spanish were violating.) This attack on the Spanish as being natural tyrants was a new charge, that would recur. Marnix had accused the Spanish of being by nature disorderly and creators of tyranny, and thus enemies of public peace and tranquility, who must be resisted to maintain temporal order. With Matthias this could be done. Once this was done the maintenance of sacred order would follow.

Marnix would register one more stout defense of the Pacification of Ghent and attack Don Juan from his ideology of rebellion. In 1578, in answer to a pamphlet defending Don Juan, Marnix wrote "Response a un petit livret n'aguères publié et intituté declaration de l'intention du Seigneur Don Jehan d'Autriche."<sup>27</sup> This piece of propaganda again asserted the idea of preservation of both sacred and secular order and found Don Juan to be the violator of these orders. In context, it was a defense of the Pacification, but it was a restatement of Marnix's ideology that would make the separation of heresy and sedition more complete. In brief,

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., v, 137-144.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., v, 29-55.

Marnix would make a case that one could be both a good subject and of a religion different from that of their king.

Marnix made his case against the position of Don Juan and, doubtless Philip II. In the pamphlet to which Marnix responded, "Declaration de l'intention du Seigneur don Jehan d'Austriche," this traditional identity of inseparable secular and sacred order was made clear. To keep the peace, Don Juan claimed, he had been forced to take up arms to suppress the rebellion in order to maintain Roman Catholicism and the authority of the King. He offered to forgive the rebels if they join in loyalty to king and church. If not, he threatened, they would be killed for their hostile acts. There would be no mercy "because they are the cause of their evil."<sup>28</sup> No less than Marnix, Don Juan reasoned from the theory of correspondences, but his notion of order linked the sacred with the secular, and those who went against it were willful rebels who resisted proper order and thus should be shown no mercy. Don Juan's duty to Catholicism, king and a certain conception of order was clear.

In answering Don Juan point by point, Marnix made the difference in his ideology apparent. For Marnix, Don Juan, by claiming to maintain the peace under the guise of maintaining Catholicism and king, really wanted war. By

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<sup>28</sup>Lacroix, ed., "Declaration de l'intention du Seigneur don Jehan d'Austriche," Oeuvres de Philippe de Marnix, V, 56-60.

this deceit Don Juan showed that he "has been instructed in Machiavellian intrigue." What Don Juan sought was civil war, so that Spain could enslave the Low Countries through his "sham and simulation." Like a good Machiavellian, he would rather be dreaded than loved.<sup>29</sup>

Marnix then turned to the order of religion. The way to preserve the Roman Catholic religion was not by force and temporal disorder, but through the "good union of solid mutual association" in the Pacification of Ghent. The persecution of the Reformed only punished subjects who wished to be loyal to the king and "serve God according to the testimony of their consciences." Under the Pacification the Reformed were the best behaved they had been so far and religious peace existed between Catholic and Reformed.<sup>30</sup> This settlement had brought both secular and sacred order to the Low Countries by separating the two and not insisting on the conformity of religion for all subjects.

Marnix then turned to blame Philip II as the cause of the disorder by violating the traditional political order of the Low Countries in an effort to suppress religious dissent. Philip sought more authority in the Low Countries than he had in Spain. While the Low Countries had been loyal, Philip's lack of compassion had forced them "into the arms of a foreigner (Matthias)." Philip had sought to build

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., V, 31-39.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., V, 43-44.



forts and enforce placards without the approval of the States. He had tried to change the system of government and rule through foreigners. Philip had called on them to be more loyal and better vassals than his subjects in Spain. All that the Low Countries sought was peace and a return to their laws and privileges.<sup>31</sup>

At this point, Marnix turned to what may be the most telling comment in this entire pamphlet in terms of his ideology. Marnix identified in practical political terms the source of all of this disorder. In response to Luther, Charles V, the Emperor of such high memory, "feared that this change of religion would bring change or alteration to the state, and by consequence hinder the course of peace and tranquility of his subjects," and threaten the magistrates and superior authority.<sup>32</sup> The accepted linkage of sacred and secular order could not have been more carefully cited as the cause of disorder. Charles V had feared that if the religion of some of his subjects changed that would be the end of temporal order, the first step to chaos. Fortunately for Charles V, the States of the Empire had acted to settle the religious war in the Religious Peace of 1555, and, as Marnix implied, had saved the state.<sup>33</sup> For the Netherlands,

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., V, 44-46.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., V, 47.

<sup>33</sup>The Peace of Augsburg provided for the lord of each jurisdiction of the Empire to select the religion for his area, either Lutheran or Catholic, with certain exceptions

the Pacification of Ghent offered the same opportunity.<sup>34</sup>

In 1579 the rebellion of Orange and Marnix and the apparent unity of the provinces provided by the Pacification of Ghent was confronted by a group of Catholic nobles from the south who were discontented with the direction of events. To Marnix, they were Malcontents for seeking to leave the rebellion to return to Catholicism as the sole religion, Don Juan and the old order. The Malcontents were reacting to a series of events. Since the defeat at Gembloux, Orange had been losing control of the southern Low Countries. To compound that problem the troops in the south were unpaid, and in September 1578 there was a mutiny. The mutinous troops were soon joined by their Catholic Walloon commanders, who were tired of Orange's dominance of the States General and the excesses of the Calvinists in towns where they had seized control and purged the Catholics from positions of authority. Also at this time, the very competent Alexander Farnese, later Duke of Parma, took command for Philip in the Low Countries. The division of interests of the north and south became apparent as these Malcontents would form a Catholic Union of southern provinces on January 6, 1579 at the town of Arras.

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for ecclesiastical jurisdictions. Unlike the Pacification of Ghent, there was not a provision for individual freedom of conscience inside of the jurisdictions, beyond that of being able to move to a jurisdiction which conformed to the individual's belief.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., V, 47-48.

Meanwhile, on January 23 the northern provinces of Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland, Gelderland and Ommelanden formed the Union of Utrecht. Orange delayed joining until he was sure unity with the south was over. The Catholic Union of Arras soon returned to loyalty to Parma and Philip II as they appeared to guarantee the maintenance of Catholicism and order in the south. Indeed, that was true as the property and privileges of the south were restored, while Catholicism was maintained to the exclusion of all Protestantism. Other than a brief period of attempted reconciliation between the Unions in the form of the appointment of the Duke of Anjou as governor general by the States General, the political separation into two regions had been accomplished in 1579.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, the agreement that created the Union of Utrecht served as the "constitution" of the new Dutch Republic, or the United Provinces, until the time of Napoleon.

Of course, the permanency of the division into the two new territories was not apparent at the beginning to the participants in the events and Marnix rose yet again to address the issues raised by the Malcontents, though in hind sight the split can be seen in the arguments of the pamphlets. Marnix wrote in response to a Malcontent pamphlet, "Lettre d'un gentilhomme, vray patriot." This pamphlet accused Orange of seeking to establish a tyrannical

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<sup>35</sup>parker, Dutch Revolt, 192-195, 204-206.

domination over the Low Countries, while the Malcontents had reconciled with their "natural prince," Philip II. It claimed that Matthias was a tool of Orange in an effort to establish a Calvinist inquisition that would be much worse than that of Spain. The Calvinists had acted to suppress Catholicism in Holland and Zeeland, and Orange sought not peace, but to run all of the Catholics out of the north.<sup>36</sup>

Marnix's answer was contained in his "Response a un libelle fameux." Predictably, Marnix said that the Malcontents had it all backwards. The Malcontents were a group of self-serving people who had betrayed their country for Spanish money, seeking peace at the expense of the Reformed. In defense of the Reformed, Marnix asserted that the Calvinists had never been condemned by "a legitimate Council or Synod." (Obviously the Catholic councils that had condemned Calvinism were not legitimate to Marnix, as the councils of a perverted religion could not conform to divine order.) Not only were the Calvinist innocent of creating disorder, but so was Orange of any charges of tyranny. And here lay the crux of the argument for temporal order.<sup>37</sup>

Marnix then defined temporal order and the duty of the prince and his nobles. It was the duty of a good prince to

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<sup>36</sup>Marnix, Oeuvres, V, 97-107.

<sup>37</sup>Marnix, "Response a un libelle fameux," Oeuvres, V, 64-69.

relieve his people of tyranny. Orange had fulfilled this duty as a prince by protecting the Calvinists from persecution and oppression through the Pacification of Ghent, while his opponents, the Malcontents, sought to divide the country over religion. Marnix then tried to build a case that the Catholics in Holland and Zeeland were in no danger. In fact, even in areas where the Calvinist were in control, Orange had acted to allow the conservation of Catholicism.<sup>38</sup> By preventing tyranny over consciences in the north, Orange had fulfilled the duties of a good prince and maintained temporal order.<sup>39</sup>

What then were the duties of the nobility in regards to the prince?

The principal degree of nobility was to be virtuous, constant and magnanimous in giving good and loyal service to his country and his prince, as long as he governs legitimately and according to the laws and customs of the country, in which he had been received to be guardian, protector and father of the people, and to preserve law and justice.<sup>40</sup>

Marnix regarded Orange as having fulfilled these

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., V, 70-77.

<sup>39</sup>This preservation of Catholicism was a practical matter for the rebellion. Usually only the most pro-Spanish element was purged as in many cases Catholic families dominated town councils as at Amsterdam, which did not enter the revolt until 1578, as an urban patriciate containing many Catholics continued and even strengthened its power during the revolt. D. J. Roorda, "The Ruling Classes in Holland in the Seventeenth Century," in Britain and the Netherlands, edited by J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossman (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1964), II, 113-117.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., V, 84-85.

obligations as a good prince, thus the Malcontents were in revolt against a legitimate prince. By inference, Marnix championed the provinces of Holland and Zeeland as legitimately resisting tyranny. In this setting the final act of the drama for the provinces of the north, who had formed a new political and religious order with the Union of Utrecht, remained to occur. In 1580, the States of the United Provinces would pass an act deposing Philip II as their prince, while the provinces of the south would remain loyal to the Spanish king.

The new government of the United Provinces was based on the Union of Utrecht. The Union was a practical document drawn up in a time of war. Beyond providing a basic agreement on which the States of the Union could act, it sought to serve two purposes, to resist a powerful enemy in Parma and the Catholics, and to preserve the individual privileges and freedoms of each of the provinces that joined, thus creating "a community, but equally it guaranteed the independence and particular rights of the parts."<sup>41</sup> Concerning religious freedom, it represented the culmination of a long process that gave the settlement of religion to the provinces, but adding that freedom of

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<sup>41</sup>A. Th. van Deursen, "Between Unity and Independence: The Application of the Union as Fundamental Law," Acta historiae neerlandicae XIV (1981), 51-52.

conscience would be recognized in all provinces.<sup>42</sup>

The ultimate expression of the success of an ideology has to be its acceptance in political reality and the Union of Utrecht represented an application of Marnix's ideology of the separation of the sacred and secular in this new order. On the side of the secular, beyond the swearing of allegiance for mutual defense by the provinces of the north, it provided for the States to impose taxes to pay expenses of the alliance. It also provided that no treaties would be concluded nor wars started without the unanimous advice and consent of the provinces. It provided for a common coinage and other such measures to insure internal and external order among the United Provinces, while retaining for the provinces their particular privileges.<sup>43</sup> For the sacred side of order, each province would settle the religious issue

without being hindered or prevented from doing this by any other province, such regulations as they consider proper for the peace and welfare of the provinces, towns and their particular members and for the preservation of all people, either secular or clerical, their properties and rights, provided that in accordance with the Pacification of Ghent each individual enjoys freedom of religion and no one is persecuted or questioned about his religion.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>O. J. de Jong, "Union and Religion," Acta Historiae Neerlandicae XIV (1981), 29-45.

<sup>43</sup>"Treaty of Union, eternal alliance and confederation made in the town of Utrecht...", Texts Concerning the Revolt, Kossman and Mellink, eds., 165-173.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 169-170.

Furthermore,

it has never been and is not now their purpose and intention to exclude from the union and alliance any town or provinces which want to maintain the Roman Catholic religion exclusively and where the number of residents belonging to the Reformed religion is too small to enable them to enjoy, by virtue of the Religious Peace, the right to exercise the Reformed religion. On the contrary they are willing to accept as members of the union such towns and provinces as wish to maintain the Roman religion exclusively if these want to subscribe to the other points and articles of the union and to act as good patriots. For it is not their opinion that one province or town should lay down the law to others in the matter of religion, as they want to further peace and unity amongst the provinces and to avoid and to take away the main occasion for quarrels and discord.<sup>45</sup>

Here was precisely the separation of the secular from the sacred in matters of conscience, which Marnix had based his ideology on and had offered to Philip II as a solution to his problems in the Low Countries. The tie of heresy and sedition, the traditional assumption in the sixteenth century, had been broken in the new Dutch Republic in the ideology of rebellion which Marnix had formed and advocated. There now remained, after the formation of the Union of Utrecht, only to remove the cause of the disorder, the tyrant, Philip II.

Philip II was deposed by act of the States General of the United Provinces of the Netherlands on July 26, 1581. In this act the States rehearsed the tyranny of Philip and his representative in the oppression of the freedom of the

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 173.



Low Countries and declared that he had forfeited his title of king, a post to which God had appointed him, by failing to protect his people "from all iniquity, trouble and violence as a shepherd is called to protect his sheep." The new natural model was not a beehive, but a shepherd and his flock. On this basis he was not a prince but a tyrant and thus subject to replacement. This same act naming Philip as forfeit placed the Duke of Anjou,<sup>46</sup> brother of the king of France, in the position of lordship.<sup>47</sup>

A clear statement of the new order was realized in the negotiations with the Catholic Anjou to come to the United Provinces, and heading the delegation for the States General was Marnix. The substance of the negotiations was preserved in a report dated March 1581.<sup>48</sup> This report made clear by the statements of the representatives of the States that Philip II was responsible for the troubles of the Low Countries, citing for Anjou the examples of good rulers who allowed their people to retain their rights, customs,

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<sup>46</sup>For a comprehensive review of the career of Anjou and his involvement with the Netherlands see, Mack P. Holt, The Duke of Anjou and the Politique Struggle during the Wars of Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

<sup>47</sup>"Edict of the States General of the United Netherlands by which they declare that the king of Spain has forfeited the sovereignty and the government of the afore-said Netherlands," Oeuvres, 216-228.

<sup>48</sup>Marnix, "Rapport fait au Prince d'Orange et aux états généraux par les ambassadeurs qu'ils avaient envoyés au duc d'Anjou pour lui offrir la souveraineté des pays-bas," Oeuvres, V, 180-233.

privileges and laws. The report also spelled out that the States General would meet according to all of its ancient privileges and that the Council of State, which was to contain no foreigners, would be commissioned by the States. Marnix himself insisted that the States control succession to prevent the appearance of another tyrant. Also, the state of religion was not to be changed. If Anjou violated any of the points in the agreement, the States General would remove him and pick a successor. But maybe the most important part of the negotiations was over the term "sovereign." Anjou wanted to add "souverain" to the title "prince et seigneur," but an unidentified States' representative, presumably Marnix, replied that in Dutch the equivalent of the French word "souverain," which means supreme, did not exist, and offered "opperste heere" (first lord). Significantly, Anjou was not being offered sovereignty, but lordship, and thus asserting that the provinces "are governed by their laws, customs and privileges."<sup>49</sup> The States had reserved de facto sovereignty to themselves and their system.

Marnix certainly knew where sovereignty lay in his new order. He would acknowledge the practical achievement of sovereignty by the States, in March of 1580, when he

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 196-197. Also see Griffiths, Representative Governments, 314-315, where extra significance was added to this exchange, as Griffiths recalled that Jean Bodin, the virtual father of sovereignty was an advisor to Anjou at this time.

answered a letter from Orange asking on what basis Philip II could be removed as prince. For Marnix, the people could not act to remove the prince, nor could he be removed just because

he is not of our religion, but because, firstly, he is a tyrant and oppressor of our laws and liberties through the ministry of foreigners ...Then because he is the sworn enemy of the true religion and word of God...and by the ruining of those of the true religion, he followed the road of oppression of all of the liberties of the countries....It would not be true that we could depose a king or prince simply for not being of the true religion.

If that were true then the early Christians would have removed the Roman Caesars, but they held no imperial office. No, there had to be tyranny and injustice in the temporal world, but only those with a vocation (office) from God can act. In this case that was the members of the States General "who have a legitimate vocation from God,..[and] could remove a prince in order to defend and maintain the country against tyranny and oppression."<sup>50</sup> It must be noted here that Marnix required temporal disorder caused by a ruler. Philip was being deposed not because he was Catholic, but because of the temporal disorder he had created by attempting to suppress the conscience of the Calvinists.

Other Protestants in the sixteenth century had argued for a lesser magistrate's right to resist and depose a

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<sup>50</sup>Gordon, ed., Representative Government, 482-486.

tyrant, since the magistrates received their office from God, and thus had an obligation to protect the people from oppression by a prince who was violating his office by creating disorder. But Marnix's argument was more than that, since it articulated a major shift in the relationship of the secular and sacred order which stemmed from a concept of freedom of conscience that called for noninterference from the secular world. Conscience, even that of the prince of the wrong religion, was removed from the temporal world and reserved to the sacred world.

Marnix in his ideology of rebellion had made conscience a matter of private, not public concern, which removed matters of conscience from the public or temporal order. As long as a person of conscience different from his neighbor's did not create temporal disorder he should be left alone. Temporal disorder was the problem with the Anabaptists and Spiritualists. Temporal disorder was also the justification for rebellion against Philip II, not that he was of the wrong religion, but that he created temporal disorder by trying to suppress those of the Reformed conscience. The consequence of this was that by removing conscience to the private from the public sphere, Christianity, Reformed or Roman, was removed from matters of temporal authority. As John Bossy so aptly put it in describing what he called "the migration of the holy," temporal authority assumed formerly sacred functions during the sixteenth century as the state

increasingly became the sole source of temporal authority. In a radical departure from medieval experience, "the institutions of Christianity drifted into a position marginal to the maintenance of peace among Christians."<sup>51</sup> Of course, Bossy was primarily addressing matters of social order, but it seems to apply to political order as well. The religious conscience of the individual did not determine the ability of the individual to be a good subject or patriot, contrary to the assumed model of Philip II which linked heresy and sedition.

Donald Kelley recently addressed essentially the same problem dealt with here -- freedom of conscience, rebellion and ideology -- but with quite different results.<sup>52</sup> He focused on France but also concluded there was no difference in the Low Countries.<sup>53</sup> While I have pursued a method based in discourse, Kelley followed a psychological approach and concluded that the Protestant (Lutheran and Calvinist) concept of freedom of conscience liberated the individual ego and substituted individual conscience for external authority. For Kelley, the idea of freedom of conscience developed during the sixteenth century changed the problem

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<sup>51</sup>John Bossy, Christianity in the West: 1400-1700 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 41.

<sup>52</sup>Donald Kelley, The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 251, 256-257, 279, 282, 312, 318.

of conscience "from a theological dilemma into a burning political and social issue." Conscience was "no longer a private matter" but the basis for a program of public action. It was "the opening of the Pandora's box of ideology," which was the source of modern ideologies.<sup>54</sup> In the case of Marnix and the United Provinces, this simply does not hold true. Far from freeing the conscience and making it public, Marnix's ideology justifying rebellion was based on the removal of conscience from the public sphere to a private sacred realm. (This was seen in the new Dutch state as well in its provisions for freedom of conscience without temporal interference.) If anything Marnix's ideology sought to tame the conscience and prevent rebellion by removing it from public concern. In short, Marnix restricted the involvement of religious conscience in political and social issues, as religious conscience and secular issues were separated not blurred together. Kelley's origin for modern ideologies must have come from a source other than the Calvinist concept of conscience.

Where Kelley initially erred was in not defining the Calvinist notion of freedom of conscience properly. Kelley quotes Calvin, "Christian freedom [meant] that the conscience of believers...should rise above and advance beyond the law, forgetting all law righteousness," and then adds that the message of Calvin was that if the individual

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 59-63.

conscience called it was alright to be a nonconformist or even a rebel.<sup>55</sup> Unfortunately, Kelley construed Calvin's message out of context. The freedom from law which Calvin was referring to was the freedom of the righteous from Mosaic law and good works, as external to the source of justification, which was spiritual. Calvin then continues, "nor can any man rightly infer from this [freedom] that the law is superfluous for believers....[For] the whole life of Christians ought to be a sort of practice of godliness."<sup>56</sup> Far from releasing the Calvinist from temporal orderly behavior, the laws of Moses were to instruct them in the temporal practice and appearance of godliness. Later Calvin returned to the subject of the freedom of conscience,

concerning the abrogating of human constitutions, huge troubles are stirred up, partly by the seditious, partly by slanderers-as if all human obedience were at the same time removed and cast down.

Therefore, in order that none of us may stumble on that stone, let us first consider that there is a twofold government in man: one aspect is spiritual, whereby the conscience is instructed in piety and in reverencing God; the second is political, whereby man is educated for the duties of humanity and citizenship that must be maintained among men....The former sort of government pertains to the life of the soul, while the latter has to do with the concerns of the present life....Now these two, as we have divided them, must always be examined separately....There are in man, so to speak, two worlds, over which different kings and different laws have authority.

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 61.

<sup>56</sup>John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, edited by John T. McNeil, translated by Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), I, 834-835.

Through this distinction it comes about that we are not to misapply to the political order the gospel teaching on spiritual freedom, as if Christians were less subject, as concerns outward government, to human laws, because their consciences have been set free in God's sight; as if they were released from all bodily servitude because they are free according to the spirit.<sup>57</sup>

Here was a clear statement of the division of secular order and sacred order which constituted the foundation of Marnix's base in Calvinism, and which he worked out in a practical ideology of rebellion.

Since Marnix's ideology was driven by Calvinist religion and the desire for freedom of conscience, not by secular concerns beyond that of wishing to preserve order, the struggle against Philip II, in Marnix's mind, would have ended if Philip had only granted freedom of conscience to the Reformed and stopped the temporal persecution. The internal nature of Marnix's Calvinism, that hated and lashed out at the externals of late medieval Catholicism, depended on the freedom of conscience and its proper instruction. Without these there could be no proper order of religion. For this Calvinist, the justification of rebellion was based in an intense religion, which required him to separate the sacred and secular world to derive an ideology for the removal of his secular prince. It was not that Philip was Catholic, but that he oppressed the consciences of the Reformed in the Low Countries through temporal disorder.

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 846-847.



This concept of secular and sacred order sharply contrasts with the findings of Quentin Skinner who claims that the theory of resistance of the Calvinists was a grafting of medieval theories to produce a secular justification without reference to "specifically Calvinist arguments."<sup>58</sup> In the case of Marnix, I have argued that this simply is not the case. While Marnix did draw upon medieval antecedents (defense of noble privileges, natural law) to justify rebellion, to emphasize these without relating them closely to historical context is to miss the larger shifting of the concept of order that Marnix fashioned in the Low Countries. This new conception of order was certainly not a purely secular notion, as Skinner would have it, but a Calvinist argument derived from a concept of spiritual religion devoid of externals which demanded the separation of the sacred and the secular orders.

Marnix confronted the task of justifying rebellion when the concept of order demanded a unity of heaven and earth, reflected in a unity of political and religious authority on earth. He justified rebellion against the Catholic church in this notion of order because it violated the correspondence to heaven, and then turned paradoxically to split the corresponding unity of political and religious

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<sup>58</sup>Quentin Skinner, The Foundations of Modern Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), II, 323.

order into separate areas so as to justify temporal rebellion when confronted by a prince who sought to preserve the unity by punishing dissenting religious conscience. It was this shift that revealed the meaning in his writings, and perhaps that of other Calvinist figures in the revolutionary late sixteenth century.

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## VITA

Fred Edwin Beemon was born in Okolona, Mississippi on August 6, 1944. He was educated in the public schools of Jackson, Mississippi. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Mississippi in 1967, his Master of Arts degree from Mississippi College in 1972, and his Ph.D. from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 1988. His professional experience includes stints as a musician, retail store manager, petroleum landman, and Assistant Professor of History at Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi.