



Radboud University Nijmegen

Enemy, Rival, Frog

The influence of history on the portrayal of the Dutch in late seventeenth-century English literature

BA Thesis

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Abstract:

This thesis will look at the way the Dutch are represented in English literature from the Restoration in 1660, taking 1672 as a turning point and looking at texts up to 1685. The focus will be on war, trade and gender, and how Dutch people are portrayed with regards to these three areas. It argues that trade is a theme that is present in all texts written about the Dutch, while the other two themes depend on the subject of the texts.

Keywords: seventeenth century, Anglo-Dutch relations, English literature, war, trade, gender

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Introduction

During the late seventeenth century, there were a lot of changes in the relationship between the English and the Dutch. After the Restoration, they went from two wars in ten years to sharing a monarch only 15 years later. They were rivals on the seas, vying for dominance in trade. This all meant that their relationship was a thing of great discussion, also among authors. Many poems, plays, and travel accounts in English from that period deal with the Dutch in one way or another. These works of literature have not been studied in great detail yet, as some of the texts that this thesis will look at can only be found in their original early modern edition, and not in more modern publications.

The later seventeenth century is an interesting period to look at when considering Anglo-Dutch relations. After the restoration in 1660, there were many changes in alliances and relations. The Dutch defeated the English on the Thames in 1667, only to be defeated by an alliance of England, France and German principedoms. However, in 1688, a Dutch stadtholder came to the throne of England. Especially after 1672, Pincus describes a shift in public opinion from anti-Dutch to anti-French, which could influence the perception of Dutch people from complete enemies to at least allies (340). When William III becomes king of England, the English and the Dutch share a ruler and most of the hostilities are gone by that time. There is a lively discussion about the acceptance of William as King, while only 20 years before, the English and Dutch nation were still at war. There are many different factors in this complicated situation, but popular opinion is considered an important one, and one of the few ways we can still see popular opinion is through literature that was read by the people of the time. In this way, the view of the Dutch presented in literature may give some insight in what the English stereotypes of the Dutch were, and if they changed together with the historical developments. A theory that might come in useful in this thesis is that of imagology and national character, as described by Birgit Neumann among others: “Typically, constructions of foreign national characters provide an essential quality of difference against which cherished self-images materialize with much greater clarity” (275). Therefore it is important to keep in mind that the image that is presented of the Dutch may be one that is considered ‘strange’ or ‘other’ by English people, and that is used by English people to distance themselves from these particular qualities. The English were particularly involved with the Dutch in war and trade, as they were rivals. Many historians also argue that the Anglo-Dutch wars were caused by trade rivalry, so these topics would be good to look at from

this perspective. Gender would be another particularly interesting way to look at the image of the Dutch, as stereotypes are often very visible when it comes to gender roles. The question this thesis asks therefore, is: In what ways are the Anglo-Dutch relations before and after 1672 reflected in the representation of Dutch people in English literature of that time, in particular when looking at war, trade and gender?

The expectation is that before 1672, the English were more angry and negative about the Dutch than afterwards, as they had been at war and defeated. After 1672, one expects that the Dutch were more looked down upon, as they were soundly defeated in 1672, but it may also be that the opposite is the case, as the alliance of the English shifted. To answer the question, this thesis will look at several texts, from before, during and after 1672. With the themes of war, trade and gender in mind, the texts will be analysed in detail, and the portrayal of the Dutch or Dutch characters will be examined. This thesis takes a historicist approach for the most part, by placing the texts in their historical contexts and trying to trace the influence of history and culture of the time as a whole on the work of literature. However, for some texts, the new historicist approach is used as well, because not all texts in this thesis are exactly literary, and comparing literary and non-literary texts, such as travel reports, from the same period and placing them in context is what new historicists do (Gallagher and Greenblatt 11). Additionally, Greenblatt and Gallagher write in *Practicing New Historicism* that New Historicists tend to focus on the influence of the individual of the author on the text, which is what this thesis attempts to do as well, as far as that is possible (16).

This thesis will be looking at the historical contexts of the texts with a focus on Anglo-Dutch relations of the time. Clearly a theme could apply more or less to a particular text, : for example, Marvell's "The Dutch in the Thames" would focus more on war, while it makes more sense to study Aphra Behn's *The Dutch Lover* with a background of trade and/or gender in mind. This does not mean that the other themes will be completely disregarded, only that not all themes may be applicable to all texts. The texts will then be linked to the more general historical background, and the background of the authors, as far as they are known. To answer the question, there will be a set of sub-questions.

- In what ways did the Anglo-Dutch relations change before and after 1672?
- How are the Dutch described with regards to war, trade and gender in Marvell's "The Character of Holland" and "The Dutch in the Thames"?

- How are the Dutch described with regards to war, trade and gender in the texts from 1672 and after?

There have not been many studies of the representations of Dutch people in English literature of the time that this thesis will focus on. Marjorie Rubright has written a book on the representations of Dutch people in the earlier part of the seventeenth century, but this does not cover one of the most interesting periods, around 1672. The focus of her book is on the duality of Anglo-Dutch relations. On the one hand, the English are very close to the Dutch, as they had been allies during the 80-years war, and they often regard each other favourably because of their shared Protestantism, but on the other hand they are rivals in a lot of things. While her analysis of texts is very interesting, the focus is mostly on works from the earlier seventeenth century while the focus of this thesis will be mostly on the second part of the seventeenth century. During this time, the relations between the English and the Dutch were shifting a lot. The history of this time is well-documented and researched, but it has not been linked to literature and representations of Dutch people yet, so there is a gap to be filled. An interesting article in this case would be Pincus's analysis of the shifting alliances from Anglo-French to Anglo-Dutch, and its representations in popular opinion, because he describes the propaganda used by the Dutch and the ways in which this may have helped shape popular opinion about them. He argues: "There can be no doubt that the Dutch successfully smuggled large numbers of pamphlets into England during the war" (353). In general, the historical side of the Anglo-Dutch relations during this time has been researched in depth by several scholars, one of whom is J.R. Jones, who wrote a history of the Anglo-Dutch Wars of the seventeenth century. His work, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century* as well as that of other historians will be the basis for the historical background that the texts will be placed in. Some of the texts that will be discussed in this thesis have not been subject to analysis at all yet, or only with a different focus.

The first chapter of this thesis will set out a general outline of the historical background of the texts. This chapter will answer the first subquestion. To do this, it will describe the historical background around 1672 and the most significant changes in the relations between the English and the Dutch. It will start after the Restoration, discussing the Anglo-Dutch wars that followed, and end with the events that followed the last Anglo-Dutch war in the seventeenth century. The second chapter will deal with the texts that were written before 1672. These texts will be *The Character of Holland* and *The Dutch in the Thames*, both by Andrew Marvell. In the third chapter, texts from 1672 and afterwards will be discussed.

The texts from 1672 will also be included in this chapter as they will most likely be a response to the events of that year. For this chapter, the texts that will be studied are John Ogilby's *The Holland Nightingale; or, the Sweet Singer of Amsterdam; being a paraphrase upon the fable of the frogs fearing that the sun would marry* (1672), Mrs. E.P.'s *On His Royal Highness His Expedition against the Dutch* (1672), Aphra Behn's *The Dutch Lover* (1673), Owen Felltham's *Batavia or the Hollander Displayed* (1675) and Henry Nevile Payne's "A Character of the Dutch" from *A Description of Holland* (1685).

Chapter 1 – Historical background

1.1 – Introduction

Anglo-Dutch relations underwent many changes in the period from the Restoration in 1660 to the ascension of William III to the English throne in 1688-89. The following chapter attempts to represent a coherent historical reconstruction with the themes of trade and war as the most important ones running through the entire period. Whereas the emphasis was more on wars because of trade in the first period, the later period is more moderate on both themes. The second Anglo-Dutch war was an important event during the first period. It takes 1672-1674 as a turning point, as the third Anglo-Dutch war was arguably the last major conflict between the two states in the seventeenth century. Afterwards, the relations were not characterised by war, but rather by trade and the ruler that they had in common. When the background is established, the next chapters will deal with the way literature from the time may or may not reflect these changing relations.

1.2 – War & Trade since Restoration

The period between the Restoration and the disaster year of 1672 can be characterised by the wars that the English and the Dutch fought against one another. During the Cromwellian period, the English had already fought a war against the Dutch. With the return of Charles II in 1660, these wars continued. There were to be two more Anglo-Dutch wars in the seventeenth century, which were, according to some historians largely due to English aggression. However, Levy contradicts this by characterising the Anglo-Dutch wars as trade wars (172). The Dutch and the English were the largest trading nations in the world at that time. The Dutch were at the height of their power in the seventeenth century and the English perceived that as a threat to their trade power. According to Pincus, trade became an important factor in post-restoration international politics and the people knew it. “The aspiring universal monarch, therefore, needed to achieve control of the sea”(336). The fact that the Dutch were so powerful at sea suggests that they aspired to universal dominion, and this inspired fear. Tensions ran high, and this escalated into war several times. The Second Anglo-

Dutch war only reinforced the idea of Dutch power at sea, as they famously sailed up the Medway and set fire to the English fleet that was docked at Chatham.

There are several more explanations offered for the outbreak of the Anglo-Dutch wars, and most have to do with both political and economic causes, and some historians even link religion to the wars (Rommelse 593). The way Pincus describes religion as a cause seems slightly far-fetched but it does make some sense. The argument is that, according to the English, the Dutch did not worship God, but rather Mammon, the biblical symbol of greed and material gain, and in this capacity they were an enemy to English Protestantism (Rommelse 594). The image of the Dutch that was prevalent among the English made many people think the war was justified, as the Dutch seemed to want a commercial empire, which was a threat to the English monarchy, and at that time was considered even more of a danger than the threat of Catholic universal monarchy from the French.

Tensions over trade were an important underlying source of the problem between the English and the Dutch, and Claydon argues that English honour was also at stake, as the Dutch did not recognise their superiority with regards to naval power (Rommelse 594). In 1665, the second Anglo-Dutch war broke out. It was preceded by Navigation Acts which had also started the first Anglo-Dutch war, and George Downing, who is usually blamed for starting the second war, was sent to the Dutch Republic as an ambassador to forward English trade interests (Jones 145, Rommelse 602). The second war is characterised by many, including J.R. Jones, as a war not initiated by Charles II or his court, but rather by people surrounding James, Duke of York, politicians and naval officers (145). The reason for this large influence of commercialism on policy, as Rommelse explains, was that the tax revenue from more trade was necessary for the economy at that time (600).

This second war – as the first had also been- was a prime example of a war influenced heavily by mercantilism. The English, in their policy, tried to emulate the Dutch: “The Dutch Republic was a clear example of the ideal mercantile society where traders had almost direct access to the process of political decision-making.” (Rommelse 602). Jones adds to this that, for the benefit of the nation, the English needed to imitate some parts of the Dutch system with regards to taxes (153) The English sent a fleet to secure the English African trade, and they captured most of the Dutch factories along the coast of Africa. However, Admiral De Ruyter was sent after them, and he recaptured everything. What followed were exchanges of attacks between English and Dutch ships, which were encouraged by James Duke of York and his advisors. The Dutch came to be seen as the biggest obstacle in the way of a flourishing English trade. This was the catalyst for an official war between the English and the Dutch

(Rommelse 603). Some wished to extend the violence in the seas off Africa into the English Channel, so that they could block Dutch trade even more, and establish English dominance over what they claimed to be “British” waters (Jones 147).

During the war, the focus was on mercantile interests at all times. It was believed that blocking Dutch trade would “shatter their morale” (Jones 160). It was a clear back and forth of blocking trade routes and fighting battles at sea, a true naval war. However, both sides were also plagued with difficulties. Jones explains that the English state was not able to maintain their ships in a condition to fight (166). The Dutch had lost many ships in sudden attacks made by the English. However, the plague and the great fire of London that struck in 1665 and 1666 were of such economic influence that the English decided not to dispatch their fleet when the Dutch were coming their way in 1667. This turned out to be a fatal decision, as the Dutch made it all the way up the Medway to Chatham, where the English navy was docked. They set fire to a great number of ships and took home the largest of them: the Royal Charles. After this defeat, the Dutch ruled the seas between England and the Netherlands, and most trade to London was blocked. The need for peace was urgent, as the economic situation was getting worse and worse. It seemed proven that the Dutch were the great power at sea. They were thriving while the English did not have enough money to keep up their defences.

1.3 – 1672 – 1674

The Third Anglo-Dutch war started in 1672. This was a disaster year for the Dutch, as they were at war with nations on all sides. The English had allied themselves with the French and sought revenge for the humiliation of 1667. However, J.R. Jones also argues that the third war did not have to do so much with the rivalry between the Dutch and the English, but also with English domestic politics and the power balance between King and Parliament. He maintains that trade was only used as a pretext for the war, and that this was largely Charles II’s own war, as he only sought the assistance and money from parliament after 10 months of fighting (179). This all was possible because Charles and his brother James had signed a secret treaty with France to join in an attack against the Dutch. To the public, the war was explained as a war over the sovereignty over the seas, but in reality it was a battle for power between King and parliament (Jones 180). The third Anglo-Dutch war was mainly started by the French, and the English were only involved through their agreement in the Treaty of Dover to a ‘joint war’ (Jones 184). This war was not so much a war at sea, as an invasion from land. This is also

why the role of the French is very important, as they sent the land armies. De Witt, leader of the Dutch government, made a mistake in thinking this war was going to be a naval war, and so he did not prepare for invasion by land. Renewed attempts to sail up the Medway and intercept the English fleet failed again and the position of the Dutch became very weak during the war. However, the position of the English was not much better, as there had been a propaganda campaign against the war in England, financed by William of Orange. This helped change public opinion in England against France by posing them as the 'Popish threat' and the Dutch as the Protestant allies. After the war had ended, this propaganda campaign would help William eventually gain the English throne, as public opinion was not so much against him and the Dutch as it had been before.

1672 was a turning point in many ways. The Dutch had been almost all-powerful at sea before, and many English people feared that the Dutch wanted universal dominion. In 1672, these fears were assuaged, as the Dutch were soundly defeated, and the height of their power at sea was over. Therefore, the fear that the Netherlands wanted universal power were no longer founded in any real threat and it declined (Pincus 335). Quite contrary to what had happened in the second Anglo-Dutch war, the Dutch lost a lot of their power. Whereas in 1667 it still seemed as if nothing could defeat them, at least at sea, they were in a deep crisis only 5 years later.

1.4 – After 1672: War & Trade

As the threat of a Dutch universal dominion declined in the eyes of the English, the relations between the two countries improved. Anglo-Dutch relations after 1672 were not so openly hostile, but rather more subdued. Steven Pincus argues that popular opinion in the 1670s shifted from hostility to the Dutch and friendliness to the French to the other way around (335). The Dutch came to be seen as allies and the French as the enemy once more. A good example of an event which brought about a shift in popular opinion was the marriage of James II's daughter Mary to William III of Orange. He married Mary Stuart in 1677, and the match was widely celebrated, although Catriona Murray also remarks that there was some suspicion in certain quarters - especially among the country gentlemen- as to the real faith of William, and his purpose in marrying the English princess (733). The match was an important point for believers in papist conspiracies. The image of the Dutch that existed in English

minds at that time did not help William's case. According to Murray, the Dutch were seen as treacherous, "they lacked principle and would readily break a treaty for material gain" (733). Even so, there were also many people who celebrated the match, and the bonds between the Dutch Republic and England were reinforced, as they also had been when Mary Stuart Princess Royal married William II back in 1641, before the wars.

The change in relations between the two countries was also partly due to propaganda from the Dutch Stadholder William III. From several sources, it is clear that he employed people to set up a campaign of propaganda to get the English on his side. When James succeeded Charles II, William saw him as a threat, as he was openly Catholic and had friendly relations with the monarchy in France. Louis XIV of France was William's most important enemy during that time, as the French continued to threaten the south of the Netherlands. Afraid of an invasion, William saw that he had to ally himself with a power that could balance France. England was such a power, but James was on good terms with Louis XIV, so when William was invited to the throne of England by English opposition in 1688, he saw it as his chance to get England on his side, and he drove James away. The English and the Dutch now shared a monarch, where only 15 years before, they had still been at war.

1.5 – Conclusion

Anglo-Dutch relations during the late seventeenth century underwent several changes. Where in 1660 the focus was on trade rivalry and the resulting wars, at the end of the century the two countries had become allies, and even shared a monarch. The relationship between the two countries was far more friendly, and the turning point for these changing relations is 1672-1674, the Third Anglo-Dutch war. Afterwards, the Dutch were so much weakened, their Golden Age was as good as over and so they were not as much of a threat to English trade anymore. Now the question remains if the image of the Dutch in literature reflects this change in Anglo-Dutch relations.

Chapter 2 – The Dutch, war, trade and gender in Marvell’s *The Character of Holland* and *The Dutch in the Thames*

2.1 – Introduction

One of the most famous authors from the period before 1672 is Andrew Marvell. He was politically active, and his poetry has remained an important source. Marvell himself was politically engaged. He was, as John M. Wallace describes him, a loyalist, one of the people “who turned their coats with the times and followed with a clear conscience the changes of regime between 1649 and 1688” (4). This would mean that Marvell went with the political changes that were occurring, from the Civil War to Oliver Cromwell and back to monarchy. He was always on the side of the ruling party at the time, but he was also an author of a lot of satire, and in this way was also critical of the government. He wrote two poems on the subject of the Dutch, and one about the Dutch people, which is *The Character of Holland*. This poem dates back to 1665, during the second Anglo-Dutch war, and was reprinted in 1672, during the third Anglo-Dutch war. In this thesis, the version from 1665 is used.

Another poem by Marvell is about the events of 1667, and entitled *The Dutch in the Thames*. In both, he casts judgement on the Dutch, although both poems are on different subjects. The first poem could be said to be a more general poem about Dutch society, though themes of war do appear in the last part of the poem, while the second poem has a clear focus on war, because that is the actual subject of the poem. While there are some references to trade in the poems, the theme of gender only appears very briefly in *The Dutch in the Thames*. Both are clearly based on important historical events, and the portrayal of the Dutch can be explained through placing the poems in their historical contexts.

2.2 – *The Character of Holland*

The Character of Holland is a poem of which the first 100 lines appeared in 1665, although some authors date smaller parts of the poem back to the first Anglo-Dutch war of 1652-1654 (Wallace 107). The poem describes the Dutch and their land. It starts with the land, moves on

to the way the country is organised and then turns to the characteristics of the people. It ends in a short stanza describing a scene from the Anglo-Dutch wars,

In the first few stanzas of the poem, Marvell describes all kinds of aspects of Dutch society in a very negative way. The poem starts by saying “Holland, that scarce deserves the name of land”. Marvell describes the way the Dutch made land out of sea, that the land they acquired in this way is made out “Of Shipwrackt Cockle and the Mussle shell”, and that it is the “indigested vomit of the sea”. This is a clear negative view of the Netherlands, but it also emphasises the Dutch connection to the sea, which he continues to do throughout the poem. This is also important as the English and the Dutch were rivals over dominance at sea during this time, and so this shows a kind of jealousy, as well as an excuse for why the Dutch fleet could be so powerful. The Dutch are so closely connected to the sea, that it is no wonder that they hold siege there.

Marvell seems fascinated by the way the sea still tries to regain the Dutch land, with constant flooding. The poem states that “Nature [...] would throw their land away at Duck & Drake”, meaning that Nature would constantly retake the land, idly squandering it. The poem even likens the Dutch people to sea-creatures, which emphasises the close bond between the Dutch and the sea. If the creatures living in the sea can trade places with the people on the land, this presents quite a negative view, as sea-creatures are generally considered slippery, which may also be a reflection on the elusive character of the Dutch in Marvell’s poem. He also places sea-creatures at a dining table in the Netherlands, exchanging places with civilised people who normally sit there. He does this by playing with words that look quite similar, but have very different meanings: “For Pickled Herring, pickled Heeren chang'd.” Herring and Heeren (the Dutch word for gentlemen) trade places in Marvell’s poem. Pickled herring is a common dish in the Netherlands, and in general food is pickled because it can be preserved longer, so this can also be seen as a reflection on the ‘gentlemen’ of the Netherlands being preserved, or old-fashioned.

The next stanzas are dedicated to the organisation of the Dutch political system. Marvell remarks that the Dutch need someone “who best could know to pump an Earth so leak”, and that the one who can ‘drain’ the land of drowning people is automatically its King. According to Marvell, this is the basis for who gets to rule the Netherlands, and the States General that supposedly rule the country do not “bear strict Service or Liberty” but only are

there “for lesse envy”, so that everyone can have a say and not be jealous. In this way, power seems legitimised.

Throughout the poem, Marvell uses a structure that introduces Dutch culture step by step, starting with the way the land is formed, moving to the people in it, then to the government and finally to religion, which is “next in order.” Marvell does seem to be more positive on Religion at first, but in the next stanza he touches on the freedom of conscience that exists in the Netherlands, and here the tone turns back to being quite negative. Each religion that arrives in the west (and more specifically Amsterdam) “pillag’d the first piece he found”. Pillaging suggests that the place was ruined, and so this is a very negative way of describing freedom of religion. Each religion has their own place in the Netherlands, and Amsterdam was well-known as a place of freedom for people who were persecuted elsewhere. The interesting thing about the freedom of conscience is that Marvell uses language of economics and trade, calling Amsterdam a “Bank of Conscience”, where religious people can find “Credit and exchange”. This language is clearly referring to the economic capital that Amsterdam had become after the establishment of the Dutch United East-India Company in 1602 and Amsterdam’s flourishing stock exchange established in the same year, and as a result of the blocking of the Scheldt, which diverted all trade from Antwerp to Amsterdam (Carlos 25). It is also critical of the religious freedom, as it is stated in Matthew 6:24: “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.” This implies that the Dutch, with their obsession for money, cannot rightly be devoted to a god, as they are concerned with only materialist matters. In the same stanza, Marvell uses the language of seafaring to describe the move of religion westward, saying that religion “imbarks” and “westwards steers its ark”. The ‘ark’ is a reference to Noah’s ark, which is in line with the subject of religion, but also important as a reference to a ship. This ark also is a symbol for the floods that punished humanity for its sins, so in that way, this passage could be read as a condemnation of the multitude of religions that are allowed in the Netherlands. That the ark is steered westwards could imply a demise, as the ark steers towards the sunset, but then this would also be critical of religion in England, as England is even further west from the Netherlands. These two taken together are a reference to the Dutch trading empire, that was based on their dominance at sea. This is also an area where there was intense rivalry between the English and the Dutch, as also explained in the previous chapter. The language used in this passage, however, is not clearly negative or positive, so on the basis

of trade, there is not necessarily a judgement from Marvell. However, looking at the way he uses biblical elements, it could be said that Marvell judges the freedom of religion negatively.

There is a very negative view of the Dutch in the next stanza, where he compares Dutch governors “Themselves the Hog's, as all their Subjects Bores.” Their court is in a village, referring to either The Hague, or the decentralised form of government of all the separate states. The village, according to Marvell, fits the governors perfectly, as they are nothing more than pigs. He goes on to say that more than 1500 years ago, the Dutch “had one Civilis call'd by Name;”, by which he most likely means Claudius Civilis, who led the Batavian rebellion against the Romans, but he continues to say “But surely never any that was so.” Here, Marvell uses another clever play on words, by taking the Latin meaning of Civilis (civil, citizenly or even gracious), combining it with the famous figure from Dutch history, but subverting it and saying that the supposed ‘hero’ of the Batavian rebellion did not deserve his name and reputation, nor did any other Dutch people since then.

The last stanza is more focused on current events and clearly favours the English over the Dutch, as Marvell describes a scene from the second Anglo-Dutch war: “Vainly did this Slap-Dragon fury hope,/ With sober English valour ere to cope”. The passage is most probably about the battle of Lowestoft, as Marvell mentions “Rupert, Sandwich, and of all, the Duke”. By this he means Prince Rupert of the Rhine, Admiral Sir Edward Montagu, Earl of Sandwich and James, Duke of York, who was the brother of Charles II, who were all involved in the battle off Lowestoft as commanders of the navy (Jones, 158). The battle was won by the English, who lost only 1 ship, as opposed to the Dutch, who lost 17 ships and 2500 men in one of their biggest defeats in all the Anglo-Dutch wars (Jones, 158). This event could explain the negative view of the Dutch, as Marvell tried to express English superiority over the Dutch. By saying that the Dutch “scarce deserve the name of land” he plays into the pride that the English felt by winning this battle. At least England is a true country, and the Netherlands merely exist of what has accidentally washed up on shore and was turned into some form of country where traditions do not matter and any “Dyke-grave” can have the power, as long as he can keep the water out. This would also help explain why the poem was reprinted in 1672. Its popularity may have increased, or it could have been used to reinforce the idea of English superiority over the Dutch again, as it had in 1665. As the English were at war again with the Dutch in 1672, this poem could have reminded the soldiers of the time when they were superior, and shown them that they could be superior again. This was actually

the case in 1672, when an alliance of the French and English from one side, and German princes from the other side forced the Dutch to retreat and flood parts of their land.

In general, Marvell is not very positive about the Dutch in this poem, as he compares their land to the vomit of the sea and likens the people to sea creatures. The image that is presented to us is one of people trying their hardest to keep their land together with random people taking control and being defeated by the English at sea. The stereotype of the Dutch as a seafaring nation is very visible here, as it is suggested that the Dutch are one with the sea, and this explains the difference with the English, as well as the power of the Dutch.

2.3 – *The Dutch in the Thames*

After the events of 1665, at the Battle of Lowestoft, “the considerable victory [...] declined to a series of fiascos involving inaccurate intelligence, strategic errors, bad timing and the inadequate replacement of poor officers.” (Smith 363). The absolute low of these fiascos was the raid on the Medway of 1667. *The Dutch in the Thames* is a poem about these events, when the Dutch sailed up the Medway to Chatham, where they set fire to the English fleet and captured the Royal Charles to take with them to the Netherlands. Marvell describes the events in a way that emphasises the Dutch power at sea and describes the English as having neglected their defences. The poem takes a chronological approach, and so describes all events as they happened in order of time. However, the poem is also a satire against the court, and so is also critical of the English government (Smith 362). Public opinion turned against the government, especially after the Raid on the Medway, and Marvell contributes to a phase of anti-court satire that opposes the corruption at court (Smith 362).

Marvell starts this poem by describing the beautiful English countryside that Admiral De Ruyter encounters when he sails the fleet up the Thames: “Survey’d their chrystall streams, and Banks so green / and Beauties ere this never naked seen.” (76). De Ruyter, according to Marvell “finds, the Aire, and all things, sweeter here.”(76). This passage also has a sexual component, as De Ruyter is described as eyeing the bashful Nymphs on the riverbanks (76). This emphasises De Ruyter’s masculinity, which strengthens his position as the leader of the Dutch fleet, and with that as a symbol for Dutch male leadership. It adds the component of strong masculine leadership to the already overwhelming Dutch military power,

contrasting it with the leaders of the first English stronghold on the Thames, who run away. In this way, a more positive characterization of the Dutch is used to critique the English for not being so masculine.

The theme of war becomes apparent after the description of the beauties of England, when language is used that suggests imminent threat: “While the red Flaggs breath on their Top-masts high / Terror and War, but want an Enemy.” The Dutch naval fleet is not just there to admire England, it is looking for an enemy, but it has not found one yet. This could be a subtle criticism towards the English defences. If the Dutch can admire the English countryside from their warships, then there is something wrong with English defences, as they should have been stopped already. The Dutch power is emphasised, as they are supposedly helped by Neptune, Aeolus and Tritons, classical gods of the sea and winds.

At first, the Dutch Navy is still compared to “A fleet of clouds”, referring to the white sails of the ships gliding along the water. However, the tone of the poem changes when the first cannonfire is released. Then there is “Thund’r and Lightning from each armed Clowd.” With the benefit of hindsight, Marvell describes the weak English defences as not enough to withstand the immense power of the Dutch. This is not so much a praise of the Dutch as it is a criticism on the way the government in London is spending its money. One of the forts on the shore of the Thames is “quickly judg’d not *tenable* / which if a House yet were not *tenantable*”. The fort is not fit for habitation, as the City does not pay for its upkeep. This clearly describes the English economic situation at the time of the attack on the Medway. The effects of the Fire of London and the plague, as well as the King’s expenditures were taking their toll on the economy. Samuel Fortrey wrote a tract on “England’s Interest and Improvement” in 1663, in which he suggests that the king should be an example of living without excess. If he did that, “this alone would be at least ten hundred thousand pounds a year to the advantage of his people.” (117). Fortrey also argues that “private advantages are often impediments of public profit” (115) so if the king were to economize, the country would profit from it. Marvell’s poem appears to express similar views. After the Dutch encounter no resistance from the English, they sail up to Chatham, where the English fleet is docked, and according to Marvell is “a weak and easy Prey.” Marvell is commenting on the poor state of arms on board the ships, which could do nothing but “hide its armlesse Head.” The Dutch are aided by an English pilot, who did not receive his pay, and thus betrayed the English secrets to the Dutch. These same problems arise with English seamen, who are unpaid and “refuse to mount our Ships for spight.”

The part of the poem that is the most negative about the Dutch is the part where Marvell describes the way the Dutch took the Royal Charles, which was the pride of the navy. The Royal Charles was the ship that had “restor’d / his exil’d Sovereign on its happy board”. Charles II had come back to England to become its King on this ship, but now it was “a cheap spoyle, and the mean Victor’s slave”. Even in this instance, the way this is described is more focused on the meaning of the ship in English history and the pity of it being taken than it is focused on a certain judgement of the Dutch. The Dutch are described as “the mean Victor”, in the sense that they are stingy. This comes back to the stereotype of the greedy and stingy Dutch people. It goes well with the fact that he also calls them “robber”. That they took the Royal Charles is described as “present shame”, but this reflects more on the shame of the English than that it casts any judgement on the Dutch, other than them being the enemy. England is described as a “Tygresse” who yells after the “Robber” but cannot do anything, because she has “uselesse claws” and “can not harme”. The fact that it is a ship that is considered a symbol for the Restoration which is taken by the Dutch can also symbolise Marvell’s disillusionment with the reinstated monarchy. Better things were expected from the king, but instead the English are defeated by the Dutch because the king and government did not invest in proper defences. In that way, the ship symbolises the hopes that came with the Restoration being taken away.

Marvell criticises the state of English defences, but at the same time shows the Dutch as dangerous and powerful. This could be explained through the fact that the English wanted to be as powerful at sea as the Dutch were at the time, and so he describes the Dutch in this way to show what English power could be like. In this way, national character is used not to praise his own country, but to criticize it. However, this poem is mainly concerned with answering the question of “How could this have happened?”, and the answer is not only that the Dutch were so dangerous, but also that the English neglected to keep up their defences and pay for their soldiers and navy.

2.4 – Conclusion

The overall image of the Dutch that is depicted by Marvell in his poems is not a positive one. In both poems, the Dutch are depicted in different ways. Both these poems have a focus on the theme of war, but both deal with this theme differently. In *The Character of Holland*,

Marvell paints a negative picture of the Dutch, which could be explained by looking at the historical background of the poem. It describes the Dutch society, but as it turns out, this poem is really about the Battle of Lowestoft, where the English soundly defeated the Dutch. This poem plays into this defeat, and highlights the superiority of the English by portraying the Dutch in an unfavourable way. It creates a national character of the Dutch that is clearly everything that the English are not.

The Dutch in the Thames takes a different approach altogether, as it does not merely criticize the Dutch, but also the poor handling of money at the English court. "The City" is responsible for the upkeep of the defences, but they have fallen into disrepair and cannot withstand the Dutch power. An Englishman has collaborated with the Dutch because he was "Cheated of Pay" and the "Feather'd Gallants" have come to watch the "Play" but when it turns dangerous, they "to London run". This criticism of the people in power is more important in this poem than the enemy. The Dutch are portrayed in a way that is not necessarily negative, except for the fact that they are the enemy in this war and they take away the English navy's most prized possession. The language that Marvell uses to describe them is not explicitly negative, and can even be said to be somewhat positive, as he portrays the Dutch as being very powerful at sea. This poem is more of a criticism on the English state of affairs, the economic situation, than it is a judgement on the Dutch. If anything, this poem shows that the Dutch were too powerful for the weak English defences to withstand, which could be used as almost an excuse. Again, the image that is presented in this poem could be explained through the historical background of the poem, but whereas it seems through the title of the poem that the focus could be on the Dutch, it is actually more directed towards the English and their own domestic problems, and how this affects their foreign policy.

Chapter 3 – The Representation of the Dutch in Texts from 1672 to 1685

3.1 – Introduction

1672 was the starting year of the Third Anglo-Dutch War and a disaster year for the Dutch. From this moment on, the power of the Dutch started to decline, first because 1672 had disastrous consequences for the Dutch economy. Historians like Annette Munt describe the way the Dutch fleet was forced back into port: “As a result, it was so unsafe for Dutch ships to go out that the States General forbade all merchant ships and fishing fleets to leave port. The ban remained in force for almost two years” (Munt 4). As a consequence, a lot of trading companies went bankrupt. In addition to this, the Dutch were still involved in large wars after 1672, such as the 9-years war, which started in 1688. Consequently, with a weakening economy and the costs of war, Dutch power crumbled. The decline can be argued to have started in 1672, with the collapse of trade for two years (Munt 4-5). It became known to the rest of Europe that the Dutch were not almighty at sea, as they suffered heavy losses during this year, both on land and on sea.

The two years during which Dutch ships were banned, brought opportunities for others, notably the English, to take control. The decline of power prompted a change in the relations between the English and the Dutch. In this chapter, texts from 1672 up to and including 1685 will be discussed in chronological order to see whether the change that is visible in history is also reflected in the representation of the Dutch in literature. Firstly, this chapter will discuss two texts from 1672, *The Holland Nightingale* and *On His Royal Highness His Expedition against the Dutch*. After that, there will be a discussion of Aphra Behn’s play *The Dutch Lover*, which was written in 1673. The first text from after the war is a travel report by Owen Felltham called *Batavia, or the Hollander Displayed*. The last text that will be discussed is “A Character of the Dutch” from 1685, which was written so long after the war that any changes in attitudes towards the Dutch might be best reflected in this text.

3.2 – Texts from 1672: Mrs EP, John Ogilby

In 1672, John Ogilby wrote *The Holland Nightingale; or, the Sweet Singer of Amsterdam; being a paraphrase upon the fable of the frogs fearing that the sun would marry*. The Fable of the Frogs and the Sun is one of Aesop's fables. Ogilby was a translator of Virgil, as well as the fables by Aesop, which he "paraphrased in verse" (Ogilby). Although he had published two volumes of fables before (in 1665 and 1668), this particular one was published later, and separately. The poem was written during the third Anglo-Dutch war, and although it does not seem like the poem is about war at first, the closing lines are clearly referring to the war.

The poem starts off with a relatively positive description of the development of the Dutch, saying that "but a century of years before, [they] dabbled in fishing, despicably poor". Nowadays they have "Grown formidable, both at Sea and Land." However, the language that is used to describe the Dutch is not quite as positive, as the country is called "United Bogs" and the people are "Hogen Mogen Frogs" who are in command, without any royalty or nobility. The use of Hogen Mogen is also interesting here, as the Oxford English Dictionary states that it means "depreciative", but is also used to denote a Dutch person. This negative term has thus become synonymous with the Dutch. The Dutch trade power is recognized, although in the same sentence, the strength of their army is called into question: "Are they with Force not able to Invade? / No matter; They'l undo the World by Trade".

As is usual with a fable, there is a moral in the story, which in this case is explicitly stated at the end of the poem. "Princes beware to Aid a Growing State,/ Lest they be first that give you the Check-Mate./ Wealth and Success turns Humbleness to Pride:/ Beggars on Horseback to the Devil ride." This moral clearly refers to the history of Anglo-Dutch relations. During the Dutch 80-years war against the Spanish, they asked for English help, and they were given assistance by Elizabeth I. They were allies during that time, but now that the success of the Dutch has grown, they are very powerful and at war with the English. This is perceived by the English as ungratefulness. This poem is also a warning for the Dutch. They should fear "a new Sun that riseth in the West; / His Flames beware; His kindled Vengeance shall; / Unless you straight submit, consume you all." In general, the comparison with frogs is elaborated through the entire poem, as is also mentioned in the title. It is a "paraphrase on the fable of the frogs fearing that the sun would marry". As the King of France at the time was Louis XIV, the Sun King, this line from Marvell's poem could be interpreted as the Dutch fearing that France would become an ally of the English, and in that way enter into a 'marriage'. This

could also explain the new sun, rising in the west as describing the English King Charles II: as the Sun King had been a sworn enemy of the Netherlands, a new enemy would rise in the west, and ally with the already existing enemy. As this was the case in 1672, the poem is clearly written in response to or anticipation of the events of that year. Again, the common stereotype of the cold, croaking frog is used to portray the Dutch in a negative way.

The piece written by Mrs E.P., called *On His Royal Highness His Expedition against the Dutch* is, as the title suggests, about the expedition led by James, Duke of York, against the Dutch in 1672. The poem mainly praises James for his courage, and warns the Dutch that they should fear the English army under James's command. It is addressed directly to the Dutch, warning that they cannot hope to win the coming war. The language that Mrs. E.P. uses to describe the Dutch is extremely negative. She calls them "Savage Bores" and "Slaves". She also invokes the memory of the Amboyna massacre, which had occurred almost 50 years before. The Dutch tortured and killed ten English men, nine Japanese men and one Portugese man at the trading post at Ambon in what is now Indonesia (Games 506). Even though the incident had happened so long ago and was dubbed a conspiracy by the Dutch it was often invoked during the Anglo-Dutch wars (Games). It is interesting to note that the texts that are available on Early English Books Online about Amboyna are mostly from the years of the different Anglo-Dutch wars. There are several texts from 1651-1653, like *A memento for Holland*, written during the first Anglo-Dutch war, a few from 1665, such as *A True relation of the unjust, cruell, and barbarous proceedings against the English at Amboyna in the East-Indies by the Neatherlandish govenour [sic] and council there*, written during the Second war, and in 1673, John Dryden wrote a play about it called *Amboyna*, intended as wartime propaganda. The incident is used to portray the Dutch as monsters, and is kept alive in English memories through literature that discusses it. Every time that something is needed to portray the Dutch as enemies, or as evil, the Amboyna massacre is referenced. The national character that is sketched here is one of cold-blooded murderers. Mrs. E.P. also uses this incident as a justification for the war against the Dutch, as she says: "as our cause is just, so we shall thrive." In the context of war, this poem makes the Dutch out as absolute enemies who have to be fought. The English are presented as a "noble train of English youth" and James is "brave York". A clear opposition between the "brave and noble" English national character and the national character of the Dutch can be seen here, creating an image of true 'good versus evil'.

Both poems from 1672 are more warnings for the Dutch than that they are judgements of them. The historical background is a clear basis for both poems, as the image that is presented of the Dutch in these poems is in line with the defeat that they suffered at the hands of the French and English. John Ogilby's poem depicts the Dutch as fearful frogs, who have a good reason to be afraid. The text by Mrs E. P. was written after the defeat, and it shows the Dutch as true enemies while at the same time commending James, Duke of York, and the English fleet for their victory. The stereotype of the frog and the image of cold-blooded murder are used to create an 'other' to which the English are opposed.

3.3 – *The Dutch Lover*

The Dutch Lover is a play by Aphra Behn from 1673. Behn was originally an English writer, but she spent some time in the Netherlands, as evidenced by "The Life and Memoirs of Mrs. Behn", a prologue to her collected works published in 1698. She was originally from Kent, but married a merchant who was originally from the Netherlands, Mr. Behn. After the second Anglo-Dutch war broke out, Behn was asked by the king to "Secrecy, and Conduct, Affairs of the highest Importance in the Dutch war" (4). She became a spy in Antwerp (4) and lived there for a while. She caught the attention of a Dutch merchant from Utrecht, and she used him to get more information for the king (6). Therefore, in her capacity as spy for Charles II she had a lot of dealings with Dutch people.

Although the play is called *The Dutch Lover*, it has only one Dutch character, who is called Haunce van Ezel, which literally translates to "Hans of Donkey" in English, already indicating that the author is not particularly positive about him. For the purposes of this thesis, the focus will be on the character of Haunce and how he is portrayed, and less on the rest of the play. To understand his character, according to Christopher Gabbard, we must first understand that the Dutch were considered phlegmatic, which means passionless (560): "The phlegmatic type, it is important to emphasize, was 'typically denigrated for . . . effeminacy and cowardice'" (561). At the beginning of the play, in the list of characters, Haunce is already introduced as a "fop", a vain man. Haunce is engaged to Euphemia, but Euphemia is in love with Alonzo. Alonzo tries to marry her by impersonating Haunce by being very impatient, uncivil and pushy, constantly asking Don Carlo for his daughter (3.1), but the actual Haunce arrives in Madrid before they can actually get married. Euphemia's father

cannot distinguish between the real and the fake Haunce, as they are both ridiculous. The joke here is that one Haunce is only pretending, and therefore exaggerating, but the other Haunce is not pretending at all. Even before Haunce appears on stage, he is constantly referred to as the “fool”, which also connects to his last name being “donkey”.

The first time the actual Haunce appears on stage, he has a bottle of brandy in hand and is clearly drunk. He and his friend Gload talk about ladies and sea-voyages, with Gload telling Haunce he smells of the sea and of sick, and that he is too drunk to visit ladies. This could also be interpreted as Haunce’s failure as a man. He drinks so much that he cannot even visit ladies anymore. In Act 4, scene 1 they talk about the change in Haunce, what he is like as a merchant, with Gload commenting that at home, his hands are “defil’d with counting of damn’d dirty Money”. This implies that merchants are only concerned with money, and that this is considered dirty. It is a comment on the Dutch trading empire. The Dutch are well-known for being merchants, and this is a very negative view of them. There is a change in Haunce now, as they talk about the difference between a “Merchant and a Gallant”. However, the way he is described now is so ridiculous and disgusting, that it is even more horrible to imagine that the Merchant-version of Haunce is even worse.

The ridiculousness of the character of Haunce is emphasised by the plan Euphemia has. In Act 2, Scene 2 she gives Alonzo “Letters, Sir, intercepted from the Father of my design’d Husband out of Flanders to mine.” On the basis of the content of these letters, Alonzo disguises himself as what he thinks Haunce will be like, and this image is not very manly. Considering it was Euphemia who came up with the plan, this passage subverts standard gender roles and gives Euphemia more agency while portraying the man she is supposed to marry as a lesser man.

Furthermore, Haunce is not depicted as a proper man either when Hippolyta asks him to “assist” her to fight off a “ravisher”. Haunce does not do so, which goes against the expectations for a ‘proper man’. Therefore, Hippolyta asks him: “Have you no Manhood, Sir?”. A little later on in the same scene, Haunce is fighting Antonio, saying: “Beg your Life; for I scorn to stain my Victory in Blood—that I learnt out of Pharamond [Aside.”. Although this seems a very chivalrous and masculine way to behave, he tells the audience that he learnt the line from Pharamond, which is a heroic romance about the history of France from King Pharamond, as are the rest of the lines he speaks when trying to end the fight. The fact that he has learnt these lines from a book, rather than from the battlefield himself shows that he does not conform to masculine stereotypes of fighters or warriors.

As Gabbard notes, “Sir William Temple posits that the men of a society

are either "Warlike or Effeminate" (557). He states this in his *Observations upon the United Provinces* (204), showing that there were two images at the time of Dutch men: they were either fighters, the masculine stereotype, or they were not, and that was considered effeminate. Haunce is clearly not depicted as warlike in this play, and so according to Sir William Temple, he must be effeminate. This is shown through Haunce's reading of romances about fighting rather than fighting himself. The portrayal of the titular *Dutch Lover* confirms the phlegmatic, effeminate stereotype that becomes clear through other texts of that time about Dutch men.

3.4 – *Batavia or the Hollander Displayed*

Owen Felltham wrote *Batavia or the Hollander Displayed. Being Three Weeks Observations of the Low Countrey, Especially Holland* in 1675, while he travelled through the Netherlands for 3 weeks on business with a friend, as is written in the introduction to the report. This text is not intended as a literary text, but rather as a report of Felltham's findings. While he was there, he had the chance to observe the Dutch and write an extensive report on his findings. There are two parts to his story. In the first he is quite negative about most things he encounters, and he describes them like they are curiosities. The stereotyping and national character are very apparent here, as the travel writing describes things that are unfamiliar to the audience rather than similarities between them and the unknown country. In the second part of the story he says "now view a Fairer Object" (36). After that, he continues with the positive sides to the country.

On the whole, Felltham seems to find the Netherlands a depressing country: "It is an excellent Countrey for a despairing Lover." The only advantage he sees is that "if they die in perdition, they are so low that they have a shorter cut to Hell" (6). When describing the rest of the country, the constant references to Heaven, Hell and Purgatory make it seem like Felltham was fearing death at all times. While travelling, "you cannot baulk your road without the hazard of drowning." (8). The entire country is marshes. He is not kind to the Dutch people either, saying that they were "bred before manners were in fashion." (20) and that they are very stubborn: "you may sooner convert a jew than make an ordinary Dutchman yield to arguments that cross him" (19). However, some things he encounters he finds better than England, like the houses in the Netherlands (14-15). "Their Houses they keep cleaner then their bodies, their bodies then their souls" is an indirect judgement on their souls. Their

houses are very clean, but this covers up their spiritual depravity. According to Felltham, “Shipping is Bable” for the Dutch (23). This biblical reference implies that they are too proud of their shipping and that there will be consequences, like there were with the people who built the tower of Babel in the book of Genesis. However, he also admires the fact that “they have not of their own enough materials to compile one ship; yet how many Nations do they furnish?” (37). The Dutch do not have a lot of materials of their own, but through trade all over the world, they supply the rest of Europe with materials they would not otherwise have. He further describes the Dutch as hardworking people (39).

Felltham continues with the stubbornness, also in the area of war, saying that the Dutch hold a grudge against the King of Spain, which according to him is a “Badge of an ill Nature”, as they owe him respect, as “they were once the lawful subjects”(23). The description of the Dutch navy is very long, and the emphasis is on their power: “They are water devils” (25). However, they are not honourable (25) which is a judgement on their character. Felltham considers the Dutch godless, they “place their Republick in a higher esteem then Heaven itself”(29), and “Their Countrey is the God they worship. “War is their Heaven, Peace is their Hell.”(18). However, on the positive side, he admires the way they have no king, but “without a King go forth in bands to conquer Kings”(40). He also sees that the Dutch prosper in war (49).

When talking about houses, Felltham also sees fit to comment on gender roles. In the house, he sees that “the woman there is the Head of the Husband”(17). He also comments that Dutch women are hot-headed, “and turns like Beer with Lightening to a sowerness,/ which neither Art nor Labour can ever make sweet again.”(18). These gender roles were not ‘natural’ or standard for that time, which makes it a curiosity for Felltham. It shows an atypical role for women, but it could also be turned around to show that men are effeminate in Dutch society. This is a very interesting connection to the effeminacy of Haunce in the previously discussed *Dutch Lover* by Aphra Behn. Stubbornness returns here as well, but the author comments that he has no real experience, as he does not have a Dutch wife. In a Family, “All are equals” (30), and you would not know the difference between master, mistress, father or son. He continues to comment on the women, who “would have good faces if they did not mar them with making.” (31). They also wear too many clothes according to Felltham (32). These comments on women and roles show that he believes women in the Netherlands are more equal to men, and have a more active role in the household than what he is used to in England. He also expects women to be dressed in a certain way, which is very different in another country.

Felltham seems to cast no definitive judgement on the Dutch, showing both the negative and positive aspects of Dutch society. However, by starting with the negative, this already gives a strange impression for everyone who does not know the country. In general, Dutch customs are described as curiosities. A reason for these curiosities could be cultural pride. The people that are encountered on the journey do things differently than what the author is used to, and so they are strange, which is mostly negative, but is in some cases also admirable. The English culture is seen as the standard to which Dutch culture is held, and everything that they do different is considered strange. This piece does describe some Dutch history, but does not involve any current affairs, and from the text itself it is not clear in which year this was written, whether before, during or after a war.

3.5 – “A Character of the Dutch” *A Description of Holland*

The last piece of literature that is going to be discussed is Henry Nevile Payne’s “A Character of the Dutch” from his *A Description of Holland*. This text is from 1685, which places it well after all the Anglo-Dutch wars of the seventeenth century, and only three years before William III’s invasion of England and his ascent to the throne at the expense of James II. Payne himself was, according to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, a Roman Catholic as well as a Jacobite. Therefore it would make sense that he would oppose the Protestant Dutch, even though he had no way of knowing in 1685 what would happen only a few years later. The influence of the individual seems very apparent here, as the relations between the two countries have improved from the wars, but the image of the Dutch that he presents in his poems is very negative.

Payne begins his poem by trying to explain where the Dutch come from. He refers to the boggy land, which the Netherlands were at the time, and that “they grew out of bogs”. To this he adds that they learnt “their first words from the croaking of Frogs.” This is an interesting comparison, as the Dutch still sometimes refer to their own country as “kikkerlandje”, which literally means frog-country. The origin of this name also lies with the bogs that used to cover a lot of the land and that housed many frogs. However, being compared to frogs is not very positive.

The next stanza describes how Dutch people were created from a combination of earth and sea. Payne describes how the Dutch have no real substance, as they were “skins of Mud”.

The “Froth of the Sea” then hardened into brains. This shows some interesting parallels with the image Marvell presented of the Dutch in *A Character of the Dutch*. In that poem, he also described the Dutch as half-sea, half-land people, and the idea returns in this poem. It is clear that the Dutch and the sea are considered inseparable. However, in this poem, the relation is described more negatively, as the image is more of a monster that emerges from the bog and is made out of mud than it is of a man. The Dutch are also linked to money, as they have been before. Payne says that “Guelts” is their “sole God”, and that the Dutch would do anything for money. It is “the first word they spoke” as well as their last, and they spend their entire lives scrambling for money. The image presented here is that the entire country is all about money, and this also plays into the stereotype of the stingy Dutch.

The form of the poem is very song-like, with a clear metre that keeps repeating itself. This makes it very easy to remember the poem. Therefore, it would be easy to imagine that this was read aloud to an audience, or if it was not it was deliberately made to look like it came from an oral tradition. Taking a New Historicist approach for this text would be most useful, because of the Roman Catholicism of the author and his Jacobite leanings. This text could be a piece of propaganda against the Dutch, warning people away from an alliance. The way the Dutch are described in this poem could definitely be used as anti-Dutch propaganda, as there is not a positive line about them to be found. As Pincus argues there is evidence that the Dutch also put out pro-Dutch propaganda in England during the Third Anglo-Dutch war (1672-74), it is reasonable to assume that there was also propaganda that was against the Dutch.

3.6 – Conclusion

When looking at all the texts considered here, the overall image of the Dutch is a negative one. Throughout time, it does not seem to change much, for, except for the travel writing by Owen Felltham, all the texts pose the Dutch as enemies, fools or both. It can be said that texts that were not written during the war are linked to historical events to a lesser extent than the ones that are about war, or written during the war. A returning comparison is that of the Dutch to frogs and the country to marshes. The last one is logical, as the Netherlands mainly still consisted of bogs at the time, but the constant comparison with frogs could be considered quite negative, as most people dislike frogs. There are, however, some authors, like Owen Felltham, who turn it into something semi-positive, by saying that the frogs are as much at

home on land as they are in the water, referring to the power of the Dutch at sea. With regards to gender, it seems there is a returning stereotype of Dutch men being effeminate, like in Aphra Behn's play, and Dutch women are more masculine, as Owen Felltham describes them as being equal in the house. In general, trade is a theme that keeps reappearing, no matter when the text was written. The Dutch are constantly being presented as merchants, obsessed with money or otherwise engaged with capital in some way. The theme of war seems less present in the later texts, while the theme of gender is present only in some texts.

Conclusion

Considering all the texts that were discussed here, the three most important themes that this thesis focuses on are present in a greater or lesser degree in all of them. Especially trade is a theme that appears in almost all the texts. The Dutch and money are a combination that is visible everywhere, as they are described as obsessed with money in several of the texts that were discussed, like John Ogilby's text or Henry Payne's poem.

The expectation was that with a more positive relationship between the two countries, the representation of Dutch people in literature would also improve, from a historicist perspective. This does not seem to be the case, even though we see a change in the most important themes through time. On the theme of war, it is clear that texts that were written during wars also see the Dutch more as direct enemies. These texts also often refer to the rivalry that exists in trade. Texts about war are most engaged with historical context, and this makes sense as most of the texts that deal with war were written in direct response to events.

Texts that are less concerned with war, like *The Dutch Lover*, are also the texts where the other two themes of trade and gender become more prominent. There are several stereotypes or comparisons that return throughout all the texts. The most prominent of these is the comparison between the Dutch and frogs. Almost every text that attempts to describe the Dutch in any way makes the same comparison. This could be explained through the fact that the Netherlands consisted mostly of bogs and marshes during the seventeenth century. Because frogs are creatures that live on land as well as in the water, this comparison plays into Dutch dominance at sea as well, because the Dutch are just as at home at sea as they are on land. Although the text from 1685 was expected to be more positive about the Dutch from a historicist approach, a new historicist approach seems to offer more of a solution here, as the identity and political views of the author may have contributed to the fact that the Dutch are still portrayed very negatively. Henry Payne was a Roman Catholic, and thus would be opposed to Dutch Protestantism.

In general the texts in this thesis are not becoming more positive as the relations get better, although there are some changes. During wars, for example, there is an emphasis on fighting and rivalry, while this emphasis is not present in peacetime writing. The most important thing that has arisen out of this thesis is that we can clearly see the influence of large historical events like battles on the literature that is produced, but peace seems to have

less of an influence on the texts that were written, and the image of the Dutch that is presented. However, the underlying stereotypes about trade are almost always present, no matter when the texts were written. The influence of Neumann's foreign national characters has also become clear, as the creation of the Dutch national character in these texts can be used to oppose the English national character to show English superiority or distance from everything that the Dutch are. This is how it is used in most of the texts analysed here. The exception to this was Marvell's *The Dutch in the Thames*, as this text uses the Dutch national character to criticize the English national character. It has shown that both historicist and new historicist perspectives can be useful to analyse texts from this period. This thesis has provided an insight into Anglo-Dutch relations from a literary perspective, and many texts were used that have not been studied in great detail before, or if they were, not from the perspective of the Dutch. It has shown that the stereotypes about the Dutch remain largely the same, even though relations may change. This means that the way history develops does not necessarily change the way people perceive others. The national character of a people, once sketched, is not so easily changed by what now seem large historical changes. Historical context does influence the image of the Dutch, mainly through large events like wars and battles, which provide new topics to write about, but the people at the time may not have experienced events in the way that we now see them, with the benefit of hindsight. We see the big picture of history, but the people living it were not aware of the consequences the changes that were occurring were going to have.

Although 1672 could be seen as a turning point, another turning point might be the Glorious Revolution, and for further research, it may be interesting to find texts that deal with this to see if there are any changes later on. The texts about the Dutch in this thesis do not display a significant change through time, but this may change when looking at texts from later times, comparing different centuries and linking the historical background. It could even be traced all the way to nowadays, providing an overview of changing relationships over time.

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