Germany and the Coming of the French Wars of Religion: Confession, Identity, and Transnational Relations

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Abstract

From its inception, the French Wars of Religion was a European phenomenon. The internationality of the conflict is most clearly illustrated by the Protestant princes who engaged militarily in France between 1567 and 1569. Due to the historiographical convention of approaching the French Wars of Religion as a national event, studied almost entirely separate from the history of the German Reformation, its transnational dimension has largely been ignored or misinterpreted.

Using ten German Protestant princes as a case study, this thesis investigates the variety of factors that shaped German understandings of the French Wars of Religion and by extension German involvement in France. The princes' rich and international network of correspondence together with the many German-language pamphlets about the Wars in France provide an insight into the ways in which the conflict was explained, debated, and interpreted.

Applying a transnational interpretive framework, this thesis unravels the complex interplay between the personal, local, national, and international influences that together formed an individual's understanding of the Wars of Religion. These interpretations were rooted in the longstanding personal and cultural connections between France and the Rhineland and strongly influenced by French diplomacy and propaganda. Moreover, they were conditioned by one's precise position in a number of key religious debates, most notably the question of Lutheran-Reformed relations. These understandings changed as a result of a number pivotal European events that took place in 1566 and 1567 and the conspiracy theories they inspired. This combination of influences created a spectrum of individual interpretations of the French Wars of Religion. The military campaigns of the years 1567-69, far from being motivated by political or financial opportunism, were the product of these individual interpretations.

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Author's declaration

I hereby declare that the material presented in this thesis is the product of my own work, except where referenced, and has not been submitted for publication, for any degree at this, or any other institution.

Introduction

In March 1568 the Elector Palatine Friedrich III sent a letter to his fellow Protestant Prince Elector August of Saxony in which he wrote of the religious conflict that had once again broken out in France. He reminded August that the violence had erupted 'not only in the Kingdom of France but also in the Netherlands, Italy, and other places' and feared that it would also engulf 'our beloved fatherland' of the Holy Roman Empire.[1] Nine months later the Cardinal of Lorraine wrote to Philip II of the dangers facing the Catholics in France. In his letter the Cardinal drew Philip's attention to the fact 'that all the German princes of the opposite religion have not only formed a league together but have also armed themselves against us … On the other side, sire, the Queen of England … is said to give aid to our rebels with munitions, artillery, money, and men … Thus, your majesty will permit me to say to you that it is necessary that we prepare a good and great effort' to end the war.[2] These two interpretations of the religious conflict that raged in France are characteristic of a mood that swept across Western Europe between 1567 and 1569. During the last years of the 1560s the idea that events in France were part of a larger international struggle dominated public and private discourse. This mood was the culmination of a decade of debates and discussions about the nature of the turmoil in France. These debates were informed by a complex mix of factors, ranging from the theoretical understanding of the nature of

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[1] 'in der cron Frankreich sonder auch in den Nederlanden, Italien und andern orten … ins geliebten vaterland' Friedrich III to August of Saxony, 26 March 1568, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume II* (Braunschweig: C. A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1870): pp. 203-204.

[2] 'tous les princes d'Allemaigne de contraire religion non seullement se liguent ensamble mais aussi s'arment contre nous … D'aultre consté, sire, la Royne d'Angleterre est … declaré car elle donne secours à noz rebelles de munitions, d'artillerie, d'argent et de gens … Ainsi, vostre magesté me permettre de luy dire qu'il est besoing que nous faicions ung bon et grant effort …' Phillip II to Charles de Lorraine, 13 January 1569, D. Cuisat, *Lettres du Cardinal Charles de Lorraine, 1525-1574*, (Geneva: Droz, 1998): p. 590.

transnational and inter-confessional relations to the concrete events that unfolded around Europe during the 1560s. Though the consequences of these debates, most notably German military intervention in France, have been discussed in the historiography, the beliefs underpinning these consequences have largely been ignored.

The series of events commonly referred to as the French Wars of Religion was from its inception a profoundly European phenomenon. The internationality of the conflict manifested itself in a variety of different ways. The outbreak of violence in 1562 was closely linked to events in Scotland, where Protestants overthrew the French Catholic regency of Marie de Guise. The turbulence and chaos of protracted conflict in France also served as an incubator for new and often radical political, social, and religious ideas. Though to a large extent developed in response to the problems inside France, these ideas were not the product of an exclusively French intellectual climate, nor were they confined by France's borders. Rather, they were produced in dialogue with ideas developed throughout Europe and disseminated to the rest of the continent via printed works and private correspondence. The Wars of Religion also had a deep impact on the social composition of communities inside France and beyond. The success of Reformed Protestantism, the exclusivist nature of Reformed doctrine, and the often violent Catholic backlash led to the collapse of French civil society and the formation of communities of Huguenots separated or even isolated from their Catholic neighbours. These communities were often forced to uproot and to find safe havens in neighbouring countries. There they had a transformative effect on the religion, social structure, and economies of their host communities.

The internationality of the French Wars of Religion manifested itself most clearly in the crucial role played by foreign actors. The magnitude of the conflict, the direct relevance of its causes to wider European issues, and the importance of the Kingdom of France in the European political landscape ensured that there were persistent efforts by foreign potentates to influence the outcome of the Wars. A particularly noteworthy group of foreign actors are the Protestant

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princes of the Holy Roman Empire who between 1567 and 1569 intervened militarily in the Wars in France. Though the majority of the Protestant German princes came to the aid of the Huguenots, a small number, including Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, Philibert of Baden, and Jean-Phillipe of Salm, served the royalists. The German campaigns had a significant impact on the course of the Wars. Crucially, they represent the culmination of an ongoing German engagement in French affaires; dating back before the outbreak of war in 1562 they reveal a more profound relationship than diplomatic events suggest. The ties between the French and German aristocracies were not limited by the existence of borders, which were porous in the pre-modern period. Moreover, the cosmopolitanism of the border region between France and the Empire ensured frequent contact between people and exchange of ideas. It is this process of intellectual, cultural, social, and religious exchange between France and Germany, as well as the ways in which the French Wars of Religion were explained, understood, and interpreted in Germany that will be the focus of this thesis. The correspondence of Protestant princes of the Empire has left us a unique insight into the ways in which France was discussed abroad, will serve as a case study through which I will investigate the transnational impact of the French Wars of Religion.

Historiography

This thesis will engage with and contribute to a number of different historiographical debates and traditions. The transnational nature of the project together with the ambition to present a comprehensive analysis of all the different factors shaping German understandings of the Wars of Religion forces me to engage with an unusually wide range of historiographies in a number of different languages. I will first give a brief overview of the most important of these, summarising the main trends and indicating how I intend to contribute, before discussing the aims and structure of the thesis in more detail.

The French Wars of Religion: national or international story?

Firstly, and most importantly, my research contributes directly to our understanding of the international dimension of the French Wars of Religion, both its international resonance and the way in which foreign players impacted on the course of the conflict. Traditionally, the French Wars of Religion have been regarded as a quintessentially national conflict. The narrative of the Wars has been shaped heavily by the distortion of nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century nationalism, as well as (until recently) by a highly confessionalised historiography. In these contexts, history served polemical purposes. A pertinent example is Gaston Zeller's 1933 article 'La Monarchie d'Ancien Régime et les Frontières Naturelles', which uses the example of German intervention during the French Wars of Religion to demonstrate that the Rhine was essential to French national security.[3]

Even after nationalistic and confessionally-driven readings of history came under attack, the tendency to read the Wars solely as a French story persisted. This was reinforced by the practicalities of conducting historical research, which ensured that it was easier to concentrate on the French story alone, especially given the complexity of the domestic political scene. When designing research projects, modern national borders are often used as a convenient way of limiting the project's scope, not least because the infrastructure of research, such as the *Bibliothèque* and *Archives Nationales*, readily lends itself to such an approach. Writing national histories has long been seen as unproblematic, with borders presented as seemingly fixed and non-arbitrary tools for demarcating the limits of research. Moreover, from the 1970s, the regional and local impact of the Wars was re-emphasised.[4] The wealth of sources housed in local archives has

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[3] G. Zeller, 'La monarchie d'Ancien Régime et les frontières naturelles', *Revue d'Histoire Moderne*, 8 (1933): 305-333.

[4] See for instance, the work carried out by Anglo-American scholars: P. Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); D. Potter, *War and Government in the French*

allowed historians to paint vivid and detailed pictures of the workings of religious conflict in the community. Studying the transnational dimension, however, naturally poses some tricky methodological questions. How can one best limit the scope of a project or best conduct comprehensive research within the time constraints when the source base is heavily broken up and spread out over a large geographical area? The problems of accessing historiographies and primary sources in multiple languages, in this case English, French, German, Dutch, and Latin, has deterred historians from pursuing projects that are truly transnational.

All this has ensured that the transnational dimension of the conflict has largely been neglected. Consideration of the place of the Wars in a European context has for the most part been confined to the international rather than the transnational; that is the interaction between nations or states rather than developments transcending borders. There has been ample interest in the interaction between states, for instance through diplomacy. The most influential and extensive work dealing with the international politics and diplomacy of the French Wars of Religion is Lucien Romier's *Les Origines Politiques des Guerres des Religion*, first published in 1913.[5] Besides focussing on internal political manoeuvring, for instance by influential aristocratic families, Romier discusses at length the effect of French fortunes in the wars with the Habsburgs, the role of the *Fuorusciti* (disaffected and wealthy Italian political exiles), and Henry II's sometimes awkward relationship with the German Protestant princes. As the name suggests, the *Origins Politiques* explains the causes of the Wars in exclusively (high)-political terms. It almost exclusively attributes influence over the course of the Wars to those holding significant political power and downplays the role of religious ideas and sentiments or societal pressures.

Provinces, Picardy 1470-1560 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); S. Carroll, *Noble Power during the French Wars of Religion, the Guise Affinity and the Catholic Cause in Normandy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[5] L. Romier, *Les Origins Politiques des Guerres des Religion*, (Geneva: Slatkine-Megariotis Reprints, 1974).

Romier's work remained the latest word on the international dimension of the Wars of Religion until the publication of Nicola Sutherland's *The Massacre of St Bartholomew and the European Conflict, 1559-1572* in 1973. [6] Despite the transformation in much of the historiography of the French Wars of Religion by the 1970s, Sutherland presents a series of arguments that would have sounded very familiar to Romier. Although Sutherland, contrary to Romier, puts religion at the heart of the story, she also restates the classic interpretation of the origins of the conflict, focussing on the weakness of the French monarchy, the incessant political manoeuvring of Catherine de' Medici, and the ruthless political and religious ambitions of the Guise and the other 'ultra-Catholics'. In the international arena, the focus is strongly on the connection between Philip II and the French Catholics, the relationship between events in France and the Netherlands, and on the arduous process of creating an international Protestant alliance. Another work that has to be mentioned is De Lamar Jensen's *Diplomacy and Dogmatism: Bernardino de Mendoza and the French Catholic League*, which provides a detailed account of the workings of Spanish diplomatic influence in France. [7] His more broadly focussed article 'French diplomacy and the Wars of Religion' helpfully demonstrates how international diplomatic practice survived the turmoil of religious conflict. [8]

This focus on high politics and international diplomacy, though an important part of the story, has meant that the historiography of the French Wars of Religion in a European context has become divorced from the work of historians concentrating on the Wars inside France. For instance, pioneering scholarship by historians working on for instance the societal and local impact of the conflict, the variety of religious experiences, and the history of ideas has not been

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[6] N. M. Sutherland, *The Massacre of St Bartholomew and the European Conflict, 1559-1572* (London: Macmillan, 1973).

[7] D. Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism: Bernardino de Mendoza and the French Catholic League*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1964).

[8] D. L. Jensen, 'French diplomacy and the Wars of Religion', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 5 (1974): 23-46.

incorporated in the abovementioned historiography. Furthermore, although comparative studies placing France in a wider context, such as a collection of essays entitled *Reformation, Revolt and Civil in France and the Netherlands 1555-1585*, do deal with topics such as the political and religious middle ground and Calvinist political thought, they do not go further than the placing of two separate historiographical traditions next to each other.[9] There is, thus, a clear gap in our understanding of the ways in which the religious, social, cultural, and intellectual tensions that underpinned the Wars of Religion transcended the porous and permeable borders of sixteenth century France. This thesis will aim to make a direct contribution to our understanding of the transnational cultural, religious, and intellectual exchange that formed the foundation of German involvement in the Wars in France.

Germany and the French Wars of Religion

A similar analysis can be made of the historiography of German intervention in the French Wars of Religion, to which this thesis will directly also be contributing. Historical study of German involvement in the French Wars of Religion can be divided into two distinct phases. The first phase, between roughly 1850 and 1930, saw the most persistent interest in Franco-German relations and reflects the great power rivalry between the two nations. This first flurry of interest is characterised by hefty volumes in which both the diplomatic traffic and the course of German-led military campaigns are carefully mapped. Making extensive use of large bodies of primary sources, works such as Friedrich Barthold's *Deutschland und die Hugenotten*, Karl Hahn's *Herzog Johann Wilhelm von Weimar und Seine Beziehungen zu Frankreich*, and Pieter van Herweden's *Het Verblijf van Lodewijk van*

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[9] P. Benedict, G. Marnef, H. van Nierop, and M. Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil in France and the Netherlands 1555-1585*, (Amsterdam: Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999). Another example of such a comparative study is H. van Nierop, 'Similar problems, different outcomes: The Revolt of the Netherlands and the Wars of Religion in France', in K. Davids and J. Lucassen (eds.), *A Miracle Mirrored, The Dutch Republic in European Perspective,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): pp. 26-56.

Nassau in Frankrijk, laid the groundwork for our understanding of these campaigns.[10] Though invaluable as a source for understanding the workings of international diplomacy and military intervention, these works of course predate many of the developments that have transformed the historiography of the French Wars of Religion since the 1960s. The second phase is much more incomplete and patchy, with interest in German involvement in France often only an aside. A pair of essays by the Alsatian historian Bernard Vogler: 'Le rôle des Électeurs Palatins dans les Guerres de Religion en France' and 'Huguenots et Protestants Allemands vers 1572' provide the most prominent contribution.[11] These articles root German involvement during the Wars in a longer tradition of Franco-German aristocratic contact, but lack a proper investigation of the reception of French justifications in a German context, leading Vogler to draw dubious conclusions about the motives behind these campaigns.[12] Besides this, there have been some rather basic accounts of German campaigns in local history journals, such as Gregor Richter's 'Württemberg und die Kriegszug des Herzogs Johann Wilhelm von Sachsen nach Frankreich im Jahr 1568'.[13] This

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[10] F. W. Barthold, *Deutschland und die Hugenotten, Geschichte des Einflusses der Deutschen auf Frankreichs Kirkliche und Bürgerliche Verhältnisse von der Zeit des Schmalkaldischen Bundes bis zum Geseze von Nantes, 1531-1598*, (Bremen: Verlag von Franz Schlodtmann, 1848); K. Hahn, *Herzog Johann Wilhelm von Weimar und Seine Beziehungen zu Frankreich*, (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1907); P. J. van Herweden, *Het Verblijf van Lodewijk van Nassau in Frankrijk, Hugenoten en Geuzen, 1568-1572*, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1932). Other examples of works from this period are J. Ney, 'Pfalzgraf Wolfgang, Herzog von Zweibrücken und Neuburg', *Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte*, 29 (1911): pp. 1-124; W. Platzhoff, *Frankreich und die Deutschen Protestanten in den Jahren 1570-1573*, (Munich: Oldenburg, 1912); G. Baguenault de Puchesse, 'Le duc de Wurtemberg, les Guise et Catherine de Médicis (1561-1563)', *Bulletin Philologique et Historique du Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques*, (1915): 173-197.

[11] B. Vogler, 'Le rôle des Électeurs Palatins dans les Guerres de Religion en France (1559-1592)', *Cahiers d'Histoire*, 10 (1965): 51-85; B. Vogler, 'Huguenots et Protestants allemands vers 1572' in *L'Amiral de Coligny et son Temps*, Paris, Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français, 1974: pp. 175-189.

[12] See Chapter VI.

[13] G. Richter, 'Württemberg und die Kriegszug des Herzogs Johann Wilhelm von Sachsen nach Frankreich im Jahr 1568', *Zeitschrift für Württembirgische Landesgeschichte*, 26 (1967): 252-265. Another example is K. Malisch, 'Pfalzgraf Wolfgang von Zweibrücken und Neuburg und die französischen Hugenotten', *France-Bayern: Bayern-Frankreich: Wege und Begegnungen, 1000 Jahre Bayerischen-Französische Beziehungen, France-Bavière; Allers et Retours, 1000 Ans des Relations*

relative lack of interest in the transnational activities of the German princes is illustrated most clearly in Matthias Langsteiner's *Für Land und Luthertum: die Politik Herzog Christoph von Württemberg*, an extensively-researched and detailed analysis of Christoph's political career, which, despite its depth of research, hardly mentions France.[14]

The most recent work that must be discussed in this context is Hugues Daussy's *Le Parti Huguenot, Chronique d'une Désillusion* from 2014.[15] This account of the fate of the Huguenot party during the early Wars of Religion is thorough in its treatment of their efforts to solicit support in Germany. Daussy's focus, however, is strongly on the French side of the story. The German princes are only mentioned where their paths directly cross those of the Huguenots, ignoring the very important process of interpretation and the internal debates that underpinned German involvement in France. The last 150 years of scholarship has thus primarily touched upon the anatomy of German diplomatic and military involvement in France. What is still lacking in the existing historiography, therefore, is a thorough investigation into the German religious, political, and intellectual context in which the Wars of Religion were interpreted and in which German policy towards France was formed. As a result of this neglect, I argue that the motivations behind the German military campaigns have been misunderstood. By looking beyond the moments of direct German involvement in France I will address this gap and present a new assessment of the intellectual and religious underpinnings of these campaigns.

Franco-Bavaroises, (Paris: Biro, 2006): pp. 110-115; and A. Wirsching, 'Konfessionalisierung der Aussenpolitik: Die Kurpfalz und der Beginn der Französischen Religionskriege (1559-1562)', *Historische Jahrbuch*, 106 (1986): 333-360.

[14] M. Langsteiner, *Für Land und Luthertum: die Politik Herzog Christoph von Württemberg (1550-1568)*, (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2008).

[15] H. Daussy, *Le Parti Huguenot, Chronique d'une Désillusion (1557-1572)*, (Geneva: Droz, 2014).

Transnational history

The field of transnational history is very young. Though the adjective 'transnational' has increasingly been used since the 1970s, it was only after the end of the Cold War that historians started systematically to revise the central position of nation states as dominant categories of historical investigation.[16] Despite the ascendency of transnational history, which is reflected in many recent publications and in its institutionalisation in research institutes and programmes, its theoretical foundation remains somewhat difficult to pin down.[17] The first important observation to make is that transnational history differs fundamentally from international history. Whereas the former aims to study the past through an interpretive framework that transcends nations, international history still relies on the nation-state as the foundation of analysis, meaning that international research projects 'often consisted of scholars of different nations' histories comparing their notes.'[18] It is the realisation that social, economic, cultural, political, intellectual, and religious developments are not unique for each nation, nor contained by the borders of states that drives transnational history. However, it is the relation between national and transnational histories that makes the field complex. Akira Iriye, one of the pioneers of transnational history, has described this relationship aptly:

> The transnational approach to the study of history … does not deny the existence of nations and the roles they play in contributing to defining the world at a given moment in time. The intricate interrelationship between nations and transnational existences, between national preoccupations and transnational agendas, or

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[16] A. Iriye, *Global and Transnational History, The Past, Present, and Future*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013): p. 12.

[17] For instance the Centre for Transnational History at University College London, the Institute for Transnational & Spatial History at the University of St Andrews, and the 'Collective identities and transnational networks in medieval and early modern Europe' research programme at Universiteit Leiden.

[18] Iriye, *Global and Transnational History*, p. 8.

between national interests and transnational concerns is of fundamental importance to the study of transnational history ... Transnational history ... focuses on cross-national connections, whether through individuals ... or in terms of objectives shared by people and communities regardless of their nationality.[19]

Though Iriye's modern focus colours his interpretation of the field, this definition is still useful for Reformation history. Despite the fluidity and ambiguities of sixteenth-century states and nations (see Chapter I), the Reformation was a phenomenon *per excellence* in which local, national, and transnational factors interacted and intersected. Therefore, it is not surprising that transnational approaches have recently left their mark on the study of the Reformation. Though a truly transnational approach to the Wars of Religion as a whole is lacking, this interest in the transnationality of the Reformation has been growing. Two popular avenues of investigation are particularly relevant for this thesis: the international dimension of Calvinism, especially Reformed exiles and refugees, and the spread of ideas, news, and rumours throughout Europe through print culture.

The Reformed sense of connectedness to coreligionists throughout Europe has been a feature of a number of publications. Ole Grell, for instance, has shown the important role played by ministers and merchants in the formation of ties between German Reformed Protestants and the Huguenots.[20] Research into Calvinist internationalism has ranged from the intellectual and theological background of this outlook, for example in Charles Parker's article 'French Calvinists as children of Israel', to the role of individuals in the creation and maintenance of cross-border Reformed ties, such as

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[19] Ibid, p. 19.

[20] M. Prestwich, *International Calvinism, 1541-1715*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); O. P. Grell, 'Merchants and Ministers: the Foundation of International Calvinism', in A. Pettegree, A. Duke, G. Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): pp. 254-273; Antoher example is G. Murdock, *Beyond Calvin, The Intellectual, Political and Cultural World of Europe's Reformed Churches, c. 1540-1620*, (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2004).

Donald Kelley's biography of François Hotman.[21] This research is by nature transnational. Despite the richness of the historiography of Calvinist internationalism, and in particular, on the role of exiles in the creation of transnational networks, more work remains to be done. This thesis will also explore the tensions between Lutherans and Calvinists. Differences over the Eucharist and the relationship between Church and state were at the heart of debates about German involvement in France and are at the heart of this thesis.

The second relevant category of transnational history is the study of information flow across borders. The logistics of information dissemination strongly impacted the way the French Wars of Religion were interpreted and played an important role in shaping German participation in the conflict. Andrew Pettegree's recent monograph *The Invention of News* serves as a comprehensive overview of the rise of transnational news culture, giving ample attention to the Reformation as 'Europe's first mass media event'.[22] Together with his book *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*, this study lays the groundwork for understanding the role of information, misinformation, and a lack of information in creating ideas and informing action.[23] Pettegree's work is built upon by more narrowly focussed studies of the process of transnational information transfer during the Reformation. The work of Cornel Zwierlein has contributed greatly to our understanding of the way in which information about the events and ideas of the French Wars of Religion was disseminated in Germany.[24]

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[21] C. H. Parker, 'French Calvinists as the Children of Israel: An Old Testament Self-Consciousness in Jean Crespin's Histoire des Martyrs before the Wars of Religion', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 24 (1993): 227-248; D. R. Kelley, *François Hotman, a Revolutionary's Ordeal*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

[22] A. Pettegree, *The Invention of News, How the World Came to Know About Itself*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).

[23] A. Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[24] C. Zwierlein, *Discorso und Lex Dei, Die Entstehung neuer Denkrahmen in 16. Jahrhundert und der Französische Religionskriege in Italien und Deutschland*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003; Zwierlein, C., 'Une propaganda huguenote international: le début des guerres de religion en France perçues en Allemagne, 1560-1563', in J. Foa and P. Mellet (eds.), *Le Bruit des Armes. Mises en Formes et*

His research, focussing on the dissemination rather than the interpretation of news, forms a great platform from which to develop studies of the consequences of the presence of this information in Germany. I will both be relying on, and contributing to, this body of scholarship, investigating how German interpretations of the conflict in France were conditioned by the kind of information flowing from France to the Empire.

Confessionalisation

German interpretations of events in France were not only shaped by news and propaganda from France, but also by the political, intellectual, and religious climate inside the Empire. Rooting German involvement in France in the Imperial as well as the French context has been lacking in the existing historiography. In trying to rectify this, I will engage rigorously with the history of confessionalisation, a historiographical tradition that has dominated the study of the Reformation in Germany since the mid-1980s. The confessionalisation thesis was developed by Heinz Schilling and Wolfgang Reinhard.[25] Based on the assertion that in early modern society, 'state and church were structurally linked together', the thesis presents a model that explains the process of state formation that took place in the Empire between the Peace of Augsburg and the Thirty Years' War.[26] Schilling and Reinhard place religion at the centre of this process, arguing that 'confessional homogenisation' 'enabled states and societies to integrate more tightly'. Consequently, the study of confessionalisation often consists of looking at the instruments used for creating cohesion, homogeneity, and integration; including theological texts, printing, propaganda and censorship,

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Désinformations en Europe pendant les Guerres de Religion (1560-1610), (Paris: Champion, 2012): pp. 397-415.

[25] H. Schilling, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society*, (Leiden: Brill, 1992).

[26] J. Deventer, '"Confessionalisation" – a useful theoretical concept for the study of religion, politics, and society in early modern East-Central Europe?, *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'Histoire*, 11 (2004): 403-435, on p. 407.

education, catechising, and moral discipline.[27] Moreover, although the thesis was developed in a German context, Schilling and Reinhard argued that the model is applicable to the whole of European Reformation history.[28] The confessionalisation thesis has proven very influential, inspiring a large corpus of scholarship including numerous PhD theses. A lot of work has been done on untangling the workings and impact of the process in individual states or cities, focussing on education, religious discipline, and the reshaping of society as well as on the political side of the story.[29]

Despite this success, the confessionalisation thesis has over the last two decades come under attack from a variety of angles. It has been criticised for its overly strong focus on the role of confessions in early modern society, for its teleological character, for indiscriminately applying the same concept to different confessional groups, for its top-down approach, and for its inapplicability to Europe's many multi-confessional environments. [30] I will demonstrate that the confessionalisation thesis suffers from another weakness, namely that the strong focus on the homogeneity of confessional groups overshadows seemingly trivial doctrinal differences, which could nonetheless have a significant impact. This is not a question of the success or failure of confessionalisation, but rather an assertion that even among those most exposed to the influences of the process a significant level of individuality of belief could be found. This

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[27] Deventer, '"Confessionalisation", p. 408; U. Lotz-Heumann, 'The concept of "confessionalization": a historiographical paradigm in dispute', *Memoria y Civilización*, 4 (2001): 93-114, on p. 99.

[28] Lotz-Heumann, 'The concept of "confessionalization", p. 98.

[29] See for instance B. Thompson, 'The Palatine Church Order of 1563', *Church History*, 23 (1954): pp. 339-354; J. M. Estes, 'Johannes Brenz and the Institutionalization of the Reformation in Württemberg', *Central European History*, 6 (1973): 44-59; G. Strauss, 'Success and Failure in the German Reformation', *Past & Present*, 67 (1975): 30-63; C. Methuen, 'Securing the Reformation through Education: The Duke's Scholarship System of Sixteenth-Century Wurttemberg', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 25 (1994): 841-851.

[30] Lotz-Heumann, 'The concept of "confessionalization", pp. 103-112.

individuality contradicts the homogeneity or uniformity supposed by Reinhard and Schilling and could have far-reaching consequences.

Religion and politics

A central theme in the historiography of the French Wars of Religion is the question of causes and motives. What moved the warring parties to allow France to descend into such a long period of chaos and bloodshed? Key to this debate has been the question of the relationship between religious and political motives. The debate has moved through three distinct phases. After centuries in which highly confessionalised accounts of the Wars dominated, a generation of historians at the start of the twentieth century moved away from this focus on religion.[31] Romier's *Les Origines Politiques* is one of a number of influential monographs written in the first half of the twentieth century that depict the Wars as an exclusively political struggle.[32] The use of religious language by the warring parties, they argue, was nothing more than an attempt to cover up their true motives: the pursuit of the political betterment of faction or family. The third phase began when a number of pioneering historians broke through the rigid divide between religion and politics by interrogating the ways in which religion operates both within society and in the lives of individuals.[33] Borrowing techniques from sociology and anthropology, historians such as Natalie Davis have carefully dissected the many manifestations of religious identities and demonstrated how these became intertwined with concerns about ideas such as the purity of society.[34] The creation of clear distinctions between religious and political motives in historical analysis is thus artificial at best. Despite its influence on the

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[31] M. P. Holt, 'Putting religion back into the Wars of Religion', *French Historical Studies*, 18 (1993): 524-551.

[32] Romier, *Les Origines Politiques*; Holt, 'Putting religion back into the Wars of Religion'.

[33] Holt, 'Putting religion back into the Wars of Religion'.

[34] N. Zemon Davis, 'The rites of violence: Religious riot in sixteenth-century France', *Past and Present* 59 (1973), 51-91.

historiography of the French Wars of Religion, this interpretation has been almost entirely ignored in recent studies of the role of Germans in the conflict. In the analysis of their motives, a *Romierian* opposition between religion and politics still dominates. The argument that German (military) involvement in France was exclusively the product of political expediency, cold calculation, and private ambition remains influential. Forty years after the pioneering work of Davis and her colleagues, this interpretation of the motives of the German participants in the Wars of Religion is in urgent need of revision. By carefully mapping the precise set of beliefs held by individual German princes I will demonstrate that religion did play a major role in shaping their attitudes to the French Wars of Religion. Moreover, I will show that, despite the fact that Lutherans fought on both sides in the conflict, their actions were entirely compatible with these beliefs.

History of ideas

The last major historiographical tradition that this thesis will contribute to is the history of ideas. The traumatic breakdown of social harmony and royal and noble control during the Wars of Religion led to the formation of new ideas about political power and sovereignty and about the role of religion in society.[35] Though the emphasis of historical

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[35] A good general overview is Q. Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). For sixteenth-century resistance theory see K. W. MacArthur, 'The Vindicae Contra Tyrannos: A Chapter in the Struggle for Religious Freedom in France', *Church History*, 9 (1940): 285-298; C. G. Shoenberger, 'Luther and the Justification of Resistance to Legitimate Authority', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 40 (1979): 3-20; R. M. Kingdon, 'Calvinism and resistance theory, 1550-1580', in J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450-1700*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991): 193-218; K. A. Parrow, 'From Defense to Resistance: Justification of Violence during the French Wars of Religion', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 83 (1993): 1-79; R. V. Friedeburg, 'In Defense of Patria: Resisting Magistrates and the Duties of Patriots in the Empire from the 1530s to the 1640s', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 32 (2001): 357-382; D. VanDrunen, 'The Use of Natural Law in Early Calvinist Resistance Theory', *Journal of Law and Religion*, 21 (2005/2006): 143-167. For studies on the concept of tolerance see H. Butterfield, 'Toleration in Early Modern Times', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 28 (1977): 573-584; M. Turchetti, 'Religious concord and political tolerance in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 22 (1991): 15-25; O. P. Grell and B. Scribner (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); B. J. Kaplan,

enquiry has been on the thinkers and theologians who most clearly formulated these ideas, the debates that shaped them were participated in by a much wider group of people. Moreover, these debates transcended borders. In addition, such discussions were not merely academic, but had the power directly to inform actions and policy. Among the German princes, the concepts of tolerance, freedom of conscience, religious reconciliation, as well as ideas about the role of secular government in presiding over religious reform, were discussed with direct reference to France. This was very much a transnational conversation, taking place in correspondence and in person, for instance between François Hotman and his host the Elector Palatine. The role of the German princes in the development of ideas has been entirely ignored in the existing historiography and will be addressed in this thesis.

Aims and methodology

Questions

The starting point of this research project is the well-recorded German military involvement in France during the Second and Third Wars. Due to the overwhelming focus of the existing historiography on the logistics of intervention, a number of fundamental questions have been left unanswered. These questions relate to three important themes.

The first theme pertains to the origins of German interest in France. Why were the German princes interested in French events in the first place? How did they come to know about what was unfolding in France? Why did they feel entitled to meddle in French affairs? Why did the warring parties in France feel the need to engage the German princes and to bring them into the conflict?

The second set of questions relates to German understandings of the nature of the conflict. How did German audiences interpret the

Divided by Faith, Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe, (Cambridge MA: The Balknap Press, 2007).

contrasting narratives about the nature of the Wars presented to them by Huguenots and French Catholics? How did Huguenot resistance theory measure up to German understandings of the justifiability of opposing royal authority? What did the Germans make of the incessant accusations of hidden agendas and secret political ambitions thrown back and forth by Huguenot and Catholic diplomats? How did their own experience of religious conflict inside the Empire inform their interpretations of the Wars of Religion in France? How did the Lutheran princes regard the role of the Reformed Huguenots? What was their perspective on the Catholic-Reformed conflict that was unfolding across the border?

The third and final category of questions relates to discussions and ideas about how to resolve the conflict. What strategies were used by the Germans to exercise influence on French affairs? What did the German captains hope to achieve by their military action in France? What did they imagine France would look like after the restoration of peace and tranquillity? How much were the debates about the future of France shaped by the experience of creating the Peace of Augsburg?

The tendency to study the French Wars of Religion as a national history has meant that such questions have never been asked let alone answered in the existing historiography. By answering these I will establish a comprehensive picture of the ways in which German understandings of the conflict in France and its possible solutions were shaped. This will firmly root the French Wars of Religion in a European context and illuminate the complex interplay between local, national, and transnational factors in shaping these understandings. Moreover, I will highlight how the conceptual underpinnings - informed by theology and political thought - interacted with the experience of real-life events of the 1560s to change German attitudes towards the conflict in France. Finally, the answering of these questions will lead to some surprising conclusions about the importance of the individuality of belief and its role in conditioning the effect of French propaganda.

Methodology

In order to answer all these questions, the aim of this thesis will be systematically to study all the ties between France and Germany that underpinned German involvement in the Wars of Religion. Besides the obvious diplomatic connections, these links included family and patronage ties, a shared noble identity, cultural exchange, feelings of religious connectedness, and a sense of a shared predicament. The focus will be transnational rather than international. In other words, the transfer of ideas across the French border and their reception in Germany as opposed to the relations between France and Germany will be investigated.

The study of the role of Germany in general, and the Imperial princes in particular, during the French Wars of Religion is complex, not only crossing national and linguistic borders, but also the boundaries between different historiographical traditions. In order to be able to deal successfully with this complexity, the scope of the research project has to be highly focussed. Therefore, this thesis will concentrate on the role of ten individuals over the period of two decades. Through the study of these individuals I will be able to come to broader conclusions about the workings of transnational information transfer and the role of local and national contexts in shaping interpretation of these reports. These ten princes, all Protestants, have been chosen for a number of reasons. Firstly, they are among the most actively involved in the affairs of France, whether through diplomacy, military intervention, or simply through participation in the debates about the nature of the conflict. Secondly, they represent a range of different perspectives on France, from ardent supporters to fierce critics of the Huguenot cause. Finally, they have left plenty of correspondence. This correspondence will be used not only to study Franco-German interaction during the Wars of Religion, but also to untangle the debates and discussions about France among the princes of the Empire.

German perspectives on the Wars of Religion were formed over a prolonged period of time, building on ties established long before the

violence broke out in 1562. To reflect this, and also to investigate how Franco-German ties changed as a consequence of the Wars, this study will focus on the years 1552-1572. In 1552, the epicentre of the Habsburg-Valois conflict shifted to the border region between France and the Empire. This shift intensified German interest in French affairs and led to the formation of an alliance between Henry II and a number of German Protestant princes. Just like 1552, 1572 was a transformative moment. The St Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 24 August 1572 sent shockwaves across Europe, severely damaging the reputation of the French crown amongst Protestant throughout the continent. The study of the effects of the Massacre on European perspectives on the Wars of Religion in itself warrants the full attention of an entire research project and is too big to do justice to in this thesis. Therefore, I have chosen to use 1572 as a cut-off point, focussing on the decades leading up to the German campaigns of the Second and Third Wars.

Sources

This thesis relies heavily on the correspondence of ten German Protestant princes. Validated by a humanist interest in epistolary culture and the prominence of the New Testament, the Reformation era saw a flourishing of the practice of letter writing.[36] As Mark Greengrass has demonstrated, informal epistolary networks could serve to foster a sense of connectedness, common purpose, and belonging, even among geographically dispersed groups. [37] The extraordinarily rich and informal networks of correspondence left by the ten princes served similar functions. It placed the princes at the heart of a large transnational social network of peers and coreligionists and encouraged a sense of connectedness to people, places, and events

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[36] M. Greengrass, 'Informal networks in sixteenth-century French Protestantism' in R. A. Mentzer and A. Spicer (eds.), *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World. 1559-1685*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): pp. 78-97, on pp. 80-81.

[37] Ibid, p. 97.

outside their own territories. Moreover, these networks also served as important policy tools and were used frequently to exercise influence over events in France. Consequently, examining this body of correspondence provides an insight into the princes' identities and their place on the European stage as well as their responses to the French Wars of Religion. In contrast to other studies of the role of the German princes in the French Wars of Religion, I will not only make use of the letters between the princes and France, but also of the correspondence between the 'Princes of the Augsburg Confession.' It is this internal correspondence that provides an insight into the German debates about the nature of the conflict, the crucial middle stage between French diplomacy and propaganda and German intervention. Helpfully, a significant proportion of this correspondence has appeared in printed form. August Kluckhohn's two-volume edition of Friedrich III's correspondence contains over a thousand letters, many of which deal with the question of France. [38] Large proportions of the correspondence of William of Orange, Louis of Nassau, and Christoph of Württemberg have also appeared in print.[39]

The archives of Germany and France house large numbers of yet unpublished letters relevant to this thesis. The Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart contains a substantial body of unpublished letters to and from the Duke of Württemberg, including correspondence with his close associate Wolfgang of Zweibrücken as well as with important players in France, such as the Guise brothers. The Hessische Staatsarchiv Marburg, similarly, contains the correspondence of the Landgraves of Hesse, including a lengthy exchange of letters between Philip and

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[38] A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume I* (Braunschweig, C.A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1868/1870), two volumes.

[39] G. Groen van Prinsteren (ed.), *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1835/1836), volume two and three used; P. J. Blok (ed.), *Correspondentie van en betreffende Lodewijk van Nassau en andere Onuitgegeven Documenten*, (Utrecht: Kemink, 1887); V. Ernst (ed.), *Briefwechsel des Herzogs Christoph von Wirtemberg*, (Stuttgart: Verlag von Kohlhammer, 1899-1907), four volumes; N. Japikse (ed.), *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste, Prins van Oranje*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1934).

Heinrich Bullinger about religious questions. The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris houses a large body of evidence concerning Franco-German relations during the French Wars of Religion. Among these letters we find the German princes' proposed solutions for the violence in France as well as the papers of French royal diplomats active in the Empire. The reports that these diplomats sent to Charles IX and Catherine de' Medici give a good insight into the debates taking place at the courts of the Imperial princes. To provide context, I will also make use of the correspondence of number of other key players, including Catherine de' Medici, Charles de Lorraine, and Phillip II.

To place the debates among the princes in a wider context, I also studied around fifty German-language publications about France, which appeared between 1552 and 1572. They range from short pamphlets to publications of more than a hundred pages long. Though they are not of course necessarily representative of the mood amongst the wider population in the Empire, these often anonymously printed polemical texts give an insight into the ways in which the situation in France was discussed in the public sphere.

Chapters

The first chapter examines the many different connections between the princes of the Holy Roman Empire and France that existed or were created during the 1550s. These connections, which sometimes dated back generations, included family ties, cross-border landownership, patronage networks, and shared educational experiences and led to the formation of a common cultural identity. The chapter also questions what the terms 'German' or 'French' meant in the mid-sixteenth century, how people saw the border between the two countries, and how ideas of foreignness shaped understandings of the relation between the various countries and regions of Europe. These connections, as well as a conceptual understanding of the nature of national identity, served as a foundation on which all further debates about the conflict in France were built.

Chapter II examines the religious context in which German interpretations of the Wars of Religion were formed. The outbreak of violence in France coincided with a period of confessional turmoil inside the Empire. Within a decade of the creation of the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, the fragile peace was disturbed by the drawn-out conflict between Gnesio-Lutherans and Philippists and by the conversion of the Elector Palatine to Reformed Protestantism. Both developments led to discussions about the nature of Lutheran orthodoxy and the relation between the different forms of Protestantism. The question of France was directly incorporated into these discussions. Lutheran objections against Reformed Protestantism were not just theological. There was also a strong sense amongst Lutherans that Reformed Protestantism was essentially seditious, an idea reinforced by French Catholic interpretations of the origins of the Wars. These debates and discussions, which were fought out in correspondence and at a number of summits of the Imperial princes, profoundly shaped German understandings of the French Wars of Religion.

The third chapter takes a closer look at the contrasting narratives of the causes of the Wars of Religion presented to German audiences. From the moment violence broke out in France, the German Protestant princes were targeted by both Huguenot and Catholic diplomats. They presented radically different interpretations of the nature of the conflict. Besides these diplomatic efforts, German audiences also learned about events in France through the many German-language pamphlets about the Wars circulating inside the Empire. The tone of many of these pamphlets again differed strongly from the diplomatic messages, causing further confusion among German audiences. The disagreements at the heart of these contrasting narratives pertained to questions about the permissibility of opposition to royal authority. The compatibility of Huguenot and German Lutheran theories of resistance will therefore also be discussed in detail.

Chapter IV focuses on the German Protestant princes' visions for the future of France. In response to the incessant French diplomatic

efforts and the debates they provoked, the German princes developed a number of distinct solutions for the violence in France. In the development of these ideas, they built not only on their own understandings of the relation between secular government and religious authority, the dangers of a religiously diverse society, and the role of 'lesser magistrates', but also on their experiences of resolving religious strife inside the Empire. Moreover, they attempted to tailor these ideas to the specifics of the French situation. However, as is often the case with ideas, a number of these solutions collided with the reality of the conflict, proving impossible to implement and forcing the princes to tweak, adapt, or reconsider.

Chapter V explores how events in the Netherlands radically changed the tone of German debates about France. The eruption of public unrest in the Netherlands during the summer of 1566 coincided with the increasing popularity of the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy. Protestant circles throughout Europe reverberated with talk of an elaborate plot designed to destroy Protestantism across the continent. The backlash against the *Wonderjaar* in the Netherlands, led by the Duke of Alba, seemed to confirm the theory that the conflict in France was but one stage of a larger Catholic scheme. Though not everyone in the Empire bought into this narrative, it nonetheless transformed the tone of the discussions about France, pushing intricate debates about the nature of Lutheran-Reformed relations or the justifiability of resistance aside, substituting it with warnings of acute danger and calls for the making of common cause against Catholicism.

The final chapter investigates the ways in which all the above debates shaped German involvement in the Wars of Religion, most notably the five German military campaigns. It challenges the assumption made by a number of historians that these campaigns were primarily motivated by the pursuit of political and financial self-interest. Instead, it will demonstrate that the actions of the German princes were entirely consistent with their positions in the debates about France that developed in the decade leading up to the campaigns.

Together these chapters form the first comprehensive study of all the different factors shaping transnational relations during the early French Wars of Religion. Though the international dimension of the conflict has been noted before, it has long been the scholarly practice to study only the moments at which foreign influence was directly felt in France, such as through diplomacy or military intervention. However, as I will demonstrate, they were the culmination of a much more complex process of engagement. This process was essentially transnational. Returning to Iriye's definition of the transnational, which emphasises the interplay between national and transnational dimensions, it is crucial to realise that German understanding of the French Wars of Religion were formed by ideas, events, and experiences from the Empire, France, and beyond. Only by rooting these events in German and European as well as French contexts is it possible truly to understand the underpinnings of German intervention in the French Wars of Religion.

The German princes

The following ten princes will be the focus of this thesis:

Christoph of Württemberg (1515-1568) spent most of his youth at the courts of the Holy Roman Empire and the King of France. During his time in France, Christoph took part in the Franco-Habsburg Wars. After succeeding his father Ulrich in 1550 he continued the conversion of Württemberg to Lutheranism, playing a leading role in the reform of the Church Order and the school system in Württemberg.[40]

Friedrich III, Elector Palatine (1515-1576), also known as *the Pious* converted twice, first from Catholicism, the religion of his upbringing, to Lutheranism and then in the early 1560s to Reformed Protestantism. The creation of a Reformed state in the Palatinate, including the

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[40] Langsteiner, *Für Land und Luthertum*.

supervision over the influential Heidelberg Catechism, was Friedrich's primary concern from 1563 until his death.[41]

Johann Casimir of the Palatinate (1543-1592) was the second surviving son of Friedrich the Pious and the only son to share his Reformed convictions. Johann Casimir spent a large part of his life embroiled in the religious conflicts of Europe, leading two military campaigns in France and one in the Netherlands and maintaining a large international Protestant network. He also aimed to reinforce his strong contacts in England by attempting to marry Elizabeth I.[42]

Wolfgang of Zweibrücken (1526-1569). Like Friedrich and Casimir a member of the Wittelsbach family, Wolfgang was also related to the Landgraves of Hesse through his mother. Wolfgang presided over the reformation of his territories of Zweibrücken and Neuburg, amongst others commissioning a new Church Order and hymnal.[43]

Philip of Hesse (1504-1567) was a member of the first generation of Lutheran princes and one of the leaders of the Schmalkaldic League. Philip was devoted to preventing the fracture of Protestantism over the question of the Eucharist and organised the 1529 Marburg Colloquy to resolve it.[44]

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[41] P. Fuchs, 'Friedrich III. der Fromme', *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 5 (1961): 530-532; D. Visser, 'Zacharias Ursinus and the Palatinate Reformation', in D. Visser (ed.), *Controversy and Conciliation, The Reformation and the Palatinate, 1559-1583*, (Allison Park: Pickwick Publications, 1986): pp. 1-20.

[42] V. Press, 'Johann Casimir', *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 10 (1974): 510-513; J. Raitt, 'The Elector John Casimir, Queen Elizabeth and the Protestant League', in D. Visser (ed.), *Controversy and Conciliation, The Reformation and the Palatinate, 1559-1583*, (Allison Park: Pickwick Publications, 1986), pp. 117-145.

[43] Ney, 'Pfalzgraf Wolfgang, Herzog von Zweibrücken und Neuburg'.

[44] F. Wolff, 'Philipp der Großmütige', *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 20 (2001): 376-379.

William of Hesse-Kassel (1532-1592). The oldest son of Philip of Hesse, William inherited his father's commitment to Protestant unity as well as a quarter of his possessions.[45]

William of Orange (1533-1584) Son of William of Nassau-Dillenburg, the head of a relatively minor German princely house, his status increased significantly when in 1544 he inherited the lands and title of his cousin René de Châlon, prince of Orange. In response to William's new status, Charles V compelled the young prince to move to the Imperial court in Brussels to be raised a Catholic. From 1568, William led the Revolt of the Dutch against the rule of Philip II, until he was assassinated in 1584. His genuine religious convictions are notoriously difficult to determine, converting from Lutheran to Catholic to Calvinist at politically expedient moments.[46]

Louis of Nassau (1538-1574) The younger brother of William of Orange may have received a university education before joining William in Brussels. Louis' career is characterised by his service to his brother's cause, representing William as diplomat and military commander, and by his efforts for the international Protestant cause, spending a significant periods of time in the entourage of Jeanne de Navarre in France. Louis fell at the Battle of Mookerheyde in 1574.[47]

Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar (1530-1573) was one of three sons of the unfortunate Johann Friedrich of Saxony, who lost his title of Elector in a dispute with the Emperor. After his father's death, he became embroiled in the conflict between his brothers and the Emperor, allowing him to oust his brothers and reunite his father's patrimony. Another controversial moment was Johann Wilhelm's

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[45] W. Ribbeck, 'Wilhelm IV., Landgraf von Hessen', *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 43 (1898): 32-39.

[46] K. W. Swart, *William of Orange and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1572-84*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).

[47] P. J. Blok, *Lodewijk van Nassau*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1889).

campaign in service of Charles IX of France, causing yet another conflict with the Emperor and leading to a substantial loss of territory. Johann Wilhelm was one of the most important proponents of Gnesio-Lutheranism, co-founding the University of Jena, which became an important bulwark of strict Lutheran orthodoxy.[48]

Philibert of Baden (1536-1569) was brought up a Catholic at the court of the Duke of Bavaria, but converted to Lutheranism. In 1569 he joined Johann Wilhelm in his campaign to France, where he fell in Battle of Moncontour.[49]

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[48] Hahn, *Herzog Johann Wilhelm von Weimar*.

[49] A. Krieger, 'Philibert, Markgraf von Baden-Baden', *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 25 (1887): 739-741.
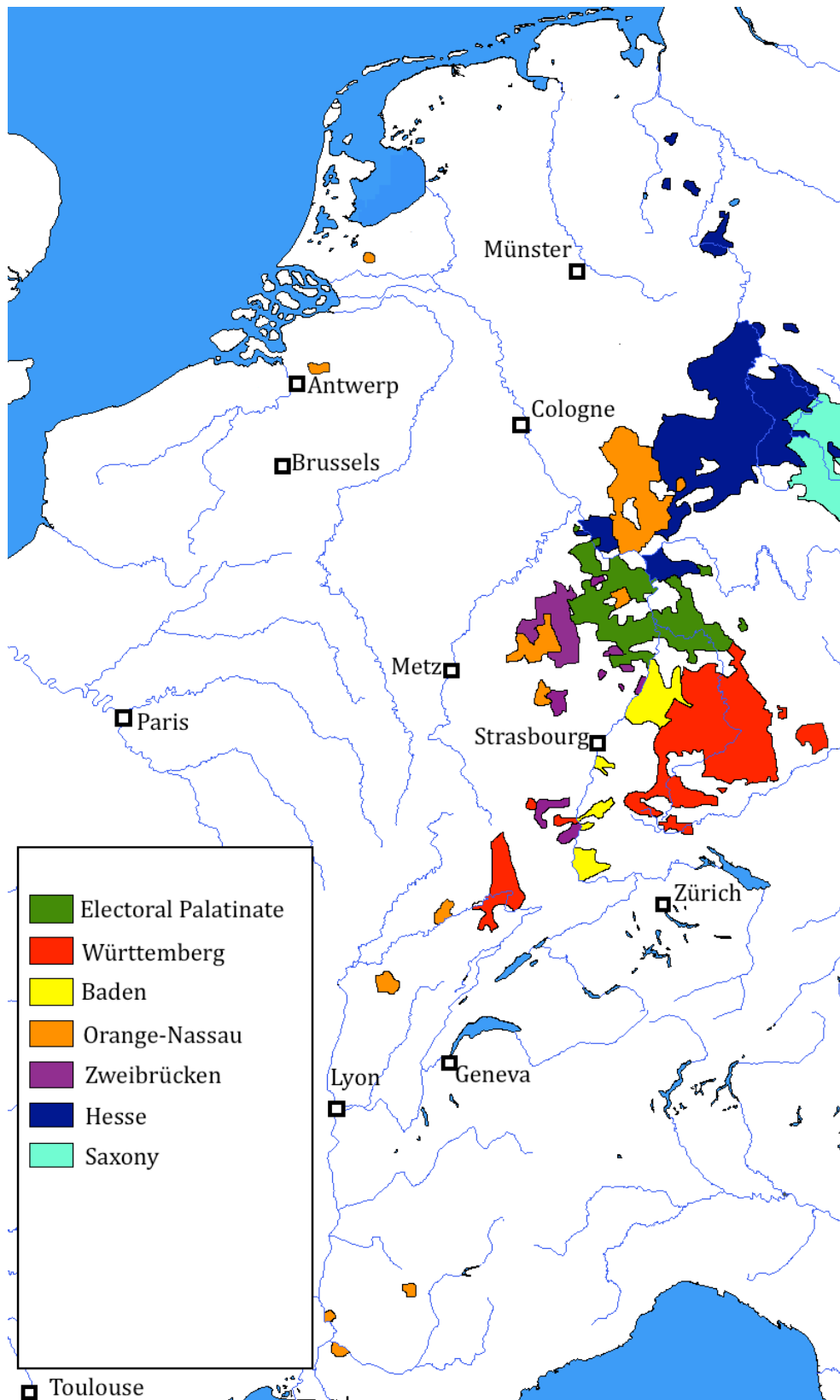
Figure 1: Map of the possessions of the princes studied in this thesis.[50]

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[50] This map is hand drawn so might be approximate in places.

Terminology

The absence of clear borders or well-defined ideas about national identity makes using terms such as German, French, or Dutch very problematic. For instance, in this thesis I count William of Orange among the German princes. Despite later being regarded as the *pater patriae* of the Netherlands, a strong case can be made for placing William, whose patrimonial heartlands bordered the principality of Hesse and the Palatinate, amongst the likes of William of Hesse and Friedrich III, especially in the 1560s. The German-born, French-speaking prince of Orange is a good example of the cosmopolitanism of much of the sixteenth century aristocracy. For the sake of brevity I will nonetheless use the terms 'German', 'French', and 'Dutch', albeit with the caveat that these terms are far from unproblematic.

Confessional labelling too should only be done with caution. Many of the terms used by historians to describe confessional identity would have been deeply resented by those they are intended to represent. The term Huguenot was widely used, but not by the French Protestants themselves. The terms Calvinist and Zwinglian were exclusively used in a negative context and more importantly do not reflect the variety of theological influences shaping the religion of French, Dutch, and Palatine Protestants. I will, therefore, exclusively use the more neutral term Reformed Protestantism. The term Lutheran was also rarely used. The Lutheran princes instead tended to refer to themselves as the princes of the Augsburg Confession. Despite the resistance of some Lutheran princes, such as Philip of Hesse, to the use of terminology that contributed to creating divisions within Protestantism, the Augsburg Confession and its official adoption by the German princes makes the use of the term 'Lutheran' much more straightforward.

I.   The Princes of the Holy Roman Empire on the International Stage

> *Wilhelmus van Nassouwe*
> *Ben ick, van Duytschen bloet;*
> *Den Vaderlant ghetrouwe*
> *Blijf ick tot inden doot;*
> *Een prince van Oraengiën*
> *Ben ick, vrij onverveert;*
> *Den conick van Hispaengien*
> *Heb ik altijt gheëert.[1]*
>
> William of Nassau
> am I, of German blood;
> Loyal to the fatherland
> I remain until death
> A Prince of Orange
> am I, free and fearless;
> The king of Spain
> I have always honoured.

These curious words of the first verse of the Dutch national anthem frequently raise eyebrows. The fact that they mention Germany, Spain, and Orange, a small principality in the south of France, more explicitly than the Netherlands seems particularly odd. One has to explore the historical context in which these words were written for them to make sense. Published in the 1581 *Geuzenliedboek*, the *Wilhelmus* was part of an extensive propaganda campaign celebrating the struggle against Habsburg rule in the Netherlands.[2] The complete poem, an acrostic forming the words '*Willem van Nassov*', is essentially biographical. Keeping in mind the propagandistic nature of the text, and the fact that it was written at a time in which William of Orange's reputation as *Pater Patriae* of the Netherlands was first established, it is nonetheless

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[1] Anon., *Een Nieu Geusen Lieden Boecxken/ Waerinne Begrepen is/ den Ganstschen Handel der Nederlandtscher Gheschiedenissen/ dees Voorleden Jaeren tot noch toe Ghedragen/ Eensdeels Onderwylen in Druck Uitghegaen/ Eensdeels nu nieu By-ghevoecht* (s. l.: s. n., 1581), f. 24 v.

[2] K. W. Swart, *William of Orange and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1572-84* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003): pp. 29-102; A. Duke, *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009): pp. 57-76.

illustrative of the complex mix of loyalties and belongings that shaped the identity of a member of the high nobility of the Holy Roman Empire.[3] In these eight short lines, Orange's family ties (of German blood), the lands he controlled in the Netherlands (fatherland), and his dynastic loyalties (King of Spain) are mentioned. Moreover, his claim to sovereignty is also emphasised (Prince of Orange … free and fearless). Although it has to be said that the position of William of Orange was rather unique, it can be argued that the other princes of the Empire to a greater or lesser extent shared Orange's complex international identity.

In order to understand the princes' actions on the international stage in the 1560s, it is first important to consider the factors that informed their perspective on political and religious events outside the Holy Roman Empire. Since it is impossible to use the terms 'international' or 'transnational' without understanding what 'national' meant in a mid-sixteenth century context, I will first address the connections between regionalism, national identity, and international influences in the Empire, and especially the Rhineland, home to most of the princes studied in this thesis. Secondly, I will discuss the many aspects that formed the Imperial princes' international identity. Finally, I will consider the intensification of diplomatic relations between France and the Protestant German princes after 1552. The cultural, social, and political internationalism discussed in this chapter strongly influenced the German princes' perspective on the French Wars of Religion. As will be demonstrated, this internationalism as well as the lack of clear borders, the cosmopolitanism of the Rhineland, and the relative unimportance of national sentiment ensured that events in France were not seen as foreign or distant.

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[3] N. M. Sutherland, *Princes, Politics and Religion, 1547-1589* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1984): pp. 207-236.

1.1 National Identity in the sixteenth-century Rhineland

In his chapter entitled *The Elusive Netherlands*, Alistair Duke lists all the factors that contribute to the construction of national identity and one by one demonstrates how they do not quite apply to the Low Countries.[4] The region lacked a common language, natural borders, a shared dynastic history, political unity, or even a commonly accepted name for its inhabitants. Religion, which as the Dutch Revolt unfolded became an increasingly important contributor to the Dutch self-image, was for most of the sixteenth century a divisive rather than a unifying factor.[5] A similar argument can be made about the Rhineland, the region of the Holy Roman Empire bordering the kingdom of France and the ancestral heartland of most of the princes studied in this thesis.

Geographically, the Rhineland was part of the Holy Roman Empire. Although this entity in some ways resembled other early modern states, the exact nature of the Empire defied definition. Historically, it claimed to be the natural successor of the Roman Empire and the realm of Charlemagne. Accordingly, the Empire should have had no boundaries and instead encompassed the entirety of Latin Christendom.[6] In practice, at the turn of the sixteenth century, the shape of the Empire had become relatively fixed. During the last decades of the fifteenth century, it had become common practice to refer to the 'Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation'.[7] This term is somewhat misleading. It not clear what exactly constituted this German nationhood, although language certainly played a role. Although some form of German was spoken throughout most of the Empire, French,

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[4] Duke, *Dissident Identities*, pp. 9-56.

[5] J. Pollmann, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520-1635* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): pp. 44-67.

[6] T. A. Brady, *German Histories in the Age of Reformations, 1400-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): p. 12.

[7] Ibid, pp. 11-28.

Italian, and various Slavic languages were also spoken in certain parts.[8] The Rhineland was a particularly multilingual region. Dialects of Low and Middle German were commonly spoken around and east of the Rhine, but different forms of French, such as Lorrain and Franc-Comtois, were used in the Duchy of Lorraine and of the Franche-Comté, regions of the Empire situated less than a hundred kilometres west of the Rhine. The Imperial city of Strasbourg, the most important urban centre in the Rhineland, was home to a significant Francophone minority.[9]

The ambiguity of the Rhineland is most clearly illustrated by the debate about borders. Rather than a sharp boundary, the Franco-Imperial border was unclear. There were continuous debates about where the 'natural border' between France and the Empire should be. Whereas traditionally the Meuse was said to demarcate the edge of the Kingdom of France, the argument that French royal authority stretched to the Rhine was increasingly voiced.[10] The theoretical or historical foundation of this debate can be found in the partitioning of Charlemagne's inheritance into three parts in 843. Though Charles the Bold and Louis the German inherited regions that can easily be identified as France and Germany, Lothar I inherited the region between Meuse and Rhine. Since his kingdom of Middle Francia had long disappeared, theorists argued over whether this region was naturally a part of France or Germany. Not surprisingly, French writers such as Nicolas Gilles argued that this land was 'a part of France.'[11] This theory became policy in what has been called the French '*Rheinpolitik*'. Henry II's campaign of 1552 was partly intended to realise this

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[8] Ibid, p. 14-15.

[9] R. von Thadden, 'Calvin und der Fortgang der Reformation im Reich', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 208 (1969): 1-23.

[10] D. Potter, *War and Government in the French Provinces, Picardy 1470-1560* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993): p. 266; R. Babel, *Deutschland und Frankreich im Zeichen der Habsburgischen Universalmonarchie (1500-1648)* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Burchgesellschaft, 2005), pp. 166-168.

[11] 'une portion de la France' Babel, *Deutschland und Frankreich*, p. 173.

ambition. The strip of land between the two rivers, which at places was as wide as 250 kilometres, was thus clearly in the sphere of influence of both France and the Empire.[12] This reality of the frontier as a zone rather than a clear boundary can also be seen when looking at the border between France and the Netherlands.[13] Despite the fact that throughout the early-sixteenth century French and Habsburg diplomats tried to hammer out clear agreements about where exactly the border should lie, the place where France and the Low Countries met was more *frontière* (a border region) than *limites* (a border in the modern sense of the term).[14] In his study of the Pyrenees, the region that separated France from Spain, Peter Sahlins has drawn our attention to 'the rather complex interplay of two notions of boundary – zonal and linear – and two ideas of sovereignty –jurisdictional and territorial'.[15] These 'two polarities', Sahlins argues, 'can be found at any given moment in the history of the boundary'.[16] A similar observation can be made about the Franco-Imperial frontier. However, despite the increasing importance of the matter of natural borders (which emphasised the linear and the territorial), in this region the zonal and the jurisdictional interpretations dominated. Debates about frontiers were characterised by disputes over legal and financial jurisdictions and seigneurial rights, showing that France was still very much thought of as a kingdom rather than a country, let alone a nation state.[17]

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[12] Ibid, p. 169.

[13] Potter, *War and Government in the French Provinces*, p. 267.

[14] Ibid, p. 268.

[15] P. Sahlins, *Boundaries, the Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989): p. 7.

[16] Ibid, p. 7.

[17] Ibid, pp. 265-293.

Figure 2: Map of the Holy Roman Empire in 1555.[18]

Politically the Rhineland was also unusually diverse. Broadly speaking, the political entities that formed the Empire were significantly larger in the east than in the west (see Figure 2). Around the Rhine the map of the Empire looked most fragmented.[19] Some of the most important Protestant entities, such as Württemberg, Nassau, and the Palatinate, were located in close proximity to the seats of the three ecclesiastical Electors: Trier, Mainz, and Cologne. Moreover, besides the many duchies, counties, and bishoprics, a string of Imperial free cities lined the Rhine. As a result of this fragmentation, regionalism, rather than nationalism, dominated life in the sixteenth-century Rhineland. In his book *Town, Country, and Regions in Reformation Germany*, Tom Scott

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[18] Though this map to some extent reflects the fragmentation of the Empire, which was particularly extreme in the west, it does not accurately reflect either the ambiguity of borders, or the problem of competing theories about 'natural borders'. Adapted from A. Kunz and R. Moeschl, 'Deutschland, 1555', *Leipniz Institut für Europäische Geschichte*, accessed 02 October 2015, http://www.ieg-maps.uni-mainz.de/mapsp/mapp555d.htm.

[19] Brady, *German Histories*, p. 18.

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dissects this regionalism.[20] Although local and regional identities were created by the political reality, and reinforced by customs and traditions, Scott argues, they did not prevent the formation of extensive networks, which stretched far beyond the region. Trade, primarily along the Rhine, brought goods, people, and ideas from outside the area. Reformed Protestantism, for instance, spread along the Rhine from Zurich to Strasbourg and beyond. Contact with the Low Countries was also particularly strong.[21] Together with the Netherlands and northern Italy, the Rhineland was the most urbanised, densely populated, and wealthy region of the Empire. Besides Cologne and Strasbourg, which ranked among the Empire's largest cities, the Rhineland was characterised by a high density of smaller cities, many of which did not have more than 2000 inhabitants.[22] A number of these cities, including Aachen, Worms, Speyer, Frankfurt, and Colmar, were Imperial free cities. The region was also a centre for learning, with universities at Cologne, Marburg, Mainz, Trier, Heidelberg, Tübingen, Freiburg, and Basel and the first *Lateinschulen* in Frankfurt and Cologne.[23] These cities fostered both a sense of independence and civic pride, further increasing both the fragmentation of the region, and, through their universities and trade networks, a sense of internationalism and cosmopolitanism.

Local and regional rulers, both noble and civic, had a stake in the governance of the Empire.[24] Forming part of the *Reichsstände*, they had the right to take part in Imperial Diets.[25] To streamline Imperial

[20] T. Scott, *Town, Country, and Regions in Reformation Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 2005): pp. 263-281.

[21] P. G. Wallace, *Communities and Conflicts in Early Modern Colmar: 1575-1730*, (Atlantic Heights: Humanities Press International, 1995): p. 52.

[22] H. Rabe, *Reich und Glaubensspaltung: Deutschland 1500-1600* (Munich: Beck, 1989): p. 28.

[23] P. F. Grendler, The Universities of the Renaissance and Reformation', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 57 (2004): 1-42, on p. 5; Babel, *Deutschland und Frankreich,* p. 108.

[24] Wallace, *Communities and Conflicts*, p. 19.

[25] Brady, *German Histories*, p. 20.

politics, *Reichskreisen*, or Imperial Circles, provided a platform for formal deliberation and cooperation on a smaller scale. Adding to the complexity of the Rhineland, the region was in 1512 divided into three *Kreisen* (the *Kurrheinischer-*, *Oberrheinischer-*, and *Burgundischer Reichskreisen*).[26] The *Kreisen* could also be used to give extra weight to foreign policy initiatives.

A shared and distinct religious identity, the Reformation's most important contribution to the gradual process of nation building, was by no means present in the Rhineland. Whereas by 1552 Lutheranism dominated much of the Protestant parts of the Empire, and Reformed Protestantism posed the only significant challenge to Catholicism in France, the Rhineland was confessionally much more diverse.[27] The presence of the three ecclesiastical Electorates ensured that Catholicism in the region was backed up by significant political and military muscle. Similarly, Lutherans enjoyed the patronage of the princes of Württemberg, Hesse, and before 1560 the Palatinate. Despite their religious differences, the Protestant and Catholic potentates of the region were forced to maintain close connections, both formally, for instance as part of the *Reichskreisen*, and informally.[28] The Rhineland's position on the border of France and the Empire made it susceptible to religious influences from both countries. Moreover, the Rhineland's proximity to Zurich contributed to the success of Reformed Protestantism. Strasbourg had established itself as one of the most important centres of the early Reformation and, though predominantly Lutheran, played an important role in the development of Reformed

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[26] W. Dotzauer, *Die Deutschen Reichskreise (1383-1806)*, (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1998).

[27] Wallace, *Communities and Conflicts*, p. 24.

[28] A good example is Friedrich III's letter to the Electors of Trier, Mainz, and Cologne about the threat of French violence spilling over into their territories: Friedrich III to the Electors of Trier, Mainz, and Cologne, 9 February 1569, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume II* (Braunschweig: C.A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1870): p. 292.

Protestantism.[29] When religious oppression intensified in France and the Low Countries, the Rhineland became a logical place to seek refuge. Similarly, many of the Protestant exiles from the England of Mary Tudor spent time in the Rhineland.[30] Geographic proximity meant that inter-confessional interaction and even cooperation could not be avoided. The multi-confessional environment of the Rhineland also made it an incubator for innovative ways of dealing with religious plurality. Jesse Spohnholz, for instance, has demonstrated how the town of Wesel, on the banks of the Rhine, tried to reconcile its Catholic, Reformed, and Lutheran communities by creating a multi-confessional Eucharistic ceremony.[31] Despite such conciliatory efforts, the lack of religious uniformity contributed to the fragmentation of the Rhineland.

Politically, the Holy Roman Empire lacked the uniformity and centralisation of a modern nation state and its diversity was most extreme at the Empire's western edge.[32] Just like the Low Countries, the part of the Empire bordering France lacked the conventional building blocks for the creation of a uniform national or regional identity. There was no uniformity of language, politics, or religion. Moreover, the region was home to a relatively large and influential population of immigrants. Therefore, the question is how, lacking the characteristics of a nation, the inhabitants of the Empire in general, and the Rhineland in particular, regarded their own identity.

The history of the formation of nations and national identities has been hotly debated in recent decades. The 'modernist thesis', as the preeminent historian of nationalism Anthony D. Smith christened it, downplayed the importance of nationhood as a source of identity

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[29] D. MacCulloch, *Reformation, Europe's House Divided, 1490-1700* (London: Penguin Books, 2004): pp. 183-184; M. Greengrass, *The French Reformation* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987): p. 21.

[30] O. P. Grell, 'Merchants and ministers: the foundation of international Calvinism', in A. Pettegree, A. Duke, and G. Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): pp. 254-273.

[31] J. A. Spohnholz, 'Multiconfessional celebration of the Eucharist in sixteenth-century Wesel', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 39 (2008): 705-730.

[32] Brady, *German Histories*, pp. 27-28.

before the Enlightenment.[33] Proponents of this position remind us of the dominance of local and regional loyalties in Early Modern Europe. The term *patria* (fatherland), for instance, was rarely used to describe one's country, but rather employed to refer to one's hometown or region.[34] Similarly, the fact that the map of Europe was to a large extent shaped by dynastic politics rather than by groups with a shared cultural, linguistic, or religious identity adds weight to the argument.[35] Smith and others challenge this thesis. They point towards states such as the Dutch Republic, England, and Scotland to illustrate how the terminology of nationalism, often attached to a sense of divine election, was employed to create cohesion. In the 1550s, however, England and Scotland were still in the grip of internal religious turmoil and the Dutch Republic had not yet been established. Nonetheless, there is evidence that concepts of nationhood and patriotism were being developed in the mid-sixteenth century. As the ideal of Christendom, or *Corpus Christianorum*, crumbled as a result of the Reformation, various thinkers started to reimagine the way in which Europe could be ordered.[36] Language was identified, primarily by linguistically minded humanists, as a category along which Europe could be divided in various nations. In France, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had seen the slow rise of French (or more precisely, the *Langue d'oïl*) as a language with great cultural significance. It was attributed a sacred quality and was increasingly often regarded as both reflective of the Kingdom of France's characteristics and as a force binding its subjects

[33] A. D. Smith, 'Nationalism in Early Modern Europe', *History and Theory*, 44 (2005): 404-415, on p. 404.

[34] R. V. Friedeburg, 'In defense of patria: resisting magistrates and the duties of patriots in the Empire from the 1530s to the 1640s', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 32 (2001): 357-382, on p. 358.

[35] J. H. Elliott, 'A Europe of composite monarchies', *Past & Present*, 137 (1992): 48-71, on p. 51.

[36] Duke, *Dissident Identities*, pp. 18-19; A. Hadfield, *Literature, Politics, and National Identity: Reformation to Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): pp. 1-22.

together.[37] In reality the majority of the Kingdom's inhabitants did not speak this particular form of French and there was no move to create linguistic uniformity.[38] The use of language as a tool for defining nations was thus for the most part theory rather than reality.

Two influences above all served as a catalyst for the formation of an early form of national or patriotic rhetoric. The first, humanism, provided new material for discussions about the origins of the people of Germany. Tracing one's national or dynastic history to the Biblical or classical past was already popular in the Middle Ages. The people of France, for instance, were said to descend from the Trojans, driven away from their city after its fall. There was less consensus about the history of the Germans.[39] Debates about origins were reinvigorated by the increasing interest in the history of antiquity, which encouraged a deeper awareness of the pre-Christian past of the various regions of Europe. This provided a basis on which to build an ethnic understanding of the peoples of Europe. Terms such as *Gallia*, *Germania*, and *Gallia Belgica* were already in use in the late Middle Ages, but gained in popularity in the sixteenth century.[40] In the Netherlands, the myth of the *Batavi*, a Germanic tribe that resisted the Roman Empire, contributed to an increased feeling of cohesion among the Dutch.[41] In Germany, Tacitus' *Germania* not only provided an insight into the ancient history of the Germans, but also satisfied the insatiable demand for classical literature.[42] It was therefore frequently reprinted

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[37] C. Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology, Myths and Symbols in Late-Medieval France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991): p. 267.

[38] Ibid, p. 275.

[39] A. G. Dickens, *The German Nation and Martin Luther* (London: Edward Arnold, 1974), p. 23.

[40] Duke, *Dissident Identities*, p. 30.

[41] L. Cruz, 'Turning Dutch: historical myths in Early Modern Netherlands', The *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 39 (2008): 3-22, on p. 3; J. I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic, Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477-1806* (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1995): p. 57.

[42] H. Kloft, 'Die Germania des Tacitus und das Problem eines deutschen Nationalbewußtseins', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 72 (1990): 93-114.

in Germany in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Moreover, the contents of *Germania* served the cause of the second catalyst of a German national consciousness - the Reformation - well. Tacitus' intention when writing *Germania* was not so much to chronicle the history of the Germans, but rather to hold a mirror up to the inhabitants of Imperial Rome. For this purpose, he emphasised the stark contrasts between the Germanic tribes, who he described as simple and pure, and the decadent and corrupt Romans.[43] This argument was soon exploited by German Protestants, who too were keen to contrast the simple purity of their Reformation, which had begun in a remote town in Germany, with the corruption of the Catholic hierarchy based in Rome. Humanism and the Protestant Reformation thus together fostered an increased awareness of the shared characteristics of the German people. It is important, however, not to overstate this development. This national consciousness was still very far off nineteenth century nationalism. The humanist interest in Tacitus was mainly confined to the scholarly elite. Moreover, there was no clear definition of who the Germans exactly were. The heirs of the tribes described by Tacitus now inhabited England, the Netherlands, and France as well as the Holy Roman Empire. The common ancestry of the French and the Germans, not only through the Germanic tribes but also through Charlemagne, did not go unnoticed and was invoked at moments when their interests overlapped.[44]

It is thus questionable to what extent these linguistic and ethnic definitions of nationhood were in use outside intellectual circles. Religion as a catalyst for the creation a sense of nationhood had the potential to permeate much deeper throughout society. The biblical trope of a chosen people, traditionally used to refer to the Israelites, could easily be applied to newly Protestant populations throughout

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[43] Dickens, *The German Nation*, p. 36.

[44] Babel, *Deutschland und Frankreich*, pp. 146 and 150.

Europe.[45] The fact that the renewed understanding of the message of Christ originated in Germany, rather than in Rome or Jerusalem, had the potential to increase the self-consciousness of the German-speaking inhabitants of the Empire. Also the increased availability of Scripture and liturgies in the vernacular added to the sense that one's own nation occupied a special place in God's providence.

Arguably the most powerful catalyst of national feeling was negative rather than positive. Emphasising the foreignness of opponents and enemies was a commonly employed polemical tool. The history of sixteenth century Europe is full of examples of this practise. In Germany, propagandists of the Schmalkaldic League pointed out the foreignness of the Pope, the Emperor Charles V, and their Flemish and Italian troops.[46] In France, opponents of the Guise and their party emphasised that the family was in fact from the Empire rather than from France, which was made visible by their blond hair.[47] In the Low Countries, William of Orange, in opposition to the influence of Cardinal Granvelle, complained that 'strangers' should not meddle in 'affairs that concern this country [the Netherlands]'.[48] This opposition to foreign influences, and especially strong anti-Spanish sentiments, later informed much of the propaganda of the Dutch Revolt.[49] This xenophobia, illustrated by these examples, could reinforce a sense of national identity.

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[45] D. Loades, 'The origins of English Protestant nationalism', in S. Mews (ed.), *Religion and National Identity: Papers Read at the Nineteenth Summer Meeting and the Twentieth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982): pp. 297-307.

[46] G. Haug-Moritz, 'The Holy Roman Empire, the Schmalkald League, and the idea of confessional nation-building', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 152 (2008): 427-439, on p. 435.

[47] S. Carrroll, *Martyrs and Murderers, The Guise Family and the Making of Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): p. 1.

[48] 'les estrangiers … quelque chose qui concerne ce pais' William of Orange to Louis of Nassau, 1 April 1566, G. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite d'Orange-Nassau, Volume II* (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1835): p. 75.

[49] A. Jouanna, *La Saint-Barthélemy, Les Mystères d'un Crime d'État* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007): p. 34; B. J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith, Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge MA, The Belknap Press, 2007): p. 108.

A closer look at the use of nationalistic vocabulary gives a similar impression about the ambiguities of early modern ideas of the nation. There was an increase in the use of terms such as 'fatherland' and 'patriot'. In addition to the terms *'Patria'* and *'Vatterlandt'* denoting local rather than national belonging, the terms *'communis patria'* and *'gemeinen Vatterlandt'* referred to the country as a whole.[50] Often, for instance in France, the definition of the *communis patria* was linked to loyalty to the monarch.[51] The language of patriotism was closely related to these notions of the common fatherland. *Amor Patria*, or love for the fatherland, did not resemble modern nationalism or patriotism, but rather denoted the set of 'duties and virtues that were meant to be indispensible to, and nourished by, civic life'.[52] Lutheran writers, such as Philip Melanchthon, added the duty to protect the true religion to the list of obligations that made up the ideal of *Amor Patria*.[53]

In conclusion, it can be argued that a wide variety of influences shaped the identity of the inhabitants of the Rhineland around 1550. Local and regional interests and loyalties were certainly very important. Politically, the most dominant power brokers were regional rulers or, in large urban centres, the city government. Much economic activity was also regional, although the Rhine encouraged national and international trade. Local culture, customs, and linguistic diversity also disrupted any sense of national cohesion. The protection of local and regional rights and privileges was a constant concern. The proximity to France, the Swiss Cantons, and the Low Countries ensured the cross-border exchange of goods, people, and ideas. However, in contrast to these previously mentioned influences, religious and intellectual

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[50] A. Duke, 'From king and country to king or country? Loyalty and treason in the Revolt of the Netherlands', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 32 (1982): 113-135, on p. 125.

[51] Duke, 'From king and country to king or country?, p. 123.

[52] R. von Friedeburg, '"Lands" and "Fatherlands". Changes in the plurality of allegiances in the sixteenth-century Holy Roman Empire', in R. Stein and J. Pollmann (eds.), *Networks, Regions and Nations, Shaping Identities in the Low Countries , 1300-1650* (Leiden: Brill, 2010): pp. 263-282.

[53] von Friedeburg, '"Lands" and "Fatherlands", p. 272.

developments encouraged a closer association with one's country and nation. A significant proportion of the Rhinelanders must have been aware of being an integral part of the Holy Roman Empire and of the German Nation. The reformation of religion not only caused confessional diversification in the localities, but also facilitated a feeling of connection to coreligionists throughout the Empire and Europe. However, a sense of attachment to the German nation was only one of the many factors that formed the identity of a sixteenth century Rhinelander.

1.2 The international identity of the high nobility

As illustrated by the text of the *Wilhelmus,* the set of loyalties and belongings that formed the identity of a member of the high nobility could be particularly complex. Besides their obvious attachment to their own territories, and to the Empire, the German princes were above all members of a European class. As will be demonstrated here, their social and familial ties, possessions, education, language skills, cultural identity, and professional and political engagements transcended the Empire's borders.

1.2.1 *Territories and family connections*

Although the majority of the princes discussed in this thesis primarily possessed lands in the German speaking part of the Empire, the territorial claims and ambitions of the aristocratic families of the sixteenth century were by no means restricted by the Empire's borders. The most obvious example of a family with transnational possessions is the House of Nassau. Although the family seat was situated in Dillenburg, roughly 70 kilometres northeast of the Rhine, the family's most lucrative and important possessions were positioned in Dutch-

and French-speaking regions. [54] The foundations of the family's prominence in the Low Countries and France were laid a generation before William of Orange became the head of the family. By marrying Claudia de Chalon, Heinrich III of Nassau, uncle of William of Orange, acquired significant possessions in France and the Francophone areas of the Empire, such as the Franche-Comté.[55] When these possessions, including the principality of Orange in the south of France, passed to the young William of Nassau in 1544, his lands included among others Nassau and Katzelnbogen on the Rhine, Breda and Vianen in the Low Countries, Chalon-Arlay and Besançon in the Franche-Comté, and the principality of Orange in Provence.[56] Moreover, the inheritance also included the *Hôtel d'Orange* in Paris.[57]

The house of Orange-Nassau was not the only European noble family with lands, influence, and interests that transcended borders. The houses of Lorraine, Montmorency, Croÿ, Arenberg, and Egmont are only a few examples of aristocratic families that owned counties or duchies in France and the Empire.[58] Other noble houses, whose dynastic heartlands were located in German speaking territories, also had possessions in the Francophone lands bordering France. The Dukes of Württemberg, for instance, were also counts of Montbéliard, a county situated 150 kilometres east of Dijon.[59] Many families who did not own

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[54] A. Duke, 'From "loyal servant" to "irreconcilable opponent" of Spain: Koenraad Swart's interpretation of William of Orange, 1533-72', in K. W. Swart, *William of Orange and the Revolt of the Netherlands* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003): pp. 8-25, on p. 13.

[55] K. Eiler, 'Nassau, Grafen' *Neue Deutsche Biography,* 18 (1996): 738-740.

[56] Duke, 'From "loyal servant" to "irreconcilable opponent", p. 13.

[57] Jean-Philippe of Salm to William of Orange, June 1559, N. Japikse (ed.), *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste, Prins van Oranje* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1934): pp. 168-169.

[58] G. Guillaume, 'Philippe II de Croy', in *Biographie Nationale, Volume IV* (Brussels: Thiry, 1878): pp. 537-540; L. P. Gachard, 'Jean de Ligne, Comte Arenberg', in *Biographie Nationale, Volume I* (Brussels: Thiry, 1866): pp. 368-380; T. Jusse, 'Lamoral, comte d'Egmont', in *Biographie Nationale, Volume VI* (Brussels: Bruylant-Christope, 1878): pp. 490-510.

[59] R. Uhland, 'Christoph, Herzog von Württemberg', *Neue Deutsche Biography,* 3 (1957): 248-249.

territory outside the German speaking part of the Empire had either done so in the past, or had the ambition to do so in the future. The house of Wittelsbach, one of Germany's most powerful aristocratic families, besides providing the rulers of the Palatinate and Bavaria, had also previously ruled land both west and east of Germany, including the counties of Holland, Zeeland, and Hainaut, and the prince-bishopric of Liège.[60] The make-up of the possessions of an aristocratic family was ever changing. Marriages often led to territory changing hands as part of the dowry. New titles and land could also be acquired through service to a foreign monarch. Count Wilhelm of Fürstenberg, a celebrated mercenary captain, not only lost his possessions in Germany as a result of his service to Francis I, but also gained land in France.[61] Similarly, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar was promised the city and seigneurie of Châtillon as a reward for his service to Henry II.[62]

1.2.2 *Education and language skills*

The internationality of the German princes is also reflected in their education. In the sixteenth century, significant changes were taking place in the way young noblemen were educated. In the late fifteenth century, the nobility was often scorned for their ignorance and lack of learning.[63] Changes in the roles noblemen were expected to fulfil, which increasingly included advisory, administrative, and diplomatic tasks, made changes in the upbringing of young aristocrats necessary. Although levels of education differed from nobleman to nobleman, a

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[60] C. Häutle, *Genealogie des Erlauchten Stammhauses Wittelsbach von dessen Wiedereinsetzung in das Herzogthum Bayern (11. Sept. 1180) bis Herab auf Unsere Tage* (Munich: Hermann Manzshe, 1870).

[61] D. Potter, *Renaissance France at War: Armies, Culture, and Society, c. 1480-1560* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008): p. 137.

[62] F. W. Barthold, *Deutschland und die Hugenotten, Geschichte des Einflusses der Deutschen auf Frankreichs Kirkliche und Bürgerliche Verhältnisse von der Zeit des Schmalkaldischen Bundes bis zum Geseze von Nantes, 1531-1598* (Bremen, Verlag von Franz Schlodtmann, 1848): p. 232.

[63] J. H. Hexter, 'The education of the aristocracy in the Renaissance', *The Journal of Modern History*, 22 (1950): 1-20.

general pattern can be identified. The upbringing of a German prince characteristically consisted of an academic component and an apprenticeship-like practical training. Despite the prevailing attitude that book-learning was unbecoming of the nobility, who were traditionally responsible for the martial rather than the organisational and administrative side of ruling, the sons of the German princes were now taught the skills of a scholar either by a private tutor or at university.[64] An increasing appreciation of the importance of education, both primary and higher, and the rise of humanism at the courts of the Imperial princes contributed to this trend. The Elector Palatine Friedrich III, Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, and Philip of Hesse founded or invested heavily in the universities of Heidelberg, Jena, and Marburg respectively.[65] Duke Christoph of Württemberg, recognising the use of education for religious reform, personally involved himself in the educational restructuring of his territories, creating a two-tiered system of German and Latin education available throughout his lands.[66] Orange's father, Wilhelm of Nassau, influenced by Melanchthon's views on education, also founded Latin schools in his county.[67]

Enrolling in universities was becoming increasingly popular among the nobility. The aim for these young aristocrats was not to graduate, but rather to acquire academic knowledge informally.[68] At university, aristocrats became part of a quintessentially international community. Although the foundation of a large number of new universities in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries ensured

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[64] P. N. Siegel, 'English humanism and the new Tudor aristocracy', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 13 (1952): 450-468, on p. 455.

[65] W. Rüegg (ed.), *Geschichte der Universität in Europa, Volume II* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1996): p. 57.

[66] C. Methuen, 'Securing the Reformation through education: The duke's scholarship system of sixteenth-century Wurttemberg', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 25 (1994): 841-451; L. C. Green, 'The Bible in sixteenth-century humanist education', *Studies in the Renaissance*, 19 (1572): 112-134.

[67] M. E. H. N. Mout, 'Het intellectuele milieu van Willem van Oranje', *BMGN*, 99 (1984): 596-625, on p. 601.

[68] Grendler, The universities of the Renaissance, p. 26.

the availability of a centre of education nearby, it was still common to pursue one's higher education further afield. This was also true for young noblemen. Despite the fact that the newly founded university of Marburg was only forty kilometres away from their ancestral home in Dillenburg, Orange nonetheless sent his brothers to the universities of Leuven and Wittenberg.[69] In the Palatinate, noble families often chose to send their sons to universities in France rather than to their own university in Heidelberg.[70] Consequently, there was a marked increase in the numbers of German students at French universities. Felix Platter from Basel was not only surprised by the number of other German students he encountered at the university of Orléans – he counted between two and three hundred – but also by the large number of noblemen among them.[71] The prominent presence of German nobles at French universities is illustrated by the fact that the German Nation at Orléans was exempted by royal proclamation from the ban on carrying a sword, the traditional hallmark of a nobleman.[72] The attraction of famous scholars was one part of the reasoning behind the choice to study abroad. Orange, for instance, chose Leuven as university for his son Philip William because of the presence of the classicist Cornelius Valerius.[73] Another reason for choosing universities further afield was that it provided excellent opportunities for networking. The young aristocrats from the Palatinate, for instance, at the universities of France encountered members of the great French noble families.[74]

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[69] Mout, 'Het intellectuele milieu van Willem van Oranje', p. 603.

[70] B. Vogler, 'Le role des électeurs Palatins dans les Guerres de Religion en France (1559-1592)', *Cahiers d'Histoire*, 10 (1965): 51-85, on p. 52; B. Vogler, 'Les contacts culturels entre Huguenots français et Protestants palatins au 16e siècle', *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, 115 (1969): 29-42, on p. 30.

[71] Babel, *Deutschland und Frankreich*, p. 114.

[72] Ibid, p. 115.

[73] Mout, 'Het intellectuele milieu van Willem van Oranje', p. 603.

[74] Hexter, 'The education of the aristocracy', p. 10.

These contacts could be valuable building blocks of transnational patronage and clientage networks.

An alternative to university education was the employment of private tutors. [75] This was the alternative for those nobles who preferred to maintain a distance between the old aristocracy and the gentlemen and clerics who made up most of the student body. Private tutors also taught young aristocrats who did not have the opportunity to spend a prolonged period of time in a university city. This private tuition was often combined with the second component of a noble's education; a practice that can best be described as an apprenticeship. At the court of a befriended noble house, young noblemen learned, both through instruction and by actively taking part in court life, the social and political skills expected from aristocrats. Moreover, the young noblemen had the opportunity to establish close relationships with their host families and others at court. The marriage of Philibert of Baden and Mechthild, daughter of Wilhelm of Bavaria, with whom Philibert spent a part of his childhood, is illustrative of the potentially lasting nature of these contacts. [76] These apprenticeships often reinforced the international connections of the young noblemen, either by bringing them into contact with peers from abroad, or by giving them the opportunity to spend time abroad themselves. Christoph of Württemberg spent a large part of his childhood first at the Imperial court in Innsbruck, then travelling throughout Europe in the entourage of Charles V, and finally at the court of France.[77] In France, Christoph behaved very much like a French courtier and even took part in a number of French military campaigns, serving in the army of the King.[78] Elector Palatine Friedrich III too spent a significant part of his youth

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[75] An example of this practice is the private tuition given to Christoph of Württemberg by Michael Tiffernus. M. Langsteiner, *Für Land und Lutherum: die Politik Herzog Christophs von Württemberg (1550-1568)* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2008): p. 13.

[76] A. Krieger, 'Philibert, Markgraf von Baden-Baden' in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biography, Volume XXV* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1887): pp. 739-741.

[77] Langsteiner, *Für Land und Lutherum*, pp. 13-14.

[78] Ibid, p. 14.

abroad, living at the French courts in Paris and Nancy and at the Habsburg court in Brussels.[79] From the age of eleven, William of Orange was raised at the cosmopolitan court in Brussels, the political heart of Charles V's large and extremely diverse domains.[80] There he not only built up a close relationship with the Emperor, but met aristocrats, diplomats, artists, and other courtiers from all corners of the Habsburg patrimony, including his future enemies the Duke of Alba and Cardinal Granvelle. His father, recognising the value of connections at such an important political centre, sent his third son, Louis, to live with his older brother in Brussels.[81] Spending time away from home was common practice. Those who did not go to university, or lived at a friendly ruler's court, sometimes stayed with renowned academics. Wilhelm, the eldest son of Philipp of Hesse, spent time at the Strasbourg residence of Johann Winter, a famous scholar of medicine.[82]

As a result of this educational practice, combining academic learning with the acquisition of practical experience away from home, the princes of the Empire were on the whole multilingual. Since the late Middle Ages, French had grown in importance as a language of the German nobility.[83] The type of French spoken by the aristocracy was the French of the court in Paris and contrasted strongly with the many regional and local dialects and languages that were spoken in most parts of the country. The fact that the princes did not speak Low German, Alsatian, or Franc-Comtois – the languages of the regions they controlled – but High German and French signified their belonging to an international elite. Then, as now, French was regarded as a civilised

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[79] V. Press, *Calvinismus und Territorialstaat, Regierung und Zentralbehörden der Kurpfalz 1559-1576* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1970): p. 223.

[80] Duke, 'From "loyal servant" to "irreconcilable opponent", p. 13.

[81] William of Nassau to William of Orange, 29 September 1556, Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste*, p. 76.

[82] W. Ribbeck, 'Wilhelm IV' in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie, Volume XLIII* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1898): p. 32.

[83] Babel, *Deutschland und Frankreich*, p. 108.

language; it was described as 'noble, gracious, elegant, and polished'.[84] It had been the language of the social elite of England, Germany, and the Low Countries for centuries.[85] Moreover, the princes mastered these languages to be able to function in an international environment, not to converse with their subjects. The emphasis on learning multiple languages is best illustrated in a letter sent by Jean de Ligne, count of Arenberg, to Albrecht of Bayern, who had hosted Ligne's son. Ligne writes that since his son 'only knows the German and French language' and since 'the royal majesty [the king] of Spain, my most gracious lord, rules and owns many and diverse realms and lands with different languages, such as Italy, Spain, and more' he decided 'to sent [his] son to Italy to learn the language.'[86] The fact that it is suggested here that mere bilingualism is not enough is telling. A quick survey of the language skills of the princes studied in this thesis reveals that knowledge of three or more languages was indeed the norm. Christoph of Württemberg, besides his native German, learned Latin and Greek from Michael Tiffernus at Innsbruck and French at the court of Francis I and Henry II.[87] Friedrich III also learned perfect French in Paris. Besides French and German, he had and 'average' command of Latin.[88] William of Orange spoke, with varying degrees of fluency, German, French, and Latin, and possibly also Spanish, Italian, and a little Dutch.[89] Wilhelm of Hesse learned German, Latin, and Greek at home, and French in Strasbourg.[90] As Ligne suggests in his letter, his son was expected to

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[84] Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology*, p. 270.

[85] Ibid, 271.

[86] '… kennen den allain teutscher und franzosischer sprachen…' '… den Ku. Matt zu Hispannien meinen allen gnedigster her allerhande und viellerley Reichen und landen und diverssen sprachen, als italia, Hispania und mehr andern herscht und besizt…' 'Sohn … in italia die sprache … zu lernen abzuferzigen …' Jean de Ligne to Albrecht of Bavaria, 28 April 1565, Arenbergarchief, Edingen.

[87] Langsteiner, *Für Land und Lutherum*, pp. 13-14.

[88] 'mittelmäßig' Press, *Calvinismus und Territorialstaat*, p. 223.

[89] Mout, 'Het intellectuele milieu van Willem van Oranje', pp. 601-602.

[90] Ribbeck, 'Wilhelm IV', p. 32.

engage in a political and social world that was not confined by the borders of the Low Countries, or even of the Empire. In order to act successfully on this European stage, a good knowledge of a range of languages was required. It is also worth noting that proficiency in Latin, the traditional *lingua franca* of Western Europe, was not deemed sufficient. If a noble's language skills were primarily intended to serve diplomatic purposes, Latin, also the language of official, legal and diplomatic documents, would have sufficed. However, as we shall see, interaction with peers abroad, both in formal and informal settings, formed an important part of an aristocrat's network. The ability to express oneself in a variety of languages, ideally with elegance and wit, significantly improved the quality of such interaction.

1.2.3 *International networks of sociability*

Networks of sociability were in the first place established and reinforced at important events bringing together aristocrats from the Empire and beyond. The Imperial Diets provided a formal context in which the princes could meet and interact politically, but also socially. The sixteenth century was an extraordinarily active period for such events; there was on average a Diet every three years. Political necessity also brought aristocrats together at conventions and colloquy called to address specific problems. Such summit meetings were not only important for facilitating formal deliberation, but also for bringing together noblemen in the same location. Behind the scenes, connections were laid, friendships formed, and alliances forged.

The sixteenth century was a golden age for pageantry. Spectacular and ostentatious displays of magnificence were at once entertainment, self-promotion, and politics statements. Taking part in tournaments, joyous entries, or similar spectacles was a way of demonstrating or reaffirming one's noble status and position in the hierarchy of Europe's elite. Disputes between aristocrats about the order of processions or the seating arrangements at banquets illustrate

the importance of such occasions.[91] Early-modern pageantry invoked both chivalric culture and a Renaissance obsession with Classical antiquity. Tournaments, both the joust and melee, remained very popular.[92] A list of competitors in tournaments held at the Habsburg courts reveals the cosmopolitanism of such events.[93] The large-scale mock-battles that were frequently staged brought together noblemen from the Low Countries, Germany, Spain, Italy, and France. As a prominent member of the Brussels court, William of Orange appears on the list, leading a band of 'adventurers' at a tournament in Antwerp in September 1549.[94] In the international setting of large tournaments, German princes often took centre stage. In February 1564, the Rhinegrave Jean-Philippe of Salm was one of the central figures at a tournament at Fontainebleau, leading one of the two competing parties of knights.[95] It is also safe to assume that Christoph of Württemberg and Friedrich III would have taken part in such spectacles during their time at the French court.

Baptisms, weddings, and funerals too were occasions at which the aristocracy came together. A particularly striking example is the marriage celebrations of Wilhelm V of Bavaria and Renata, the daughter of François de Lorraine and Christina of Denmark, in February 1568, which lasted eighteen days and in which dignitaries and aristocrats from around Europe participated.[96] This event was more than just a celebration in serving as an important occasion to make public statements. Through a combination of medieval pageantry and heraldry

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[91] R. A. Jackson, 'Peers of France and Princes of the Blood', *French Historical Studies*, 7 (1971): 27-46, on p. 36.

[92] R. J. Knecht, *The French Renaissance Court, 1483-1589* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008): pp. 87-91.

[93] B. Frieder, *Chivalry and the Perfect Prince* (Kirksvill MO: Truman State University Press, 2008), pp. 187-212.

[94] Ibid, p. 205.

[95] R. J. Knecht, *Hero or Tyrant? Henry II, King of France, 1574-89* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), p. 15.

[96] A. L. Thomas, *A House Divided, Wittelsbach Confessional Court Cultures in the Holy Roman Empire, 1550-1650* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 150-151.

and identifications with heroic characters from classical antiquity, noble houses underlined both their international importance and their political independence. The audience of these statements consisted primarily of other aristocrats, princes, and monarchs. These occasions thus served as moments at which the relationships between peers could be established, explicitly and implicitly, formally and informally. They therefore lay at the foundation of international networks of aristocratic sociability.

The importance and longevity of these networks shines through in the correspondences of the high nobility. Letters contain evidence both of contact in person and of the maintenance of social ties over a long distance. Many noblemen and women spent a considerable proportion of their lives on the road. Travelling between different estates, the attendance of family events, and important political gatherings all required them to spend time away from their primary residences.[97] This habit of travelling was so widespread among the nobility that it became common practice to expect peers throughout Europe to offer bed and board, even when arriving unannounced. Large noble households 'received noble guests on virtually a daily basis.'[98] Travelling provided ample opportunity for the expansion and maintenance of international social networks. William of Orange not only maintained a large network of correspondence, exchanging letters with the high nobility and monarchs of the Empire, France, Denmark, Spain, and Italy, but also regularly made long journeys, including to France in 1559 and to the German part of the Empire in 1561.[99] When preparing for such a journey, Orange sometimes planned his travels in such a way that he could pass the residences of a number of different

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[97] Juliana of Nassau to William of Orange, 6 April 1560, Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste*, pp. 350-351.

[98] K. B. Neuschel, 'Noble households in the sixteenth century: material settings and human communities', *French Historical Studies*, 15 (1988): 595-622, on p. 605.

[99] William of Orange to William of Nassau, 2 September 1559, Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste*, p. 84; Eric of Brunswick-Calenberg to William of Orange, 9 August 1561, Ibid, p. 276.

peers, even if they were situated fairly far apart. In the summer of 1561, for instance, he made arrangements to pass both the Duke of Brunswick-Calenberg in Hamelin and his 'beloved and dear cousin' Wilhelm, Duke of Jülich-Kleve, in Düsseldorf.[100] Contacts established during travels could be further developed in correspondence and through gift giving. In a letter written in 1552, for instance, Mary of Hungary remembered fondly her visit of the residence of Christoph of Württemberg, and especially his aviary. To thank Christoph for his hospitality, she sent the duke a gift of three birds of prey.[101]

Mary's choice of gift is significant. As Natalie Zemon Davis has demonstrated, the practise of gift giving was used to establish and reinforce the status of both giver and recipient.[102] Although the rhetoric of nobility emphasised the permanence and exclusivity of the class, for instance through a focus on the ancient lineages of noble families, the reality was different. The distinction between the lower echelons of the nobility and members of the third order was very unclear. Old noble families could disappear or lose their distinct position in society and new families entered the ranks of the nobility, for instance by buying titles or by being rewarded for service to a monarch.[103] Also on the battlefield, traditionally the place where a nobleman quite literally could win his spurs, commoners were challenging the supremacy of the aristocracy. [104] In this fluid system, status constantly had to be reinforced.[105] The hunt was the noble sport par excellence. Hunting

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[100] 'freundlichen lieben ... vetter' Eric of Brunswick-Calenberg to William of Orange, 9 August 1561, Ibid, pp. 276-277.

[101] Mary of Hungary to Christoph of Württemberg, 13 October 1552, V. Ernst, *Briefwechsel der Herzogs Christophs von Wirtemberg, Volume I* (Stuttgart: Verlag von Kohlhammer, 1899): p. 825.

[102] N. Zemon Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000): pp. 56-72.

[103] J. Dewald, *The European Nobility, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): pp. 15-59.

[104] Potter, *Renaissance France at War*, p. 88.

[105] H. van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland, from Knights to Regents, 1500-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): p. 33; E. Schalk, 'The appearance and

with hounds or birds of prey was by law restricted to the nobility.[106] By choosing as her present birds of prey, Mary of Hungary reinforced the noble status of both Christoph of Württemberg and of herself. Crucially, the characteristics that defined nobility, such as the right to hunt, were universal. This explains the popularity of gifts related to the hunt in the cross-border interaction between aristocrats.[107] Examples of this practise are the falcons and hounds gifted to the Duke of Arenberg by the Duke of Guise and Duke of Jülich-Kleve respectively.[108] European nobles were thus members of an international class. The 'continual exchange of recognition' that was, according to Kristen Neuchel, 'fundamental to a noble's identity' also took place in a European context.[109]

1.2.4 *The exchange of news and information*

In order to function on the international stage, the German princes needed to remain informed about events outside their own territories. However, the acquisition of reliable information on a regular basis about events throughout Europe could be difficult. The princes of the Empire had a variety of sources from which to gather information. Firstly, printed news pamphlets were being published with increasing frequency throughout the Empire.[110] They did not only report on events in Germany, but also brought news of important political events, such

reality of nobility in France during the Wars of Religion: An example of how collective attitudes can change', *The Journal of Modern History*, 48 (1976): 19-31.

[106] van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland*, p. 23; Knecht, *The French Renaissance Court*, p. 82.

[107] Knecht, *The French Renaissance Court*, p. 85.

[108] Jean de Ligne to the Duke of Jülich-Kleve, March 1560, Arenbergarchief, Edingen; Jean de Ligne to William of Orange, 11 February 1560, Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste*, pp. 318-319.

[109] K. B. Neuschel, *Word of Honor, Interpreting Noble Culture in Sixteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989): p. 74.

[110] A. Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014): pp. 58-75.

as battles and peace treaties, from around Europe. For instance, the struggle against the Ottoman Empire, which was taking place east of the Holy Roman Empire, dominated the pamphlets of the early 1500s.[111] The Reformation, Europe's 'first mass-media event', also inspired large volumes of pamphlets, printed in the many printing workshops that were being established in most large German cities.[112] The titles of many pamphlets emphasised that they were 'honest' and 'current'.[113] To add to their air of reliability, they included, or claimed to include, translations of original documents, such as the texts of peace treaties, royal proclamations, or petitions. However, the problem was that these news pamphlets were not as informative or reliable as the German princes required. Before a pamphlet could appear on the market, the news had to reach Germany, translated into a format suitable for the market it was aimed at, printed, and distributed. Although the production process sometimes only took a few days, the dissemination of news through pamphlets was by no means the quickest.[114] Moreover, pamphlets were often highly polemical. The princes must have known this, since many of them used local printers to publish pamphlets justifying their own policies and actions.[115] Moreover, the fact that the production of pamphlets was above all a commercial enterprise meant that news had to be delivered in a manner that was attractive for a large audience. The rather sensationalist tone of many pamphlets could stand in the way of accurate and clear reporting.

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[111] Ibid, p. 62.

[112] Ibid, p. 60; A. Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005): pp. 157-185.

[113] 'Warhaftigen' 'Neuwe', Anon., *Warhaftigen Neuwe Zeytung/ von dem Großmächtigen König zu Franckreich/ wie seine Königliche Maiestat/ en Parys/ im[m] Thurnier/ von einem Edelman[n] und Capitan beschedigt worden/ den eylften tage des Hewmonats/ dieses neun un[d] fünftzigsten Jars/ durch ein züschlahend tüdlich Fieber/ in Gott saliglich verschyden* (s. l.: s. n., 1559), f. 1 v.

[114] Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 73.

[115] Ibid, pp. 76-95.

Travellers passing by the courts of Germany served as a second source of news. As discussed before, princely courts received visitors on an almost daily basis. These travellers carried news and gossip from the places they had previously visited. This informal way of information dissemination provided the most regular source of news.[116] However, the very nature of the oral transmission of information, and the fact that a large proportion of the information carried by travellers must have been based on hearsay, meant that this was also not the most reliable source of news. Moreover, there was no guarantee that travellers passing by carried the particular piece news the princes desired. There were good reasons why those who required regular and reliable news, such as monarchs and merchants, developed their own formalised systems of information gathering.[117]

The princes of the Empire themselves did not maintain a large and structured system for the acquisition of news. Diplomats were sometimes despatched to foreign courts, but on the whole did not maintain permanent embassies. Therefore, the princes' most reliable source of news was their regular and extensive network of correspondence with peers throughout Europe. It was customary to include in most letters a paragraph or two with news that had recently come to the attention of the writer. In this manner, news of important events in France, such as the Death of Henry II of France and the assassination of the Duke of Guise, spread quickly among the German princes.[118] The formulaic manner in which news was presented illustrates the regularity with which it was included in correspondence. Often the paragraph containing the news started with the phrase 'I also

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[116] Ibid, pp. 17-39 and 49.

[117] Ibid, pp. 40-57.

[118] William of Orange to August of Saxony, 25 December 1560, Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste …*: pp. 209-210; Friedrich III to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 14 December 1562, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume I* (Braunschweig, C.A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1868): pp. 362-364.

cannot keep hidden from Your Grace that ...'.[119] Sometimes the source of the news was also mentioned. Urbain Scharberger, the secretary for German affairs in Brussels, in 1560 wrote to Orange: 'Here there is not much news, except that there is much talk among merchants about the French execution [during the aftermath of the Tumult of Amboise].'[120] Friedrich III gave extra credibility to talk of persecution in France by adding that 'one of my servants, a doctor, from France ... has reported' this news.[121] News was also frequently passed down the networks of correspondence. For instance, Friedrich III, after receiving news of the assassination of the Duke of Guise, wrote Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar to inform him about the event.[122]

News, similarly to the gifts studied by Davis and the favours discussed by Neuschel, could serve as a commodity used to reinforce relationships between peers and between clients and patrons. This is clearly illustrated in a letter sent by Orange to August of Saxony in January 1561. Engaged in difficult negotiations concerning a possible marriage between himself and August's niece, Anna of Saxony, Orange hoped to soften August's resolve by promising that 'when something takes place in France ... and is brought to my attention, I shall always confidently notify Your Grace of the same.' [123] Maintaining good relations with peers throughout the Empire and beyond could ensure the availability of a reliable source of news: the bigger one's network, the bigger the pool of information. Orange's offer could potentially be

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[119] Darbeneben könden E. L. wir auch ... nicht pergen, das ...' Friedrich III to August of Saxony, 17 May 1570, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume II*, p. 395.

[120] 'Alhie ist wenig neuer zeitungen; allein daz die kauffleuth vill ... von der frantzösische execution reden ...' Urbain Scharenberg to William of Orange, 23 November 1560, Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste*, p. 305.

[121] 'ayner meyner diener, ayn doctor, alhie aus Frankreych ... mich berichtet hatt ...' Friedrich III to Johann Friedrich of Saxony, 5 March 1560, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume I*, p. 127.

[122] Friedrich III to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 14 December 1562, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume I*, p. 364.

[123] William of Orange to August of Saxony, 8 January 1561, '... dan da sich etwas sunders in Franckerig odder sunst zutragen und mir zu wissen gethan wirt, sollen E. C. F. G. desselben allezeit vertraulich verstendigen werden.' Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste*, p. 218.

very valuable to August. Due to the distance between the French border and Saxony, roughly 700 kilometres, it took news from France some time to reach August. Orange, who was often present at the court of Brussels, in possession of estates on the border of and inside the kingdom of France, and well connected to the French nobility, was much more likely to be notified quickly and reliably of events in France. By creating extensive networks of correspondence, based on the practice of sharing information, the princes of the Holy Roman Empire were generally relatively well informed. As we shall see, throughout the French Wars of Religion, they were fully aware of most battles, sieges, massacres, assassinations, peace edicts and other significant events taking place in France.

1.2.5 *Art and visual culture*

The traditional characteristics, virtues, and privileges of the nobility, including the right to display a coat of arms and the duty to serve the monarch on the battlefield, extended to a relatively diverse group of people. The difference in wealth and power between a local knight or a gentleman, who sometimes was not easy to distinguish from a wealthy yeomen farmer, and a *grand seigneur* could be enormous.[124] It is therefore not surprising that, besides emphasising their membership of the nobility, the Imperial princes also sought to distinguish themselves in other ways. Culturally, most of the princes of the Empire seem to have shared a desire above all to appear cosmopolitan. As patrons of scholarship, literature and poetry, visual art, music, and architecture, the princes of the Empire displayed a taste for Italian, French, and Spanish rather than German, styles and fashions. Already in the late fifteenth century, the Rhineland, and specifically the court of the Electors Palatine, was a centre for the promotion of the ideals of the

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[124] van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland*, p. 38.

Italian Renaissance in Germany.[125] The Electors financed a circle of humanists, both from Germany and from abroad, who aimed directly to imitate their colleagues in Italy. In music, the Low Countries, rather than Italy, was the centre for the development of a new style. During the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth centuries, the so-called Franco-Flemish school dominated music throughout Europe. The Electors Palatine were again the first to promote the style in Germany, employing a Dutchman, Johannes van Soest, as their court composer.[126] In Stuttgart, the music of the Franco-Flemish school could also frequently be heard. Even after Württemberg became Lutheran, music by famous Catholic composers such as Orlando di Lasso and Josquin Des Prez remained popular at court.[127] The Dukes of Württemberg used music to display their international significance and cultural sophistication. They brought musicians from their famous *Hofkapelle*, which rivalled the best ensembles in Europe, on diplomatic missions 'and even loaned them out to other courts.'[128]

A particularly visible statement of taste could be made through architecture. In the early and mid-sixteenth century, Renaissance influences in architecture started spreading throughout Europe. The German princes were among the first to promote this style. The most striking example of this is the so-called *Ottheinrichsbau* inside Heidelberg Castle (see Figure 3). Still regularly described as one of the earliest (or even the first) Renaissance building of Northern Europe, the building, which included private living quarters as well as a number of rooms for public functions, contrasts strongly with the surrounding medieval architecture. Its architectural language, including Ionic and Corinthian columns and caryatids interspersed with niches containing

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[125] H. J. Cohn, 'The early Renaissance court in Heidelberg', *European History Quarterly*, 1 (1971): 295-322.

[126] Cohn, 'The early Renaissance court in Heidelberg', p. 319.

[127] K. Marcus, 'Music patronage of the Württemberg Hofkapelle, c. 1500-1650', *German History*, 13 (1995): 151-162, on p. 154.

[128] Ibid, p. 153.

statues of figures from classical antiquity, looks so quintessentially Italian that it has often been (falsely) rumoured that Michelangelo Buonarotti was its architect.[129] The building project gave Ottheinrich, father of Friedrich III, international renown. In 1559, an English ambassador in Germany, Dr Christopher Mont, described the *Ottheinrichsbau* as 'a magnificent and sumptuous building, for which [Ottheinrich] assembled from all parts the most renowned artists, builder, sculptors, and painters.'[130]

Figure 3: Nineteenth-century reconstruction of the Ottheinrichsbau.[131]

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[129] H. Hubach, 'Kürfurst Ottheinrichs "neuer hofbaw" in Heidelberg: neue Aspekte eines alten Themas', in V. Rödel (ed.), *Mettelalter. Schloß Heidelberg und die Pfalzgrafschaft bei Rhein bis zur Reformationszeit; Begleitpublikation zur Dauerausstellung der Staatlichen Schlösser und Gärten Baden-Württemberg* (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2002): pp. 191-203, on p. 202.

[130] Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, pp. 82-83.

[131] J. Hanschke and P. Thoma, 'Das Heidelberger Schloss, die bauliche Gestalt der Residenz der pfälzischen Wittelsbacher seit 1600', in A. Wieczorek, B. Schneidmüller, A. Schubert, and S. Weinfurter (eds.), *Die Wittelsbacher am Rhein. Die Kurpfalz und*

Ottheinrich's building project at Heidelberg was part of a larger trend. Other princes also commissioned construction work on their residences. Christoph of Württemberg in 1553 started large-scale building works on his castle in Stuttgart, adding a number of Renaissance features, most notably a large courtyard with a three-tiered column-lined arcade, to the medieval fabric (see Figure 4).[132] In Baden, the residence of the *Marggrafen* had in the fifteenth century been moved from a medieval castle on a mountain ridge to a new gothic structure closer to the town of Baden. Despite the fact that the *Neues Schloss* was a relatively new building, the fashion for Italian architecture inspired a series of building projects throughout the sixteenth century.[133] The visibility of these architectural statements can clearly be seen in a print of the city of Baden and surrounding from 1643 (see Figure 5). Despite appearing in the background, the sixteenth-century Renaissance additions to the castle are very obviously visible. The contrast with the medieval *Altes Schloss* is particularly striking. Thus, by spending large sums of money on striking alterations to their residences, the princes of the Empire could show in a very public manner that they were members of the European cultural elite.

Figure 4: The courtyard, Altes Schloss, Stuttgart.[134]
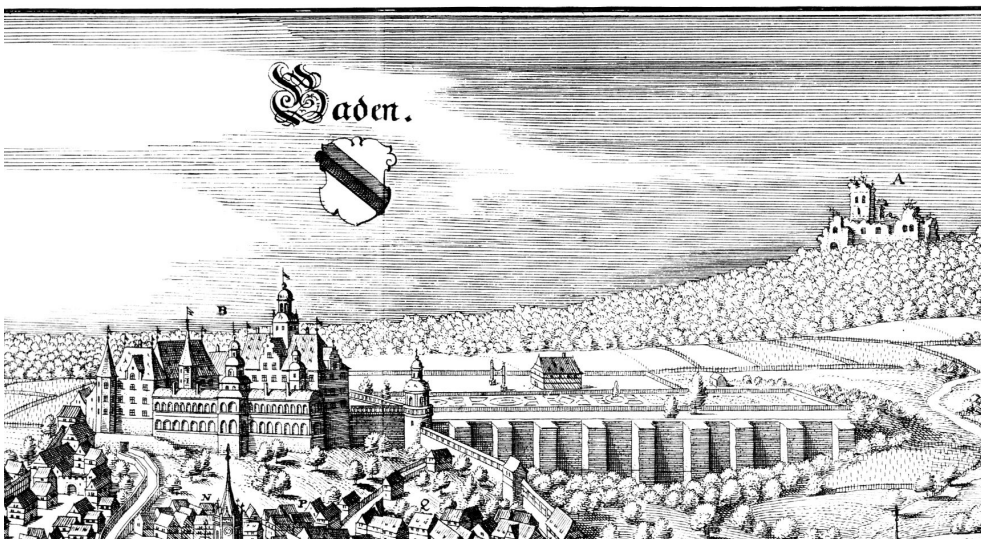
Figure 5: Matthäus Marian die Ältere, *Baden-Baden, Ansicht von Westen* (fragment).[135]

Another way in which the German princes displayed their cosmopolitanism was through portraiture. For instance, by commissioning a portrait by an internationally renowned artist, a statement could be made emphasising one's position among Europe's

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[134] Landesmuseum Württemberg, http://www.landesmuseum-stuttgart.de/ (accessed 13-09-2014).

[135] Matthäus Marian die Ältere, 'Baden-Baden, Ansicht von Westen', *Topographiae Sueviae* (Frankfurt am Main, Merian, 1643): pp. 27-28.

elite. One striking example is Antonis Mor's portrait of the young William of Orange, probably painted in 1554.[136] The choice of painter is significant. Mor's clientele includes a remarkable number of Europe's most important monarchs and aristocrats.[137] By choosing the same portraitist as, amongst others, Philip II, John III of Portugal, Alessandro Farnese, and Mary Tudor, the 21-year-old prince of Orange presented himself as a nobleman of international significance.

Alternatively, messages could also be conveyed by the way one was depicted on a portrait. The choice of pose, attributes, and especially of clothing could all contribute to the impact of message. The most famous portrait of Christoph of Württemberg was made by Abraham de Hel, a painter who was not quite as famous as Mor, but also active throughout Europe.[138] The portrait conveys a sense of confidence, wisdom, constancy, and worldly authority; all characteristics befitting of a father of the German Reformation. Yet, the style of clothing Christoph is wearing is recognisably Spanish, rather than German. Considering that, as Ulinka Rublack has demonstrated, clothing was increasingly viewed as reflective of a people's moral fabric, and the simplicity and modesty of German fashion was repeatedly contrasted with the decadence of foreign modes of dress, this choice of clothing is remarkable.[139] It not only shows that Christoph was aware of the fashionability of Spanish dress, but also that in this portrait he consciously decided not to associate himself with the local culture of his own lands.

The German princes' apparent admiration of Spanish fashion, Italian architecture, French education, and Flemish music is above all illustrative of their international orientation. Commissioning buildings

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[136] A. Mor, *Wilhelm I. von Oranien-Nassau*, Staatlichen Museen, Kassel, c. 1554.

[137] H. Hymaus, 'Antoine Mor', in *Biographie Nationale, Volume XV* (Brussels: Bruylant-Christophe, 1899): pp. 228-234.

[138] K. Bosl (ed.), *Bosls Bayerische Biographie, 8000 Persönlichkeiten aus 15 Jahrhunderten* (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1982): p. 327.

[139] U. Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): pp. 125-176.

and works of art, dressing in the finest fabrics and furs, and employing leading scholars and artists was expensive. Christopher Mont, after having expressed his delight at Ottheinrich's stylish new building, also remarked that his son, Friedrich III, was forced to tone down the 'splendour and magnificence' of the Palatinate, dismissing 'all the musicians and above 200 retainers from court, being desirous to free the Palatinate from debt.'[140] The princes' habit to spend big in order to be among the first to promote new styles and fashions, besides satisfying their personal tastes, also served as a very effective method of claiming membership of a very select group of leading European aristocrats.

1.2.6 *Warfare, captivity, and diplomacy*

Military conflicts also intensified the contacts between aristocrats from different countries. Taking part in warfare was central to what it meant to be a nobleman. During the first half of the sixteenth century there were a number of large-scale conflicts that provided opportunities for the nobility of the Empire to show off their military prowess. The most important of these were the Italian Wars that lasted on and off from 1494 to 1559 and the civil wars that pitted Charles V against the Protestant League of Schmalkalden between 1546 and 1553.[141] Both wars brought together soldiers and commanders from a range of different national backgrounds, both in the same army and opposing each other on the battlefield. The Imperial high nobility played a relatively small role in most off the Italian Wars, in which Spanish and Italian noblemen dominated. However, this changed when the theatre of war shifted from Italy to the Franco-Imperial border in 1551. Especially the Nassau family was strongly represented in ranks of the

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[140] Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 83.

[141] L. Romier, *Les Origins Politiques des Guerres des Religion, Volume I* (Geneva: Slatkine-Megariotis Reprints, 1974); D. L. Potter, 'Foreign policy in the age of the Reformation: French involvement in the Schmalkaldic War, 1544-1547', *The Historical Journal*, 20 (1977): 525-544; MacCulloch, *Reformation,* pp. 158-212.

Imperial army. Orange's uncle, Henry III of Nassau-Breda, and his son, René of Chalon, who fell at the siege of St Dizier, were two of the most important Imperial captains. Following the family tradition, Orange first became a commander of a *bande d'ordonnance*, soon followed by his promotion to Captain General at the age of 22.[142] Although the Schmalkaldic Wars took place inside what we now call Germany, commanders and troops from Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Bohemia, and Hungary as well as Germany all engaged in the conflict.

Large military conflicts encouraged the establishment and expansion of transnational aristocratic contacts in three ways. Firstly, the need for military cooperation between captains from a range of different backgrounds ensured the intensification of liaison between nobles from different parts of Europe. A good example is the intense correspondence concerning the siege of Metz in 1552 between the Duke of Alba, an aristocrat whose dynastic heartlands were situated in Castile, and the Duke of Arenberg, who owned land in the Rhineland, the Low Countries, and France.[143]

During both the Italian and Schmalkaldic Wars, a number of leading figures were captured in or during the aftermath of battles. Time spent in captivity could facilitate the development of closer familiarity between captive and captor. After the battle of Saint Quentin in 1557, Jacques d'Albon, Maréchal de Saint André, one of Henry II's leading counsellors, spent almost a year as captive in the castle of the prince of Orange in Breda.[144] Similarly, Landgrave Philipp of Hesse, after having been captured during the aftermath of the Schmalkaldic Wars, spent no less than five years in the Netherlands as a captive of the Habsburgs. The foundation for Philipp's strong interest in events in the Netherlands, and his extensive correspondence with noblemen from that region, was probably laid during this period.

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[142] Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste*, p. 11.

[143] Correspondence between Jean de Ligne, Duke of Arenberg, and the Duke of Alba, Arenbergarchief, Edingen.

[144] Japikse, *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste*, pp. 121-122.

Orange and St André met again during the negotiations leading up to the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis. In the absence of Philip II, Orange was one of the principal negotiators for the Habsburg side.[145] The lengthy negotiation process brought together envoys from Italy, Spain, and England as well as from France and the Empire.[146] In this context, the establishment and expansion of relations between nobles from different parts of the continent was particularly easy. For example, the first meeting between Orange and a French monarch, in this case Henry II, took place in the margins of the signing of the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis.[147] As will become clear in subsequent chapters, the French Wars of Religion, in similar ways to the Italian and Schmalkaldic Wars, encouraged an intensification of the contacts between the French high nobility and the princes of the Holy Roman Empire.

1.3 Franco-Imperial relations after 1552

Having discussed the wide variety of ways in which the princes of the Holy Roman Empire engaged socially, culturally, and politically, on the international stage, I will now focus on one particular development: the intensification of diplomatic relations between the French monarchy and the Protestant princes of the Empire during the early 1550s.

1.3.1 *The constitutional make-up of the Holy Roman Empire*

Before proceeding to discuss the manner in which the close diplomatic relations between German princes and the King of France were established, it is first important briefly to consider debates that were raging in the Empire concerning the sovereignty of the princes and their duty of obedience to the Emperor. The history of the Empire is characterised by a continuous process of establishing and re-

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[145] Romier, *Les Origins Politiques … Volume II*, pp. 297-347.

[146] Ibid, pp. 297-347.

[147] Ibid, pp. 297-347.

establishing the power relations between local and regional powers and the Emperor. Often, this balancing act was not so much expressed in words, but in ritual. A good example of this practice is the Joyous Entry, a civic ceremony in which a regional lord entered a city and performed a series of ceremonies, emphasising the rights and freedoms of the city.[148] Representatives of the city also swore oaths, pledging to in turn protect the privileges and prerogatives of their overlords.

Regional rulers also had to balance their allegiance to the Emperor, their monarch, with the protection of their own sovereignty. The reality of Imperial politics, however, did not match the rhetoric of Imperial power and sovereignty. The political landscape in the Empire was fragmented. Most institutions of political power were concentrated in the cities and the 'states', such as Württemberg, Hesse, and Saxony.[149] Successive Emperors, lacking a strong institutional power base, struggled to dominate the politics of the Empire.[150] As a result, political theorists began to reassess the relationship between the Emperor and the princes of the Empire. These debates started in the late fifteenth century.[151] The crux of the question was: was the Emperor the sole possessor of sovereign power, or did he share it with the *Reichsstände*; the princes and the Imperial cities?[152] The question was not resolved until the seventeenth century. Not even the key terms of the debate, such as sovereignty, were clearly defined by the 1550s.[153] Nonetheless,

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[148] P. Arnade, *Beggers, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots, The Political Culture of the Dutch Revolt* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008): p. 33.
[149] Brady, *German Histories*, p. 18.

[150] B. Scribner, 'Germany', in B. Scribner, R. Porter, and M. Teich (eds.), *The Reformation in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): pp. 5-6.

[151] P. H. Wilson, 'Still a monstrocity? Some reflections on Early Modern German statehood', *The Historical Journal*, 49 (2006): pp. 566-567.

[152] Ibid, 565-576.

[153] Those using the term 'sovereignty' in the context of this debate borrowed heavily from Jean Bodin, whose *Six Livres de la République*, containing his idea of indivisible sovereignty, were not published until 1576.

it was clear that the relation between the increasingly independent-minded princes and the Imperial monarchy had become problematic.

1.3.2 *German mercenaries*

A particularly striking example of the conflicting interests of Emperor and German nobility was the role of German mercenary troops and their aristocratic captains in various European conflicts. Throughout the Italian Wars and the French Wars of Religion, German and Swiss soldiers formed the backbone of virtually every major army.[154] As a result of this reliance on German and Swiss mercenaries, demand was high, sometimes even higher than supply, and therefore the maintenance of close contacts with those who controlled the mercenary market could influence the outcome of a war.[155] The French were among the first to realise this, and thus it became a foreign policy priority to establish good relations, formally and informally, with the Swiss Cantons and the German nobility.[156] The prominence of the Rhineland as a place to recruit *landsknechts* and *reiters* ensured that the French diplomatic presence was particularly strong there.

Among the mercenary colonels were some of the most important princes of the Empire. Christoph of Württemberg, for instance, commanded German mercenaries during his time at the French court.[157] The German princes had a variety of reasons for acting as mercenary commanders. Firstly, it could help them to establish a reputation for military prowess. Since an active role on the battlefield was still considered central to a noble's identity, service as a

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[154] J. B. Wood, 'The royal army during the early wars of religion', in M. P. Hold (ed.), *Society and Institutions in Early Modern France* (Athens, Georgia University Press, 1991): pp. 1-35.

[155] D. Potter, 'The international mercenary market in the sixteenth-century: Anglo-French competition in Germany, 1543-50', *The English Historical Review*, 111 (1996): 24-58.

[156] Greengrass, *The French Reformation*, p. 39.

[157] Potter, *Renaissance France at War*, p. 138.

commander of mercenary troops could provide a solution when other opportunities to excel in battle were scarce. Secondly, serving a foreign monarch on the battlefield could help establish a good relationship between monarch and prince and the possibility of future military or political alliances between the two. Finally, serving as a mercenary captain could be financially attractive. Albrecht *Bellator*, Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach, built up a fearsome reputation as military commander. Building on this reputation, he spent a significant part of his career on campaign, fighting for the Emperor, then for the King of France, and again for the Emperor.[158] Due to his formidable reputation, Albrecht could drive a hard bargain when negotiating with Charles V or Henry II.

The example of Albrecht of Brandenburg-Kulmbach is illustrative of two phenomena: Firstly, the King of France and the Emperor depended on experienced mercenary soldiers and their captains and were willing to spend heavily to secure their services. Secondly, the employment of princes from the Empire by the King of France, who was at war with the Emperor, raised some complicated constitutional questions. If the Emperor was indeed the sole possessor of sovereign power in the Empire, serving the enemy of the Emperor, in this case the King of France, necessarily constituted a form of treason. The aforementioned confiscation of the lands of Wilhelm of Fürstenberg as a punishment for his service in France demonstrates that the Emperor indeed regarded this service as treasonous. Alternatively, if the German high nobility were sovereign princes in their own right, the pursuit of their own foreign policy agenda was entirely permissible. Even though scholarly debates about the nature of sovereignty would only begin in earnest in the late 1570s, the tensions that fuelled these debates were already felt in the 1550s. This tension is reflected in an agreement made between Henry II of France and the brothers Johann Friedrich of Saxony and Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar in 1558. The two dukes were promised an annual pension of

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[158] E. von Guttenberg, 'Albrecht Alkibiades', *Neue Deustche Biographie,* 1 (1953): p. 163.

30,000 francs. In exchange, they were obliged to levy an army of mercenary soldiers when Henry required it, albeit 'with the assurance, that they would not be used against the Empire or the German princes.'[159] The absence of the Emperor in this clause is striking. Yet, this sense of obligation towards the Holy Roman Empire and the Imperial princes, rather than to the Emperor, is not uncharacteristic of the attitudes of the Protestant German princes.

Nonetheless, Johann Wilhelm, understanding that his actions were likely to provoke controversy, felt the necessity to publish a pamphlet explaining his decision to serve in the army of the King of France. The pamphlet claims to be a printed version of a letter sent to 'a number of princes of the Holy Roman Empire', but is more likely to be a consciously crafted public statement. Johann Wilhelm's explanation consists of two elements. First, it was categorically stated 'that His Grace [Johann Wilhelm] … does not intend, by his own [actions] or those of his followers, to harm any of the States of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.'[160] The second part of his arguments reads as a celebration of the political independence of the regions and cities of Germany. Johann Wilhelm writes that he, 'as a poor young and

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[159] 'mit der Zusicherung, ihn nicht gegen das deutsche Reich und die Reichsfürsten zu verwenden.' K. Hahn, *Herzog Johann Wilhelm von Weimar und Seine Beziehungen zu Frankreich* (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1907): p. 53.

[160] 'Das S. F. G. … vorhaben nicht sey/ einigen des heiligen Reich Deutscher Nation einverleibten Standt/ durch S. F. G. oder die Iren zubeschwere[n] …' Anon., *Warhaftiger Abdruck des Durchleuchten Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Johann Wilhelm/ Herzogen zu Sachsen/ Landgraffen in Döringen/ und Marggraffen zu Meissern/ ausgegangene Schreibens/ am Dato im feltlager bey Amiens/ den 27. Septembris negst vorschinē/ an etzliche Chur ūn Fürsten des Heiligen Reichs/ darinnen S. F. G. ursachen anzeigen/ Welcher halben sie sich in des konigs zu Frankreich kriegs und dienstbestestellung begeben/ und sich daneben ausdrücklich erkleren/ Das S. F. G. gemüt und vorhaben nicht sey/ einigen des heiligen Reich Deutscher Nation einverleibten Standt/ durch S. F. G. oder die Iren zubeschwerē/ noch solchs zuthun den Iren wissentlich zu gestatten. Daraus dann zubefinden/ das S. F. G. und den Iren/ mit dem ausgesprengtem geschrey/ als solten S. F. G. in izigem vorstehenden Abzug/ das geurlaubte französische kriegsvolck an sich ziehen/ und damit inn Deutschland/ Krieg und unruhe anrichten wollen/ ungütlich geschicht/ Und das sölchs engweder durch S. F. G. missgünstige oder sonst unruhige leut/ die zu kriegs entbörung lust haben/ und die Herrn gerne in einander herzen wolten/ ausgebreitet wirdt* (s. l.: s. n., 1558), f. 5. r.

oppressed prince, ... greatly desires to seek and win the German Nation's ancient, laudable, and princely liberty [and] freedom.'[161]

1.3.3 *Henry II, protector of German liberties*

The trope of German liberty, which was so eloquently employed by Johann Wilhelm, was very commonly used throughout the 1540s and 50s. The celebration of the traditional liberties of the *Reichsstände* was at the same time an attack on the Emperor, who was widely regarded as a threat to these liberties. During the Schmalkaldic Wars, the Protestant princes' *Imperium*, or the freedom to govern their own territories as they saw fit, was evoked to justify military opposition to the Emperor.[162] In 1552, the trope was used to underpin the Treaty of Chambord, an alliance between Henry II of France and a number of Protestant princes. [163] For the Protestant princes of the Empire, association with the King of France could bring great benefits. Keen to maintain their political independence in the face of increasing Habsburg influence, they deemed that a French victory would better suit their interests. In their assessment, the Emperor was the bigger threat than the King of France.[164] Although the true foundation of the alliance was the shared animosity to the Emperor, by adopting the title 'Protector of German Liberties', Henry II could more easily justify his military expedition crossing the Franco-Imperial border.[165] In a German pamphlet, Henry explained his motives: The King claimed to act

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[161] 'als ein armer junger und verdruckter fürst ... der Deutschen Nation/ alten/ löblichen/ und fürstluchen Libertet/ freiheit ... gantz gerne suchen und gewinnen wolte ...' *Warhaftiger Abdruck des Durchleuchten Hochgebornen Fürsten ...*, f. 5 v.

[162] Q. Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978): pp. 189-238.

[163] Barthold, *Deutschland und die Hugenotten*, pp. 68-69.

[164] J. Pariset, *Les Relations entre la France et l'Allemagne au Milieu du XVIe Siècle* (Strasbourg: Istra, 1981): p. 131.

[165] E. Armstrong, 'The Italian Wars of Henry II', *The English Historical Review*, 30 (1916): 602-612; F. J. Baumgartner, *Henry II, King of France 1547-1559* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1988): pp. 146-159.

because he received 'all sorts of grave complaints from many Prince-electors, princes, and other distinguished people of the German Nation, who complain strongly that they are being oppressed by an unbearable tyranny and servitude by the Emperor and that they are driven into an eternal bondage and ruin …'[166] Besides being driven by pity for the German people, Henry II also claimed the right to meddle in this conflict 'because we [Henry] share a common origin with the Germans, since our ancestors were also German.'[167] This is a particularly interesting statement. Echoing humanist debates about the pre-Christian origins of the peoples of Europe, Henry claimed a close affinity with the German princes on part of a shared ancestry. This added to the bond that already existed due to the fact that they shared a common enemy. During the military campaign that followed, Henry II, with the blessing of the Protestant princes, captured 'the three bishoprics' Toul, Metz, and Verdun, all francophone cities inside the Empire.[168]

The alliance of 1552 is only one part of what was an unusually strong relationship. This amity between the King of France and the German Protestant princes was mutually beneficial. The French monarchy benefitted from access to *Landsknechts* and *Reiters* from the Rhineland and beyond, providing the backbone of his army during campaigns against the Habsburgs and England. The German princes profited financially from service to the King, but also benefited from their political association to one of Europe's most powerful monarchs,

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[166] 'allerley schwere Klage für/ vieler Churfürsten/ fürsten und anderer trefflicher Leuthe/ Teudscher Nation/ die sich zum höchsten beklagen/ das sie mit untraglicher Tyranney un[d] Servitut von dem Keyser würden vertruckt/ unnd inn ewige dienstbarkeit und verderben … gefürt würden.' Anon., *Libertas Sendtschrifften des Königlichen Maiestat zu Frankreich etc. An die Chur und Fürsten, Stende und Stett des Heiligen Römischen Reichs Teutscher Nation, darinn Sie sich irer ytziger Kriegsrüstung halben uffs Kürzest Erkleret* (Fontainebleau: s. n., 1552), f. 3 v.

[167] 'dieweil wir mit den Teudschen eine gemeinen Ursprung haben/ dann es sein unsere fürfahren auch Teudsche[n] gewesen' Ibid, f 3 r.

[168] F. W. Barthold, *Deutschland und die Hugenotten, Geschichte des Einflusses der Deutschen auf Frankreichs Kirkliche und Bürgerliche Verhältnisse von der Zeit des Schmalkaldischen Bundes bis zum Geseze von Nantes, 1531-1598* (Bremen: Verlag von Franz Schlodtmann, 1848): pp. 1-31; Baumgartner, *Henry II* …: pp. 146-159; K. Brandi, 'Karel V, Spanien und die Französische Rheinpolitik', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 167 (1943): 13-28.

helping them sustain their political autonomy within the Empire. The strong relation between the French monarchy and the Protestant princes, though not without strains, gave an extra impetus to German interest in events in France. Throughout the French Wars, correspondence between German nobles and the King of France often evoked their longstanding bond.[169] The intensification of the German princes' interest in France in the 1550s influenced their involvement in the Wars of Religion after 1562.

1.4 Conclusion

The realisation that identities are necessarily multi-layered has become well established in recent decades. The identity of the princes of the Holy Roman Empire was particularly complex. First and foremost, they had strong ties to their dynastic heartlands, with which they were most directly identified through their titles. As rulers, their first responsibility was to these regions. Also, their primary residences were located there. However, most princes owned a range of different seigneuries, counties, and duchies besides their patrimonial lands. Often these lands lay dispersed throughout the Empire and beyond; sometimes they were hundreds of kilometres apart. [170] Besides responsibility for a diverse collection of family possessions, the princes also had a stake in the governance of the Empire. In the *Reichskreisen*, *Reichstag*, and, in the case of the Counts Palatine and the Dukes of Saxony, as Electors, the princes could project power throughout the Empire. Also on the international political stage, the princes of the Empire were players of significance, controlling access to some of

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[169] Catherine de' Médici to Friedrich III, Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, Christoph of Württemberg, Philipp of Hesse, and Philibert of Baden, November 1566, H. de la Ferrière (ed.), *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, Volume II: 1563-1566* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1885): p. 397; Wilhelm of Hesse to Charles IX, 17 August 1568, BNF, 15608: f. 168; Friedrich III to the Bishop of Rennes, 3 November 1567, BNF, 15918: f. 27-49.

[170] For instance, the Duke of Württemberg's residence in Stuttgart was just over 200 kilometres away from the county of Montbéliard, one of his other territories. The distance between Dillenburg and Orange, both owned by William of Orange, was more than 800 kilometres.

Europe's most sought-after mercenaries, engaging in military campaigns, and establishing alliances with foreign monarchs. As political actors, the princes thus had to balance their local, national, and international interests.

The cultural identity of the princes reflected the multi-layered nature of their political concerns and interests. The princes of the Rhineland, such as the Landgraves of Hesse, Dukes of Württemberg, Counts of Nassau, and Counts Palatine, were the dominant political force in a region that was culturally, linguistically, and religiously diverse. Although for the largest part their lands were located in the German-speaking part of the Empire, influences from France, Switzerland, and the Low Countries had a significant impact on the culture, religion, and politics of the region. The previously mentioned princes also showed a keen personal interest in France and the Low Countries. They pursued their education at French universities, or at the court of the King of France, acquired the necessary linguistic skills to interact with the French and Low Countries nobility, and maintained correspondences with peers across the border. They were fully aware that they were members of a European elite, and aimed to reinforce this status through the exchange of courtesies, news, and gifts with peers both inside and outside the Empire. The rise of humanism and the popularity of its educational philosophy amongst Europe's elite contributed to the formation of a more homogenous international aristocratic identity. Moreover, as patrons of art, architecture, and scholarship, the German princes were among the first to move away from traditional German styles, instead commissioning buildings, paintings, clothing, and music following the latest international fashions. These visual statements helped to underline the princes' cosmopolitanism.

The princes of the Empire were nonetheless also aware of their Germanness. When referring to themselves, they often spoke of 'the German electors and princes'.[171] Alternatively, the phrase 'the Estates of

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[171] 'die Teutschen Chur und fürsten' HStASt, A 71 Bü 920, f. 56 a.

the Augsburg Confession' was also frequently used.[172] Although it alludes to confessional rather than national identity, the Augsburg Confession was nonetheless a quintessentially German creation. Also an awareness of the history of the German peoples, both ancient and recent, added to the growing importance of a German identity. The popularity of Tacitus' *Germania* fostered the formation of national sentiment. The appeals to the 'German Nation's ancient, laudable, and princely liberty' that underpinned the princes' conflict with the Emperor are illustrative of this development. As will become apparent in subsequent chapters, a concern for the safety and welfare of the Empire, if not the Emperor, also informed the foreign policies of the princes.

Nonetheless, it should be concluded that the permeable Franco-Imperial border did by no means form a barrier creating a clear distinction between 'French' and 'German' concerns. The nobility of the Rhineland was by no means less interested in events in Picardy than in Pomerania simply because the latter was inside the Empire and the former was not. In fact, religious turmoil in the city of Troyes was, for instance, much more likely to have a direct effect on the Rhineland than regional politics in Bohemia or Austria. Moreover, the intense interaction between princes and nobles on both sides of the border gave an extra dimension to German concerns about political developments in France. At a time when national identity was frequently defined in terms of loyalty to one's monarch, the close relation between the King of France and the German Protestant princes, and their shared hostility to the Emperor, is illustrative of the French orientation of the princes.

When religious turmoil in France reached boiling point in 1562, the strong connection between the German Protestant princes and the French nobility, a bond that intensified during the 1550s, ensured that the troubles in France were not viewed as foreign events. Moreover,

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[172] The envoys to the Imperial Diet to the Electors, 15 May 1559, 'die Stände Augsburgischer Confession' Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 66.

due to the strong cultural and religious influence of France on the Rhineland, there was a realisation that the violence could not be expected to be contained by France's borders. The interplay between concerns for the advancement of dynastic interests, the protection of their own lands and subjects as well as the Empire of the German Nation, and their perceived role as players on the international stage strongly informed the actions of the German Protestant princes throughout the French Wars of Religion.

II.   Lutheran-Reformed Relations

The traditional narrative of the Reformation in general, and the various wars of religion in particular, places a strong emphasis on the dichotomy between Catholics on the one side, and Protestants on the other. Encouraged by the intensification of constructive relations between various Protestant movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the lingering of strong anti-Catholic sentiments, and the prominence of national mythologies that emphasised the break with Rome as a defining moment in their own histories, the Protestant-Catholic opposition has become embedded in the public imagination of the Reformation. Even though historians are of course aware of the different denominations that are collectively referred to as Protestants, there still seems to be a tendency to regard Lutherans and Reformed Protestants as natural allies in the conflict with their mutual enemy, the Catholic powers of Europe. This perception has also shaped understandings of the involvement of German Protestant nobles in the French Wars of Religion.

During the 1560s, the most intense confessional conflicts taking place in the German-speaking parts of the Holy Roman Empire were fought between the various branches of Protestantism, rather than between Protestants and Catholics. Fiery disputes between Philippists and Gnesio-Lutherans, the persecution of Anabaptists, and especially the doctrinal disagreements between Lutherans and the growing group of Reformed Protestants all had a damaging effect on Protestant unity.[1] Because of the tradition of nationalist historiographies based on modern borders, it has largely been missed or ignored that the conflicts between Lutherans and Reformed Protestants in the Empire reached new levels of intensity at almost exactly the same time as the religious

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[1] B. Nischan, *Lutherans and Calvinists in the Age of Confessionalism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999): pp. 142-158; B. Nischan, 'Germany after 1550', in A. Pettegree (ed.), *The Reformation World* (London: Routledge, 2000): pp. 387-409.

wars erupted in France. The conversion of the Elector Palatine, Friedrich III, which led to the publication of the Heidelberg catechism in 1563, caused a profound crisis among the princes of the Augsburg Confession. The political, legal, and doctrinal crisis provoked by Friedrich's conversion and the increasing popularity of Reformed Protestantism in the Empire strongly influenced German attitudes to the Wars of Religion in France. Both developments forced the German Lutheran princes to reconsider their position in relation to Reformed Protestantism. It was clear that there were differences between the two creeds, but were they insurmountable? And, considering that the Peace of Augsburg only recognised Catholicism and Lutheranism, what in the eyes of the princes was the legal status of the Reformed faith? Finally, and most importantly, would it be prudent, or even morally justifiable, to back the Reformed Protestants in France?

Only by approaching the topic of Lutheran-Reformed relations from a transnational angle is it possible to make sense of the way in which attitudes to and ideas about this relationship were formed. Reinforced by the international outlook of the Empire's aristocracy, their understanding of the nature of the confessional landscape was as much influenced by events and ideas from France as from Germany. The princes, connected by a sense of a shared purpose, had a strong tradition of cooperation on religious issues. This tradition ensured that the events of the 1560s provoked a rich debate among the German Protestant elite. Geographic separation in turn made correspondence the most important medium through which these debates were held. This correspondence of the Protestant princes thus provides historians with a unique insight into the ways in which inter-confessional relations were debated. Moreover, their letters reveal how these debates changed overtime, even if these changes were only subtle.

This chapter will first briefly review the recent historiographical developments that help to create a better understanding of the wide range of different confessional positions and identities that existed in France and the Empire in the mid-sixteenth century. Secondly, the state of Lutheran-Reformed relations in the wake of the 1555 Peace of

Augsburg will be investigated. Furthermore, the conversion of Friedrich III and the crisis that followed will be discussed. Finally, the effect of the abovementioned developments on German Lutheran understandings of the conflict in France, both among the princes and the wider population, will be highlighted. It will be demonstrated that the question of how to react to the growth of Reformed Protestantism caused a rift amongst the German Lutheran princes. This rift had significant consequences for German attitudes to the French Wars of Religion as it conditioned the possibility of intervention: an emphatic rejection of the Reformed religion in effect ruled out the possibility of cooperation with the Huguenots, whereas recognition of the common ground shared by the two confessions made cooperation possible.

2.1 The history of the 'middle parties'

During the last two decades, a number of historians have aimed to break down the traditionally rigid division of the Christian religion into the monolithic and static blocks of Catholics, Lutherans, and Reformed Protestants. Instead, they have zoomed in on a range of different positions that can collectively be described as the 'middle parties'. This term was coined by Mario Turchetti to describe the variety of French groups that sought a *via media* and to de-escalate the rising religious tensions.[2] The middle parties consisted of people with a range of different attitudes towards the question of religious pluralism. Although few advocated the formation of multi-religious states, Turchetti and others have brought to our attention those who defended the necessity to arrange some sort of temporary mode of coexistence.[3] These groups are known under a number of different names. The terms

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[2] M. Turchetti, 'Middle parties in France during the wars of religion', in P. Benedict, G. Marnef, H. van Nierop, and M. Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands, 1555-1585* (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999): pp. 69-82.

[3] A. Duke, 'The ambivalent face of Calvinism in the Netherlands, 1561-1618', in M. Prestwich (ed.), *International Calvinism, 1541-1715* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985): pp. 109-134, on p. 118.

moyenneurs, moderates, and *politiques* are all used to refer to this group, which, it has to be emphasised, was by no means uniform.[4] The terminology used to describe them is largely borrowed from their opponents, who frequently accused proponents of concord and coexistence of putting political considerations above religious idealism (hence the term *politiques*). This term has become part of the historian's vocabulary and is often used to label those individuals or groups who do not easily fit in the traditional confessional categories.[5] For instance, William of Orange, whose private beliefs are notoriously hard to establish, is described by Jonathan Israel as 'the arch-*politique*'.[6] Taking the derogatory nature of the terminology into account, it is important to realise that this category of beliefs is not the product of a process of self-identification, but rather of the abuse of their adversaries, who accused them of nicodemism, crypto-atheism, and of being 'weathervanes', turning with every religious wind.[7] Those who belonged to the middle parties would never have identified themselves as such.

One of the most extensive works on the topic of unorthodox religious identities is Thierry Wanegffelen's *Ni Rome Ni Genève*, which provides a remarkably wide-ranging exploration of the large variety of different religious positions that could be found in mid-sixteenth

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[4] Q. Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978): pp. 149-150; M. Turchetti, 'Religious concord and political tolerance in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 22 (1991): 15-25; J. Woltjer, 'Political moderates and religious moderates in the Revolt of the Netherlands', in P. Benedict, G. Marnef, H. van Nierop, and M. Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands, 1555-1585* (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999): pp. 185-200.

[5] T. A. Brady, *German Histories in the Age of Reformations, 1400-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): pp. 250-251.

[6] J. I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic, Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995): p. 96.

[7] E. Fulton, '"Wolves and weathervanes": Confessional moderation at the Habsburg court of Vienna', in L. Racaut and A. Ryrie (eds.), *Moderate Voices in the European Reformation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005): pp. 145-161.

century France.[8] Wanegffelen approaches the topic by focusing on the lives and beliefs of a number of different clergymen, theologians, and political thinkers, all men who did not quite fit into the doctrinal frameworks that were emerging.[9] Wanegffelen's greatest contribution is his focus on the individuality of belief. Although he too writes extensively on the party of the *moyenneurs*, Wanegffelen looks beyond these categories. He raises the question of what exactly constituted orthodoxy in a mid-sixteenth century context and concludes that opinions on this matter were divided.[10]

This discussion echoes debates that were taking place in the sixteenth century. The disputes between Gnesio-Lutherans and Philippists that erupted after the death of Martin Luther in 1546 centred around the 'adiaphora controversy'; the disagreement over which elements of Lutheranism were non-negotiable, and which could be considered as 'externals'.[11] In other words, there was profound disagreement over the question of which doctrines one had to subscribe to in order to be considered a 'genuine' Lutheran.

The urge to categorise the various confessional positions described above as moderates, *moyenneurs*, and *politiques* ensures that the danger of oversimplification lurks around the corner. One of the main conclusions that should be drawn from the work of Turchetti, Wanegffelen, and others is that it is dangerous to assume that we can understand one's exact set of beliefs simply by looking at what confession they belonged to. This is clearly illustrated by Gerald Strauss, who highlighted the astonishingly wide gap between Lutheran doctrines as disseminated in catechisms, teaching, and preaching and the level of understanding of these doctrines found by visitations

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[8] T. Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome Ni Genève, Des Fidèles entre Deux Chaires en France an XVIe Siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 1997).

[9] ibid, pp. 37-74.

[10] ibid, pp. 3-31.

[11] Nischan, 'Germany after 1550', pp. 387-409.

among the rural populations of Germany.[12] Although the princes studied in this thesis consistently display a much more sophisticated understanding of theological issues, it is nonetheless important to recognise that the set of beliefs they held did not necessarily completely conform to orthodox Lutheranism as captured in the Augsburg Confession and the theological writings of Luther, even if the differences might be subtle. Moreover, as has recently been demonstrated by Stuart Carroll, noblemen with similar confessional backgrounds could differ strongly in opinion about politics.[13] 'Protestant loyalists' abhorred anything that smacked of rebellion, which once again illustrates the need to appreciate the nuances of the various positions held by Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists.

As will be demonstrated in this chapter, the German Lutheran princes found it difficult to formulate a uniform answer to the question of how to position themselves in relation to Reformed Protestants, both in and outside the Empire. This was a question with strong political as well as theological overtones.

2.2 The Peace of Augsburg

The establishment of the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 had a profound impact on relations between Lutherans and Reformed Protestants inside the Holy Roman Empire and beyond. The fact that the Peace influenced the politics and religion of the Empire so strongly is in itself surprising. The Peace of Augsburg was intended to be a political rather than a religious solution; it was negotiated by lawyers instead of theologians and was widely expected to be short lived.[14] It was assumed that it would soon be superseded either by the establishment

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[12] G. Strauss, 'Success and failure in the German Reformation', *Past & Present*, 67 (1975): 30-60.

[13] S. Carroll, '"Nager entre deux eaux": The princes and the ambiguities of French Protestantism', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 44 (2013): 985-1020.

[14] T. A. Brady, E. Cameron, and H. Cohn, 'The politics of religion: The Peace of Augsburg 1555, a roundtable discussion between Thomas A. Brady, Euan Cameron and Henry Cohn', *German History*, 24 (2006): 85-105.

of a permanent restoration of religious unity in a general council or by an overall Catholic or Lutheran victory. The Peace was negotiated by two parties with a strong desire for a short time of reprieve in which they could consolidate their respective positions.[15] The fact that the Peace was in essence an undesirable compromise shines through in some of the disappointed reactions that appeared directly after it was signed. Christoph of Württemberg, for instance, created a document entitled 'the reservations and complaints that I have concerning the religious peace', in which he listed six major grievances.[16] For Christoph, it was hardest to swallow that he was now obliged, albeit only temporarily, to look on passively as his coreligionists were being persecuted in the Catholic regions of the Empire: '5) The poor Christians outside the Empire in the patrimonial lands of the Emperor and the King, those who should be supported by the estates of the Empire, are not considered; we let those singe and burn miserably. 6) So also … the poor Christians … inside the Empire.'[17]

It is remarkable how quickly a construction that was intended and expected by most to be a temporary solution became the status quo. The failure of the Council of Trent to reunite the church ensured that the settlement of 1555 became a seemingly permanent feature of the confessional landscape of the Empire.[18] This process is reflected in the language used by the princes to describe the Peace. In 1567, twelve years after its establishment, Wilhelm of Hesse described it as 'an

[15] H. Tüchle, 'The Peace of Augsburg: New order or lull in the fighting', in H. J. Cohn (ed.), *Government in Reformation Europe, 1520-1560* (London: Macmillan, 1971): pp. 145-165.

[16] 'Was ich für bedenken und berschwert im religionsfriden hab'. V. Ernst, *Briefwechsel des Herzogs Christoph von Wirtemberg, Volume III* (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1902): p. 341.

[17] 'So sind die armen Christen usserhalb reichs in der Kai. und Ku. mt. erblanden, denen die stend des reichs sonst hilf thuen muessen …, mit nichten bedacht; die lassen wir sengen und brennen jammerlich. So … der armen christen … auch im reich …' Ibid, pp. 341-242.

[18] H. Schilling, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society* (Leiden: Brill, 1992): pp. 205-245.

everlasting peace'.[19] During the first decade after its establishment, the Peace of Augsburg thus became much more than it was intended to be. It changed from a temporary political and legalistic solution into a longstanding mode of religious coexistence, which facilitated the transformation of the Empire into a patchwork of Catholic and Lutheran states and cities.

2.2.1 *The legal status of Lutheranism*

The development described above had a transformative effect on the position of the Lutheran religion within the Empire, and consequently also on the relation between Lutherans and Reformed Protestants. The text of the Peace of Augsburg makes it explicitly clear that the religious freedoms awarded by the Peace only extended to Lutheran Protestantism: 'So shall we, the Imperial Majesty, … with violence overthrow, damage, or violate no Estate of the Empire on account of the Augsburg Confession and its doctrines, religion, and beliefs nor in any other way against his conscience, morality, and will drive him from the Augsburg Confession's religion, beliefs, practices, order, and ceremonies …'[20] Lacking a commonly used term for what we now call Lutheranism, choosing the Augsburg Confession as a touchstone for the legally acceptable form of Protestantism seems sensible. The creation of the Confession in 1530 was in itself an attempt comprehensively to capture the nature of the new religion in one document. The Augsburg Confession is fairly complete, including articles on theology, liturgy, and

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[19] 'ein ewig währender Friede' Wilhelm of Hesse to the princes of the Palatinate, Württemberg, and Baden, 7 September 1567, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume II* (Braunschweig: C. A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1870): p. 88.

[20] 'So sollen die Kayserl. Maj. … keinen Stand des Reichs von wegen der Augspurgischen Confession und derselbigen Lehr, Religion un Glaubens halb … gewaltiger Weiß überziehen, beschädigen, vergewaltigen oder in andere Wege wider sein Conscientz, Gewissen und Willen von dieser Augspurgischen Confessions-Religion, Glauben, Kirchengebräuchen, Ordnungen und Ceremonien … tringen' 'Augsburger Reichsabschied', *Internet-Portal "Westfälische Geschichte*, Accessed November 13, 2014.
http://www.lwl.org/westfaelische-geschichte/portal/Internet/finde/langDatensatz.php?urlID=739&url_tabelle=tab_quelle.

ecclesiology. The central role of the Confession in the articles of the Peace of Augsburg gave the text, and its corresponding beliefs and religious practices, a new status. From September 1555, the 'religion of the Augsburg Confession' enjoyed legal recognition as one of the two officially recognised religions of the Empire.

Together with legitimising the Augsburg Confession, the Peace of Augsburg also implicitly widened the gap between Lutheranism and Reformed Protestantism. As Johann of Nassau-Dillenburg, brother of William of Orange, phrased it, 'we should also take into account, that … in the religious peace, created in 1555 at Augsburg, … the Zwinglian, Calvinist, and similar religions were expressly forbidden and excluded from the peace.'[21] Whereas before, though significant tensions between the two religions already existed, Lutherans and Reformed Protestants were both subjected to Catholic aggression and considered unlawful or seditious movements, the Peace of Augsburg created a clear distinction between legal and illegal Protestantism. Moreover, the use of the text of the Augsburg Confession as the instrument of defining what this legally sanctioned Protestantism exactly entailed left other Protestants little room for manoeuvre.

The Peace of Augsburg was of little use to many Lutherans throughout the Empire, since, in Johann of Nassau's words, 'no Estate of the Empire that subscribes to the old Papist religion is compelled to let their subjects, who follow the Augsburg Confession, live in their lands, let alone allow them to teach and preach openly.'[22] However, the princes studied in this thesis were the main benefactors of the Peace. As possessors of the *Ius Reformandi*, the Lutheran princes, including such figures as the Duke of Württemberg, Landgrave of Hesse, and Count of

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[21] 'wirdt auch hiebey erwogen, das … im religionfrieden, Anno 55 zu Augspürg uffgericht, … die Zwinglischen, Calvinische und dergleiche lähren auszdrücklich verboten und von Religionsfrieden auszgeschlossenn [sind]' Johann of Nassau to Louis of Nassau, October 1566, G. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite d'Orange-Nassau, Volume II* (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1835): pp. 352-353.

[22] 'kein standt des Raichs, so der altenn Papistischen Religion vonn alters zugethann gewesen, schuldig ist seinen underthanen, so der Augspürgischen Confession anhengig, under sich zu wohnen, viel weniger öffentlich zu lähren und zu predigen, zugestatten.' Johann of Nassau to Louis of Nassau, October 1566, ibid, pp. 352-253.

Nassau, were able to consolidate the Reformations of their territories whilst removing the stain of disloyalty, sedition, or rebellion that tarnished their reputation during the early Reformation and Schmalkaldic War.[23] No wonder that, as will become apparent, the princes embraced the Peace of Augsburg and consistently displayed great commitment to its maintenance and protection.

2.2.2 *Reformed Protestantism in the Empire*

Although Reformed Protestantism in the Empire flourished relatively late, its influence had already been felt much earlier. Before Protestantism crystallised into clearly distinguishable confessions, ideas and doctrines that can be described as belonging to the Reformed tradition can be detected in the Protestant parts of the Empire, and especially those regions close to Zurich and Strasbourg. The dissemination of Reformed ideas was encouraged by the movement of preachers and theologians from these cities to other urban centres throughout Germany. Christopher Close, for instance, has examined the practice of southern German cities to look to Zwinglian Zurich as a source for Protestant preachers during the Schmalkaldic War. [24] Similarly, Thomas Brady has demonstrated how some elements of Zwinglian thought, particularly its emphasis on civic independence, became popular in many Protestant cities near the Swiss border.[25] The proximity of Zurich, and to a lesser extent Strasbourg, as well as the arrival of Reformed exiles from the Low Countries and France, ensured that the Reformed influences were particularly strong in the Rhineland.[26]

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[23] Brady, *German Histories*, pp. 229-256.

[24] C. W. Close, 'Augsburg, Zurich, and the transfer of preachers during the Schmalkaldic War', *Central European History*, 42 (2009): 595-619.

[25] T. A. Brady, *Turning Swiss, Cities and Empire, 1450-1550* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985): pp. 184-221.

[26] Brady, *German Histories*, p. 252.

A second reason for the spread of Reformed Protestantism in Germany was the theology of Philipp Melanchthon and his followers. The *Variata* version of the Augsburg Confession, and its slight rephrasing of the doctrine of the Eucharist, opened the door for a Swiss interpretation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.[27] It has been noted that throughout the sixteenth century, the conversion of Lutheran princes and territories to Reformed Protestantism was in most cases preceded by a 'Philippist transitional phase'. [28] Melanchthon's influences were strong in the Rhineland, even in those places that did not turn to Reformed Protestantism later in the century. The Lutheran Ottheinrich had attempted to appoint Melanchthon himself, as well as Matthias Flacius and Johannes Brenz, to positions at the university of Heidelberg.[29] Philipp of Hesse, whose conversion to Protestantism had been inspired by Melanchthon, and his son Wilhelm aimed to pursue a 'Middle Road policy', but the increasing contrast between the two variations of Protestantism forced Wilhelm to commit solely to Lutheranism.[30] The Peace of Augsburg contributed heavily to the on-going process of clearly separating Lutheranism and Reformed Protestantism doctrinally and politically, for instance through the publication of the first and second *Helvetic Confessions*.[31]

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[27] Schilling, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society*…: p. 218; E. Cameron, 'The possibilities and limits of conciliation, Philipp Melanchthon and inter-confessional dialogue in the sixteenth century', in H. P Louthan and R. C. Zachman (eds.), *Conciliation and Confession, The Struggle for Unity in the Age of Reform, 1415-1648* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004): pp. 73-88.

[28] Schilling, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society*, p. 263.

[29] V. Press, *Calvinismus und Territorialstaat, Regierung und Zentralbehörden der Kurpfalz, 1559-1619* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1970): pp. 221-222; H. J. Cohn, 'The territorial princes in Germany's Second Reformation, 1559-1622', in M. Prestwich (ed.), *International Calvinism, 1541-1715* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985): p. 144.

[30] D. Mayes, 'Heretics or nonconformists? State policies towards Anabaptists in sixteenth-century Hesse', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 32 (2001): 1003-1026.

[31] Schilling, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society*, p. 218.

2.2.3 *Lutheran hostility towards Reformed Protestantism*

The legal distinction between Lutheranism and Reformed Protestantism that was created by the Peace of Augsburg, as well as the increasingly clear doctrinal distinction between the two confessions, fuelled the sense of hostility towards Zwinglians and Calvinists harboured by many Lutherans. These anti-Reformed sentiments can be divided into two elements: doctrinal and political.

Despite the fact that the theological differences between Lutheranism and the various forms of Reformed Protestantism can be found in a variety of different areas, including soteriology, ecclesiology, and liturgy, the Lutheran princes almost exclusively focussed on only one key theological difference: the nature of the Eucharist. This is particularly interesting for two reasons. Firstly, it can be argued that the Lutheran understanding of the Lord's Supper, and its focus on the Real Presence, was on the theological spectrum much closer to the Catholic interpretation than to either Zwinglianism or Calvinism. Even though Lutherans denied the agency of a consecrated priest through transubstantiation, they nonetheless put a strong emphasis on the bodily presence of Christ in the bread and wine. Both Calvin, who constructed the doctrine of the 'Spiritual Real Presence' and Zwingli, who explained the Supper as a commemorative act, denied that Christ is 'substantially present'. Although Melanchthon's *Confessio Augustana Variata* is on purpose ambiguous on this topic, for many Lutherans the doctrine of the Real Presence was (and is) central to their religion. The fact that the Huguenots in France espoused a Eucharistic theology that by most Protestant German princes was regarded as 'infuriating propositions', and that their opponents, the French Catholics, defended a position very similar to that of the Lutheran princes, is significant.[32]

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[32] 'ergerliche propositiones' Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Friedrich III, 21 June 1560, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume I* (Braunschweig, C.A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1868): p. 140.

Secondly, the social importance of the Eucharist in the sixteenth century has been emphasised by a number of historians. Participation in the celebration of the Eucharist, and, in the Catholic world, in the *Corpus Christi* and other Eucharistic processions, enforced the unity of society.[33] The annual participation in taking communion was only possible if the individual was 'in a state of reconciliation with the church'.[34] The resolving of disputes in the community was also often sealed by participation in the mass. Communion thus at the same time served as a facilitator for good neighbourliness, a tool for policing social order, and an occasion for burying personal grudges and hostilities. For this reason, disputes over the Eucharist were more than theological conflicts. The Calvinist practice of refusing to take part in the Supper, or even to mock the Host publically, emphasised the impression that they aimed to form 'a state within the state', or that they regarded themselves as Israelites exiled to a land of idolaters. This position contrasted sharply with the magisterial Lutheran Reformation promoted by the princes.

The political dimension of Lutheran hostility to Reformed Protestantism centred on the persistent idea that the religion was inherently seditious. Accusations of heresy and sedition went hand in hand. In France, the persecution of Protestants took off in seriousness after the Affair of the Placards (1534), during which an anti-Catholic pamphlet was posted on the door of the King's bedchamber, had left a strong sense that Protestantism was not a benign reformist movement but a dangerous and subversive sect.[35] Lutherans had themselves once been subjected to such accusations. Nonetheless, as the distinctions between the various forms of Protestantism became clearer, Lutherans were happy to use the trope themselves. Luther himself, in response to

[33] C. Elwood, *The Body Broken, The Calvinist Doctrine of the Eucharist and the Symbolization of Power in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999): pp. 77-112; J. A. Spohnholz, 'Multiconfessional celebrations of the Eucharist in sixteenth-century Wesel', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 39 (2008): 705-730.

[34] M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi, the Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991): p. 149.

[35] R. J. Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598* (London: Longman, 1996): p. 3.

the appearance of radical branches of the Reformation, had asserted that all non-Lutheran forms of Protestantism were 'destructive of the civil peace.'[36] Throughout the early German Reformation, Anabaptists, who often rejected worldly governments and whose reputation was tarnished by the trauma of Münster, were the main focus of these polemical attacks. The Peace of Augsburg, which put Reformed Protestantism and Anabaptism in the same category of illegal religions, together with a series of events in France and the Netherlands shifted the focus to Zwinglians and Calvinists. The Affair of the Placards, the Tumult of Amboise (1560), and eruptions of iconoclastic violence in France and the Netherlands all confirmed fears over the social and political agendas of Reformed Protestants.

By taking a closer look at the correspondence of the Lutheran princes we can see that these fears were widely shared and frequently discussed. The language used by the Protestant princes throughout the 1550s and 60s reflect these concerns. It was not uncommon among the princes to refer to Reformed Protestantism as 'the Zwinglian sect'.[37] Christoph of Württemberg, who throughout his political career displayed a strong commitment to the advancement of Lutheranism, was particularly outspoken on this issue. In a letter to Philipp Melanchthon written in 1557, he contemplated the need to contain the rise of Reformed Protestantism: 'that also a way has to be found, in which the Swiss and other churches tarnished with the errors of Zwinglianism also will be closed down, [and] thereby much peril prevented; since unfortunately such errors have not only violently torn apart Switzerland, but also in France, Italy, England, Poland, Spain, and other places'.[38] Christoph added that he was well aware 'what

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[36] C. Scott Dixon, 'The politics of law and Gospel: The Protestant prince and the Holy Roman Empire', in B. Heal and O. P. Grell (eds.), *The Impact of the European Reformation, Princes, Clergy and People* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008): p. 45.

[37] 'der zwinglianischen Secte' Christoph of Württemberg and Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Friedrich III, 24 August 1561, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 196.

[38] 'sonder das auch die wege gefunden mochten warden, das die Schweitzer und andere … ecclesie so mit dem irthumb des zwinglianismi befleckt, auch zu und gebracht warden, dardurch vil unrat verhuetet; dann laider sollicher irthumb nit

destruction, disorder, and desolation surely will be created among our people' if Reformed Protestantism were to spread to Württemberg.[39] By invoking Switzerland, Christoph made use of a trope that would have induced vivid associations among his audience. From the early days of the Reformation, Switzerland had been associated with radicalism and erroneous doctrine. Luther and Zwingli from 1524 had been embroiled in a fierce dispute about the nature of the Eucharist, in which the former described the latter and his followers as 'fanatics', 'new heretics', and associates of 'the beasts of the Apocalypse.'[40] The process of 'turning Swiss' that was unfolding in the Empire was among the princes seen as an inspiration to those who took part in the German Peasants War of 1524-5, Europe's largest popular uprising before the French Revolution.

Fear of popular unrest made the princes particularly sensitive to the dangers of internal theological splits among the Lutheran community. As the conflict between Philippists and Gnesio-Lutherans raged, they were more conscious than theologians of the responsibility to maintain peace and stability. This led to clashes. Christoph remarked in 1556 in a letter to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar that 'it is lamentable, yes even frightful to hear, that some leading theologians of the Augsburg Confession in many, sometimes well-known points directly and angrily oppose each other and as scholars want to be seen as brighter and more pious than the other.'[41] It is clear that in Christoph's eyes the Reformed Protestants were guilty of a much more

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allain in Schweiz, sonder Gallia, Italia, Engalland, Poln, Hispania und andern mer orten heuftig eingerissen' Christoph of Württemberg to Philipp Melanchthon, 1 December 1557, V. Ernst, *Briefwechsel des Herzogs Christoph von Wirtemberg, Volume IV* (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1907): p. 452.

[39] 'was fur zerrüttung, unordnung und abfoll under den unsern gewislich zu besorgen' Christoph of Württemberg to Philipp Melanchthon, 1 December 1557, ibid, p. 452.

[40] M. A. Mullett, *Martin Luther* (London: Routledge, 2004): p. 194

[41] 'da ist wol erbärmlich und ja erschrockenlich zu hören, das etliche fürneme theology der A. C. verwandt in vilen, zum theil nemhaftigen puncten also stracks und neidig einander zuwider seien und ie einer gelerter, eigenwitziger und frommer angesehen sein will als der ander.' Christoph of Württemberg to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 13 July 1556, Ernst, *Briefwechsel des Herzogs Christoph von Wirtemberg, Volume IV*, p. 110.

threatening version of the same sin. As 'instigators of the … discord', the Reformed had separated themselves from the Augsburg Confession and caused an 'angry outburst' of inter-Protestant religious conflict.[42] In the light of the political responsibilities of the princes, this was a particularly serious accusation.

The iconoclastic riots that erupted in France and the Low Countries after 1560 confirmed the Lutheran suspicions that Reformed Protestantism was in essence seditious. The riots were, in the eyes of many Lutherans, prime examples of how not to pursue religious reform. For them it symbolised the effects of a breakdown of doctrinal and political authority. The symbolic nature of some of the iconoclasts' targets, including the tombs and monuments of monarchs and princes, was particularly damaging for the reputation of Reformed Protestantism and must have provoked memories of Münster.[43] The riots caused proponents of cordial relations with the Reformed considerable embarrassment. The Nassau family, who carried some responsibility for the events in the Netherlands in the summer of 1566, attempted to play down the gravity of the riots. Johann of Nassau in October 1566 wrote that 'many people realise that the tumult and riots, that have erupted in the form of the destruction of images and the spoiling of churches in Antwerp and other places, have not been conducted on the order of … our allies, but have only been conducted by several … tumultuous people.'[44] Moreover, Catholics with a vested interest in keeping Lutherans and Reformed Protestants apart jumped to the opportunity of using the iconoclasm to emphasise the disobedience of Reformed Protestants. The Cardinal of Lorraine wrote

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[42] 'die Anstifter … Zweitracht' 'ärgerlichen Ausbruch' Christoph of Württemberg to Friedrich III, 30 March 1564, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 501.

[43] J. H. M. Salmon, *Society in Crisis, France in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Methuen, 1979): pp. 136-137.

[44] 'das meniglich wol bewust das der tumult und uffrhur, so sich in stürmung der Bilder und spolirung der Kirchen zu Antorff und anderstwohe zugetragen, nich ausz bevelch … der Bundtsgenossen, sondern allein durch etliche … auffrürische leuth sich zugetragen …' Johann of Nassau to Louis of Nassau, October 1566, Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou Correspondance … Volume II*, p. 346.

Christoph in May 1562 complaining of 'the power that the wicked ministers have had to raise the people, seizing the money of the king, knocking down the temples, pillaging all the treasures, driving out the bishops and priests with infinite sacking and pillaging.'[45]

However, if we take a closer look at the language used by the German Protestant princes when discussing the problem of Reformed Protestantism we find a more nuanced response than the simplistic picture painted by the Cardinal. Though all Lutheran princes viewed Reformed Protestantism with a degree of suspicion or hostility, their tone when speaking about this topic could differ significantly. Whereas Christoph, but also Johann Wilhelm of Saxe Weimar, condemned the Reformed religion in the strongest terms, Philipp of Hesse chose a softer approach. 'We do not enjoy hearing', he wrote to Christoph and Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, 'that people condemn Calvin and Bullinger and others, who do not write of the Supper in the same way as those of Jena and their supporters, and explain their teachings in the worst possible way.'[46] More evidence of the Landgrave of Hesse's conciliatory attitude can be found in his longstanding correspondence with Heinrich Bullinger, Zwingli's successor as head of the Zurich reformation. The tone of the correspondence, which lasted from 1534 to 1566, was friendly, despite the theological differences that were being discussed.[47] The contrast between the difference in attitude of Christoph and Philipp shown above indicates the range of different understandings that existed among the Protestant princes of the Empire about the nature of Reformed Protestantism and its relation to Lutheranism. Since the French Wars of Religion pitted Reformed Protestants against Catholics,

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[45] 'la force que les mauvais ministres ont eus de soullever les peuples, se saisir des derniers du roy, abbatre les temples, piller tous les tresors, chasser les evesques et prestres avecques infinis sacagemans et pillories ...' Charles de Lorraine to Christoph of Württemberg, 22 May 1562, D. Cuisiat (ed.), *Lettres de Cardinal Charles de Lorraine, 1525-1574* (Geneva: Droz, 1998): p. 448.

[46] 'Das man den Calvinum auch Bullingern und andere, die nicht anner dinge den Jenischen und deren anhenger vom nachtmal gleich schreiben, verdampt und ir lehr ufs ubelste auslegt, horen wir nicht gerne.' Philipp of Hesse to Wolfgang of Zweibrücken and Christoph of Württemberg, 4 September 1561, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume I*, p. 199.

[47] HStaM 3, 1797.

these understandings had the potential to shape German attitudes towards the conflict and its main players.

2.3 The conversion of Friedrich III

Renegade preachers in Swiss cities and violent mobs in French and Dutch towns made easy targets for Lutheran polemicists. Their inferior social status seemed to confirm the opinion that Reformed Protestantism was indeed a religion for upstarts. Explanations of the religious turmoil centred on the role of rabble-rousing preachers and unruly mobs. In both France and the Netherlands, leadership largely devolved to the lesser nobility as princely sympathisers either dissimulated (e.g. William of Orange) or remained loyal (e.g. Antoine de Bourbon). The conversion of Elector Palatine Friedrich III to Reformed Protestantism, which took place sometime before 1561, seriously challenged this state of affairs. The crisis provoked by Friedrich's conversion lasted throughout the 1560s and coincided with the outbreak of the French Wars of Religion. The conversion not only provided the Huguenots with their most ardent advocate in Germany, it also created an intense and long-lasting debate among the German Protestant princes about the nature of Reformed Protestantism, which strongly influenced their view on France. Despite the direct connections between debates about the Reformation of the Palatinate and debates about Lutheran-Huguenot relations, they have never been linked in the existing historiography. Though Friedrich's conversion has been studied in the context of the religious history of Germany and in relation to the creation of Heidelberg Catechism, the historiographical gap between French and German history has caused the French dimension of this important development to be overlooked. I will here address this oversight by demonstrating how discussions about France were directly integrated into the controversy surrounding Friedrich's conversion.

Friedrich's conversion is often said to have been the result of a period of intense religious study and contemplation. Having inherited

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an extraordinarily quarrelsome team of theologians from this ecumenically-minded predecessor Ottheinrich, the Palatinate, and especially the university of Heidelberg, was home to a range of different theological opinions. Less than a month after Friedrich's accession as Elector, rumours of the teaching of Reformed doctrines at Heidelberg started to spread. Hieronymus Gerhard, theologian and advisor to Christoph of Württemberg, warned 'that at His Grace's university in Heidelberg there are two false professors, who without shame and openly defend Zwinglianism, as well as a number of preachers, who, because of [their membership of] the aforementioned sect, were expelled by other princes.'[48] Gerhard is amongst others referring to Pierre Boquin, a French theologian who had previously lectured at Bourges and the Strasbourg Academy.[49] Boquin has often been credited with persuading Friedrich of the merits of the Reformed religion and from 1560, three years after Boquin's appointment, the Reformed presence at Heidelberg was increased significantly with the appointment of the prominent theologians Petrus Dathenus, Casper Olevianus, Immanuel Tremellius, and Zacharius Ursinus.[50] Although the traditional narrative of Friedrich's conversion emphasises that the Elector made his decision to convert based on a prolonged period of Bible study, these men must have contributed significantly.

2.3.1 *Lutheran reactions*

The discussions and debates about the relation between Lutheranism and Reformed Protestantism were by no means restricted to theologians. Rather, the Protestant princes of the Empire themselves

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[48] '… das bey irer churf. G. universität zu Heydelberg sich zwen welsche professores halten, so Zwinglianismum ungeschent und offentlich verteidigen, desgleichen etliche predicanten, so von wegen gemelter secten bey abdern christlichen fursten nicht gedult …' Hieronymus Gerhard to Christoph of Württemberg, 9 March 1559, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 28.

[49] Press, *Calvinismus und Territorialstaat*, p. 240.

[50] B. Thompson, The Palatinate Church Order of 1563, *Church History*, 23 (1954): pp. 339-354.

participated very actively. Besides the discussions of the political and legal implications of Friedrich's conversion, which one would expect to find in their writings, the correspondence of the Protestant princes reveals a deep engagement with theological questions and a solid understanding of the relevant doctrines. This engagement with theology was the product of the princes' self-assigned role as leaders of the princely Reformations. With the exception of William of Orange and Louis of Nassau, all princes studied in this thesis played leading roles in the process of reforming their territories, commissioning catechisms, church orders, school curricula, and even hymnals and creating the institutional infrastructure to facilitate the confessionalising process.[51] Moreover, belonging to the second generation of Protestant princes, a foundation in theology had been part of their education. This grounding in theology came to the fore in the discussions about Friedrich's conversion.

Above all, Friedrich's Lutheran peers, witnessing the rise of Reformed Protestantism in the Palatinate, were alarmed and felt the need to intervene. Friedrich received letters, amongst others from Johann Friedrich of Saxony, warning him of the dangers of 'Zwinglianism', to which he replied with a polite thank-you note.[52] Christoph of Württemberg, 'friendly and kind-hearted', sent Friedrich 'an extract from Luther's books, [in which can be read] what fights and disputes he has had with the Zwinglians and what he has written about their teachings and beliefs … through which many … may understand how … far they are removed from the truth of God's Word.'[53] The

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[51] Thompson, The Palatinate Church Order …; J. M. Estes, 'Johannes Brenz and the institutionalization of the Reformation in Württemberg', *Central European History*, 6 (1973): 44-59; C. Methuen, 'Securing the Reformation through Education: The Duke's Scholarship System of Sixteenth-Century Wurttemberg', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 25 (1994): 841-851; Mayes, 'Heretics or Nonconformists? …; J. Ney, 'Pfalzgraf Wolfgang, Herzog von Zweibrücken und Neuburg', *Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte*, 29 (1911): 1-124, on pp. 33-54.

[52] 'Zwinglianismi' Friedrich III to Johann Friedrich of Saxony, 18 November 1559, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 105.

[53] 'Wir schicken E. L. auch freundlicher und gutherziger volmeynung hiemit ein extract aus Lutheri buechern, was fur kempf und stritt er mit dem Zwinglianis gehabt und vor irer leer und glauben geschriben hat … damit meniglich … und versteen möge … wie …

friendly tone of Johann Friedrich, Christoph, and others changed after the Palatinate's Reformed religion was institutionalised in 1563 by the publication of the *Heidelberg Catechism* and the *Palatine Church Order*. These documents contributed to the transformation of the Palatinate into one of Europe's most important centres for the promotion of Reformed Protestantism. These publications made it clear that persuasion was now no longer a remedy. Christoph wrote to Wolfgang of Zweibrücken in March 1563: 'It is now common knowledge that in the Palatinate in both schools and churches the Zwinglian or Calvinist teachings on the Lord's Supper have prevailed … however, they [the Christian princes] have, out of Christian love and good friendship and kinship, not failed to indicate, what damage to body and soul, land and people, temporally and eternally, will result from this.' Christoph, concluding that their attempts to use persuasion to prevent Friedrich's conversion failed, unambiguously stated the political consequences of Friedrich's stubbornness: 'So is Calvinism, as also all other sects that contradict the Augsburg Confession, excluded from the religious peace.'[54]

Christoph was certainly not alone in his insistence that Friedrich's conversion should result in the exclusion of the Palatinate from the Peace of Augsburg. King Maximilian and the Emperor, Ferdinand, both concluded that the Peace of Augsburg clearly stated that 'the aggravating, erroneous, and seductive Zwinglian or Calvinist doctrines' were illegal and did not fall under the provisions of the

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weyt sie von der warheit götliches worts abweichen.' Christoph of Württemberg to Friedrich III, 16 December 1559, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 108.

[54] 'es ist *communis vox et fama*, das in der Pfalz bei der schul und kirchen der Zwinglisch oder Calvinisch leer *de cena domini* die oberhand gewonnen hab. … jedoch haben sie [die christlichen chur und fursten] aus christlicher lieb auch gueter freundschaft und verwandtnus nicht underlassen sollen, S. L. anzuzaigen, was derselben hieraus fur nachtail an leib und seel, land und leuten zeitlich und ewig begegnen möchte … Zu den ist Calvinismus wie auch alle andere secten wider die Augspurgische confession von der religionsfrieden aussgeschlossen.' Christoph of Württemberg to Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, 8 March 1563, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 376.

peace.[55] Pressure was also mounting on the princes from below. The Council of the Duke of Saxony, for instance, insisted that Friedrich 'will be excluded from the Augsburg Confession and removed from the religious peace.'[56] A possible exclusion, however, would pose some significant problems. Firstly, it is unclear what this would mean in practice. Would the Lutheran and Catholic powers of the Empire stage a military campaign to enforce conformity? If so, the Empire would once again return to violent religious conflict. Alternatively, the threat of violence might have been enough to pressurise Friedrich into returning his lands to the Lutheran fold. Secondly, as Elector, Friedrich was one of the most influential Protestant princes and a political player that they could hardly afford to alienate.

The crisis was aggravated by the Lutheran princes' failure to present a united front. The matter came to a head at the 1566 Diet. Christoph, together with Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, on whom the Duke of Württemberg had considerable influence, were the most uncompromising advocates of Friedrich's exclusion.[57] Philipp of Hesse, whose Philippist and ecumenical tendencies have already been discussed, was much more reluctant to proceed so harshly against Friedrich.[58] The impasse was broken by August of Saxony who, despite objecting to the Palatinate's new religion, concluded that it would be unwise to start armed conflict between Protestants.[59]

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[55] Maximilian to Friedrich III, 25 April 1563, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 398; 'der ergerlichen irrigen verfuerischen Zwinglischen oder Calvinischen lehr' Ferdinand to Friedrich III, 15 July 1563, ibid, pp. 419-420.

[56] 'von der A. C. ausgeslossen und also aus dem religionsfriden gesazt werden' The Council of Saxony to August of Saxony, 17 May 1566, Ibid, p. 670.
[57] Cohn, 'The territorial princes, pp. 145-146.

[58] D. Visser, 'Zacharias Ursinus and the Palatinate Reformation', in D. Visser (ed.), *Controversy and Conciliation, The Reformation and the Palatinate, 1559-1583* (Allison Park: Pickwick Publications, 1986): pp. 1-20.

[59] Cohn, 'The territorial princes, pp. 145-146; Visser, 'Zacharias Ursinus, pp. 14-15.

2.3.2 *Friedrich's defence*

Although the Diet of 1566 removed the threat of exclusion, the disputes about the theology of the Eucharist, which had erupted after Friedrich had started courting Reformed Protestantism, continued. Besides the theological technicalities of ubiquity or consubstantiation, the princes in a large number of letters also discussed the very nature of orthodoxy. Friedrich, who did not show signs of being intimidated by the pressures put on him by his Lutheran peers, engaged in the debates with confidence and flair. Friedrich's justification of his own religious position consisted of three main elements.

Firstly, Friedrich directly addressed the question of religious authority. The doctrine of *Sola Scriptura*, which denied the religious authority of the papacy and instead rooted it firmly in Scripture and the writings of the Church Fathers, was one of the founding principles of the Reformation. Despite the importance of this doctrine, many Lutherans had started to treat the writings of Luther as Gospel. Although Reformed Protestants tended to view Luther with great respect and admiration, they did not regard his writings as definitive. Friedrich repeatedly argued that 'Dr Luther was human, who was capable of making mistakes like other human beings.'[60] Friedrich made a clear distinction between Luther and the Church Fathers: 'That I will not put [Luther] above Augustine and other old Christian writers or shall compare [him] to other prophets and apostles, who alone have the privilege that they cannot be accused of errors, I hope will not for Your Grace or any who love Christ be cause to hate me, since they have often made the late Doctor Luther the third Elijah and through such excess for many confused the necessary doctrines.'[61]

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[60] 'Dr Luther ist ayn mensch gewesen, der sowal als andere irren konden' Friedrich III to Johann Friedrich of Saxony, 31 December 1564, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 540.

[61] 'Das ich ine [Luther] aber uber Augustinum und andere allte christliche scribenten sezen oder den propheten und aposteln vergleychen solte, welche diss privilegium allayn haben, das ine aynicher irtumb nit kan zugemessen warden, das hoff ich, werde E. L. oder kayn christliebender mich hayssen, weyl irer vil aus D. Lutter seligen den dritten *Heliam* gemacht und durch solchen exces die nötige lehr … bey vilen sehr ist

Following from this position, Friedrich repeatedly vehemently denied being a follower of either Zwingli or Calvin. His understanding of the nature of the Eucharist, Friedrich argued, was based purely on the authority of Scripture and the witness of the apostles, rather than on the theology espoused by humans, whether Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, or others. For instance in a letter to Wilhelm of Hesse, Friedrich denied 'that we are Calvinist, or how you call it', adding 'that we never have and never will bear witness to Calvin or any other human, but only to the one infallible foundation that is Jesus Christ.'[62] Resisting the practice of labelling religions, Friedrich challenged the framework created by the Peace of Augsburg, which attempted to mark a clear distinction between Lutheranism and illegal 'sects' such as Calvinism.

Having made his case against the usage of the terms 'Zwinglian' or 'Calvinist' to describe his faith, Friedrich defended a typically Reformed understanding of the relationship between the Lutheran and Second Reformations. Whereas Reformed Protestantism was by Lutherans widely regarded as a dangerous and radical sect, the Reformed recognised their debt to the Lutheran Reformation and regarded their position as an extension or continuation of Luther's work. Following this logic, Friedrich did not consider himself to be part of a different religion. He continued to refer to himself as a member of the Augsburg Confession, and argued that besides their disagreement about the Eucharist, his faith in essence conformed to that of the Lutheran princes. When negotiating a possible marriage between Friedrich's son, Johann Casimir, and Elisabeth, the daughter of August of Saxony, in the summer of 1568, the perceived difference between the religions of Saxony and the Palatinate threatened to block the engagement. Although mixed marriages were not unheard of, they required the creation of complicated marriage contracts allowing for

verdunkelt' Friedrich III to Johann Friedrich of Saxony, 15 February 1565, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 558.

[62] 'das wir calvinistisch wie sie es nennen … sein möchten' 'das wir niemalen zu Calvino oder enichem menschen, sonder zu dem einigen unfelbarn fundament Jhesu Christo … bekant und noch bekennen' Friedrich III to Wilhelm of Hesse, 10 March 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 11.

the wife to keep professing her ancestral religion. The Palatinate chancellor, Christoph von Ehem, was adamant that this was not necessary since 'there is no difference in religion between Saxony and the Palatinate.'[63] Essentially, Friedrich and his council argued that some disagreements over particular theological questions did not necessarily imply that the debating parties followed a different religion. Seeing the state of Lutheranism since the death of Luther in 1546, this is not such a strange argument.

Despite the insistent denial that the Palatinate had adopted a different religion, it was impossible to ignore that at least in one key doctrine, the Eucharist, Friedrich disagreed fundamentally with his Lutheran peers. It was the controversy surrounding the doctrine of the Real Presence that had strongly influenced Friedrich's decision to convert. The publication of the *Heidelberg Catechism* in 1563 made it very clear that the Palatinate had adopted a new Eucharistic theology. However, it also underlined that Friedrich was right in claiming that his theology was not the same as Calvin's. Although in the Catechism a clearly Reformed understanding of the Supper is articulated (denying the bodily presence of Christ in the bread and wine), it nonetheless ignores Calvin's sophisticated theology interpreting the Eucharist as a 'Sign'. [64] The Catechism's somewhat open-ended definition of the Eucharist allowed it to appeal to Zwinglians, and even some Philippists, as well as to Calvinists.

More evidence of Friedrich's personal hand in the formulation of the Palatinate's new theology can be found in his letters; he seems to have had little trouble formulating the essence of the doctrine of the Supper. Denying the doctrine of ubiquity, Friedrich explained in a public proclamation that 'it is impossible that He [Christ] after his humanity can be with us on earth, seeing that he has ascended into

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[63] Ein unterschied in der Religion besteht zwischen Sachsen und Pfalz nich' Christoph von Ehem to Dr Craco, 11 July 1568, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 226.

[64] L. P. Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation, Incarnation and Liturgy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): pp. 205-206.

Heaven, where he sits *in loco circumscripta* [in a limited place], [and] cannot descent to us until the Last Judgement.'[65] Convinced that his understanding conformed to Scripture, he assumed that the Lutherans' insistence to hang on to the doctrine of the Real Presence was a remnant of Catholicism. Friedrich asserted that the Lutheran princes 'together with their theologians and with all the papists believe, maintain, and defend, that one eats and drinks the sacrificed body of Christ and his shed blood during the Holy Supper with the bodily mouth.'[66] Believing to be completing the Reformation started with Luther's challenge of Catholic doctrine, Friedrich recognised that he held different ideas concerning the Supper, but hoped (and probably expected) that his Lutheran peers would catch up.

During the crisis following the conversion of the Palatinate, Friedrich challenged the traditional Lutheran perception of Reformed Protestants. Firstly, his status and reputation as a Protestant prince, who was leading a textbook magisterial Reformation, directly contradicted the stereotypical image of the socially and politically subversive Calvinist. Secondly, Friedrich repeatedly presented a strong argument for the compatibility of Lutheranism and Reformed Protestantism. Crucially, Friedrich largely got his way. He was not excluded from the Peace of Augsburg, maintained more or less friendly contact with the 'princes of the Augsburg Confession', and was able to drive forward the reformation of the Palatinate. Even the marriage between Johann Casimir and Elisabeth took place, albeit only after a lengthy negotiation process. Friedrich's conversion had a transformative impact on the relationship between a section of the German Lutheran princes and the Huguenots in France. It provided an example of the possibilities and even of the productivity of liaison

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[65] Public proclamation, 1 December 1566, 'es sei unmüglich, das er nach seiner menscheit bei uns uff erden konne sein, dieweil er gen himmel gefahren, alda er *in loco circumspripto* size, könne nit zu uns herab bis an jüngsten tage.' Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 728.

[66] 'sambt iren theologis mit allen papisten glauben, hallten und vertaydingen, das man den hingegebenen leyb Christi und seyn vergossnes blut im hay. abentm. mit dem leyplichen mund esse und trincke.' Friedrich III to Johann Friedrich of Saxony, 18 April 1565, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, pp. 580-581.

between the Lutherans and Reformed Protestants. Although the Lutheran princes remained somewhat suspicious, the conversion of Friedrich and his defence of the Reformed position paved the way for successful cooperation with the Huguenots in France.

2.4 German views on Reformed Protestantism in France

The Palatinate controversy unfolded at the same time as religious tensions in France started to escalate. Since the Huguenots too professed the Reformed religion, the tensions inside the Empire to a large extent shaped German perceptions of French Protestantism.

2.4.1 *Lutheran rejections of French Reformed Protestantism*

It was widely recognised that the long list of grievances against the Reformed Religion articulated by Lutherans throughout the 1550s and 60s formed a considerable obstacle for constructive Lutheran-Reformed cooperation throughout Europe. The outbreak of religious turmoil in the Netherlands in the summer of 1566 and the German Lutherans' inactivity during the Catholic backlash illustrates this problematic relationship. Johann of Nassau and Wilhelm of Hesse concluded in late 1566 and early 1567 that the religious differences made a Lutheran intervention unlikely or even impossible. Johann observed that 'since the majority of the German princes are particularly hostile and opposed to Calvinism, and therefore also hate this whole business, one should not count much on their help and support in case of an emergency.'[67] Wilhelm agreed: 'firstly, since Calvinism is hated by all princes from Upper and Lower Saxony, as well as by Württemberg, Count Palatine Wolfgang, Baden and other princes and Estates, that, if the Dutch will not all convert to the Augsburg Confession and renounce

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[67] 'damnach die Teutsche Fürster zum mehrenteyl deme Calvinismo sonderlich feindt und zuwider, auch derchalben diesser gentzen sachen gehessig seindt, man werde sich uff iren beystandt oder hülff im fall der noth wenig zu verlassen haben ...' Johann of Nassau to Louis of Nassau, October 1566, Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou Correspondance ... Volume II*, p. 351.

Calvinism, there cannot be much hope of support from these Estates.'[68] Interestingly, Wilhelm does not include himself on the list of the enemies of Calvinism. This underlines once more that among the Lutheran princes a variety of attitudes towards Reformed Protestantism could be found.

The tone when speaking of French Calvinism, however, differs slightly from the Lutherans' emphatic rejection of the Dutch Protestants. When assessing the faith of the Huguenots, various Lutheran princes displayed a willingness to view it in a positive light. Discussing the matter with Christoph of Württemberg, Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, who at the same time was one of the strongest proponents of Friedrich's exclusion from the Peace of Augsburg, used conciliatory language to describe the Huguenots: 'Concerning the religion in France [we need to consider] the means and way ... in which we can teach the poor Christians all the articles of the right and true foundation of our Christian doctrines, and ... keep them away from the secretly advancing, seductive sects.'[69] Wolfgang made an interesting distinction here. In principle, he regarded the Huguenots in France as Christians, rather than as sectarians. The fact that they held erroneous beliefs, such as the Calvinist explanation of the Eucharist, did not change their status as Christians. Nonetheless, Wolfgang saw this element of their religion as a problem, but believed that this could be remedied by the proper explanation of the true (read Lutheran) doctrine of the Eucharist. In this way, the Huguenots differed from Friedrich III, who himself had been a Lutheran but had discarded this faith in favour of the Calvinist 'sect'. Since the Lutheran religion had

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[68] 'dan erstlich ist der Calvinismus bey allenn denn Obern- unnd Niedersechsischen Fursten, dergleichen bey Wurtemberg, Pfalzgrave Wolffgangen, Badenn unnd andern Fursten unnd Stenden so verhast, das, wo die Niederlander sich nitt per Omnia zu der Augspurgischen Confession bekennen unnd dem Calvinismo renunctirren, sich weinig beystandts vonn gedachten Stenden zuverhoffen.' Wilhelm of Hesse to Peter Klotz, 16 January 1567, P. J. Blok, *Correspondendie van en Betreffende Lodewijk van Nassau en Andere Onuitgegeven Documenten* (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1887): p. 63.

[69] 'Was dann die Religion zu Franckreich antreifft ... auff mittel und weg ... wie die armen Christen inn allen articuln des rechten waren fundaments unnseren Christlichen Lehre möchten underwissen, und ... von den einschleichenden verfüerischen Secten abgehallten were.' Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Christoph of Württemberg, 29 April 1561, HStASt A 71 Bü 895.

never made any significant inroads in France and most French Protestants had converted directly from Catholicism to Reformed Protestantism, they could be viewed in a different light. Whereas many Reformed Protestants in the Empire had abandoned Lutheranism for the Reformed faith, the Huguenots were as yet unaware of the truth of the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession. In the discussions about the religion of the Huguenots found in the correspondence of the German Protestant princes, a sense of hope and even anticipation shines through that instruction into the correct doctrines could dissuade the Huguenots from their erroneous path.

This doctrinal change was, at least during the First War (1562-63), still widely regarded, both by the more orthodox Lutheran princes, such as Christoph and Wolfgang, and the more ecumenical Philipp of Hesse, as a necessary precondition for substantial German aid to the Huguenots. In June 1562, roughly three months after the outbreak of war in France, Philipp informed François Hotman that the 'controversy concerning the article of the Lord's Supper' was damaging the Huguenots' cause, 'since the following of different opinions by the Church in France is the cause that the aforementioned princes [Württemberg, Zweibrücken, and August of Saxony] … have difficulty providing assistance.'[70] For this reason, the Lutheran princes, hoping to guide the Huguenots away from their errors, were infuriated by the role of Friedrich III, who seemed to strengthen the French Protestants in their erroneous ways. At a meeting between diplomats from the Palatinate, Veldenz (part of Wolfgang's patrimony), Württemberg, and Hesse, the matter was discussed. Wolfgang summed up their conclusions: 'from our councils' discussion I have learned with a heavy heart that the council of Heidelberg has laboured diligently to justify thoroughly and praise the confession and writings of the new churches in France, and that therefore, since they give their approval to the

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[70] 'controversia in articulo De Coena domini' 'Cum autem Ecclesiae Gallicae diversum sequantur opinionem, in cause est, quod praefati Principes … difficulter … de auxilio incomittent.' Philipp of Hesse to François Hotman, HStaM, 3, 1851, f. 20-21; for more information on François Hotman's activities in Germany, see Chapter III.

confession and writings of Calvinism and publically attack the true opinion of the Lord's Supper ..., they ... at the same time have reinforced and certified the Sacramentarian error and the damning of our Christian opinion of the Lord's Supper.'[71] In this statement, the idea that the Huguenots are being led astray once again shines through. As will be discussed in detail in Chapter IV, a number of Protestant princes, led by the Duke of Württemberg, regarded the promotion of the Augsburg Confession and its doctrines in France as the foundation of a possible solution to the conflict in France.

2.4.2 *Friedrich III as promoter of the Huguenot cause in the Empire*

In line with his strong commitment to religious reform along Reformed lines and his close personal ties to France, Friedrich adopted the role of the most important promoter of the Huguenots and their religion in the Empire. Throughout the Wars of Religion, the Elector championed the Huguenot cause through facilitating the publication of pro-Huguenot polemic, housing French refugees, and providing logistical support for Huguenot diplomats. His most significant contribution, however, was his championing of the Huguenots in correspondence with his Lutheran peers. In contrast with the anonymously written polemical pamphlets, private correspondence allowed for the development of genuine debate. Only through studying this correspondence is it possible to get an insight into the full range of arguments deployed by Friedrich and their reception amongst the Lutheran princes. In his letters, Friedrich presented a number of powerful and often sophisticated arguments in favour of the Huguenots.

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[71] '...aus unserer rethe relation mit beschwertem gemuethe vernomen, das die Heydelbergischen räthe mit sonderem fleis dahin gearbeitet, die Confession und scripta der neuen kirchen in Frankreich durchaus für just zu halten und hochzuruemen, und solchs sonder zweifel darumb, weil solche confession und scripta dem Calvinismo und Zwinglianismo beifahl geben und unser christlichen Augspurgischen confession warhaftige meinung *de coena domini* offentlich damniren, ... zugleich der sacramentisch *error* und *damnation* unserer christlichen mainung *de coena domini* sollten bestettigt und adprobiert warden.' Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Christoph of Württemberg, 27 August 1563, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume I*, pp. 434-435.

This first element of Friedrich's defence of the Huguenots is closely related to the debates surrounding his own conversion. Friedrich repeatedly argued that the doctrines of the Reformed church in France were correct. Although Friedrich was cautious not to sanction radical preachers ('I cannot testify to the preaching in France'), he was positive 'that the Reformed churches have been freed from all the abominations of idolatry, and the teachings follow the Word of God.'[72] He was also keen to address a second accusation. This was based on the persistent idea that the Reformed religion was socially and politically subversive, and the fear that, lacking central and magisterial oversight, it would serve to incubate even more dangerous and radical ideas. Friedrich countered this accusation, emphasising the doctrinal uniformity of the French Reformed church: 'I have up till now from all the reports not learned anything else than that the French churches in the matter of religion are united throughout and that they do not have the slightest disagreement amongst each other, let alone that they complain of any sects.'[73] Friedrich's efforts in favour of the French churches were intended to convince the Lutheran princes that the Huguenot party was a credible partner for German Lutherans in what was understood as a common struggle against Catholicism. Although he recognised that the Eucharistic beliefs of Lutherans and Reformed Protestants differed, he also in this context maintained that this difference did not mean that the Germans and French had different religions. As the conflict in France dragged on, Friedrich deplored the stubbornness of those Lutherans who continued to regard Eucharistic disagreement as an insurmountable stumbling block. In March 1568 he wrote angrily to Wilhelm of Hesse, stating that 'it is much more

[72] 'Von den predigten in Frankreych ways ich nit zeugnus zu geben' 'das die reformirten kirchen von allem greuel der abgotterey aufgesegt, und die lehr dem worth gottes gemess gehen soll' Friedrich III to Christoph of Württemberg, 3 May 1562, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 292.

[73] 'So hab ich bis anhero in allen berichten nie anders verstanden, dan das die Franzosischen kirchen durchaus *in causa religionis* aynig und den wenigsten misverstandt under ayn ander nitt hetten, vil weniger sich aynischer secten beglagten. Friedrich III to Christoph of Württemberg, 3 May 1562, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 292.

troublesome to learn that Your Grace has allowed yourself to be convinced that you do not labour and act against the [true] religion, when you support the extermination of the Calvinists, as if their religion is contrary to the Augsburg Confession and our religion is not much more in all and the most important points in agreement with the same.'[74]

A second argument presented by Friedrich is especially relevant to the status of Reformed Protestants in France and the Netherlands. From the beginning of his rule, Friedrich had displayed a strong sympathy for persecuted Protestants and the Palatinate soon became a welcoming place for Reformed refugees from around Europe.[75] He used the buildings of former monasteries and convents to provide a home to communities of Reformed refugees. A Dutch community settled in Frankenthal, French and Walloon congregations were established in Heidelberg, and Reformed Protestants from Frankfurt were given a new home in Schönau.[76] The Protestant princes, fearing an influx of Reformed ideas, complained that Friedrich was bringing in 'Brabanders, English, and such people … who follow the aforementioned Calvinist sect.'[77] Friedrich's commitment to supporting his persecuted fellow Christians must have been strengthened by the idea that the very fact that they were being submitted to persecution by the Catholics was in itself proof of their godliness. Reformed Protestantism contains a strong train of thought that regarded persecution and martyrdom as an

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[74] 'Viel beschwerlicher is es zuvernemmen, das E. L. sich bereden lassen, sie ziehen und handlen nit wider die religion, wann sie die calvinisten auszurotten understehen, gleich als ob ir religion der A. C. entgegen und nit viel mehr in allen und fürnembsten hauptpunkten unsers christlichen glaubens mit derselben … übereinstimmte …' Friedrich III to Wilhelm of Hesse, 6 March 1568, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 197.

[75] B. Vogler, 'Le rôle des électeurs Palatins dans les Guerres de Religion en France (1559-1592)', *Cahiers d'Histoire*, 10 (1965): 51-85; Press, *Calvinismus und Territorialstaat*, p. 188.

[76] A. L. Thomas, 'A house divided: Wittelsbach confessional court cultures in Bavaria, the Palatinate, and Bohemia, c. 1550-1650' (PhD dissertation, Purdue University, 2007): pp. 159-160.

[77] 'Brabander, Engelender und sollichen leuten …, so gedachter Calvinischen sect angengig sein' Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Friedrich III, February 1565, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 565.

integral part of the experience of the righteous on earth.[78] There exists a large body of Reformed writing expounding this vision, of which John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* is the most famous example. Such writings evoke the long history of the persecution of the godly that can be found in the Bible, the history of the early Church, and in recent examples of religious persecution. Reformed Protestants facing persecutions often compared their position to that of the Israelites facing repression in Egypt or living in exile in Babylon.[79] Also the Biblical trope of the righteous being submitted to trials and tribulations at the hand of Satan (or the Antichrist) was easily applied to the situation of the Huguenots.

Building on this idea, Friedrich felt compelled to criticise the Protestant princes, who in comfort and safety debated doctrinal purity. Friedrich wrote Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, arguably the fiercest critic of Reformed Protestantism among the princes: 'I can easily believe, that they [the Huguenots] are more serious than we Germans, since they persist [in their faith] under persecution, which is not the least of trials.'[80] Friedrich's son, Johann Casimir, in a letter written in 1566 established a direct link between the Reformed Protestants in France and the Netherlands and the persecuted Godly throughout history: 'From the beginning of the World … many Christian and Godly people and their teachings have often been condemned as sectarians or sects, persecuted, and murdered, yet they were followers of the true Christian religion, were the best Christians, and taught and defended the truth.'[81] The criticisms and arguments put forward by Friedrich and

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[78] C. H. Parker, French Calvinists as the children of Israel: An Old Testament self-consciousness in Jean Crespin's Histoire des Martyrs before the Wars of Religion', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 24 (1993): 227-248.

[79] O. P. Grell, 'Merchants and ministers: the foundation of international Calvinism', in A. Pettegree, A. Duke, and G. Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): pp. 254-273.

[80] 'So kan ich leychtlich glauben, das inen mehr Ernst sehe als uns Deutschen, demnach sie in der persecution, welches nit die geringste prob ist, bestanden …' Friedrich III to Johann Friedrich of Saxony, 9 November 1561, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 210.

[81] 'Von Anbeginn der Welt … [sind] zum öftern viel christliche und gottselige Leute und ihre Lehre für Sectirer und Secter ausgeschrien, verfolgt, und umgebracht, die doch der wahren christlichen Religion anhängig, die besten Christen waren und die

Casimir must have been difficult to counter for the German Lutheran princes. On the one hand they, completely in line with widely used Protestant polemic, identified the Roman Catholic Church as an instrument of evil, violently persecuting the righteous. On the other hand, they accused the Lutherans of failing to identify the Reformed Protestants in France and the Netherlands as the primary victims of the Antichrist's rage and thus by extension as true Christians.

2.4.3 *Defence of the Huguenots' religion in print*

Though they provide a unique insight into their writers' personal position, the letters of Friedrich and Casimir were by no means the only place where this interpretation of the status of the Huguenots was expounded. Throughout the French Wars of Religion, a large number of German language books and pamphlets concerning the conflict appeared in the Empire.[82] A significant proportion of these pamphlets focussed on the persecution of the Huguenots. The tone of some of the pamphlets, which were aimed at a relatively wide audience, is sensationalist and dramatic. A good example of a pamphlet intended to appeal to the reader's emotions is a text that claimed to be a translation of a letter sent by the inhabitants of Rouen, who in October 1562 were being besieged by a Catholic army. The pamphlet emphasised the innocence and defencelessness of the Rouen citizenry, who embody all the Huguenots, and gave a graphic account of the persecution of their party. In the letter, the people of Rouen beg their besiegers for mercy 'Since [they] know well, that many and the most genuine and sincere captains of this realm are murdered in an inhuman fashion, and some of them beheaded, and others hung, and only because they have obeyed

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Wahrheit lehrten und vertheidigten.' Johann Casimir to Friedrich III, 23 January 1566, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 627.

[82] For a more detailed discussion of German print culture about the French Wars of Religion see Chapter III.

the King's Edict.'[83] Other printed texts were of a less polemical nature, but nonetheless used the persecution of the Huguenots as proof of the merits of their religion. In 1563, a printer in Heidelberg published a German translation of the church order used by the Huguenot churches in France. In the introduction the publisher, addressing the reader, once again related pure doctrine to persecution:

> Dear Christian reader, do you want to know why the evil Fiend in recent years has murdered and killed so many thousands of Christians in lamentable fashion in France, read then diligently this church order of the persecuted Christians … Then you will without doubt learn that Satan has no small cause to rage and rant in those places, since this church order cannot be maintained and promoted with Christian diligence and zeal without causing great danger and destruction to his realm.[84]

Other pamphlets argued that failing to help the beleaguered Huguenots in effect made the German Protestants complicit in their persecution. This complicity was made worse, it was argued, by the fact that the Huguenots should be considered the Lutherans' coreligionists. In a pamphlet printed in 1568, the argument was once again made that the Huguenots' beliefs only differed from the Augsburg Confession in

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[83] 'Dan wir wissen all zuwol / dz vil und den waidlichste[n] un[d] redlichsten Hauptleüten dises königreichs sind unmenschlicher weise ermördet / und zum thail enthaupter / zum thail erhängt worden / nur umb der ursach willen / dasz sie des konigs Edict sind gehorsam gewesen.' Anon., *Abtruck Aines Briefs dem die Burger un[d] Einwonder zu Roan den 25 Octobris in disem Tausent Fünffhundert un[d] Zwai und Sechtzigsten Jar in der Belegerung an die Königin zu Frankreich haben Geschriben* (s. l.: s. n. 1562), p. 6.

[84] 'Christlichen lieber Leser / wilt du wissen warumb der böse Feind in kurzen jaren so vil tausend Christen in Franckreich jämerlich ermordet und umbracht hat/ so lese mit vleiß diese der verfolgten Christen daselbst Kirchenordnung … Darauß wirstu ohne zweiffel gnugsam erlernen / das Sathan nicht geringe ursachen hat / an diesen orten fürnemlich zu wüten und zu toben / da solche Kirchenordnung nicht ohne grosse gefahr und abbruch seines Reichs / mit Christlichem ernst und eiffer gehalten und getrieben wirdt.' Anon., *Ordnung der Evangelischen Kirchen in Franckreich / so Gehalten Wird / im Gemeinen Gebet / Reichung der Sacrament / Eingesegnen der Ehe / Besuchung der Krancken / Und Christlichen Catechismo* (Heidelberg: Johannes Mayer, 1563), f. 1 r.

one doctrine and that this deviation was caused by ignorance rather than ill will.

> Third, they have the same religion and faith as the Germans, they also have the same foe, the Antichrist, who persecutes them cruelly, that therefore the Germans in no way can with a good conscience help them being persecuted. And even if they in one single point or opinion concerning the matter of the Supper think different than the Germans, the poor people just do not know better, and are without doubt in their hearts desirous for the truth.[85]

Throughout the early 1560s a strong argument was put forward for the need for cooperation between Lutherans and Reformed Protestants. In both Friedrich III's letters and in a number of pamphlets, the differences between the two branches of Protestantism were strongly downplayed and the godliness of the persecuted Huguenots emphasised. Importantly, these arguments were not presented in isolation, but fitted directly into the debates and discussion about the conversion of the Palatinate that were taking place at the same time. These are thus two developments that cannot be properly understood without considering them together.

2.4.4 *The alternative: a rapprochement with reform-minded Catholics*

Having at length discussed the dynamics of the relationship between the two most important types of Protestantism, it is now important briefly to consider an often-overlooked alternative: the possibility of

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[85] 'Zum dritten / so haben sie dieselbige Religion und glauben wie wir Teütschen / sie haben auch eben den selbigen feindt / der sie auffs graussamerst verfolget / den Antichrist / das derwegen die Teütschen in keinem wege sollen noch mit guttem gewissen sie verfolgen helffen können. Und ob sie gleich inn einem einigen punct oder maynung die Matery vom Abendtmal betreffend / anders dann die Teutschen halten / so wissen doch die armen leut nicht besser / und seind ohne zweiffel der warheit von hertzen begierig.' Anon., *Newe Zeittung von Franckreich unnd Niderlandt. Christlichen und hochwichtige gründe und ursache[n]/ Warumb die Teutschen kriegsleut die Christen inn Franckreich und Niderlandt nicht verfolgen helffen/ oder auff einige weise sich zu iren feinden wider sie gestellen sollen. Allen Ehrlichen, unnd Frommen Teutschen zu einem newen Jar geschenckt* (s. l.: s. n., 1568), f. 3 v.

doctrinal reconciliation with Catholicism. This prospect was actively promoted as an alternative to a strengthening of Lutheran-Reformed relations.

When studying the Reformation it is always important to remember that the fracturing of the religious landscape into various distinct confessions was never intended. The hope of Martin Luther and other reformers was that the programme of theological, liturgical, and organisational reforms that they had outlined would cleanse the universal church from false doctrines, superstition, and idolatry. Reality soon caught up as the unwillingness of the Catholic Church to implement most of the reforms became painfully clear. As a result, disappointment and hostility started to dominate confessional relations and a large body of aggressive polemic was disseminated throughout Europe in print, manuscript, preaching, and visual culture, depicting Catholics as violent persecutors, idolaters, and followers of the Antichrist. The escalations of Protestant-Catholic tensions in the Schmalkalic War and other violent conflicts must have seemed to many to be the final nail in the coffin for the prospect of reconciliation. Nonetheless, as the recent historiographical interest in the 'middle parties' has demonstrated, throughout the 1550s and 60s there were ecumenically-minded individuals and groups who advocated some sort of rapprochement, whether for political or religious reasons. Some chose to focus on the common ground shared by the various confessions. Moreover, some Catholics displayed a willingness to go remarkably far in reforming doctrine and liturgy in order to facilitate a restoration of the unity of religion.

Much of the hope of reconciliation rested on the prospect of a general council. The Council of Trent, which started in 1545, was for many Protestants the extremely disappointing answer of the Catholic Church to the call for a general council. Trent was dominated by three consecutive popes and by Catholic prelates from Italy and Spain. Protestant attendance was minimal.[86] Of all the German Protestant

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[86] E. Iserloh, 'Luther and the Council of Trent', *The Catholic Historical Review*, 69 (1983): 563-576.

princes, Christoph of Württemberg was most interested, sending a delegation to the session that lasted from January 1552 to December 1553. [87] Christoph hoped that his delegates could function as 'arbitrators' and to ensure that the conclusions of the Council 'are truly founded on the Holy Scriptures together with the customs of the apostles and the early church …'[88] Needless to say, the mission ended in disappointment. [89] As a result of this setback, the emphasis of Christoph's religious policies shifted from the promotion of the 'true religion' throughout Europe to the consolidation of Lutheran orthodoxy within Württemberg and the Empire.[90]

After the failure of the Council of Trent had become apparent, the voices of those calling for a general council died down somewhat. In France, where the Council of Trent had never been popular, an ecumenical agenda was still prominently present, especially among Catholics. Building on the historic freedoms of the Gallican Church, it was widely believed that the French had the prerogative to independently settle their own religious disputes. The Colloquy of Poissy (9 September to 9 October 1561) was the most ambitious initiative of the conciliatory party. [91] Although it failed, Poissy resembled much more closely the general council envisaged by Württemberg and others. The failure of Poissy, which was primarily a dialogue between Catholics and Calvinists, did not crush all enthusiasm for reconciliation. Between 15 and 17 February 1562 a meeting took place in Saverne, a small town in Lorraine, between the Duke of Württemberg, the Duke of Guise, and the Cardinal of Lorraine. An

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[87] M. Langsteiner, *Für Land und Luthertum: die Politik Herzog Christoph von Württemberg (1550-1568)* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2008): pp. 32-89.

[88] 'arbitros' … 'warhaftig uf die heilig schrift sampt der apostolen und ersten kirchen gebrauch fundieren …' Christoph of Württemberg to Charles V, February 1552, V. Ernst, *Briefwechsel des Herzogs Christoph von Wirtemberg, Volume I* (Stuttgart: Verlag von Kohlhammer, 1899): p. 390.

[89] Langsteiner, *Für Land und Luthertum*, pp. 204-228.

[90] Ibid, pp. 204-228.

[91] See Chapter IV for a detailed discussion about the Colloquy of Poissy and the role of German Protestants in the deliberations.

extensive account of the conversations conducted during those three days, written by Württemberg himself, survives. During the meeting the failure of Poissy was discussed, which the Cardinal of Lorraine blamed on the stubbornness of the Reformed Protestants.[92] The conversation then turned to the doctrinal differences between Lutherans and Catholics.

> "One is an idolater", I [Württemberg] said to them, "when one worships other gods than the true God, or when one searches for other mediators than the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, or when one puts his trust in the saints, the virgin Mary, or in his own good works." "I believe in no other god but the true God", he [Lorraine] responded to me, "I confide only in Jesus Christ; I know well that not the mother of our Lord, nor the saints can aid me; I also know well that I cannot be saved by my good works, but by the merits of Jesus Christ." I [replied]: "I hear this with joy; the Lord wants to keep you in this confession."[93]

Without doubt despite some suspicions, Christoph thus seems to have viewed Lorraine's testimony in a positive light. Hopeful that the Cardinal might be 'a new Saul converted into a new Paul', he wrote to Wolfgang about their meeting. [94] Lorraine's apparent courting of Württemberg and other Lutherans has been interpreted in different ways. Huguenot pamphleteers were keen to emphasise Lorraine's religious hypocrisy. This interpretation has been copied by 'most

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[92] A. Muntz (ed.), 'Entrevue du Duc Christophe de Würtemberg avec les Guise, a Saverne, peu de jour savant le Massacre de Vassy, 1562. Relation autograph du Duc de Würtemberg', *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, 4 (1856): 184-196, on p. 186.

[93] 'On est idolâtre, lui dis-je, lorsqu'on adore d'autres dieux que le vrai Dieu, ou qu'on cherche d'autres médiateurs que le Fills de Dieu, notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ, ou qu'on met sa confiance dans les saints, dans la vierge Marie, ou dans ses propres bonnes oeuvres. Je n'adore d'autre Dieu que le vrai Dieu, me repondit-il, je me confie uniquement en Jésus-Christ; je sais bien que ni la mère de notre Seigneur, ni les saints ne peuvent m'être sauvé par mes bonnes oevres, mais pas les mérites de Jésus-Christ. Moi: Voilà ce que j'entends avec joie; le Seigneur veuille vous maintenir dans cette confession.' Muntz (ed.), 'Entrevue du Duc Christophe de Würtemberg avec les Guise, 187.

[94] H. O. Evennet, 'The Cardinal of Lorraine and the Colloquy of Poissy', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 2 (1927): 133-150, on p. 145.

Protestant historians ever since', who have described Lorraine's rapprochement with the Lutherans as a ploy intended to disrupt Huguenot-Lutheran cooperation. [95] Recently, however, Lorraine's position has been re-evaluated. [96] It has been persuasively argued that Lorraine's statements at Saverne are typical of the attitudes of reform-minded French Catholics. Lorraine, who had also had a central role in the organisation of the Colloquy of Poissy, seems at Saverne to have articulated the idea that peace or reconciliation could only be achieved by emphasising the common ground between the various confessions. For his part, Christoph seems to have viewed Lorraine's statements with less cynicism than many historians. This episode clearly illustrates a very important and often-ignored dimension of the above described debates: the idea that Lutheran-Reformed liaison was not necessarily the only option but that in some ways Lutheran-Catholic cooperation was more feasible. The attractions of this alternative option were manifold. First, the German Lutheran princes had a history of very productive cooperation with the Catholic kings of France. For the princes, the alliance with France had played a central role in keeping their lands, and therefore their reformations, safe. Moreover, as will also be argued in Chapter IV, there was no reason yet to assume that French evangelical Catholics could not be persuaded to accept a version of the Augsburg Confession. A strong argument could be made that through close contact and friendly admonition conversions were likely to take place. Hopes of this sort were not without foundation, since on some levels, Lutheran doctrine, liturgy, and ecclesiology were closer to Catholicism than to Reformed Protestantism. The possibility of a reformed Mass provided common ground on which to build conciliatory initiatives between Lutherans and evangelical French Catholics. A tendency to focus exclusively on the Protestant-Catholic

[95] R. M. Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, 1555-1563* (Geneva: Droz, 1956): p. 106; D. R. Kelley, *François Hotman, a Revolutionary's Ordeal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

[96] Evennet, 'The Cardinal of Lorraine and the Colloquy of Poissy', pp. 133-150; S. Carroll, 'The compromise of Charles Cardinal de Lorraine: New evidence', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 54 (2003): 469-483.

dichotomy, which can be found in most traditional narratives of the Reformation, has overshadowed the nuances. True, the ideas of evangelical and ecumenically minded French Catholics, which have been comprehensively brought to light by Wanegffelen and others, were not heard as loudly in the Empire as the pamphlets of Protestant polemicists, which presented a very stark and clear choice between the two confessions. However, among the princes, the existence of alternative voices and positions had a much stronger impact. The possibilities for working with Catholics led a number of Lutheran princes completely to reject the option of inter-Protestant cooperation, as will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters.

2.5 Conclusion

As has been demonstrated over the last two decades by historians focusing on the 'middle parties', there existed a variety of religious positions in France and the Empire. In the 1550s and 60s confessionalisation was in its early stages of progress. But the teleological focus of the historiography on the creation of confessional uniformity has blinded historians to the alternative possibilities, which were very real for policymakers in the 1560s. Patriotic and confessional history writing tended to downplay the potential for intra-confessional bickering and the impact this had on the course of events.

After 1555, the epicentre of religious conflict inside the Empire had moved from the struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism to strife between Lutheranism and Reformed Protestantism. On the whole, Lutheran attitudes to the increasingly numerous Reformed Protestants were hostile. They were routinely described as sectarian, radical, and socially and politically subversive. This attitude was reinforced by the Peace of Augsburg, which created a clear distinction between the 'legal' religion of the Augsburg Confession and the other 'illegal' forms of Protestantism. Throughout the 1560s, this point of view was regularly confirmed by events taking place in France, the Low Countries, and elsewhere in Europe. Iconoclastic riots, political conspiracies, and even

open revolt contrasted sharply with the orderly magisterial reformations presided over by the Lutheran princes.

As has been demonstrated above, this stereotype was challenged. The most important catalyst for the rethinking of Lutheran-Reformed relations was the conversion of Friedrich III. In his correspondence with his Lutheran peers, he not only eloquently and persuasively argued against the creating of a clear separation between the two confessions, but also challenged the persistent idea that Reformed Protestantism was essentially a religion for the politically subversive. Moreover, Friedrich explicitly brought the situation in France and the Netherlands into the equation. He argued that the persecution of the Reformed Protestants in France and the Netherlands at the hands of the Catholics was in itself ample proof of the righteousness of the Huguenots and their religion. Moreover, he did not shy away from accusing the passive Lutheran princes of being complicit to the persecution of Reformed Protestants. Friedrich's arguments are echoed in print. A substantial body of pro-Huguenot texts printed in German appeared throughout the Wars of Religion. They often appealed to the readers' emotions, providing graphic accounts of the atrocities committed against the innocent 'Christians' in France whilst brushing over the religious differences between the Reformed Huguenots and the largely Lutheran readership. Following his conversion, Friedrich played a pivotal role in paving the way for increased cooperation between German Lutherans and French Protestants. By arguing that, despite some disagreements, Lutherans and Reformed Protestants inherently shared a commitment to the restoration of religious purity, he removed the sting from some of the hostility between members of the two confessions. Similarly, by demonstrating that the Reformed religion was not necessarily a religion of rabble-rousers and could also follow a similar pattern as the princely reformations, Friedrich removed some of the apprehension amongst Lutherans about supporting the Huguenots.

A third and often-overlooked interpretation of the relationship between the three major religions, promoted by the Cardinal of

Lorraine and other Reform-minded Catholics, advocated the possibility of a doctrinal rapprochement between Lutherans and Catholics. Although many advocates of reconciliation also hoped to include Reformed Protestants in the religious settlement they aspired to, the breakdown of Poissy may have contributed to the feeling that Lutherans made better partners than the obstinate Calvinists. This option for religious and political rapprochement also appealed to a section of German Lutherans.

There thus existed parallel interpretations of the way in which the various confessions related to each other. This is reflected in the wide variety of names used to describe the various religious groups. Reformed Protestants were described by Lutherans as the 'Zwinglian sect', but also in some contexts as the 'poor oppressed Christians'. Although over time some interpretations dominated, one never completely excluded another. Moreover, Reformed Protestants were in some contexts described by Lutherans in more favourable terms than in others. The German Lutherans were more likely to regard the beleaguered Huguenots in France as fellow Christians than the German Zwinglians and Calvinists, who posed a direct threat to the unity and dominance of their own faith.

Finally, it has to be emphasised that among the German Lutheran princes a range of sometimes subtly different attitudes towards Reformed Protestantism could be found. On one end of the spectrum there was, amongst others, Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, who acted aggressively against unorthodox forms of Protestantism in his own territories and in a number of letters and pamphlets put Reformed Protestantism in the same bracket as other 'damaging and unchristian disruptions and offences', such as Anabaptism.[97] Christoph of Württemberg and Wolfgang of Zweibrücken also considered themselves champions of Lutheran orthodoxy. They were the two strongest advocates of the Palatinate's exclusion from the Peace of Augsburg and repeatedly expressed concerns about the rise of

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[97] 'schedliche unnd unchristliche zerrütung unnd ergernissen' ThHStAW, Fürstenhaus, A 195, Bl. 185.

Reformed Protestantism in Germany. Nonetheless, Christoph remained on relatively good terms with the Elector Palatine, allowing the continuation of political cooperation. Wolfgang was willing to look favourably upon the Huguenots, regarding them as victims, not only of persistent Catholic persecution, but also of the teaching of false doctrines. He also expressed the expectation that further religious education could rectify the situation. The Landgraves Philipp and Wilhelm of Hesse refused to demonise Calvinism. The relatively ecumenical atmosphere at the courts and university of Marburg, with its strong Philippist character, is reflected in the comments of the two Landgraves. Although they both emphasised the importance of conformity to the Augsburg Confession, they did regard the Reformed Protestants in France and the Netherlands as their coreligionists. Count Johann of Nassau was of a similar opinion.

The various different angles and interpretations discussed in this chapter illustrate the complexity of the confessional landscape in which liaison between the Huguenot leadership and the German Protestant princes took place. This underscores the importance of individual belief and conscience, which was crucial to Protestant identity. These different opinions, which could be found among people who considered themselves to be part of the same Church would have far-reaching consequences for their attitudes towards intervention in the conflict in France. The princes' position in the intra-Protestant debate determined to a large extent his support for the Huguenot cause. However, views could change according to events in France and as a result of propaganda, especially the incessant championing of the Huguenots by Friedrich. In this sense the 1560s witnessed some radical rethinking of what was to be done about France, revealing once again how civil war forces people to choose sides when their initial convictions are more ambiguous and hesitant.

But as I have demonstrated in this chapter, the relation between Huguenots and Lutherans was largely shaped by events taking place within the Empire. The news, rumours, and propaganda from France examined in the next chapter cannot be read in isolation from the

debates discussed above. With the possible exception of Friedrich III, who was strongly committed to supporting his French coreligionists, the Protestant princes were no obvious or natural allies to either of the warring parties in France. This conclusion conflicts with the assumption, found in much of the historiography of German intervention in the French Wars of Religion, that international Protestant cooperation was logical and consistent with religious allegiances and that Lutheran support for the Catholic King was inconsistent with religious principle and therefore had to be based on some other, less noble, conviction.[98] This thesis will demonstrate that this was not the case.

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[98] Vogler, 'Le role des Électeurs Palatins, pp. 54 and 62.

III.   Propaganda and Diplomacy

3.1 Introduction: the Massacre of Vassy

The outbreak of the First War of Religion in France was caused by an unexpected event that took place in the small market town of Vassy on 19 March 1562. The Duke of Guise and his retinue, on their way to Paris from their meeting with the Duke of Württemberg at Saverne, passed Vassy. The exact sequence of events is not entirely clear, but it is evident that a violent clash took place between Guise's retainers and a congregation of Huguenots gathered in a barn for worship.[1] What happened next is characteristic for the way in which German audiences became aware of major developments during the French Wars of Religion. Within weeks after the Massacre of Vassy, Duke Christoph of Württemberg received two letters claiming to provide an accurate account of the event.

The first letter was an anonymous account that articulated the Huguenot perspective on Vassy. The writer strongly emphasised the unprovoked nature of the attack, narrating how after the Duke of Guise had sent a party to investigate what was happening in the barn, the congregation said to them: '"My lords, if it pleases you, take a seat: to which they responded in these terms: by God's death, they must all be killed."'[2] They soon put their words into action and 'killed and injured a great number', 'men, women, and small children'.[3] The writer emphasised both the horror of the slaughter and the glee with which

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[1] S. Carroll, *Martyrs and Murderers: The Guise Family and the Making of Europe*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): pp. 12-19.

[2] "Messieurs, s'il vous plaist, prennes place: à quoy pour responce du premier mot, usarent de ces termes: Mort-Dieu, il fault tout tuer." Anonymous account of the Massacre at Vassy, 1562, J. F. Michaud and J. J. F. Poujoulat (eds.), *Nouvelle Collection des Mémoires pour server a l'Histoire de France, depuis le XIIIᵉ Siècle jusqu'a la Fin du XVIIIᵉ*, *Volume VI,* (Paris: l'Éditeur du Commentaire Analytique du Code Civil, 1839): p. 472.

[3] 'tuarent et blessarent grand nombre' 'hommes, femmes et petitz enffans' Ibid, p. 472

Guise's men executed it: 'This spectacle, so horrible and frightful, lasted an hour and a half before it ceased. And thereafter the trumpets were sounded as a sign of triumph and victory.'[4] This passage not only aimed to illustrate Catholic aggression, provoked solely by the religious beliefs of the Protestants of Vassy, it also underlined the harmlessness of the congregation. The Huguenots greeted their future killers not with hostility, but with their proper titles, inviting them to join them in hearing the sermon. Despite their deference, they were subjected to 'inhumanity, tyranny, and cruelty.'[5]

The Catholic version of the events by contrast highlighted the efforts made to avoid the bloodshed. François de Guise himself wrote to Christoph to explain the causes of the unfortunate event. Aware of the presence in Vassy of 'scandalous, arrogant, and reckless people, many of whom were Calvinists', François decided to have his dinner 'in a small village half a mile away [from Vassy]… expressly to avoid that what happened there.'[6] When the next day the party travelled through Vassy, they were made aware of a Protestant service taking place at that moment inside the city, leading François to conclude 'that I was too near to them not to rebuke them.'[7] When the Duke sent a party of men to admonish the Huguenots, they found the congregation armed 'with harquebuses, pistols, and other munitions, which further contravened the edicts and ordinances of the said Majesty [the King of France].'[8] The violent confrontation was thus, according to François' account, the result of 'the little respect [the Huguenot congregation] had for the

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[4] 'Et dura ce spectacle tant horrible et espouventable, avant que cesser, une heure et demye. Puis après cela furent sounnées les trompettes en signe de triumphe et victoire …' Ibid, p. 472.

[5] 'inhumanité, tyrannie et cruaulté.' Ibid, p. 473.

[6] 'gens scandalleux, arrogans et fort téméraires, combien quilz fussent Calvinistes' à un petit village plus avant à demie lieue … expressément pour y éviter ce que depuis y est advenu' François de Guise to Christoph of Württemberg, 17 March 1562, *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, 24 (1875): 212-217, on p. 213.

[7] 'j'estoit trop pres d[eulx] … pour ne leur devoir faire … telles remonstrances que je cognoist[rois] plus a propoz' Ibid, p. 214.

[8] 'avec harquebuzes, pistoletz, et autres munitions, qui estoit contrevenir advantage aux édictz et ordonnance de sa dicte Majesté.' Ibid, p. 214.

obedience they owed the King' and their 'rebellions, seditions, and insolences.'[9] The Duke had long been aware of the Huguenot presence in Vassy and had initially decided not to act. Only when confronted with both staggering insolence and armed resistance – François claimed to have been wounded himself – did his retainers resort to violence. In this account Calvinism is directly equated with disobedience to worldly authority. The Edict of January expressly only allowed public worship outside towns and cities. The Huguenots at Vassy thus in a very public manner contravened the law. Moreover, their political sedition was not only displayed through disdain for the King's laws, but also through unprovoked violence against their natural superiors. The violence committed by the Duke and his retainers, he argued, was thus motivated by self-defence and by the necessity to subdue the rebellious Huguenots.

It is not entirely clear how Christoph of Württemberg interpreted these two conflicting accounts. However, in two letters sent by Elector Palatine Friedrich III to Philipp of Hesse and Württemberg respectively, we catch a glimpse of the way in which the event was discussed among the German Protestant princes. Interestingly, Friedrich's understanding of the Massacre seems to have been built up of elements from both accounts. In the first letter, Friedrich III, contrary to the Huguenot account, writes how the congregation at Vassy defied the Duke's men: 'He [Guise] had sent a nobleman and desired to speak to the preacher. However, when the nobleman wanted to enter the barn, they refused to let him in.'[10] Friedrich, this time contradicting the Catholic account, does attribute the first act of violence to the Duke of Guise's retainers: 'Then the Duke of Guise together with a number of nobles, who were accompanying him, … quickly went [to the barn], and

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[9] 'le peu de respect quilz avoient à lobeissance quilz devoitent porter au Roi' 'pour les rébellions, seditions et insolences' Ibid, p. 214.

[10] 'Hat er einen edelman hingeschickt und den pfaffen zu sich begert zu sprechen. Wie aber der edelman hat wollen hineyngehen, haben sie ine nit wollen hineyn lassen.' Friedrich III to Philipp of Hesse, 1 April 1562, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume I* (Braunschweig, C.A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1868): pp. 268-269.

desired to enter it using violence ...'[11] In the second letter, Friedrich specifically discusses the justification presented by the Duke of Guise: '[The Huguenots at Vassy] were such wicked people, who slandered his mother ... in a scandalous and evil manner ...'[12] Moreover, they 'had built for their preacher a barn with two levels, where they kept stones for its defence ... and the Duke was himself hit by a stone on the head and wounded.'[13] Although all these justifications seem credible and understandable to Friedrich, they do not suffice in his eyes: '[The Massacre] is barely justifiable; the deed is too evil.'[14]

This example not only clearly underlines that the German Protestant princes were among the most important targets of French propaganda, it also illustrates how this information was shared, discussed, and interpreted by the princes. This chapter will assess the nature and impact of the French propaganda efforts, both Huguenot and Catholic, among the German princes. In order to understand the context in which French justifications for the use of violence were interpreted, it is first important to consider the various theories of just war and resistance that were developed in the Empire shortly before the outbreak of the French Wars of Religion. Secondly, the different ways in which Huguenots and Catholics presented the nature of the conflict to the Protestant princes, using correspondence and diplomats, will be discussed in detail. Finally, the extensive body of German-language pamphlets designed to communicate Huguenot and Catholic positions will be assessed.

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[11] 'Ist der von Guise sambt etlichen vom adel, so er bey sich gehabt, ... bald darauf gevolgt, und mit gewalt hineyn begert ...' Ibid, p. 269.

[12] '...es were solche böse buben, die seiner frau mutter ... schmehlich und übel nachgeredt ...' Ibid, p. 276.

[13] '... heten zu irer predigt ein scheur gebaut mit doppeln gengen und die mit stainen belegt, zur wehr ...' Ibid, p. 276.

[14] 'Es wirdt sich aber schwerlich verantworden lassen; die that ist zuvil bös.' Ibid, p. 276.

3.2 Civil war: religion or rebellion?

French attempts, both Catholic and Huguenot, to explain the Wars of Religion to German audiences in essence centred on the issue of causes and motives. In the two letters about the Massacre of Vassy we can catch a glimpse of the question at the heart of these debates: was the war fought over religion or was it a rebellion against divinely ordained authority? Whereas the Huguenot writer argued that the attack on the congregation at Vassy was simply the result of the Duke of Guise's hatred of the Reformed religion, François himself was adamant that the bloodshed was exclusively the consequence of the Huguenots' political disobedience. As we shall see, this contrast between religion and politics played a central role in French diplomacy and propaganda.

Moreover, this a question that still dominates much of the historiography of the French Wars of Religion. The first accounts of the wars, such as Theodore Beza's *Histoire Ecclesiastique*, written within the confessional context of the late sixteenth century, attached great importance to religion as the main topic of contention.[15] During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, historians instead looked to politics, economics, and social tensions as the main motivations behind the violence. In the works of historians such as James Thompson and Lucien Romier, religion is often seen as 'a cloak that political actors used to disguise their more explicitly political motivations'.[16] In *Les Origins Politiques des Guerres des Religion*, Romier argued that religious suppression in France started after 'a feeling of religious and political insecurity' took hold among the monarchy and the ruling classes.[17] Moreover, according to Romier, this sense of danger to the established political order was justified. By allying themselves with important

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[15] Théodor de Bèza, *L'Histoire Ecclesiastique des Eglises Reformes au Royaume de France*, (Antwerp: Jean Remy, 1580).

[16] M. P. Holt, 'Putting religion back into the Wars of Religion', *French Historical Studies*, 18 (1993): 524-551, on p. 526.

[17] 'une sensation d'insécurité religieuse et politique' Romier, *Les Origins Politiques,* p. 225.

nobles, both in France and abroad, the Reformed movement had given itself 'the allure of a political movement.'[18] In the last four decades, however, this position has been largely overturned.

In her ground-breaking article 'The rites of Violence', Natalie Zemon Davis argued that the religious riots in sixteenth-century France were not motivated by grain prices or abstruse theological concepts, but rather they were inspired by a popular Catholicity which aimed to purify the community.[19] Denis Crouzet, goes even further than Davis' downplaying of the non-religious aspects of the civil war.[20] He explains both the success of Calvinism and the violent Catholic reaction in eschatological terms. Calvinism, he argues, provided a way out of these apocalyptic fears by disconnecting the sacred and the secular spheres, whereas the Catholics saw this neglect of the sacred nature of everyday life as yet another sign that the apocalypse was near. Paradoxically, this represents a return to an older tradition that seeks to separate religion and politics, although primacy is now given to the former rather than the latter. As I shall demonstrate in this chapter, the dichotomy between religion and politics was well known to contemporaries and it was used to serve as a powerful polemical tool.

3.3 Pre-Reformations understandings of resistance

The reception of French Protestant justifications in Germany was to a large extent shaped by existing understandings of the right to resist tyranny. France and parts of the Holy Roman Empire, notably the Low Countries, had a long history of strife and competition between monarchs and their subjects. Resistance to authority gave rise to a body of thought structuring and rationalising the right of vassals and subjects

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[18] 'l'allure d'un parti politique' Romier, Ibid, p. 276.

[19] N. Zemon Davis, 'The rites of violence: Religious riot in sixteenth-century France', *Past and Present*, 59 (1973): 51-91.

[20] D. Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu, La Violence au Temps des Troubles de Religion (vers 1525 – vers 1610)*, (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990).

to defend their privileges and prerogatives with force.[21] This tradition, which made ample use of the polemic of tyranny, still resonated in the sixteenth century.[22]

In Germany in particular, recent history provided ample precedent for resisting monarchs. The political history of the Holy Roman Empire was dominated by conflicts between local and imperial powers. In the German part of the Empire, these conflicts 'were characterised by fragmented politics under the limp hand of weak emperors, who had no significant institutions to provide the focus for unified political activity on an imperial level ...'[23] Exploiting the institutional weaknesses of the Empire, various princes attempted to rein in the power of the Emperor as well as to extend their own influence and independence. As has already been discussed in Chapter I, appeals to the ancient German liberties were commonly used to support the German princes' political agenda.

A common feature of all these traditions of resistance was the belief that the authority of monarchs, whether the Emperor or the King of France, was conditional rather than absolute. The concept of *dominium politicum et regale* or mixed monarchy as opposed to *dominium regale* or absolute monarchy had already been developed in the fifteenth century.[24] In polities of this type, including the Netherlands, England, and the Holy Roman Empire, the monarch required the consent of the estates or parliament before levying extraordinary taxes or passing important legislation. Encouraged by this conceptual framework, there was a strong sense that individuals and entities, including the nobility, the Church, and cities, were not

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[21] P. Saenger, The earliest French resistance theories: the role of the Burgundian court', *The Journal of Modern History*, 51 (1979): 1225-1249.

[22] Ibid, p. 1227.

[23] B. Scribner, 'Germany', in B. Scribner, R. Porter, and M. Teich (eds.), *The Reformation in National Context*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): pp. 5-6.

[24] H. G. Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments, the Netherlands in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001): pp. xvi and 73-92.

obliged to display unquestioning obedience, but rather had the right (or even duty) to protect their privileges from infringements by power-hungry monarchs. Connected to this idea was the commonly held assumption that violence could be 'a continuation of justice by other means' and that it could be a useful and legitimate tool for addressing political imbalances.[25] A third feature was the central role of the nobility. Theories of resistance were carefully formulated, since it was feared that they might otherwise inspire anarchy. Their martial prerogatives and their role as rulers in their own right made the nobility, and especially high ranking aristocrats such as the princes of the Empire, particularly suitable for safeguarding the rights and privileges of the various estates. Huguenot justifications were judged very much in the light of the German experience.

3.4 Lutheran resistance theory

The Calvinist resistance theories developed throughout the Wars of Religion owed a great deal to the new political thinking developed during the early years of the Reformation. The political necessities of the early 1520s required that largely secular late-medieval ideas be updated. Luther himself was at best ambivalent towards the thought of sanctioning resistance. His theology was most clearly concerned with political theory in the doctrine of the Two Kingdoms, which made a clear distinction between the persuasive authority of the Church, which concerns the soul, and the coercive authority of the state, governing the body.[26] Luther also asserted that the worldly structures of authority, ranging from the state to the household, were instituted by God and thus had to be maintained and protected.[27] His insistence on obedience was inspired partly by Scripture and partly by the traumatic experience

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[25] J. R. Hale, 'Sixteenth-century explanations of war and violence', *Past and Present*, 51 (1971): 3-26 on p. 7.

[26] A. E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought, an Introduction*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999): p. 225.

[27] C. G. Schoenberger, 'Luther and the justifiability of resistance to legitimate authority', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 40 (1979): 3-20, on p. 3.

of the Peasants' Revolt, which, spurred on by the new Reformation ideas, led to a violent break-down of public order. However, as the German Reformation unfolded, it became increasingly clear that the Two Kingdoms were often at variance with each other. Obeying God could sometimes mean disobeying worldly authority and visa versa. The failure of Charles V to recognise the Reformation required new thinking and by 1530, two distinct theories had been created by the lawyers of Hesse and Saxony respectively. [28] The 'constitutionalist theory', developed by the jurists of Philipp of Hesse, argued that since the Holy Roman Empire was an elective monarchy, there were conditions that the Emperor had to comply with in order to maintain his legitimacy as monarch. By breaking these conditions, the Emperor also forfeited his authority and could justly be resisted.[29] The second theory, the 'private law theory' developed by lawyers from Saxony, built on the increasing interest in Roman civil law. It referred to the principle that judges who are blatantly unjust should not be obeyed.[30] This principle was extended to the Emperor, regarding him as an unjust judge.

Although both theories were secular, they had a distinctly religious dimension, namely the assumption that the Emperor's suppression of the Lutheran faith constituted a gross offence against his subjects. Moreover, both theories, though asserting that a level of resistance against the Emperor was permitted, were not intended to be a license for popular sedition and revolt. Resistance was predicated on the idea that the responsibility for good governance was shared among a range of different magistrates, which not only included the Emperor, but also princes, noblemen, and even civic authorities. When the Emperor failed in his duties, which included the advancement of the

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[28] Q. Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume II*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978): pp. 198-199.

[29] Ibid, pp. 198-199; R. M. Kingdon, 'Calvinism and resistance theory, 1550-1580', in J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450-1700*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991): pp. 200-201.

[30] Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume II*, pp. 198-199; Kingdon, 'Calvinism and resistance theory …': pp. 200-201.

true religion, 'lesser magistrates' were allowed or even obliged to intervene.[31] This train of thought was widely disseminated in print and was later to become a central characteristic of Calvinist resistance theory.[32]

The Hessian and Saxon theories formed the foundation for justifying the Schmalkaldic War. Since the Princes of the Augsburg Confession were the most important 'lesser magistrates', a strong awareness of these theories must have prevailed among the Protestant princes even after the war ended in 1548. Moreover, the appeals made to the right to protect their ancient German liberties that supported the princes' alliance with Henry II of France echoed elements of both theories. Consequently, any French narrative justifying or condemning resistance presented to the German Protestant princes was interpreted in the context of these theories.

3.5 Calvinist resistance theory

Calvinist leaders, faced with the threat of violent persecution at the hands of Europe's Catholic princes, also contemplated the justifiability of resistance to monarchs. However, Calvin's own writings on resistance are not quite as dismissive as Luther's. Calvin was a Humanist and knew his Cicero. With the precision and eloquence of a well-trained lawyer, he stated that though it is the duty of a Christian to submit 'patiently to the yoke', the ruler also has a God-given duty, which is 'to lead [the people] with justice and equity'.[33] When a ruler fails, this duty falls to other '"magistrates and orders" to whom "the care of the commonwealth is committed".'[34] Though Calvin failed to define who

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[31] R. von Friedeburg, *Self-Defense and Religious Strife in Early Modern Europe: England and Germany, 1530-1680*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002): p. 70; R. von Friedeburg, 'In defense of Patria: resisting magistrates and duties of patriots in the Empire from the 1530s to the 1640s', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 32 (2001): pp. 262-363.

[32] H. Schilling, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society*, (Leiden: Brill, 1992): p. 240.

[33] Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume II*, p. 214.

[34] Ibid, p. 214.

exactly those 'magistrates and orders' might be, his thinking opened up the possibility of armed resistance to the crown and contributed to some of the most famous political texts of the sixteenth century, François Hotman's *Franco-Gallia* and the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos*.

It has often been argued that the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre changed the nature of Calvinist resistance theory, inspiring ever more sophisticated and radical ideas. The texts from before 1572, by comparison, have often been dismissed as dull and unoriginal and have been described as 'not of great interest to students of political theory.'[35] This attitude has led to a neglect of the large body of texts produced during the first three wars (1562-3, 1567-8, 1568-70) and concerned with justifying and rationalising the actions of the warring parties. These texts where disseminated in manuscript and print and in French, German, and Latin and will be discussed in this chapter The texts from France became part of a larger body of Reformed Protestant literature of resistance that was being developed in the 1550s and 60s. These were particularly turbulent decades for Reformed Protestants throughout Europe. The death of Edward VI and the re-catholicising of England under Mary I led to an exodus of the Reformed Protestants who under Edward had enjoyed great influence.[36] In Scotland, the regency of Marie de Guise, sister of François, coincided with the growth of Protestantism, leading to increased tensions and iconoclastic riots in 1558-9.[37] These tensions escalated into armed conflict and violent resistance against the Catholic regime. The connectedness of the strife in Scotland and the wars in France has often been overlooked. The theoretical framework created to legitimise resistance in Scotland, as well as the success of the armed struggle, played an important role in encouraging the Huguenots in France to pursue aggressive politics.

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[35] Kingdon, 'Calvinism and resistance theory, p. 206.

[36] A. Pettegree, 'The Marian exiles and the Elizabethan settlement', in A. Pettegree (ed.), *Marian Protestantism: Six Studies*, (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996): 129-150.

[37] M. F. Graham, 'Scotland', in A. Pettegree (ed.), *The Reformation World*, (London: Routledge, 2002): pp. 410-431.

These conflicts inspired the formation of ideas about resisting secular authorities that hindered the progress of religious reform. As a safe haven for religious exiles, the Rhineland became the epicentre for the creation of such ideas. John Knox, the father of the Scottish Reformation and the author of the infamous *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, lived in Frankfurt in 1555-56. In 1556 he had two works printed in the Rhineland town of Wesel.[38] Knox's uncompromising attitude reinforced the Lutheran stereotypes about the disorderliness of Reformed Protestants. Lesser-known Calvinist thinkers were also present in the Rhineland. Unhindered by the weight of responsibility experienced by Luther and Calvin, these writers represented a more radical voice. Two such writers were John Ponet and Christopher Goodman, Englishmen who were forced into exile during the reign of Mary Tudor. Both travelled to the Rhineland, were they found a safe environment in which to develop their views on disobedience. Their works, including *A Short Treatise on Politique Power, and of True Obedience which Subjects Owe to Kings* (1556), published in Strasbourg, and *How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyed* (1558), not only relied on Scripture, but also took inspiration from legal tradition, especially natural law.[39] The intellectual climate of the border regions of France and Germany, with cities such as Strasbourg and Basel as important centres from which new ideas spread, thus resonated with talk of resistance.

3.6 French diplomatic missions to Germany

The Huguenots made extensive use of the printing press to convince readers of the legitimacy of their cause. Studying the repeated attempts by both Huguenots and French Catholics to convince the German Protestant princes can shed light on the way in which conceptions of

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[38] Universal Short Title Catalogue, accessed October 21 2015, http://ustc.ac.uk/index.php.

[39] VanDrunen, 'The Use of Natural Law in Early Calvinist Resistance Theory', pp. 143-167.

legitimacy and justifiability developed throughout the first three wars. Although there existed a significant body of pro-Huguenot printed texts in German, the private correspondences of the German princes also contain ample evidence that they were reading French justifications. These letters provide a much more nuanced insight than a simple reliance on pamphlet wars into the ways in which readers understood and interpreted the message they were receiving from France. Letter exchanges reveal a sophisticated dialogue between the French writers and the German recipients. The German princes continued the debate in German amongst themselves. The outcome of these internal debates was to force the French to alter their justifications, tailoring them to address German concerns and ensure a more positive reception.

3.6.1 *The logistics of diplomacy and propaganda*

Before proceeding to discuss the contents of French propaganda aimed at German audiences, it is first important to consider the various ways in which news and propaganda reached these audiences. The most direct, and probably also the most persuasive means of communicating justifications was through personal correspondence. We have already seen that the Duke of Guise addressed Christoph of Württemberg directly during the aftermath of the Massacre of Vassy. Building on their long-standing relation (the two dukes knew each other from the time of Christoph's residence at the French court), François's personal touch was likely to be better received than public polemic. Throughout the wars, the Huguenot and Catholic leadership repeatedly thought it necessary to directly address the German princes in person. These 'personal' letters would often later be printed. The range of letters and therefore different explanations of the conflict and its causes that circulated throughout Europe forced important other actors, such as Charles IX, Catherine de' Medici, and the Prince of Condé, to respond. As early as April 1562, a letter written in name of Charles IX to the Duke of Würrtemberg aimed to 'make sure that you [Christoph] have understood well at this moment the troubles and divisions are taking

place in my kingdom.'[40] As the conflict dragged on, the potential for contradiction and confusion continued. In 1567, Charles IX complained of all the different 'rumours and reports' that were in circulation and once again felt compelled to explain the situation to the Protestant German princes, this time Count Palatine Johann Casimir, the Landgrave of Hesse, and the Marquis of Baden.[41]

In addition to personal correspondence, both warring parties sent diplomatic missions to the courts of the German princes. The most famous Huguenot diplomat was François Hotman. His diplomatic activity dated back to late 1559 or early 1560, when he travelled to Heidelberg to try to persuade the Elector Palatine to support the Conspiracy of Amboise.[42] Heidelberg was the first port of call for most Huguenot missions. But Hotman's first mission to Germany was hampered by the shadowy role of the Prince of Condé, who Hotman claimed to be representing.[43] Condé did publicly come out in support of the coup. Once it failed, he denied complicity and his role in sanctioning the diplomatic mission remains unclear. Hotman, one of the strongest advocates of proactive and aggressive politics, thus lacked the legitimacy of princely support for resistance. The fact that Huguenot ambassadors were not always what they seemed became clear in the autumn of 1561, when both Hotman and another famous French jurist, François Baudouin, travelled the courts of the German Protestant princes claiming to represent Antoine de Bourbon.[44] The details of their journeys are unclear, as are the messages they were trying to convey. Navarre's own religious views shifted in accordance with the political situation and therefore the two men could reasonably claim to speak for

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[40] 'Je m'asseure que vous avez bien entendu de ceste heure les troubles et divisions que sont en mon Royaume ...' Charles IX to Christoph of Württemberg, 17 April 1562, HStASt A 71 Bü 477.

[41] 'bruits et rapports' Charles IX to Johann Casimir, Wilhelm of Hesse, and Philibert of Baden, December 1567 BNF, 15918: 141.

[42] Kelley, *François Hotman, a Revolutionary's Ordeal*, p. 111.

[43] Ibid, p. 111.

[44] Ibid, p. 139.

him, though they held fundamentally different attitudes to the current state of affairs. Though both Huguenots, Hotman was a fierce advocate of an aggressive policy, whereas Baudouin was known for his willingness to compromise. The incompatibility of both men's messages must have been very clear to Friedrich III and Christoph of Württemberg, their primary targets.

Later missions were directly related to the war effort. The most important Huguenot mission to Germany during the First War was undertaken by François de Coligny d'Andelot, younger brother of the Huguenot leaders Gaspard de Coligny and Odet de Châtillon. The purpose of the mission was practical and the involvement of such a prominent Huguenot leader underlined the importance of the mission. He came carrying 'a letter addressed to all the princes of the Augsburg Confession, [to ask for help in] enlisting two to three thousand [cavalry] either without infantry or with approximately six regiments *knechten* (1200 pikemen and 600 arquebusiers …).'[45]

The Catholic leadership too throughout the Wars of Religion dispatched a number of different high profile diplomats to the German Protestant princes. Amongst others, the Lords of Lignerolles and Lansac and Etienne Pasquier, the jurist and historian. The most important was Bernardin Bochetel, the Bishop of Rennes. In November 1567, Charles IX first sent a letter 'to the German princes' to explain that he 'sent the bishop of Rennes, my councillor, to Germany [and] charged him to visit you on my behalf … [to ensure that] you hear about the affairs and state of this kingdom and the causes and nature of the troubles that are there.'[46]

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[45] '… einer an alle Kur- und Fürsten der Augsb. Confession gerichteten Credenzschrift, um eine Hülfe von 2- bis 3000 entweder ohne Fusvolk oder mit ungefähr 6 Fähnlein knechte (1200 Spiesse und 600 Schüzen …) zu gewinnen.' Friedrich III to Christoph of Württemberg, 20 July 1562, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 318.

[46] 'envoyé l'Evesque de Rennes mon counsiller en Allemaigne … donne charge de vous visiter de ma part… vous faire entendre les affaires et stat de ce Royaulme et les causes et qualite des troubles qui sont [la].' Charles IX to the princes of Germany, 1 November 1567, BNF, 15918: 21.

Occasionally, representatives of the Huguenots and Catholics arrived at a prince's court at the same time, presenting the two rival accounts of the war more or less simultaneously. In November 1567, Friedrich III related to the princes of Saxony, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden how shortly after Lansac had turned up

> one of Condé's men arrived at Heidelberg ... Thereafter Lansac desired to engage in a disputation ... with this Condéan, since one could learn from this that the Princes and his party were not concerned with religion but with something else. The Condéan responded to this and desired the colloquium no less.[47]

Similarly, in January 1568 the German Protestant princes gathered at Fulda for a *Kurfürstentag*. At this conference, envoys from both sides presented their explanations of the on-going violent conflict in France.[48] Throughout the first three wars the German princes were thus continually presented with two or more different interpretations of the causes and motives behind the violence. As I will demonstrate in this chapter, these conflicting narratives, which also changed over time, caused confusion amongst the princes.

The third way in which French justifications were disseminated among the princes was through their own correspondence in German. The letter sent by Friedrich to Saxony, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden is characteristic of the way in which the German princes shared information. This practice produced a very interesting body of correspondence proving a unique insight into the ways in which the conflicting French justifications were interpreted and discussed by their intended audience. Moreover, reports shared among the German

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[47] 'en Condé'scher in Heidelberg angekommen ... Darauf begerte Lansac mit dem Condé'schen in Gegenwort ... zu haltem, weil man daraus würde vernehmen können, daß es dem Prinzen und den Seinen nicht um die Religion, sondern um Anderes zo thun wäre. Der Condé'sche ging darauf ein und begehrte das Colluquium nicht minder.' Friedrich III to the princes of Saxony, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden, November 1567, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume II* (Braunschweig: C.A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1870): pp. 147-148.

[48] Ibid, pp. 174-179.

princes are often the only surviving evidence of French diplomatic missions in Germany. The sharing of this information was not only a courtesy, but was necessary for the prevention of the escalation of the conflict to German lands. As Friedrich III phrased it in a letter sent to the Catholic Elector of Trier in 1562:

> Since many reports of the French events ... come to us [we must] also make sure that these things are verified, since because of these in the future all sorts of misunderstandings and unrest may be provoked in the Empire of the German Nation ...[49]

News of the arrival of an envoy and the message he carried was on most occasions passed on to other German princes, both Protestant and Catholic, more often than not accompanied by the interpretation of the writer. This practice ensured that the Imperial princes were on the whole well informed about events and able to judge the veracity of Catholic and Huguenot accounts.

3.6.2 *The Huguenot message*

The Reformed claims for the justifiability of resistance became louder after the Massacre of Vassy and the subsequent train of events that led to the outbreak of the First War in 1562. For the Prince of Condé, communicating the legitimacy of the Huguenot cause was an urgent necessity. Only a day after the Huguenot armies started to mobilise, Condé issued a public proclamation, systematically setting out his aims and motivations. Although very different in tone from the legalistic and theological theories of obedience and resistance outlined above, its arguments can be seen as part of the same tradition. The first part of Condé's argument sounds familiar to those used in fifteenth and sixteenth century conflicts over the balance of power:

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[49] 'Dieweil uns mancherley zeitungen von der Französischen handlungen ... zuekommen und die fursorg tragen, da diesen diengen also nachgeschehen, das dadurch kunftig allerhand misverstand und unruhe im reich Deutscher nation ... leichtlich erweckt werden möcht.' Friedrich III to the Elector of Trier, 11 May 1562, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume I*, p. 299.

the Lord of Guise ... used all his friends and influence to retain the Queen at Fontainebleau ... [and] the duke of Guise went to the King and Queen Mother in arms ... and ... the Queen ... could not help being intimidated at being surrounded by forces against her will and express command. ... And because the lord of Guise, as Grand Master and Great Chamberlain, with the Constable and Marshal Saint-André, shield themselves behind the estates and charges they hold in the kingdom, saying that it is for them to take arms whenever they think fit; added to which, they abuse the authority of the King of Navarre ... the lord prince [of Condé] declares that the above could not better have shown how far they are from their duty of maintaining the King's authority ...[50]

According to Condé, the carefully constituted and God-given order of the Kingdom of France, in which everyone plays their own part according to their rank and status, had thus been violently abused and usurped. After having established the true nature of the Guise usurpation, Condé continued along a line of argumentation that resembles the core Calvinist theory of resistance:[51]

First, [Condé] protests that he is moved by no private concern, but that solely his duty to God, the particular duty he owes to the crown of France, the Queen's government and finally his love of this kingdom, compel him to seek all lawful means before God and men and according to the rank and degree he holds in this kingdom to restore the King's person ... to full liberty and to maintain the observation of the edicts and ordinances of His Majesty ...[52]

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[50] Original in A. Stegman, *Les Édits des Guerres de Religion*, Paris, 1979. I used the translation in Potter (ed.), *The French Wars of Religion, Selected Documents*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997): pp. 73-74.

[51] This gives credence to the view that the protestation might in fact have been composed by Théodore de Bèze. Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, 1555-1563*, (Geneva: Droz, 1956): p. 107.

[52] Potter, *The French Wars of Religion*, pp. 73-74.

Condé here argued that he was forced by his God-given position as Prince of the Blood, arguably one of Calvin's 'magistrates', or as Hessian lawyers would call it, a holder of *Imperium*, to do everything in his power to restore the political order. Condé's protestation was consciously political in nature. The plight of the Huguenots is only mentioned in the context of the Duke of Guise's disobedience to the King's edicts and proclamations, in this case the Edict of January (17-1-1562), which allowed Huguenots a degree of freedom of worship. This tendency to discuss his motivations in secular terms can be explained in two ways. First, Condé and his faction were keen to disassociate themselves from the common perception that Protestantism and political sedition were the same. By using legal vocabulary that echoed pre-Reformation political thought, Condé hoped to appeal beyond the committed Calvinists, who, after Vassy needed little incentive to take up arms.

Condé's public justification also formed the basis of the Huguenots diplomatic missions in Germany. On a number of different occasions, Huguenot diplomats presented the German princes with copies of this document. In early May 1562, for instance, '[Guillaume Stuart, sire de] Vézines, came on behalf of the Prince of Condé, to [Friedrich III], handing over his letter together with the attached protestation of the same prince ...'[53]

Finding the right tone when appealing to the German Protestant princes proved difficult. The first consideration was that the very basis for the Huguenots' request for support was a sense that they shared with the German Protestants the same faith as well as the same enemy. Following this rationale, it would make sense to emphasise their struggle against Catholics, the followers of the Antichrist, and to appeal to a sense of confessional solidarity. Considering his known works, it is likely that Hotman did just that when he attempted to win the backing

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[53] 'Er, der von Vesines, ist von wegen des Prinzen von Conde bey mir gewesen, seyn ausschreiben sambt angeheffter protestation von gemelts prinzen wegen ,ir ubergeben ...' Friedrich III to Christoph of Württemberg, 3 May 1562, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume I*, p. 291.

of Friedrich III and Württemberg in 1561 and 1562. On the other hand, the fraught relationship between Lutherans and Reformed Protestants discussed in the previous chapter made this a dangerous strategy. It is clear from the German princes' correspondence that the Huguenot diplomats were keen at every opportunity to underline that their actions should not be described as 'a reprehensible rebellion against the King, but much more [as] a permissible natural defence against his enemy, the Cardinal of Guise and his adherents.' [54] This shows awareness on the part of the Huguenots of their reputation for sedition, commonly held among Lutherans.

To square this circle, the Huguenot leadership to a large extent based their justifications on the Edict of St Germain, also known as the Edict of January, which on the eve of the outbreak of war granted the French Calvinist limited freedoms of worship. In a letter addressed in September 1563 to the German princes, Coligny and Andelot reiterated 'that the Prince of Condé, the Admiral, and the other allies had not wished for anything more than the peace, and the maintenance of the Royal edicts.'[55] The Huguenots thus argued that the religious freedoms they desired were also, at least in part, the wish of the King and that therefore the promotion of their religious agenda coincided with their concern for the protection of the King's authority.

Huguenot justifications sounded very similar during the Third and Fourth Wars. Jeanne d'Albret, Queen of Navarre and one of the Huguenots' political leaders, was during this period active in communicating with foreign Protestant princes.[56] The three themes, identified by Nancy Roelker, that formed the basis for Jeanne's

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[54] 'ein sträfliche Rebellion wider den König, sondern vielmehr eine erlaubte narürliche Defension wider ihre Feinde, den Cardinal Guise und seine Adhärenten …' Friedrich III to August of Saxony, 12 December 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 150.

[55] 'das der Printz von Conde, der Ammiral, und die andere Ire mit und buntsverwanten nichts hohers gewunscht alls den fridden, unnd handthabung des koniglichen Edicts.' Gaspard de Coligny and François de Coligny d'Andelot, September 1563, HStAM 3, 1854: f. 35.

[56] N. L. Roelker, *Queen of Navarre, Jeanne d'Albret, 1528-1572*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1968): pp. 301-302.

argument corresponded closely to Condé's justification from six years earlier. Jeanne d'Albret championed the religious freedoms of the Huguenots by pointing out that these freedoms had been agreed in various edicts and treatises (St German, Amboise, and Longjumeau). Moreover, using the classic trope of the 'evil counsellors', she again blamed the breaking of these edicts on the Guise.[57] Finally, she praised the Huguenots' restraint when responding to the overwhelming Catholic aggression.[58]

However, as Hugues Daussy has argued, these 'constitutional' underpinnings of their justification were not quite sufficient.[59] Accusations of personal political ambition, which, as we shall see, were frequently launched against Condé and Coligny, forced the two Huguenot leaders to underline their commitment to their religious agenda. Moreover, it is important to add that this religious agenda as presented by Condé, Coligny, d'Albret, and other Huguenot leaders did not constitute the creation of a Calvinist France, but, at least on the short term, freedom of worship for Protestants. This prospect was likely to appeal to the German Lutherans. Increased religious freedoms in France, though not in itself something the German princes aspired to, could pave the way for the spread of the Lutheranism in the kingdom. As will be discussed in chapter IV, the creation of an environment in France in which the religion of the Augsburg Confession could flourish was central to the vision for France promoted by a number of German princes. Moreover, in order to persuade the German Protestant princes to engage in far-reaching military action on behalf of the Huguenots, the defence of the 'true religion' in the face of Catholic aggression had to be part of the motivation.

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[57] Ibid, pp. 301-302.

[58] Ibid, pp. 301-302.

[59] Daussy, *Le Parti Huguenot*, p. 304.

3.6.3 *The Catholic message*

In response to the Huguenot diplomatic efforts in Germany, the French Catholic leadership also justified their position. In three letters sent by Catherine de' Medici to the Bishop of Rennes, France's most prominent envoy to the German princes, the essence of their message is clearly summed up. Firstly, the French Catholic efforts were launched in reaction to the Huguenot courting of the German princes. In July 1562, Catherine expressed her concern that 'those who are in Orléans, having persuaded the princes of Germany that the entire subject and foundation of our strife is only religion, have great hope of having some relief from them in the shape of cavalry and infantry ...'[60] Although Catherine does not quite capture either the crux of the Huguenot message, nor the likelihood of immediate military support from the German Protestants, it is clear that the possibility of a German-Huguenot alliance troubled her greatly. In September, Rennes was dispatched to 'visit on behalf of the King ... the princes of Germany who are attending the said Diet [at Frankfurt].'[61] Rennes mission was clear: to stop the recruitment of 'soldiers who [the princes] have permitted to be levied in Germany to the benefit of those who are notorious rebels against the King.'[62] To add weight to his message, Rennes was instructed to remind them of the 'friendship' and the 'help, favour, and pleasures that the princes of Germany have received from this crown' and warn that supporting the Huguenots could damage the 'perpetual

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[60] 'ceulx qui sont à Orleans ayans persuadé les princes de la Germanie que tout le subject et fondement de noz dissensions est le seul faict de la religion, sont en grande espérance d'avoir quelque secours d'eulx de gens de cheval et de pié ...' Catherine de' Medici to the Bishop of Rennes, 22 July 1562, H. de la Ferrière, *Lettres de Catherine de Medicis, Volume I: 1533-1563*, (Paris: Impremerie Nationale, 1880): p. 363.

[61] 'd'aller visiter de la part du Roy ... les princes de la Germanie qui assisteront à ladicte diette ...' Ibid, p. 417.

[62] 'des gens de guerre qu'ilz ont permis estre levez en Germanie à la faveur de ceulx qui sont notoirement rebelles au Roy ...' Ibid, p. 417.

friendship and alliance that has always existed between the Holy Roman Empire and the Kingdom of France.'[63]

Access to and control of the German mercenary market was a pressing concern. German *landsknechten* and *reiters*, for the most part Protestants, formed the backbone of most armies, Catholic and Huguenot, during the Wars of Religion. Appeals to the long-standing good relationship between the Protestant princes and the French monarchy, which was substantiated in a formal alliance by Henry II in 1552, were more than a diplomatic courtesy. Many Protestant princes regarded the support of the Kingdom of France as an important precondition for offsetting the danger of Catholic Habsburg aggression. Although the Peace of Augsburg removed some of the immediate fears, it is evident from the princes' correspondence throughout the Wars of Religion that the maintenance of good relations with the French monarchy was a constant concern.[64]

The second element of the Catholic diplomats' strategy in Germany appealed to the stereotypical understanding of Reformed Protestantism held by many Lutherans. Throughout the first three wars, the Catholic envoys routinely described the Huguenot faction as 'rebellious subjects'.[65] Not surprisingly, this damning condemnation of the Huguenot party's political agenda dated back to the Conspiracy of Amboise. During the aftermath of the Conspiracy, a letter written on behalf of Francis II to Philipp of Hesse described in no uncertain terms how the conspirators tried to use religion to cloak their seditious agenda. The conspirators, who had launched an attack 'against our person, also against the princes and our most important servants and

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[63] 'amitié' 'les aydes, faveurs et plaisirs que la princes de la Germanie ont receuz de ceste couronne.' 'la perpetuelle amitié et alliance qui a toujours estré entre le Sainct-Empire et la couronne de France.' Ibid, pp. 417-418.

[64] For instance, when Wolfgang of Zweibrücken in 1563 contemplated supporting the Huguenots in various ways, he wrote to Christoph of Württemberg: 'Concerning the King of France we have good hope that he will not damn us scandalously …' 'Was dan den Khonig aus Frankreich betrifft sein wir auch der getrösten hoffning er werde unns onverhört nicht verdammen …' Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Christoph of Württemberg, April 1563, HStASt A 71 Bü 917, 28.

[65] 'subjects Rebelles' Charles to IX to the ambassadors of Hesse, January 1568, BNF, 15918: f. 210.

loyal subjects of our kingdom …', 'amongst others misuse the name of religion, [and] under the pretext of this religion were to recruit some foreign princes to their cause …'[66] This trope remained in use during the first three wars. It proved to be particularly effective since it played to deep-seated Lutheran fears about the rebelliousness of social inferiors.

The Protestant princes of the Empire were exposed to the Catholic message for more than a decade. The intensity of Catholic diplomatic efforts is illustrated in a letter written by Friedrich III to Charles IX in 1568. Although it is safe to assume that Friedrich's description is somewhat exaggerated, it still gives a strong sense of the scope of Catholic propaganda as well as of the aggressiveness of the message:

> Your ambassadors Lignerolles, the Bishop of Rennes, and Lansac have throughout Germany sown the rumour that the present troubles are not about religion and to prove this they have alleged that the Edict of Pacification has always been maintained in its entirety and that the acts of my lord the Prince and his party was nothing else but a horrible rebellion against their King, and that they want to deprive you of the crown, and that my lord the Prince wanted to make himself king.[67]

This message appealed more to the Catholic princes of the Empire. In their correspondence with their Lutheran peers, the German Catholics echoed the words of Rennes. For instance, envoys from the Archbishop of Trier, discussing the matter with Friedrich's councillors in May 1562,

[66] 'widder unnser person, auch widder die fürsten unnd unsere fürnembsten diener und getraue underthanen unsers reichs.' 'under andern des damens der religion misbrauchten, unnder wilcher religion schein die etliche auslendische fürsten sollicitirt haben soltten …' Francis II to Philipp of Hesse, 17 March 1559, HStAM 3, 1843: f. 87-88.

[67] '… vos Ambassadeurs Lignerolles, Levesque de Rennes, et Lansac ont par toute l'Allemaigne semé bruict que les p[rese]ns troubles nestoient point pour la religion, et pour prouve cela ils ont allegué que l'Edict de Pacification est tousioures demouré en son entire, et que le faict de Mons[r] le Prince & les siens nestoit aultre chose qu'une horrible rebellion contre leur Roy, et quils vous vouliens oster la couronne, et que Monsr le Prince se vouloit faire Roy …' Friedrich III to Charles IX, 19 January 1568, BNF, 15918, f. 189-190.

were adamant that the conflict in France was 'explicitly a rebellion', strongly dismissing the suggestion that religion had anything to do with it.[68] Thus, the Protestant princes were not only put under pressure by the French to denounce Condé's party, but also by one of the most important Catholic princes of the Empire.

3.7 French propaganda in print

The conflict in France not only dominated the private correspondence of the princes but was also hotly debated in the public domain. The printed pamphlet, a genre that came of age during the Reformation, played a central role in informing debate and fuelling conflict. In the 1550s and 60s, Calvin produced at least 100,000 printed words a year, ranging from long and sophisticated scholarly texts to shorter pamphlets aimed at broader audiences.[69] Besides this enormous output, the printing presses of Switzerland and France were also occupied with the production of the ever-increasing body of pamphlets that fuelled the French Wars of Religion. Besides the Protestants, who had best exploited the possibilities of the printed text, Catholic writers now too found their voice in print. This increasingly bitter conflict in print found its climax in the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 24 August 1572.[70]

The transnational impact of the French Wars of Religion is once again underlined by the fact that the pamphlet war was fought in German as well as in French. Between the Conspiracy of Amboise (1560) and the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre (1572) at least 113 separate titles about the wars in France were published in the Holy Roman Empire (see Figure 6). The overwhelming majority of this output was in German: 101 titles in German, nine in French and three in Latin. Cornel Zwierlein has calculated that more than 90,000 copies of

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[68] 'ausdrücklich eine Rebellionssache', Friedrich's council to Friedrich III, 27 May 1562, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 305.

[69] A. Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010): p. 208.

[70] Ibid, p. 213.

the various pro-Huguenot pamphlets in German were printed during the First War alone.[71] As well as engaging German audiences in the debates about the nature of the French Wars of Religion, the pamphlets also played to the insatiable demand for news. This helps explain both the popularity of texts about France and the fact that they generally appeared in one edition only. Similar to many other news pamphlets, the titles of these publications emphasised that the information presented was both 'recent' and 'accurate'.[72] Moreover, the peaks in output in the years 1562 and 1568 – 27 and 16 titles respectively - shows that flare-ups in France were quickly reflected in German texts.

Place of publication	Strasbourg		Heidelberg		Unspecified		Other		
Language:	F	G	F	G	F	G	F	G	L
1560	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
1561	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0
1562	0	1	0	13	0	12	0	1	0
1563	0	4	0	3	0	5	0	4	2
1564	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1565	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1566	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
1567	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
1568	0	2	0	2	0	11	0	1	0
1569	1	3	0	0	0	3	0	3	0
1570	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	6	1
1571	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
1572	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	4	0
Total:	9	16	0	22	0	37	0	26	3
	25		22		37		29		

Figure 6: Table of works about the French Wars of Religion printed in the Holy Roman Empire.[73]

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[71] C. Zwierlein, *Discorso und Lex Dei, Die Entstehung neuer Denkrahmen in 16. Jahrhundert und die Wahrnehmung der Französische Religionskriege in Italien und Deutschland*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003): p. 670.

[72] 'newlich' Anon., *Kurze beschreibung des Aufflauffs/ so sich newlich in Franckreich zu Ambosen/ wider deren von Guysze Regierung/ von dem Frantzösischen Adel in dem Mertzen/ des yetzlauffenden sechsigsten jars erhaben hatt. Darbey aycg angeschenckt/ Das offentlich auszschreiben beider Königreich Engellandt/ und Franckreich gemelter von Guyss Regierung betreffende*, (s. l.: s. n., 1560); 'warhaftig' Anon., *Kurtzer warhaffter un[d] Grundtlicher Bericht/ von der Baptischen Conspiration und Bündtnuß/ auch derselbigen jetzigen kriegsexpedition in Franckrych und Brabanct sampt deren ursachen. Zu Christlicher getrüwer Warning der Frommen Tütschen/ so sich deßwegen in dienst und bestallung und geringes zergeugkliches guts und gelts willen begeben und inlassend*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568), f. 1 v.

[73] For the creation of this table I relied on the Universal Short Title Catalogue and the catalogue of the microfilm collection *Flugschriften des Späteren 16. Jahrhunderts*. The figures presented thus represent minimum values and do not account for texts that do

As in France, Protestant texts heavily outnumbered those championing the Catholics cause. Moreover, the production of texts about France was concentrated in a small number of cities. With its well-developed printing industry, Geneva was of pivotal importance for the production of pro-Huguenot propaganda in French. The city's printers produced 'dozens of editions' of Condé's manifesto.[74] In the Holy Roman Empire, the printers of Strasbourg and Heidelberg took up Geneva's role. The prominence of Strasbourg as a centre for the production of texts about France is not surprising. A printing industry had been established in the city since the 1460s and as the Rhineland's major trading hub it remained one of the Empire's most important centres for the production of printed texts. Moreover, its proximity to France, large francophone community, and reputation as a city that provided religious dissenters unusual freedoms made Strasbourg an obvious base from which the Huguenots could direct their propaganda efforts. In 1560, François Hotman made use of two Strasbourg printers to publish *L'Histoire du Tumulte d'Amboyse* and the inflammatory *Epistre envoiee au Tigre de la France*, a pamphlet which deployed Ciceronian republican rhetoric to novel effect.

Heidelberg's printing industry was of relatively minor importance. The contrast with Strasbourg is clearly illustrated by the number of titles produced in the period between 1560 and 1572: the Universal Short Title Catalogue lists 862 titles for Strasbourg against 197 for Heidelberg. Nonetheless, Heidelberg trumped Strasbourg as the most important centre for the production of pro-Huguenot texts. Cornel Zwierlein has demonstrated that the numbers in Figure 6 are somewhat misleading. By comparing typefaces, especially capitals, he concluded that a large proportion of the anonymously printed pamphlets were

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not survive or are not (yet) included in either catalogue. Universal Short Title Catalogue, accessed October 21 2015, http://ustc.ac.uk/index.php; H. Köhler, *Register, Flugschriften des Späteren 16. Jahrhunderts, Lieferung I – XIV*, (Leiden: IDC Publishers, 2015).

[74] Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*, p. 107.

produced in Heidelberg.[75] Relative to the size of Heidelberg's printing industry, the city's printers thus devoted a much larger proportion of its resources to the production of texts about France than Strasbourg. Rather than a purely commercial decision, this seems to have been coordinated by Friedrich III. In line with his championing of the Huguenot cause in correspondence, the Elector also made Heidelberg a hub from which the Huguenots' diplomatic and propaganda campaigns were launched. Moreover, from that city Condé's protestation (as well as Huguenot justifications in the subsequent two wars) was also 'copied in manuscript and sent to other princes'.[76]

3.7.1 *Pro-Huguenot pamphlets*

The tone of most pamphlets contrasts with that of the diplomatic correspondence discussed above. Whereas the Huguenots' letters speak of the constitutional privileges of the princes of the blood, the rights granted by the various peace edicts, and the restraint of Condé and his party, many pamphlets invoke an epic struggle between good and evil. A favoured rhetorical device was the use of classical or biblical archetypes of evil. In a pamphlet justifying the Conspiracy of Amboise, the writer not only likened Charles de Lorraine to Tarquinius Superbus, but also stated that 'the Cardinal … is Amaziah the priest of Bethel, who was held in high regard by King Jeroboam.'[77] These two examples

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[75] C. Zwierlein, 'Une propaganda huguenote internationale: le début des Guerres de Religion en France perçues en Allemagne, 1560-1563', in J. Foa and P. Mellet, *Le Bruit des Armes Mises en Formes et Désinfromations en Europe pendant les Guerres de Religion (1560-1610)*, (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2012): pp. 397-415; C. Zwierlein, 'The Palatinate and Western Europe, 1555-1563', in C. Strohm and J. Stievermann (eds.), *The Heidelberg Catechism: Origins, Characteristics, and Influences, Essays in Reappraisal on the Occasion of its 450th Anniversary*, (Gütersloh: Gütersloh Verlaghaus, 2015): pp. 163-188, on p. 171.

[76] '… übersetzt und handschriftlich an andere Fürsten verschickt wurden …' Zwierlein, *Discorso und Lex Dei*, p. 655.

[77] '… als Tarquinii Superbi …' '… der Cardinal von Lotheringen seye Amazia dem Priester zu Bethel / der bey dem König Jeroboam in grosser würde unnd ansehen war …' Anon., *Kurze beschreibung des Aufflauffs/ so sich newlich in Franckreich zu Ambosen/ wider deren von Guysze Regierung/ von dem Frantzösischen Adel in dem Mertzen/ des yetzlauffenden sechsigsten jars erhaben hatt. Darbey aycg angeschenckt/*

powerfully reflect the Huguenot grievances towards the Cardinal. Lorraine not only, like the last King of Rome, behaved as a murderous and power-hungry tyrant but also as a false prophet, misleading the King and blinding him for the truth of the religion of the Huguenots.

Other pamphlets provide a more systematic but no less emotional exposition of the Huguenot position. In a pamphlet printed in Heidelberg in 1562, the writer appealed to natural law to justify Condé's actions, arguing that he acted out of self-defence: 'Seeing that it is public knowledge that His Grace [Condé] did not take up arms first, and that His Grace had good reasons, according to natural law and the King's justice', to resist those 'who against the express command of the King have armed themselves.'[78] The pamphlet then proceeds to engage directly with the Catholic propaganda efforts, lamenting that the Catholics 'have called out throughout the entire world that [Condé] is a rebel and an enemy of the King' and that 'they have released much false and deceitful clamour against His Grace.'[79] The inclusion of this clause is telling. It shows that Catholic accusations of rebellion and sedition were being disseminated widely and that they threatened to weaken support for the Huguenots in Germany. This need to engage with Catholic propaganda is underlined by another section from the same pamphlet, this time tackling the awkward problem of iconoclasm: 'Concerning the iconoclasm committed at Tours and Blois ... [Condé] intends to offer them [the King's officers] all help and support so that such violators as

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Das offentlich auszschreiben beider Königreich Engellandt/ und Franckreich gemelter von Guyss Regierung betreffende, (s. l.: s. n, 1560), f. 4 v.

[78] '... in ansehung daß offenbar und gewiß ist / daß ir F. G. [Condé] nit erstlich zu den waffen griffen haben / und daß ir F. G. gute sug und ursach gehabt / von natürlichen rechts und billichait wegen den Konig ... welche wider der Königin außdrucklich verbott sich in rüstung begebe[n].' Anon., *Andere Erclärung des Hertzogen von Conde/ in welche die anfänger und ursächer diser jetzigen empörung in disem Königreich Franckreich offenbaret: und was irem F. G. bißher zu hin[n]legung derselben fürzunemen gebürt hat/ un[d] noch gebüren will/ angezaigt wird*, (Heidelberg: s. n., 1562), p. 5.

[79] '... dieselbigen [Condé] durch die gantze welt für auffrhurer un[d] feinde des Königs außschreien ... sie lassen vil falschen lugenhafftiges geschrai / wider ir F. G. ... außgehen.' Ibid, p. 14.

example and deterrent for others will be punished.'[80] Iconoclasm continued to be a problem for the Huguenot leadership, since it confirmed in a particularly visible way the stereotypical understanding of the seditious and tumultuous Reformed Protestants. Moreover, the practice underlined confessional differences between the Huguenots and the overwhelmingly Lutheran German Protestants whose help the pamphlets tried to solicit.

The necessity of countering the potentially damaging influence of Catholic propaganda is addressed in most pro-Huguenot pamphlets. A remarkably wide variety of techniques of persuasion are used for this purpose. A particularly striking example is a pamphlet printed in 1562. Rather than offering a direct refutation of Catholic accusations of sedition, it provides a translation of a prayer supposedly said in the Huguenots' military camps. The soldiers pray God

> that Thou will guide us, our hands, and our weapons through the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, so that we let our wages be sufficient for us, that we live in discipline and moderation, without quarrels, mutiny, pranking, robbery, blasphemy, fornication, or other extravagance, walking in fear of Thee ... that we with a good conscience maintain and protect Thou Honour, together with the welfare of our fatherland, under the regiment of the Queen.[81]

Despite its seemingly neutral tone, this text served to convey effectively two important components of the Huguenots' justification. Firstly, the Huguenot army did not constitute a lawless mob bent on destruction

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[80] 'Was aber das bilderstürmen zu Tours und zu Bloys bagangen anlangt ... sie [Condé] wollten inen [the King's officers] alle hilff un[d] beistand thun dz sölche übertretter anderen zum exempel und abscheuwen gestrafft werden.' Ibid, p. 23.

[81] '... das da uns / unser hende / und waffen / durch die gnade deines hailigen gaistes / also laiten un[d] fueren wöllest / auft das wir uns unsers solds benügen lassen / in aller zucht unnd messigkeyt lebe / ohne gezenck / meutterey / balgerey / Raub / gotteslesterung / hurerey / oder ander uppigkeyt / durch deine gnade / in deiner forcht wandln ... das wir inn eim gutten gewissen / deine ehr / zusampt unsers Kunigs und Vatterlands wolfart / under der kunigin Regiment erhaltten un[d] beschütze[n] sollenn.' Anon., *Gebett die in des Härzogen von Conde Veldleger in Franckreich gehalten und nach gelegenheyt der zeit gerichtet warden*, (s. l.: s. n., 1562), p. 4.

and the overthrowing of the political and social order. On the contrary, Condé's God-fearing men aimed to restrain from every 'extravagance', even those you would normally expect from soldiers, such as blasphemy or fornication. Secondly, the prayer revealed the Huguenot army's true intention, namely the protection of the King, the Queen Mother, and their kingdom.

The pamphleteers also made clever use of developments during the wars. In 1562, Elizabeth agreed to support the Huguenots militarily. The agreement resulted in the occupation of Le Havre by an English force led by the Earl of Warwick.[82] Elizabeth's support lent the revolt badly needed legitimacy. Protestant propaganda attempted to capitalise on this and a German pamphlet was devoted to the Anglo-Huguenot alliance. It provided a German translation of a text, supposedly written by Elizabeth herself, in which the Queen outlined her reasons for supporting the Huguenots.

> Then, although the cause of this entire affair was first completely obscure, it has still come thus far, that many know, and the Queen [Elizabeth] has found, that not only her beloved brother the King of France has against all equity been endangered by some of His Majesty's subjects, who are hostile to the same Majesty's relatives, and who treat the innocent subjects pitifully, torturing them horrendously, and murdering them in a tyrannical fashion.[83]

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[82] J. B. Trim, 'Seeking a Protestant alliance and liberty of conscience on the Continent, 1558-85', in S. Doran and G. Richardson (eds.), *Tudor England and its Neighbours*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005): pp. 139-177.

[83] 'Denn ob wol die ursach dises gantzen haldels erstlich gantz und gar verborgen gewesen / so ist es doch nun mehr so weit kommen / dasz meniglich waisz / und die Königin in wreck befunden / dasz nicht allain ir geliebter brud der König in Franckreich von etlichen serselben M. underthanen wider alle billichkait in euserte gefahr gebracht ist / die derselben blutsverwandten feindtlich anfeinden / un[d] mit den unschuldigen underthanen uffs erbarmlischste umgehen / sie auffs greuwlischste martern / und gantz tyrannischer weis ermörden ...' Anon., *Der Königin zu Engeland Außschreiben/ darinnen sie die ursachen anzaiget/ warumb sie etliche irer underthanen auffgebracht/ ire und ires vilgeliebten Brüders Carols des Neündten/ Königs in Franckreich/ underthanen damit zubeschützen*, (Frankfurt: Ludwig Lücken, 1563), pp. 3-4.

This pamphlet shows that the pro-Huguenot writers were not above fabrication. Despite the taking of La Havre, Elizabeth never unconditionally supported the Huguenots. After the end of the First War, Elizabeth was keen to emphasise that the mission had been a response to the loss of Calais to the French in 1558. Moreover, though continuing to support the Huguenots with money and supplies, Elizabeth preferred to do so covertly, insisting 'that she would never encourage or support any subject in rebellion against his prince.'[84] However, by putting the words of Condé's justification in the mouth of Elizabeth, the anonymous writer of the pamphlet added more credibility to the message.

When open war broke out again in 1567, the printing of pro-Huguenot pamphlets was continued with renewed vigour. Moreover, as the conflict continued, the texts became more sophisticated. Increasingly, they made the reader aware of the source of the text. A good example is a pamphlet printed in Heidelberg in 1568. The Huguenot message had barely altered, since the pamphlet still argued 'that the Lord prince and his party are not motivated to take up arms and resist by nothing else but the justifiable fear that they [the Catholics] intended to do something against his religion and against his person.'[85] This time, though, the writer of the text is referred to, namely Odet de Châtillon, brother of Coligny and one of the most prominent Huguenot diplomats. Another type of pamphlet that was frequently used was translations of public documents, such as edicts and proclamations. These pamphlets were particularly persuasive since writers could bend their contents somewhat without losing the veneer of objectivity by guiding the reader with introductions and annotations.

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[84] Trim, 'Seeking a Protestant alliance, p. 164.

[85] '... Daß den Herren Printzen unnd seine mitverwanten nichts anders beweget hett / sich in kriegsrüstung und zur gegenwehr zubegeben / als allein die billiche forcht die sie gehabt hetten / daß man etwas wider ihre Religion und wider ihre personen fürzunemen sich understehn wolle[n].' Anon., *Relation und Bericht des Cardinals von Chastillon was sich zwüschen der königlichen Würden in Franckreich Verordneten auch ihme und anderen von wegen des Printzen von Conde abgesanten/ der verströsten unnd hernacher zerschlagnen friedshandlung halben inn newligkeit verlauffen etc.*, (Heidelberg: Agricola, 1568), f. 4 v.

We have already encountered a German translation of the Huguenot Church Order (including a preface arguing for the holiness of the text by pointing towards the persecution of its adherents) as well as translations of a letter from the inhabitants of Rouen and a prayer. These examples show the remarkable range of translated texts used for propaganda purposes. Most commonly used for this purpose, though, were public proclamations. The peace edicts of Amboise, Longjumeau, and Saint-German-en-Laye, ending the first three wars, all appeared in German translations. [86] Considering that the edicts granted the Huguenots some limited freedoms of worship and protection from Catholic violence, making Protestant Germany aware of these texts was a priority for Huguenot propagandists. When France descended into open war again in 1567 and 1568, the Huguenots lamented that their religious rights were being violated. The (re)publication of the edicts in German allowed the people of the Holy Roman Empire to verify this claim. One particularly large publication tied most of the abovementioned elements together. A printed text from 1569 of over a hundred pages long not only provided translations of all the most important edicts and treaties, but also a lengthy polemical account of the causes and development of the first three wars.[87] To add to the

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[86] Anon., *Edict und Erclerung/ von der Königlichen würden in Franckreich/ CAROLO dem IX. ausgegangen/ von wegen der friedtshandlung und hinlegung der netbörungen so in gemeltem königreich entstanden*, (s. l.: s. n., 1563); Anon., *Newe warhafftige Zeitung aus Franckreich, Nemlich das Edict unnd Erklerung des Durchleuchtigen und Christlichen Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Carlen des Namens des 9. Von Wegen der fridshandlung und hinlegung de Empöru[n]g so gegenwertige zeit zwüschen seiner königlichen würden und dem hochgebornen Printzen von Conde sampt seinen mitverwanten wider in gemeltem königreich entstanden und eingrissen, Auß dem französichen trewlich und fleissig verdolmetscht*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568); Anon., *Friefhandlung in Franckreich. Warhafftige beschreibung des Edicts unnd befehls des königs ausz Franckreich/ uber den Vertrag un[d] hinlegung der zwispalt und zerrüttung derselbigen königreich/ etc. Ausz dem Frantzösischen Exemplar trewlich verteutscht*, Langingen, Emmanuel Seltzer, (s. l.: s. n., 1570).

[87] Anon., *Frantzösischen kriegsempörung. Das ist Gründlicher Warhafftiger Bericht/ von jüngst verschienenen ersten und andern/ und jetz zum dritten mal newer vorstehender kriegsempörung in Franckreich. Darinnen angezeigt wirdt/ Auß was genotdrangten hochheblichen ursachen/ die newen Reformierten Religions verwanthe/ (wie man sie nennet) widerumb gegenwertige unvermeidliche Defension und Nothwehre wider des Cardinals von Lottringen/ und seines Angangs der Papisten unerhörte Fridbrüchtige verfolgung für die handtzunemen getrungen. Deßgleichen was er gestalt obgedachter Cardinal durch zerrüttung wachsen auff und zunemmen gesucht. Item/ Abschrifft einer Werbung/ So der königin auß Engelandt Gesandter/ bey der königlichen Würden in*

persuasiveness of the text, the writer laced the prose with vivid accounts of atrocities committed by Catholics against Huguenots. This particular publication sums up the various techniques of persuasion employed by Huguenot writers. First, it was important to emphasise the justifiability of their cause. According to the laws God, nature, and the Kingdom of France, they had justice on their side, so argued the pamphlets. Secondly, the pamphleteers used biting polemics to attack their enemies. Thirdly, the pamphlets aimed to provoke a sense of pity for the sufferings of the poor people of France, who had done nothing but obey God and king.

3.7.2 *Pro-Catholic pamphlets*

Mirroring the diplomatic developments of the 1560s, Catholic pamphlets in German, intended to offset the effects of the Huguenot propaganda, soon followed. Although pro-Catholic pamphlets were less numerous, they nonetheless presented a strong argument. It consisted of two simple and connected elements. The first directly attacked Huguenot justifications. It was argued repeatedly that Condé's claims of political legitimacy and piety were nothing more than a pretext for subversion. A pamphlet printed as early as 1561 poured scorn on all Huguenots claiming to be defending the true religion against Catholic persecution:

> … especially their disgraceful intention to whitewash [their actions] with the Gospel of Christ, even though there is no religion in the world, that gives subjects the power to use the sword without the command or permission of their sovereign, [moreover] God's Word has not been created by human power, let alone that it is in need of human help … [88]

Franckreich etc. gethan. Auß Frantzösischer Sprach trewlich verdolmetschet, (s. l.: s. n., 1569).

[88] '… sonder ir schandtlich fürnemen auch / mit Christi Evangelio beschönen wöllen / da doch kein Religion inn der Welt ist / die den Underthanen gewalt gibt / das Schwert zugebrauchen / one ihr Oberkeit bevelch und zulassung / Gottes Wort hat nit durch Menschlichen gewalt auffgenommen / noch vil weniger Menschlicher hülff bedorfft …' Anon., *Verantworttung für die Konigklich Mayestet von Franckreich wider*

Besides undermining the legitimacy of the Huguenot cause, Catholics were also keen to underline the misbehaviour of Calvinists and their disregard for the natural order. As in diplomatic correspondence, the word rebellion also pops up with great regularity in pro-Catholic pamphlets. Catholic propagandists too were keen to appeal to the emotions of the reader by painting vivid pictures of the barbarity of the Huguenots. Naturally, mentioning the iconoclastic riots was popular, as well as the disobedience of Condé and his party. A pamphlet from 1562 illustrates the tone of much of the Catholic propaganda. It reminded the reader 'that all churches in this Kingdom are being damaged, overthrown, and pillaged, with great disdain for God, his Church, the King, [and] his rulings and edicts.'[89] Despite the fact that the volume of pro-Catholic pamphlets was significantly smaller, the message they conveyed was clear.

3.7.3 *Audiences*

The question remains, for who were these pamphlets intended? The sheer number of texts about France printed in the empire, the size of the print runs, and the fact that the overwhelming majority of these texts were in German point toward a relatively wide readership. Miriam Chrisman has chronicled the growth in importance of printing in the vernacular and has demonstrated how this fostered the formation of a type of printed text quite separate from the scholarly tradition.[90] This

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derselben Rebellen Schrift/ ihr Mayestet vollkom[m]ens Alter belangend, Auß dem Frantzösischen inns Teutsch gebracht, (s. l.: s. n., 1561), f. 15 v.

[89] Dasz alle kirchen so in disem Königreich geschwächt / abgeworffen un[d] geplündert worden / zu grosser verachtu[n]g Gottes / seiner kirchen / des Königs / seiner ordnungen und Edicten ...' Anon., *Erclärung un[d] Schreiben der Herzogen von Guise/ Connestabels und Marschalcks von sanct Andre/ dem König und der Königin in Franckreich gethan/jetzige kriegsrüstung/ und wie derselben zuhelffen/ belangend',* (Heidelberg: Ludwig aus der Wetterau, 1562), p. 7.

[90] M. U. Chrisman, 'Printing and the evolution of lay culture in Strasbourg', in R. Po-chia Hsia (ed.), *The German People and the Reformation*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 74-101.

lay readership, which Chrisman defined as 'men and women without a university education who were not involved in the intellectual establishment', formed an important market for the printing industry.[91] Moreover, this group of book-reading laypeople, which included 'military men, patricians, artisans, designers, engineers, apothecaries, accountants, veterinary surgeons, and housewives', were considered to be sufficiently significant to attempt to mobilise.[92] The importance of shaping public opinion was widely recognised; governments did not only use the technology of print to inform the population about new legislation or taxation but also to persuade the readers of the necessity and justifiability of these measures.[93] The rewards of winning over sections of the urban elite can be seen in the financial support provided by Hamburg merchants for the campaign of Wolfgang of Zweibrücken in 1569.[94]

A second clue pointing towards the intended audience of printed works about France can be found in the texts themselves. The length and sophistication of many of these pamphlets makes it seem likely that at least a significant proportion of the pamphlets were aimed at the educated. References to classical antiquity, the Old Testament, and natural law that can be found in many pamphlets presuppose a certain level of sophistication. Other works published by and for this audience show that this group was interested in the wider world, keen to appear cultured, and devoted to self-improvement. Though lacking the depth of knowledge of the scholarly elite, these laymen were reading books on theology, science, geography, ethics, and drama.[95] Texts explaining the nature of the conflict that was unfolding on their doorstep fit well

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[91] Ibid, p. 76.

[92] Ibid, p. 76.

[93] A. Pettegree, *The Invention of News, How the World Came to Know about Itself* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014): p. 84-88.

[94] See chapter VI.

[95] Chrisman, 'Printing and the evolution of lay culture', p. 75.

within this body of literature, at the same time satisfying their thirst for news, interest in world affairs, and concerns for religion and morality.

Finally, Cornel Zwierlein has argued that these pamphlets served a more direct political goal and were primarily aimed at German mercenary soldiers.[96] Certainly, considering the key importance of German mercenaries on the battlefields of France, persuading these men of the merits of the Huguenot or Catholic causes could prove crucial. Moreover, some of the pamphlets even directly addressed the soldiers.[97] On the other hand, literacy was not particularly widespread among the social class providing the bulk of the mercenary soldiers. They must therefore mostly have relied on the public reading of the shorter pamphlets by their officers or the members of their communities who could read.

3.7.4 *Religion or politics?*

Contemporary observers viewing the conflict in France from a distance asked the same questions as many historians. As Wilhelm of Hesse phrased it in a letter to William of Orange written in February 1568: 'we have asked you earnestly, how do you see the troubles in France, whether they are motivated mainly by religion, or whether it is a rebellion and a private enterprise.'[98] The nature of propaganda, which relies for its effectiveness on communicating a clear and concise message painting stark contrasts, meant that the complex interplay between the religious and political dimensions, as highlighted in the recent historiography, was not represented. Instead, many pamphlets

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[96] Zwierlein, *Discorso und Lex Dei*, p. 670.

[97] Anon., *Kurtzer warhaffter un[d] Grundtlicher Bericht/ von der Baptischen Conspiration und Bündtnuß/ auch derselbigen jetzigen kriegsexpedition in Franckrych und Brabanct sampt deren ursachen. Zu Christlicher getrüwer Warning der Frommen Tütschen/ so sich deßwegen in dienst und bestallung und geringes zergeugkliches guts und gelts willen begeben und inlassend*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568), f. 1 v.

[98] 'Wir haben sie mit ernst gefragt, wofür sie das betrübte wesen in Frankreich ansegen, ob er vornemblich der Religion halben zu thun, oder ob es ein Rebellion und privatsache seye.' G. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite d'Orange-Nassau, Volume III* (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1836): p. 165.

reinforced the idea that the conflict was either religious or political. In a long publication printed in Heidelberg in 1568, a Huguenot diplomat mocks Catholic representations of the war, who 'when it suits them, [claim that] we must be heretics, and when it does not suit them, we must be seditious rebels.'[99] Ironically, Huguenot propaganda suffered from the same fundamental flaw. One moment, Condé strived to free the King and the Queen mother from captivity at the hands of the Guise and to restore the Princes of the Blood to their rightful place in the political hierarchy. The next, the Huguenots struggled to protect and preserve freedom of worship, so that the Word of God might flourish in France. This muddled message was the result of the difficulty of tailoring justifications to different audiences. Ideally, the justifications presented by Catholics and Huguenots should appeal to princes and peoples of all branches of Christianity. Political justifications had the potential to do so. The preservation of the political and social order was deemed extremely important by Catholics and Protestants alike, with the exception of some religious radicals. Similarly, German princes, themselves anxious to protect their political position, could easily identify with concerns expressed by Huguenot diplomats over the blatant infringements of the rights and privileges of the Princes of the Blood.

However, such political justifications were more likely to provoke sympathy rather than to spur potential allies on to far-reaching action. Appealing to religious solidarity did have the potential to do so. For instance, Friedrich III's almost unconditional support for the Huguenots was based largely on religious grounds. Moreover, graphic accounts of the slaughter at the hands of the forces of the Antichrist of men and women guilty of nothing but following the Gospel of Christ

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[99] 'Wen[n] es inen gelege[n]/ müssen wir Ketzer sein / wen[n] es ihnen aber nit gelegen/ müssen wir auffrührischen Rebellen sein.' Anon., *Des Prin[n]tzen von Conde gesanten Herrn Honorat vonn Chastellirs bericht/ des itzigen in Franckreich abermals enstandene[n] kriegs/ So er dem Durchleuchtigste[n] Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Friederichen Pfalzgraven bey Rhein/ des Heiligen Römischen Reichs Ertztruchsessen un[d] Churfürste[n]/ Herzoge[n] in Bayern etc. in personlicher gegewert des königlichen würde in Franckreich gesanten/ Herrn von Lansacs/ erstlich müntlich gethan/ und hernacher ihren Churfürstlichen Gnaden in schrifte[n]/ auff gnedigst erfordere[n]/ ubergeben den 4 Decembris Anno 1567, Auß Französicher sprach trewlich verteutschet*, (Heidelberg: Agricola, 1568), f. 35 r.

were much more likely to rally support than complaints of constitutional infringements. Similarly, Catholic accounts of the horrors of heresy and the destruction of churches were also likely to galvanise their coreligionists. By presenting both an intellectual argument, rooted in constitutional concerns, for the wars as a political conflict and an emotional argument, emphasising the wickedness of their opponents, for the war as religious strife, both Catholic and Huguenot propagandists muddied the waters somewhat, leading to confused responses among their German audiences.

3.8 Reception

Having established that the Protestant princes of the Holy Roman Empire were throughout the first three Wars of Religion continuously exposed to conflicting accounts of the struggle and its causes, it is now time to investigate the reception of these messages. It is of course very difficult to establish precisely the princes' private thoughts or reactions on receiving news from France. Nonetheless, their private correspondence does provide an insight into the ways in which these accounts were being discussed.

On one end of the spectrum we again find Friedrich III. Due to his conversion to Reformed Protestantism, which took place roughly at the same time as France descended into civil war, Friedrich did not need much persuasion to back the Huguenot cause. On the contrary, the Elector Palatine played a central role in facilitating the Huguenots diplomatic efforts, including the production and dissemination of pamphlets. Moreover, the court of the Elector Palatine became the first port of call for most Huguenot diplomats. Friedrich employed François Baudouin at his university and was also briefly represented by François Hotman.[100] Most importantly, however, Friedrich himself adopted the arguments of the Huguenot diplomats and pamphlets and used them in his own correspondence with his Lutheran peers. Friedrich thus

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[100] Kelley, *François Hotman*, p. 121.

became the spokesperson for the Huguenot cause in Germany. In his attempts to persuade his peers, Friedrich echoed some of the arguments of the Huguenots. In a letter to Christoph of Württemberg, for instance, Friedrich not only professes to be driven by 'a sincere pity' for the 'oppressed Christians in the Kingdom of France', but also launches a biting attack on 'the Duke of Guise and his party', who since Vassy have shown 'that they are striving for the extinction of our true Christian religion.'[101]

Friedrich's commitment to the Huguenots made him deaf to the arguments of Catholic diplomats. After having made yet another attempt to persuade Friedrich of the merits of the Catholic position, the Bishop of Rennes wrote a letter to Charles IX in which he expressed his frustrations:

> [Friedrich] does not respond to me but with passages from Holy Scripture and with revelations and with the power of God, which he prays every day to inspire him to follow the enterprise that is good and leave that which is bad.[102]

Rennes added that Friedrich ignored 'all other arguments of friendship and of good neighbourliness' and that he instead already had committed himself to 'favouring the rebels'.[103]

The single mindedness displayed here by Friedrich was rare among the Protestant German princes. A more common reaction to the two conflicting narratives was confusion. This confusion was partly caused by the accusations of false pretexts and conspiracy theories that

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[101] 'ain herzlichs mitleiden' 'betrangten christen in der cron Frankreich' 'des herzogen zu Guisa sambt seines anhangs' 'das sie umb die ausrottung unserer waren christlichen religion zuthun were.' Friedrich III to Christoph of Württemberg, 15 November 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, pp. 134-135.

[102] 'On ne me respond que par passages de la S^te scripture et par Revalla[ti]ons et par la puissance de dieu lequel ilz prient tous les Jours les Inspirer a pour suivre l'enterprise si elle est bonne et la laisser si elle est maulvaise.' The Bishop of Rennes to Charles IX, 1 November 1567, BNF, 15918, f. 22-23.

[103] 'toutes les aultres raisons d'amytie, de bon voisinage' 'favoriser les rebelles' Ibid, f. 22-23.

played a prominent role in both Catholic and Huguenot propaganda. With all this talk of hidden agendas and false justifications, it was difficult to know what to believe. Jean Philippe, Rhinegrave and Count of Salm, was the Lutheran prince from the Rhineland who was most directly involved in the conflict. Having from the age of eighteen spent most of his time in the service of the King of France, he should have been well informed about the causes of the Wars of Religion.[104] However, in a letter to Friedrich III written whilst being part of the Royal army besieging Bourges in August 1562, he expressed profound confusion: 'I would love to have informed Your Grace more often about how everything develops here [in France]. Everything has transformed so much everyday, that I do not know what to write ... I have not seen a stranger war in my lifetime'.[105] As a professional soldier bound to the King of France, the Rhinegrave was obliged to fight for the Catholic side. Nonetheless, in his letter he emphasised that he did 'not want to be used against the Christian religion.' He did, however, question 'whether [the Huguenots] only fight for the sake of religion, or if they as rebels against the crown occupy the city [of Bourges].'[106] A similar doubt was voiced by the Elector August of Saxony in November 1567. He complained that he had not yet been able to understand completely the nature and causes of the conflict, lamenting that the contradicting

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[104] D. Potter, 'Les Allemands et les armées françaises au XVIe siècle. Jean-Philippe Rhingrave, chef de lansquenets: étude suivie de sa correspondence en France, 1548-1566', *Francia, Frühe Neuzeit, Revolution, Empire 1500-1815*, 20 (1993): 1-20; [104] F. W. Barthold, *Deutschland und die Hugenotten, Geschichte des Einflusses der Deutschen auf Frankreichs Kirkliche und Bürgerliche Verhältnisse von der Zeit des Schmalkaldischen Bundes bis zum Geseze von Nantes, 1531-1598* (Bremen, Verlag von Franz Schlodtmann, 1848): pp. 374-375.

[105] 'E. C. F. G. wolt ich gern öfter vergewist haben, wie alle sachen hie zu land geschaffen. So seint sy dermassen von tag zu tag verwandlt, das man nicht wohl weiß, was gewiß zu schreiben ... Kein wunderbarlichern kriege hab ich mein tage gesehen.' Jean-Philippe of Salm to Friedrich III, 25 August 1562, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume I,* pp. 329-330.

[106] '... ob sy sich allein der religion halben bewahren oder als rebellen der cron die statt vorhalten.' Ibid, p. 330.

nature of the various reports he received made it impossible for him to make up his mind.[107]

3.8.1 *The limits of resistance*

A second important concern when deciding the tone and contents of justifications was their compatibility with established theories of resistance. Although there is no evidence that any of the German princes ever directly compared Huguenot justifications to the Saxon or Hessian theories of resistance, these must have been instrumental in shaping the reception of Huguenot propaganda. In as far as the Huguenots' motives and justifications for resistance resembled those of the Schmalkaldic League, some Lutheran princes were willing to go along with them. A good example of the conditionality of Lutheran support for the Huguenot cause is the reaction of Christoph of Württemberg and Philipp of Hesse to the requests of Andelot in 1562. As mentioned before, Andelot travelled the courts of the German princes with the aim of persuading them to provide financial support for Condé. To persuade the Lutheran princes, Andelot presented some of the key Huguenot arguments, namely that the Guise have usurped the power of the monarch by keeping the King and Queen mother captive. Moreover, he argued, the violence committed against the Huguenots was illegal, since the Edict of Saint German (January 1562) allowed them some religious freedoms. These arguments must have appealed to the Lutherans at some levels. Complaints by the princes of the blood that their rights and privileges were being violated must have resonated among the German princes. Secondly, claims that the Guise family and their party have lost all legitimacy because of their tyrannical behaviour and violence against the Protestant religion must have reminded the princes of the Hessian and Saxon theories of resistance. Thirdly and most importantly, the Prince of Condé as a

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[107] August of Saxony to Gerhard Pastor, 14 November 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, pp. 129-130.

prince of the blood was the right person to redress this political imbalance.

However, the success of Andelot's mission was not a foregone conclusion. The English diplomats Henry Knolles and Christopher Mont witnessed the Catholic reaction to Andelot's mission: 'the French ambassador had been there for some time to stop M. D'Andelot's purpose, and to persuade the princes that the cause of these troubles in France was not religion.'[108] In other words, French Catholics attempted to discredit Andelot by alleging that his justifications were just a façade to mask Condé's political ambitions.

More problematic for the Huguenots was the reaction of Württemberg and Hesse, who revealed that doubts remained. A letter written by Friedrich III in August 1562 shows how the Huguenots managed to allay some of this doubt: 'Condé has delivered us five princes [Württemberg, Hesse, Baden, Zweibrücken, and Palatinate] … a written guaranty …, that he will only use and spend the 100,000 florins for the deliverance of the King and the Queen Mother and for the benefit of the same and for the conservation and preservation of religion and the King's edict published throughout France last January …'[109] A written declaration by the hand of Condé himself was thus necessary to offset the Lutherans' apprehensions. This anecdote illustrates the working of both propaganda efforts. Firstly, it shows how, at least during the First War, the Huguenot justifications struck a chord among some of the most important Lutheran princes. However, it also shows how Catholic propaganda managed to sow doubt in Germany about the true nature of the Huguenots' motives.

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[108] 'Knolles and Mundt to Elizabeth I, 3-9-1562', J. Stevenson (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers Foreign, Elizabeth, Volume 5* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1867): p. 576.

[109] '… uns funf fursten von dem princes von Conde ein … verschreibung …, das er 100,000 fl. zu erledigung des konigs und konigin mutter und zu nutzs derselben auch erhaltung und handhabung der religion und des kon. edicts im Januario nechsthien durch ganz Frankreich publicirt gebrauchen und aufwenden wölle …' *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, p. 326.

3.9 Conclusion

The sheer intensity of French diplomacy and propaganda in Germany strongly underlines the perceived influence of the Imperial princes on the outcome of the Wars of Religion. The earliest French propaganda, explaining the causes and motives behind the Conspiracy of Amboise, dates from two years before the outbreak of open war. As the conflict intensified, French activity in Germany became more diverse as well as more intense. Personal correspondence and the sending of diplomats served to target the German princes directly. They presented arguments tailored towards their audiences and allowed for the possibility of engaging in a dialogue. These arguments tended to be more finessed, appealing to intellect rather than emotion. Simultaneously, French Catholics and Huguenots and their supporters in the Empire oversaw the production of large numbers of pamphlets, which despite their variety in length and sophistication, on the whole appealed to the emotions of the reader, often by emphasising the horrors and atrocities committed during the wars.

Examples can be found in all three types of propaganda of occasions in which writers and diplomats felt the necessity directly to engage with their opponents' message. Moreover, in the Empire, the messages were supposed to appeal to a wide variety of audiences, including Catholics, Lutherans, and Reformed Protestants. Although the propaganda managed to appeal to some, for instance the Elector Palatine, it also caused considerable confusion. Especially attempts by various pamphleteers, both Catholic and Huguenot, to describe the conflict in either exclusively political or exclusively religious terms led to bewildered reactions. This confusion was confounded by the various conspiracy theories presented to German audiences.

The success of the various justifications was conditioned by their compatibility with existing ideas about the justifiability of resistance. By 1562, a number of theories and traditions of resistance, both religious and secular, had already been developed in the Empire, most notably by Lutheran thinkers. These understandings of the justifiability of

resistance, and its limits, shaped the German reception of French diplomacy and propaganda.

IV.   German solutions for religious divisions in France

Having been subjected to a barrage of reports, news, pleas, and propaganda from France, it remained for the princes to formulate a cogent response. Considering the complexity of the conflict and the range of different explanations of its causes presented to the princes, it is unsurprising that they sometimes failed to reach a consensus about the best solution. Evidence concerning the princes' visions for the future of France can be found in a number of different sources. Discussions amongst the German nobility and German appeals to the leaders of the warring parties in France were rarely presented clearly and unambiguously. Despite this, such discussions allow for the reconstruction of their ideas about possible solutions to the conflict in France. Four distinct yet interrelated proposals can be identified. The first was the promotion of Lutheranism as a *via media*. The second was the creation of a legal settlement similar to the Peace of Augsburg. The third was the implementation of tolerant policies intended to defuse the religious tensions and open the door to the spread of Lutheranism. The final proposal emphasised the importance of the protection of royal authority, asserting that the Reformation of France would have to follow the model of the German magisterial reformations. These solutions were rooted in moral and theological thinking, informed by the experience of religious conflict in the Holy Roman Empire, and heavily influenced by the events in France. In this chapter I will discuss how these ideas were developed in response to the changing situation in France. Moreover, I will briefly discuss the intellectual contexts in which these ideas were formed.

4.1 The Naumburg Convention

Even before the outbreak of war in 1562, German Protestants felt compelled to contribute to the defusing of religious tensions in France.

This was partly the consequence of the strong Franco-German connections discussed in Chapter I, and partly because they linked the worrying spread of Reformed Protestantism in the Empire to the success of Calvinism in France. On the insistence of Wolfgang of Zweibrücken and Huguenot diplomats, the question of France was on the agenda at the Naumburg Convention, organised in January 1561 to create unity amongst the Germany's Protestant princes. [1] The conclusions of Naumburg reveal that on the eve of the French Wars of Religion most German Lutheran princes were in agreement concerning solutions for the rapidly escalating tensions in France. The majority of the twelve princes present at Naumburg concluded that the promotion of the Lutheran religion could bring Huguenots and Catholics together. Collectively, they dispatched a French translation of the Augsburg Confession to Charles IX and Antoine de Bourbon. Christoph of Württemberg, the strongest promoter of this policy, went further. He dispatched a number of theological books to Antoine de Bourbon with the intention of clarifying Lutheran doctrine.[2] The princes hoped that French Protestants, who had never been Lutheran, would respond positively to a clear exposition of Lutheran theology. Moreover, they recognised that Lutheran theology, liturgy, and ecclesiology could bridge the gap between the Catholic Evangelicals, who wanted a reform of liturgy, and Reformed Protestants. The formulation of a *via media* solution for France fitted well in the spirit of the deliberations at Naumburg. At the convention, the princes attempted to reformulate some of the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession to make them acceptable to both Philippists and Gnesio-Lutherans.[3] The idea was that conflict could be avoided by creating a broad definition of orthodoxy. The measures introduced at Naumburg were unsuccessful and were

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[1] R. Shornbaum, 'Zum Tage von Naumburg 1561', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 7-8 (1911): 181-214.

[2] H. O. Evennet, 'The Cardinal of Lorraine and the Colloquy of Poissy', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 2 (1927): p. 145; E. Koch and H. J. A. Bouman, 'Striving for the union of Lutheran churches: The church-historical background of the work done on the Formula of Concord at Magdenburg', *The Sixteent Century Journal*, 8 (1977): 105-122.

[3] Koch and Bouman, 'Striving for the union of Lutheran churches, p. 112.

heavily criticised by conservative Lutherans. Nevertheless, the principle of broad orthodoxy, based on the *Variata* edition of the Augsburg Confession, remained for many Lutheran princes, including Württemberg, Hesse, and Zweibrücken, the preferred solution for the religious tensions in France and the Empire.[4] As will be demonstrated, a Lutheran France was more than merely a fancy. Rather, it was a policy that was pursued vigorously. At Naumburg, Württemberg made it clear that the Huguenots' conversion from Reformed Protestantism to Lutheranism was a necessary precondition for German support.[5] This is illustrative of the force with which this solution was advocated.

4.2 The idea of religious reconciliation

In sixteenth-century understandings of social cohesion, the collective membership of a common body of believers, or *Corpus Christianum*, was of pivotal importance.[6] This membership was granted though baptism. It held strong secular connotations alongside the vital religious dimension of belonging to the entire body of Christian believers. Harmony in society was created and safeguarded by the collective membership of this one body of believers, reinforcing social cohesion and good neighbourliness. At a national level, the same principle applied. In France, the idea that a shared religion was one of the key forces binding the French people together was widely accepted.[7] Though the Protestant Reformation shattered the unity of Christendom, the equation of confessional uniformity with social order remained.

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[4] Ibid, p. 112.

[5] R. Stupperich, 'La Confession d'Augsbourg au Colloque de Poissy', in *L'Amiral de Coligny et son Temps* (Paris: Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français, 1974): pp. 117-133, on p. 120.

[6] H. de Wall, 'Corpus Christianum', in H. Dieter Betz, S. Browning, B. Janowski, and E. Jüngel (eds.), *Religion Past and Present*, (Leiden: Brill, 2011). Accessed online on 30 October 30, 2015: http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/religion-past-and-present/corpus-christianum-SIM_03244.

[7] Kaplan, *Divided by Faith, Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe*, (Cambridge MA: The Belknap Press, 2007): pp. 99-124.

There is no doubt, therefore, that a restoration of religious as well as social and political unity, if not uniformity, was an integral part of the ideal solution. There were very few who celebrated the merits of a multi-confessional society. After the rise of Protestantism, the overwhelming instinct was first to work towards 'preserving' and later towards 'restoring a unity that the church had once enjoyed.'[8] It is important to avoid teleological thinking, especially the assumption that the division of Europe's religious landscape into a variety of distinct confessions was an inevitable outcome of the Reformation. Moreover, it is also easy to dismiss irenicists in the midst of religious conflict as either naïve or as ignored and marginalised visionaries. In fact, there were many vocal and influential proponents of an ecumenical or irenic agenda. In order to properly understand German calls for a restoration of religious unity it is necessary first briefly to discuss the activities of these irenicists.

4.2.1 *Influential ecumenical thinkers*

Discussions about the feasibility of religious reconciliation necessarily boil down to the question of which elements of a religion constitute its essence and are therefore non-negotiable, and which elements are mere externals (or *adiaphora*). A second and related factor that determined the feasibility of reconciliation was a willingness and ability to compromise. The uncompromising adherents to a narrowly defined and 'pure' Calvinism or Catholicism naturally found it both difficult to reach an accommodation with those who did not adhere to the exact same doctrines or to accept that these believers practiced another version of the same faith. By contrast, the Rhineland, the Low Countries, and the north of France were home to a religious mentality that has often been described as 'Erasmian'. Although Judith Pollmann has questioned the 'explanatory powers' of Erasmianism as a shaper of the Dutch attitude

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[8] H. Hotson, 'Irenicism in the Confessional Age: The Holy Roman Empire, 1563-1648', in H. P. Louthan and R. C. Zachman (eds.), *Conciliation and Confession in the Struggle for Unity in the Age of Reform, 1415-1648* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004): pp. 228-285.

to religious pluralism, it is nonetheless clear that there were in this region many who, though interested in the reformation of religion, were strongly committed to the unity of the Church.[9] Besides Erasmus, the most important examples are the German theologian and ex-Lutheran Georg Witzel, the Flemish humanist Joris Cassander, and the French jurist François Baudouin.[10] These three thinkers all favoured a fairly broad interpretation of orthodoxy, intended to incorporate a variety of different practices and interpretations whilst at a basic level preserving doctrinal uniformity.[11] They recognised the need to address the decrepit state of religion, but emphasised that what needed to be pursued was a *Reformatio*; a return to the early Church, and not a *Transformatio*, which they feared the Protestants were implementing.[12] The tendency of such thinkers to switch between confessions made them vulnerable to accusations of apostasy and Nicodemism, illustrated by Hotman's famous remark that Baudouin was 'like the dog [returned] to his vomit.'[13] These three thinkers published extensively in Germany, France, and the Low Countries and their ideas were well known throughout the region. Moreover, as highlighted before, Baudouin travelled the German courts as a Huguenot envoy, advocating his irenic agenda. Irenic and conciliatory thinking thus contributed significantly

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[9] J. Pollmann, 'Countering the Reformation in France and the Netherlands: clerical leadership and Catholic violence 1560-1585', *Past & Present*, 190 (2006): 83-120, on p. 92.

[10] D. R. Kelley, *François Hotman, a Revolutionary's Ordeal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973): p. 135; M. Turchetti, 'Religious concord and political tolerance in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 22 (1991): 15-25.

[11] J. A. Sponholz, 'Multiconfessional celebration of the Eucharist in sixteenth-century Wesel', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 39 (2008): 705-730; M. Turchetti, 'Middle parties in France during the Wars of Religion', in P. Benedict, G. Marnef, H. van Nierop, and M. Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555-1585*, (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999): p. 168.

[12] T. Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome Ni Genève, Des Fidèles entre Deux Chaires en France au XVIe Siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 1997): pp. 103-112.

[13] 'comme le chien [retourné] à son vomissement' Ibid, p. 103.

to the intellectual climate in which German solutions for the future of France were formulated.

4.3 The Colloquy of Poissy

The common desire to restore religious unity found expression in the many religious councils organised during the first fifty years of the Reformation. In their attempts to create or preserve unity, the Protestant princes had repeatedly resorted to councils, for instance at Marburg in 1529, Worms in 1557, Frankfurt in 1558, and Naumburg in 1560.[14] Despite the limited success of these conferences, the belief that a universal council represented the best chance for pan-European restoration of religious unity was widespread among German Protestants.[15] The Council of Trent, intended to be such a universal council, was bitterly disappointing for Protestants, who recognised that a conference organised within the existing structures of the Catholic Church was unlikely to favour them. Christoph of Württemberg was the only German Protestant prince who sent a delegation and he too was soon left disillusioned. At Naumburg it was decided that further Protestant German participation at Trent was out of the question.[16]

This hostility to the Council of Trent was shared by much of the French Catholic establishment. The French, whose Gallican tradition was characterised by opposition to papal authority, resented the dominance of the papacy over the outcome of the Council and were very concerned about the likelihood of having a reform agenda imposed upon them by Rome.[17] By 1560, they had lost all faith in the Council of Trent and they dismissed the idea of reopening it. Instead, Catherine de'

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[14] Koch and Bouman, 'Striving for the union of Lutheran churches, p. 106.

[15] See Chapter II.

[16] A. Tallon, *La France et le Concile de Trente (1518-1563)* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1997): p. 288.

[17] T. I Crimando, 'Two French views of the Council of Trent', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 19 (1988): 169-186.

Medici, Michel de l'Hôpital, Antoine de Bourbon, Charles de Lorraine, and their entourages played with the idea of organising an alternative council.[18] During the months leading up to Poissy, Catherine, through her diplomats, discussed her plans with the princes of the Empire. Catherine was strengthened in her dismissal of the papacy's plans to reopen Trent by a number of German princes, including Philip of Hesse, Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, and Christoph of Württemberg, who all asserted that they had no faith in another council in the mould of Trent.[19]

In the spring of 1561 the format of the proposed alternative council took shape. It was to be a national council at which representatives of both Catholics and Reformed Protestants would take part. In the eyes of Catherine and other French proponents of reconciliation, the absence of Protestants at Trent made the Council redundant.[20] Though it was not initially the intention that Lutherans would be present at Poissy, the German princes were once again involved in the build-up. In the summer of 1561 Charles de Lorraine, through his representative Christophe Rascalon, contacted the Protestant princes to explain the purpose of the Colloquy.[21] Lorraine recognised that the reunifications of the French church depended on the reaching of an accord about the Eucharist. He criticised advocates of freedom of conscience, defended the importance of the unity of the church, and argued that reconciliation could only be achieved by finding theological common ground. The doctrines of the Augsburg Confession, he argued, could help Catholics and Huguenots in finding this common ground.

Initially, German Protestant reactions to the organisation of the Colloquy were predominantly positive. Philipp of Hesse was

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[18] Tallon, *La France et le Concile de Trente*, p. 286.

[19] Crimando, 'Two French views of the Council of Trent' p. 54

[20] Tallon, *La France et le Concile de Trente*, pp. 292-293.

[21] Ibid, pp. 309-311.

particularly optimistic.[22] In April 1561 the Landgrave discussed his hopes and expectations with Heinrich Bullinger and Christoph of Württemberg, writing

> that messages have come to me in which it is claimed that the French … have allowed that in the planned council … the Pope's abominations and abuses will be discussed, and that France is so inclined that the Reformation should be started against the Pope.[23]

The belief that the truth of the Gospel would shine through during a true religious council can also be detected in the writings of other princes. Friedrich III's optimism was inspired by his unshakable belief that in a theological dispute between Reformed and Catholic theologians, the Reformed could count on divine inspiration:

> it is so with our dear God, He can surely support them, as the prophet Jesiah said, and the Lord Christ in John 6 also indicated: they will all be taught by God, since these are the things pertaining to him. He will defend his own interests well.[24]

However, there was considerable Protestant opposition to the idea of Lutheran participation. Hubert Languet lamented that 'many Germans [Protestants] appear rather to favour the papists' and that the presence at Poissy of strict Lutheran theologians, such as Johannes Brenz, would ensure that the Augsburg Confession would serve to foster discord

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[22] H. Hauser, 'Antoine de Bourbon et l'Allemagne', *Revue Historique*, 45 (1891): 54-61, on p. 56.

[23] das unss itzo zeitungenn ainkommen / darinnen gemeldet / daß die frantzosenn … in daß angestelte Concilium bewilligt / daß … daß Bapst gruwell unnd mißbreuch ann denn tag … gebracht werde / und daß Frannckreich dahin gesinnen / daß die Reformation ann dem Babst anngefangen werdenn solle …' Philipp of Hesse to Heinrich Bullinger, 27 April 1561, HStAM 3, 1797: f. 121.

[24] 'so steht es doch bei dem lieben Gott, der kan inen wol beystehen, wie der prophet Jsayus … sagt, und der herr Christus Jo. 6 selbst anzeugt: Sie werden alle von Gott gelehrt, dessen ist die sachen selbst eigen. Der wurdt auch seyn aygen wol verdaydingen.' Friedrich III to Christoph of Württemberg, 28 July 1561, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume I* (Braunschweig, C.A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1868): p. 190.

rather than reconciliation.[25] The Imperial princes themselves also doubted the value of German participation. They were primarily concerned that the presence of their theologians might complicate or disturb the process. The danger of exposing the deep rifts between the various forms of Protestantism was a concern. On the other hand, the German princes could, through their theological representation, exercise influence over the outcome of this most crucial of discussions. In a letter to Christoph of Württemberg written in July 1561, Friedrich III toyed with the idea of sending 'our theologians' to the council, but added that such action would certainly be 'questionable'.[26] Christoph did not share Friedrich's reservations. Despite the disappointment of Trent, he continued to believe in the possibility of religious reconciliation. In correspondence with Antoine de Bourbon from June 1561 Christoph expressed his firm opinion that German theologians should be present too.[27] The Duke hoped that his Lutheran theologians could steer the discussion in the right doctrinal direction and facilitate reconciliation on the basis of the Augsburg Confession. On 3 October 1561, the Württemberg theologians Jakob Beurlin, Jakob Andreä, and Balthasar Bidembach left Stuttgart in order to join the deliberations at Poissy.[28] Friedrich too, despite his reservations, decided to send two theologians, Michael Diller and Peter Boquin, to the Colloquy.[29] Both sets of theologians, however, failed to reach Poissy in time to take part in the proceedings.[30]

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[25] 'semblant favoriser plutôt les papistes' B. Nicollier-de Weck, *Hubert Languet, Un Réseau Politique International de Melanchthon à Guillaume d'Orange* (Geneva: Droz, 1995): p. 134.

[26] 'unsere theologos' 'bedencklich' Friedrich III to Christoph of Württemberg, 20 March 1561, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume I*, p. 169.

[27] D. Nugent, *Ecumenism in the Age of the Reformation: The Colloquy of* Poissy, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1974): p. 59; Hauser, 'Antoine de Bourbon et l'Allemagne'; Tallon, *La France et le Concile de Trente*, p. 312

[28] G. Bossert, 'Die Reise der Württembergische Theologen nach Frankreich im Herbst 1561', *Württembergische Vierteljahreshefte für Landesgeschichte*, 8 (1899): 351-412.

[29] Michael Diller and Peter Boquin to Friedrich III, December 1561, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume I*, pp. 215-229.

[30] Tallon, *La France et le Concile de Trente*, p. 315.

Despite the lack of German participation, the Augsburg Confession was at the heart of the deliberations at Poissy. After a promising meeting between Théodore de Bèze and Lorraine on the eve of the Colloquy, tensions soon flared when Bèze took the floor and in sharp terms defended the Reformed interpretation of the Eucharist.[31] Lorraine responded with a long speech in which he defended the doctrine of the Real Presence, which, he added, was supported by the Lutherans and the Orthodox as well as Catholics.[32] After two weeks of fruitless deliberations, Lorraine attempted to break the deadlock by asking Bèze to subscribe to the Augsburg Confession.[33] Bèze and the Huguenots interpreted this move not as an attempt to find a theological middle ground, but as a trick intended to isolate them from the Lutherans. With Bèze's dismissal of Lorraine's proposal the Colloquy had effectively failed.

4.4 The aftermath of Poissy

The failure of Poissy had a significant impact, not only on France, but also on the Empire. German audiences had taken a great interest in the event. In contrast to Trent, Poissy had been designed with the genuine intention of reconciling Huguenots and Catholics, and consequently there was optimism in Protestant Germany. After Poissy collapsed, the discussion shifted to ascribe blame for its failure. Naturally, two contrasting explanations circulated. Directly after Poissy German translations of the speeches of both Theodore Beza and Charles de Lorraine were printed in the Empire.[34] Whilst the Huguenots presented

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[31] Nugent, *Ecumenism in the Age of the Reformation*, pp. 98-100; S. Carroll, *Martyrs and Murderers: The Guise Family and the Making of Europe*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): p. 150.

[32] Carroll, *Martyrs and Murderers*, pp. 151-152.

[33] Ibid, 152.

[34] Charles de Lorraine, *Oration oder Gegenantwort des Cardinals von Lothringen das Angefangen Gespraech die Religion in Franckreich Belangend Gehalten zu Poissy den Sechzehenden Septembris Anno M.D.LXI*, (s.l., s.n., 1561); Theodore Beza, *Oration das*

Lorraine's attempts as political manoeuvring - a narrative that until recently dominated the historiography of the Colloquy – the Cardinal lamented the obstinacy of the Reformed Protestants. Both in correspondence with Württemberg in October 1561 and at their meeting at Saverne the following February, Lorraine cleared himself of blame. At Saverne he told Christoph that

> the Calvinist ministers have from the beginning shown themselves to be people with whom reconciliation cannot be expected, who have called all the Catholics idolaters, which has resulted in an intolerable irritation.[35]

Discussions about the future prospects of reconciliation also flared up. The failure of Poissy divided opinion on this matter. Whereas some, including Lorraine and Württemberg, remained committed to the ideal of religious reconciliation, others concluded that it was time to consider other options. In France, Michel de l'Hôpital and his party advocated a tolerant policy. In Germany, a number of Protestant princes shifted their focus from a religious to a legal solution. Württemberg's conciliatory efforts as well as the alternatives solutions developed after 1561 will be discussed in detail below.

4.4.1 *The Württemberg and Palatinate missions*

Having missed Poissy, Beurlin, Andreä, and Bidembach did not directly return to Germany. They instead arranged opportunities to pitch their

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Angefangenen Gespraech in Franckreich von Religions Sachen Belangend welche er Gehabt Hat: Auff Dienstag den Neündten Septembris, Anno 1561. In ainen Frauwencloster de Poissy Genannt, (Heidelberg: Ludwig Lucius aus der Wetterau, 1561).

[35] 'les ministres calvinistes s'étaient, des l'abord, montrés comme gens avec lesquels il n'y a pas de conciliation à espérer; qu'il avaient appelé idolàtres tous les catholiques, et qu'il était résulté de cela une irritation intolerable.' A. Muntz (ed.), 'Entrevue du Duc Christophe de Würtemberg avec les Guise, a Saverne, peu de jour savant le Massacre de Vassy, 1562. Relation autograph du Duc de Würtemberg', *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, 4 (1856): 184-196, on p. 186.

proposed solution to France's most prominent individuals.[36] When doing so, they were aware of their responsibilities to their master and ensured that they acted within the mandate that he had given them. In order to increase the possible impact of their embassy, the team from Württemberg worked together with the two Palatinate theologians, Michael Diller and Peter Boquin.[37] Soon, however, the doctrinal cracks that had already started to damage relations between the princes of the Augsburg Confession began to affect this joint diplomatic effort.[38] It was clear that the Württemberg delegation had different goals than the men from the Palatinate, who were primarily interested in strengthening the connections between Friedrich and the Huguenot leadership. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that Christoph's theologians had a particularly clearly defined goal in mind, namely the promotion of the Augsburg Confession, which they not only considered to be the only correct exposition of religious truth, but also saw as the *media via* that could unite France religiously. They were convinced that the truths of the Augsburg Confession, provided that they were properly explained, should appeal to all. Therefore, Württemberg's theologians made arrangements to meet with a number of important individuals at the French court. On 19 November 1561 they met with Coligny in Saint Germain. A day later they were granted an audience with the King, Catherine de' Medici, and Antoine de Bourbon. On 21 November they were again requested to appear before Catherine.[39] At these meetings, they explained and expounded on Lutheran theology. However, not only were the conversations slowed down significantly by the need for interpreters, both Catherine and Navarre also explained that, though they strongly desired religious reconciliation, they were not interested

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[36] Bossert, 'Die Reise der Württembergische Theologen nach Frankreich, pp. 367-412.

[37] Michael Diller and Peter Boquin to Friedrich III, December 1561, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, pp. 215-229.

[38] Bossert, 'Die Reise der Württembergische Theologen nach Frankreich, pp. 397-398.

[39] Ibid, pp. 391-393.

in converting to Lutheranism.[40] Only two months before, a similar proposal had been on the table at Poissy and had been rejected emphatically. It was clear to Catherine that at this particular junction the solution was not feasible.

4.4.2 *Religious tolerance in France*

After Poissy, Catherine and Michel de L'Hôpital abandoned their conciliatory agenda and instead aimed to implement tolerant policies in order to preserve the peace between the competing confessions. This was not an obvious move. In the sixteenth century, the concept of religious tolerance had very negative connotations. The phrase *un roi, une loi, une foi*, which captured the idea that the very essence of French unity depended on uniformity of law and religion under one monarch, is often mentioned to underline this point.[41] The term tolerance is derived from the Latin verb *tolerare*, which translates as 'to bear' or 'to endure'. Sixteenth-century interpretations of the concept focused on the idea that tolerance forces one to remain inactive in the face of evil.[42] Instead of undertaking action to end the erroneous or forbidden activities, one was expected, so it was argued, to grudgingly endure the error to continue.[43] The majority of sixteenth-century theorists thus concluded that religious tolerance should be avoided, not only because of the intrinsic immorality of the concept, but also because it ripped society apart.[44] Voices that advocated tolerance on purely principled grounds were rare, but not entirely absent in France. Pierre du Chastel

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[40] Bossert, 'Die Reise der Württembergische Theologen nach Frankreich, p. 294.

[41] Kaplan, *Divided by Faith* pp. 99-124.

[42] P. Benedict, 'Un roi, une loi, deux fois: parameters for the history of Catholic-Reformed co-existence in France, 1555-1685', in O. P. Grell and B. Scribner (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): p. 67.

[43] Turchetti, 'Religious concord and political tolerance, p. 18.

[44] Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, p. 114.

and Sebastian Castellio were two of the few that argued that it is wrong in principle to execute someone for their beliefs.[45]

When religious tolerance was considered, it was usually on pragmatic rather than philosophical grounds. For instance, a significant number of large trading centres implemented, sometimes temporarily, tolerant policies for economic reasons. The citizens of Antwerp argued that 'where the inquisition treads, the merchant departs.'[46] Therefore, the city's magistrates were amongst the most vehement opponents of anti-heresy legislation and instead allowed plurality of religion. For German cities, too, there were direct economic incentives to tolerate multiple religions within their walls.[47] Especially in the religiously-diverse Rhineland cities could not afford to alienate merchants, artisans, and apprentices from outside the city, on whom their economies depended. In Münster, prominent guild members struggled to keep the city open for non-Lutheran economic participation.[48] In Strasbourg, too, toleration was briefly established for economic and political reasons. Not only was it argued that tolerance was good for business, Strasbourg's unusual religious policies also underlined its political independence.[49]

Despite the negative connotations of the concept, there were thus plenty of examples of *de facto* religious tolerance in the regions bordering France for Catherine, de L'Hôpital, and other proponents of tolerance to draw on. De l'Hôpital's arguments for religious tolerance had both pragmatic and ideological dimensions. The Chancellor came to realise that it was foolish to assume that Protestantism in France could be wholly eradicated by force. The Huguenots, he argued, had simply

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[45] Benedict, 'Un roi, une loi, deux fois, p. 69; Turchetti, 'Middle parties, p. 172.

[46] Duke, *Dissident Identities*, p. 67.

[47] C. Scott Dixon, 'Urban order and religious coexistence in the German Imperial city: Augsburg and Donauwörth, 1548-1608', *Central European History*, 40 (2007): 1-33.

[48] R. Po-chia Hsia, *Society and Religion in Münster, 1535-1618*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984): p. 134.

[49] MacCulloch, *Reformation, Europe's House Divided, 1490-1700*, (London: Penguin Books, 2004): pp. 183-184.

grown too numerous. [50] Moreover, they were particularly well represented amongst the gentry and nobility, giving the Huguenot faction access to significant military power. Trying to supress them, he feared, would rip the French state apart. The Chancellor emphasised that his proposed solution was not a religious but a constitutional settlement.[51] The second part of de l'Hôpital's rationale was rather more positive. He likened the people of France to a family in which differences of opinion could be found.[52] As in a family, one was obliged to love each other despite these differences. He also argued that the monarchy's primary responsibilities were the protection of this family from unrest and war and 'the maintenance of the commonwealth'.[53] Moreover, whilst bemoaning the futility of using violence to affect religious conversion, he argued that 'the arms of charity, prayers, [and] persuasion' were more potent in the struggle to bring Protestants back to the fold.[54] Catherine de' Medici's and Michel de l'Hôpital's tolerant agenda was institutionalised in the Edict of Saint Germain, issued in January 1562. The Edict was in essence a temporary compromise. It was intended 'to halt all troubles and seditions whilst awaiting the organisation of a general council'. [55] It allowed the Huguenots to organise themselves in synods and consistories and hold public gatherings outside cities. The writers of the Edict attempted to separate heresy and sedition. It decreed that the Huguenots were not 'to have any armed assemblies ... [nor] insult, reproach, or provoke on religious

[50] Benedict, 'Un roi, une loi, deux fois, p. 69.

[51] L. Romier, *Catholiques et Huguenots a la Cour de Charles IX*, (Paris: Perrin, 1924): p. 286.

[52] Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome Ni Genève* p. 215.

[53] Q. Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978): p. 251.

[54] S. Kim, '"Die nous garde de la messe du chancelier": the religious beliefs and political opinion of Michel de l'Hopital', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 24 (1993): 595-620.

[55] 'en attendant la determination d'ung concile general ... faire cesser tous troubles et seditions.' 'Édit de Janvier', *Éditions en Ligne de l'École des Chartes*, École Nationale des Chartes, 17-1-1562. Accessed January 2016. http://elec.enc.sorbonne.fr/editsdepacification/edit_01.

grounds or create, solicit, or favour any sedition, but live and interact with each other gently and graciously.'[56] Though the Edict did not advocate tolerance as the preferred long-term solution for the religious tensions in France, it did consider the possibility of a bi-confessional society. Among the Protestant German princes there was not yet any enthusiasm for religious tolerance in 1560 or 1561. They were themselves heavily invested in the creation and preservation of religious uniformity in their own territories. Moreover, in the Empire they had managed to create a stable peace without having to resort to tolerance. In the short period between Poissy and the Massacre of Vassy, the German Protestant princes primarily looked at their own experiences in the Empire and started to consider ways in which the successful formula of the Peace of Augsburg could be replicated in France.[57] Nonetheless, the Edict of Saint Germain provided a legal precedent on which German calls for tolerance later in the 1560s could be based.

4.5 German mediation during the First War of Religion

Only two months after the Edict of Saint Germain was issued, the Massacre of Vassy sparked the outbreak of war. German involvement during the years 1562 and 1563 was limited. The exception was Christoph of Württemberg's diplomatic activity. Despite the breakdown of the Colloquy of Poissy and the failure of his theologians in France, he continued to see himself as a reconciler of the warring parties.[58] In June

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[56] 'faire aucunes assemblées à port d'armes … injurier, reprocher ne provocquer pour le faict de la religion ne faire, emouvoir, procurer ou favoriser aucune sedition, mais vivent et se comportent les ungs avec les autres doulcement et gracieusement' Ibid.

[57] H. Daussy, *Le Parti Huguenot, Chronique d'une Désillusion (1557-1572)*, (Geneva: Droz, 2014): p. 393.

[58] F. W. Barthold, *Deutschland und die Hugenotten, Geschichte des Einflusses der Deutschen auf Frankreichs Kirchliche und Bürgerliche Verhältnisse von der Zeit des Schmalkaldischen Bundes bis zum Geseze von Nantes, 1531-1598*, (Bremen: Verlag von Franz Schlodtmann, 1848): pp. 489-490.

1562 he wrote a letter to Anne de Montmorency in which he summarised all he had done to restore peace:

> We have sent letters to the most serene King of France, to the Queen Mother, and also to the King of Navarre and the prince of Guise, as well as to the Prince of Condé, and together with some other German electors and princes we have sent envoys … In order that they with all care and diligence … can serve for the restoration of tranquil harmony.[59]

A number of Christoph's letters survive. Though they lack concrete suggestions about how to end the bloodshed, they do give an insight into Christoph's overall attitude to the conflict and its possible resolution. As early as 3 March 1562, he wrote a letter to Condé in which he advocated peace. His sole motivation for this call for peace, Christoph wrote, was the preservation of public and institutional order in France:

> … in the first place for her, which is the sole Church of Christ, and her safety, to which, for the sake the royal dignity, the common fatherland, and the peace of the Christian state, I urge singular piety and diligent respect, I beg you to accommodate our … petitions …[60]

In order to preserve peace, Christoph emphasised the necessity of 'first putting aside the weapons and as far as possible restoring the dignity,

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[59] 'Dedimus ad serenissimum Regem Francia, ad Reginam matrem, necnon ad Regem Navarrae, Principes Guisianos, adhaec ad Principem Condensem, literas, atq. una cum aliorum quorundam Electorum et Principum Germaniae legatis … Ut omni cura et diligentia id agunt. … ad reparandum publicam tranquillitatem concordiam servire potest.' Christoph of Württemberg to Anne de Montmorency, 21 June 1562, HStASt, A 71 Bü 472, 35.

[60] ' … in primis autem pro ea, que est vestra singularis erga Ecclasiam Christi et eius salute ad haec erga regiam dingnitatem, communem patriam et Christianae Reipub. tranquillitatem singularis pietas et observantia diligentissime vos hortor et oro … nostrorum petitioni … accommodentis …' Christoph of Württemberg to Louis de Bourbon, 3 March 1562, HStASt, A 71 Bü 472, 31.

reputation, and grace of the King of France …'[61] Despite advocating loyalty and respect for Church and King, Christoph did not want to seem hostile to Condé, ensuring him that his letter was 'lovingly and courteously' written.[62] In this letter, Christoph's personal views on the Huguenot party shine through. In line with Lutheran attitudes to Reformed Protestantism, he believed that Condé's cause could only be legitimate and successful if it did not seek to alter or damage the social and political fabric of French society.

Three months later, Christoph reaffirmed his commitment to a *media via* solution in a series of letters to the French establishment. In a letter to Antoine de Bourbon, commander-in-chief of the royal army, written on the 9 June 1562, Christoph expressed some sympathy for the plight of the Huguenots. He regarded the suffering of the persecuted Protestants in France as part of 'all the pious blood that since the blood of the righteous Abel has been shed.'[63] However, the answer to persecution, Christoph argued, was not rebellion: 'The pretext of protecting the public peace will not stand up before the tribunal of God, so beware of sedition.'[64] Christoph clearly supported the stance of Navarre, who despite his association with the Huguenot party had remained loyal to the Catholic king.

On the same day, Christoph also wrote to Charles IX and his mother Catherine de' Medici. The Duke started by reminding the young king of his responsibilities: '[You have] not only your own entire Kingdom of France, but the safety and peace of all of Christianity to

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[61] 'In primis autem arma deponantur et quantum fieri potest Regiea dignitati Gallicae existimatio et gratia conservantur …' Christoph of Württemberg to Louis de Bourbon, 3 March 1562, HStASt, A 71 Bü 472, 31.

[62] 'amanter et officiose' Christoph of Württemberg to Antoine de Bourbon, 9 June 1562, HStASt, A 71 Bü 472, 34.

[63] '… omnem sanguinem piorum, qui iam inde a sanguine iusti Abel effusus est.' Christoph of Württemberg to Antoine de Bourbon, 9 June 1562, HStASt, A 71 Bü 472, 34.

[64] 'Nec valebit coram tribunal Dei preatextus tuendae publicae tranquilitatis, et cavende seditionis.' Christoph of Württemberg to Antoine de Bourbon, 9 June 1562, HStASt, A 71 Bü 472, 34.

consider.'[65] Christoph was genuinely troubled by the way in which the religious conflict in France developed and, despite the polite tone of the letter, spelled out unambiguously what was happening in France:

> After the great clemency, goodness, and kindness of the expectations, the start, and the beginnings of Your Majesty's highest reign, such horrible armed actions of persecution and the shedding of innocent blood have been undertaken.[66]

The letter to Catherine de' Medici has an even more ominous tone. Christoph underlined the urgency of a swift and peaceful solution, since the calamities in France were partly caused by

> the shedding of the blood of innocents, contrary to the precepts and commandments of God, whose persecution, as is evident from many examples and histories, calls … the wrath of God over us …[67]

Christoph thus believed that both sides held some responsibility for the violence and chaos in France. On the one hand, he was not afraid to condemn in strong words the violence committed by Catholics against Huguenots, reminding the King and his mother of their responsibly for maintaining law and order. On the other hand, this violence was, according to Christoph, no justification for rebellion. Instead, he urged Condé to refrain from using violence and to seek a solution through legitimate means, respectful of the King and his authority. These letters are characteristic of Christoph's attitude throughout the Wars of

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[65] '… non minus propriam suam totius Regni sui Gallici quam universa Christianitatis salute et tranquillitatem sit consideratura.' Christoph of Württemberg to Charles IX, 9 June 1562, HStASt, A 71 Bü 472, 32.

[66] 'Adhaec R[am] D[tem] vestram auspitia, initia, et ingressus amplissimi sui Regni magis clementia, bonitate et benignitate quam horrendis armoris motibus persecution et effusione innocentis sanguinis sit susceptura.' Christoph of Württemberg to Charles IX, 9 June 1562, HStASt, A 71 Bü 472, 32.

[67] '… contra praecepta & mandata Dei effusione innocentis et eius sanguinis, cuius persecutione, ut ex multis exemplis et historiis constat, Ira Dei super nos … causatur …' Christoph of Württemberg to Catherine de' Medici, 9 June 1562, HStASt, A 71 Bü 472, 33.

Religion. A strong commitment to Lutheranism and a concern for the preservation of political and social order were the two pillars on which his vision for the future of France was built. As in 1560 and 1561, his mediation efforts during the First War were ineffective. The repeated French dismissal of German suggestions inspired a rethink in the years after the Peace of Amboise.

4.6 Between the wars

The end of the First War in the spring of 1563 did not end German discussions about the future of France. In the summer of 1563, Christoph of Württemberg and Wolfgang of Zweibrücken exchanged letters in which they discussed ways in which a stable and lasting peace could be guaranteed.[68] The precise nature of their shared vision for the future of France is most clearly formulated in a resolution, composed in the name of Wolfgang by his council. It stated that a translation of the Augsburg Confession should be send to the Huguenots

> … in order that they may recognise even more, that the German princes, who have sent this message, desire nothing more than that the Word of God may be spread and maintained throughout the Kingdom of France and that the general peace may be lasting. … These letters are also created in the hope that through these the particularly Christian trust and lasting friendship between the Crown of France and the estates of the Augsburg Confession may be strengthened, enlarged, and sustained, leading to the increased welfare and resilience of Christianity in general, against all tyrannies, persecutors, and corruptors of the sacred and divine Word and the venerable sacraments. … [The Huguenots] will read [the Augsburg Confession] diligently and through it recognise their own errors … and from then on they will maintain the true Christian opinion of the Lord's Supper … and also be in unanimous consensus with the Christian churches of the

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[68] J. Ney, 'Pfalzgraf Wolfgang, Herzog von Zweibrücken und Neuburg', *Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte*, 29 (1911): pp. 1-124, on pp. 54-75.

Augsburg Confession, in [the areas of] doctrine, sacraments, and discipline ...[69]

Louis of Nassau also believed, at least before 1566, that the Augsburg Confession was at the heart of any lasting resolution of religious strife in France. Like Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, he repeatedly insisted that the Huguenots should publicly subscribe to the Augsburg Confession. However, Louis did by no means share Zweibrücken's or Württemberg's deep devotion to the doctrines formulated in the Confession. Rather, Louis saw it primarily as a political tool. The roots of Louis' religious and political agenda can be found in his longstanding admiration of François Baudouin. Between 1550 and 1560, Baudouin worked tirelessly to restore the unity of Christendom. Though he considered himself a Protestant, he championed a return to the Church in the time of Constantine. The universality of Constantine's Church was in the eyes of Baudouin one of its most important features. Regarding himself a true reformer, he criticised the Protestant 'transformers' who were creating new churches.[70] Committed to this ideal of unity, Baudouin even reconverted to Catholicism in 1563. Whereas Baudouin despaired at the inflexibility of Calvin's dogmatism, Calvin in turn saw Baudouin as the worst kind of apostate.[71] According to Louis of Nassau's biographer, Petrus Johannes Blok, Louis met Baudouin in secret in 1563, probably to discuss the best means of resolving the

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[69] '... uff das man desto mehr ... merken möge, das die Teutschen Chur und fürsten, weslche diese pottschafft abgesanndt haben, nichts hoher begern, dann das Gottes wortt in der Chron Frankreich ... ausgebraittet und erhallten werde unnd der gemain fried bestenndig pleiben möge. ... Unnd seinndt diese Media also geschaffen dass hoffenlich dardurch ein sonnders Christlichs vertrouens unnd bestendige freundtschafft zwischen der Chron Franckreich unnd den Stennden der Augspurgischen Confession kan gestifftet vermehret und erhalten warden, zu grosser wolfarth und Craft der allgemeinen Christenhait wider alle Tirannen, verfolger unnd verfelscher deß hailig göttlichen wortts und der hochwurdigen sacramenten. ... woltten vleiszig lesen, unnd Ihren Irrtumb darauß erkennen ... und der wahren Christlichen mainunge vonn dess herrn Nachtmahl hinfuro zugethan sain ...und also ein einhelligen *consensum* mit den Christlichen Kirchen der Augspurgischen Confession inn der Lehre, Sacramenten, un disciplina ...' Resolution of the council of Zweibrücken, August 1563, HStASt, A 71 Bü 920, 56 a.

[70] 'transformateurs' Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome Ni Genève*, p. 111.

[71] Ibid, p. 108.

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intensifying religious tensions throughout Europe. [72] In line with Baudouin's irenic philosophy, Louis despaired at the theological inflexibility and stubbornness that, in his eyes, caused the rift between Lutheranism and Reformed Protestantism. In an exchange of letters with Landgrave Wilhelm of Hesse from 1565 Louis outlined his vision:

> As I have written Your Grace the last time concerning the matter of religion, so I have since then once again received a writing from France, in which they assure me that our coreligionists [the Huguenots] have no objection to the complete adoption of the Augsburg Confession, insofar as they think of the points on the Lord's Supper as true or bad, one cannot condemn or dismiss any of these; and it seems to me in truth that we should drop all trivial disputes, or on purpose overlook some things, since because of this the two nations can then be brought together and after this, when peace and quiet returns and we are unhindered and untroubled by the Catholics, we can with good manners and without bitterness decide on these differences …[73]

The central principle of Louis' vision is thus that, in essence, Lutherans and Reformed Protestants belonged to the same religion. Interestingly, though recognising the discord over the Eucharist that disrupted Reformed-Lutheran relations, he did not regard this issue as either a deal-breaker or as something irresolvable. Moreover, Louis, and apparently also his unnamed correspondents in France, concluded that

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[72] P. J. Blok, *Lodewijk van Nassau*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1889): p. 24.

[73] 'Wie E. F. G. ich am letzen der religionssachen halber geschrieben, so hab ich sindt der zeit aus Franckreich widderum schreiben bekommen, darinnen mann mich versichert, das die religionsverwanten darselbst die Augspurgische Confession durchauss ahntzunemen keine beschwerung machen werden, so ver mann den puncten *de coena* rein unnd schlecht stelle, damit man kein theil darauss condamnieren oder verwerffen moge; unndt duncket mich inn der warheit, mann solte billich alle *disputationes* fallen lassen, oder uber etwas durch die finger sehen, damit mann diese zwo *nationes* zusamenbringen moge unndt darnach, wann mann mit ruhen sein mochte unndt von dem Bapstum ungehindert undt sonder sorg, alsdan mit gueten manieren ohn verbitterung disse *differentias* decidieren …' Louis of Nassau to Wilhelm of Hesse, 26 June 1565, P. J. Blok, *Correspondentie van en Betreffende Lodewijk van Nassau en Andere Onuitgegeven Documenten, Verzameld door Dr. P. J. Blok*, (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1887): p. 35.

in all other areas the religions of the Huguenots and the German Lutherans were in harmony with each other. If the two confessions were in all but one doctrine already the same, why then was Louis so adamant that the Huguenots should 'commit themselves to the Augsburg Confession'?[74] And if Louis did not expect a rapprochement on the issue of the Lord's Supper in the short term, what would be the benefit of the Huguenots publically adopting the Confession?

4.6.1 *The Peace of Augsburg in France*

Louis' insistence that the Huguenots should subscribe to the Augsburg Confession was part of a new strategy that was becoming increasingly popular among the German Protestant princes. In 1563, Zweibrücken's council also advocated 'that in France a religious peace may be established, similar to that in Germany, following the formula of the Religious Peace, that from the Recess of the year [15]55 will be translated in the French and Latin languages …'[75] This statement echoed the comments of a number of German nobles who also believed that the success of the Peace of Augsburg could be replicated outside the Empire.[76] Various historians have highlighted this proposal. Hugues Daussy, for instance, writes that Wilhelm of Hesse, the Elector Palatine, and Chistoph of Württemberg in the summer of 1561 intended 'to suggest the establishment in France of a religious peace similar to that which had been put into effect in the Empire.'[77] However, historians have never unravelled the exact nature and possible consequences of this idea. This is probably because evidence of explicit discussions of

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[74] 'sich zur den Augspurgischen Confesion begeben' Ibid, p. 47.

[75] '… das man inn Frankreich einen Religion frieden, gleich dem Teutschen uffrichten sole, nach der formula des Religion friedens, die auß dem Reichsabschiedt *anno* 55 *in gallicam & latinam linguam* transferiert …' Resolution of the council of Zweibrücken, August 1563, HStASt, A 71 Bü 920, 56 a.

[76] Friedrich III to Philip of Hesse, 16 September 1561, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume I*, pp. 200-201.

[77] Daussy, *Le Parti Huguenot*, 393.

this idea remains elusive. Expressions of the notion seem to have been limited to brief remarks, such as the single sentence from the pen of Zweibrücken's council quoted above. Nonetheless, I will try to reconstruct the underlying assumptions that led a number of German princes, including Zweibrücken, Nassau, and Hesse, to believe that a settlement in the mould of the Peace of Augsburg could be possible in France.

4.6.2 *Theoretical underpinnings of a Peace of Augsburg-style solution*

The proposals to introduce the Peace of Augsburg in France rested on two important assumptions. First, it was informed by the Lutheran conviction that Reformed Protestantism was intrinsically seditious. In contrast to Christoph of Württemberg, Louis of Nassau, and Wilhelm of Hesse did not see the promotion of the Augsburg Confession in France as a goal in itself, but rather as a means to an end. They believed that such a move could take some of the viciousness out of the conflict, not only by ending the damaging and escalating tensions within Protestantism, but also by quelling the socially subversive tendencies of some Protestants. Following from this, they assumed that a united, orderly, and socially conservative form of Protestantism could be accepted much more easily by the Catholic powers of Europe.[78] In a letter written to Louis of Nassau in 1566 (during the aftermath of the Wonderjaar) Wilhelm of Hesse argued that

> it would be very good if the preachers in these places [the Netherlands] were admonished to abstain from subtle disputes and do not split up the Christian Church with such bickering; that also they collectively subscribe to the Augsburg Confession and in compliance with it keep to its doctrines and ceremonies; if the same also publish a public confession, then we have little doubt that it will significantly

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[78] Daussy, *Le Parti Huguenot*, 471.

halt the … persecution, and also will move the King of Spain to tolerate the religion in these places.[79]

William of Orange agreed. In September 1566 he remarked

'that since so many religions have arisen at the same time, namely [that of] the Augsburg Confession, the doctrines of Calvin, and also … the Anabaptists …, it is most to be feared that the King's Majesty and the other Catholic princes and lords, using the pretext of all these sects, will repress these lands with violence.'[80]

Orange thus directly linked disunity among Protestants with Catholic violence, arguing that the sectarianism of some movements could legitimise Catholic persecution. Although the former phrased it in positive and the latter in negative terms, both Hesse and Orange thus bought into the idea that the unification of Protestantism under the umbrella of the Augsburg Confession could reduce the dangers of persecution. Louis of Nassau concurred. When he anticipated a future in which Protestants in France would be 'untroubled by Catholics', he did not imply the complete destruction or disappearance of the Catholic religion in France, but rather a situation in which Protestantism could enjoy some form of official or legal recognition, protecting it from Catholic aggression. As a skilled and experienced diplomat, Louis of

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[79] '… were sehr guett das die predicanten dere örtter ermhanett wurdenn vonn den subtilen *disputationibus* abzustehen undt durch solch gezenck die Christliche Kirche nitt zu trennen; das sie auch sämbtlich sich zue der Augspürgischenn Confeszion erclertt undt derselben gemez, beid inn Lher undt Ceremonien, sich verhieltten; deszenn auch ein öffentliche Confeszion lieszen ausgehen, so trugenn wir keinen zweiffel es wurde der … verfolgung … viell nachbleibenn, sich auch die Kön. Wür. zue Hispanien desto ehir bewegen laszen die religion der örtter zu tollerieren …' Wilhelm of Hesse to Louis of Nassau, 13 October 1566, G. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite d'Orange-Nassau, Volume II* (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1835): p. 392.

[80] 'Dan dieweill in dieszen länden so mancherley relligionen zugleich endtstanden weren, nemblich die Augspürgische Confeszion, Calvini lehr, und auch … der wiederthauff … so were ahm meisten zu beförchten das die Kön. Ma[t]. und ander Irer relligion-verwandte Fürsten und Herren, underm schein der mancherley secten, dieszen landen mit gewalt zu setzen …' William of Orange to Louis of Witgenstein, 20 September 1566, Ibid, p. 300.

Nassau worked hard to achieve such an accommodation.[81] Both in the Netherlands and in France, where he moved in the entourage of Jeanne d'Albret, Louis worked towards a legal compromise that could end the violence between Catholics and Protestants.[82] Although Louis took part in various military campaigns (and perished at the Battle of Mookerheyde in 1574), he realised that the use of violence could only have a limited effect.[83] With the chances of a religious reconciliation also quickly diminishing, a legal construction following the example of Augsburg became a more attractive proposition.[84]

The second assumption relates to the role of the nobility. It is important to re-emphasise here that the Peace of Augsburg did not create or promote a form of religious tolerance, or even a religiously diverse society. Rather, it divided the Empire into a patchwork of smaller jurisdictions that for the most part only allowed one official religion. Herein lay the greatest difficulty in translating the Peace of Augsburg to a French or Dutch context. Surely, the princes must have known that the strict application of the legal principles of the Peace would make France entirely Catholic. The *Cuius Regio, Eius Religio* principle, which granted the *Ius Reformandi* only to princes and Imperial Free Cities, decided the religion of the territories and cities of the Empire. Due to the more centralised nature of sovereignty in France, it would logically follow from this that the right to reform was exclusively vested in the monarchy, which so far remained Catholic. The differences between the political constitution of the Empire and France thus made it impossible to directly copy the format of the Peace of Augsburg. For all their promotion of this solution, there is no evidence of any concrete discussion of how the princes thought the Peace of Augsburg could be translated to a French context.

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[81] P. J. van Herweden, *Het Verblijf van Lodewijk van Nassau in Frankrijk, Hugenoten en Geuzen, 1568-1572*, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1932): pp. 82-104.

[82] Blok, *Lodewijk van Nassau*, pp. 56-92.

[83] Ibid, pp. 116-117.

[84] Ibid, p. 46.

I believe that when speaking of introducing the Peace of Augsburg in France, the German princes envisaged a settlement in which the most influential noble families should have the right and opportunity to introduce an institutionalised Lutheran Reformation in their territories. This, they believed, could end seditious and disorderly manifestations of religious zeal and instead create princely reformations in the German mould. Such a set-up fitted well in the political and religious climate of the early 1560s: it spoke to deep-seated concerns for the protection of aristocratic independence, conformed to Lutheran understandings of the religious role of secular magistrates, and fitted within the legal framework already in place in France.

The ongoing attempts by the nobility of Europe to consolidate or extend their power in the face of growing royal authority strongly informed this solution. Discussions concerning the prerogatives of the nobility dominated much of the political discourse of the mid-sixteenth century. In France, the traditional nobility jealously guarded its privileges.[85] Faced with the dangers of an expansion of royal power, political encroachment by the *noblesse de robe*, and competition from rival aristocratic families, the high nobility in word and action frequently asserted and reasserted its independent power.[86] In the Low Countries, members of the high nobility became increasingly concerned by Habsburg attempts to centralise the political structure of the country. Besides the controversial Pragmatic Sanction, a plan to reorganise the region's bishoprics caused a stir among the *grands seigneurs*.[87] The polemic used by the League and the Compromise – two aristocratic associations created in opposition to Habsburg overreach -

[85] L. Romier, *Les Origins Politiques des Guerres des Religion, Volume II*, (Geneve: Slatkine-Megariotis Reprints, 1974): p. 283.

[86] R. A. Jackson, 'Peers of France and Princes of the Blood', *French Historical Studies*, 7 (1971): 27-46; J. Dewald, *The European Nobility, 1400-1800*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): pp. 15-59; G. R. Asch, *Nobilities in Transition 1550-1700, Courtiers and Rebels in Britain and Europe*, (London: Arnold, 2003): pp. 101-103.

[87] P. Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts and Civic Patriots, The Political Culture of the Dutch Revolt*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008): pp. 58-59.

closely resembled the language used by the German princes to describe their conflict with the Emperor in the 1550s. The princes studied in this thesis were themselves deeply invested in the struggle for the protection of the rights of the nobility. Furthermore, in line with Luther's writings on the religious responsibilities of the magistrate, the princes considered themselves the natural custodians of the Reformation in the Empire. They took this responsibility very seriously, playing leading roles in the reformation of their territories. In this atmosphere of aristocratic independence and noble control over religious reform it is not strange that the German princes advocated a central role for the French nobility.

More importantly, there was a legal foundation on which such a model could be built. In contrast with the Edict of Saint Germain, which had a strong focus on the urban dimension of French Protestantism, the Edict of Amboise, which ended the First War, was strongly seigneurial in character. Whereas Saint Germain made provisions for the worship by urban communities, Amboise restricted Protestant worship to the households of the nobility. [88] As a result of this, control of French Protestantism shifted from the cities to the aristocracy and the private chapels of noblemen became a focal point of French Protestantism after 1563. In fact, the right of Protestant worship on noble lands was recognised in the 1563 religious peace of Amboise. This brought the French Reformation more in line with the other European Reformations, which had eventually been taken over by an aristocratic leadership. In effect, the contours of the solution advocated by Zweibrücken and other German princes were already in place. Moreover, there was no reason to assume that such a settlement would not last. After all, the Catholic Habsburg Emperor had accepted a similar settlement and the kings of France had long been well disposed to the leaders of Germany's orderly princely reformations. Despite its supposed temporary nature, the Peace of Augsburg was strongly supported by most German Protestant princes. It allowed them to implement their reformations without the immediate danger of

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[88] Kaplan, *Divided by Faith* p. 186; Turchetti, 'Middle parties, pp. 172-173.

Catholic aggression. Moreover, a settlement in which the French aristocracy was given the right to reform fitted within their wider political agenda, was rooted in Lutheran doctrine, and was compatible with legislation already in place in France. The popularity of the idea of expanding this settlement to include France was thus more logical than it seems.

4.7 The Second and Third Wars

The outbreak of war in 1567 opened a new phase in discussions about the future of France. In the years between Naumburg and the Second War it had become clear that neither reconciliation on the basis of the Augsburg Confession nor a settlement similar to the Peace of Augsburg were feasible. Despite the princes' defence of the merits of the Augburg Confession, their appeals had fallen on deaf ears. Both the Huguenots and the Catholic leadership had repeatedly declared that they had no interest in embracing Lutheranism. The Edict of Amboise, which had enjoyed broad support among the German princes, too had failed to prevent further bloodshed. This led some to reconsider their visions for the future of France. Moreover, the horrors of war and the prospect of the destruction of Protestantism in France made a new solution a pressing necessity. Because of the urgency of the situation, many princes now openly considered solutions that were previously unthinkable.

4.7.1 *German calls for tolerance in France*

With reconciliation out of the question and a rapprochement between Lutherans and Calvinists increasingly unlikely, a number of German princes started to advocate religious tolerance. One of the most vocal advocates of tolerance was Friedrich of the Palatinate. In November 1567 he argued in a letter to the Bishop of Rennes that

if [his Majesty] wishes to have and maintain his kingdom in peaceful repose and secure and permanent unity ... and ... does not want to witness a horrible ... conflict, desolation, and ultimately the ruin of his kingdom, then it is necessary to advice him ... to abolish the horrible persecutions and spilling of the blood of innocent Christians of the Reformed religion, and following the example of Germany ..., liberty should be given to all to preach ... the pure word of God.[89]

Friedrich thus presented freedom of worship as a pressing necessity, and the only way to avert certain disaster. Other pleas for the introduction of freedom of worship can be found in the correspondences of a number of other Protestant German princes. Johann Casimir, Friedrich's son, wrote to the King in January 1558, urging him to 'grant to your subjects who are of the Reformed Religion ... liberty and the exercise of their religion.'[90] He added in a different letter from the same month that by ensuring the Huguenots the 'conservation and security of honour, goods, and life, they are prompted (as loyal subjects are required to do) to place body and goods under your command.'[91]

The advantages of a policy of freedom of worship were twofold. Not only could it return France to peace and tranquillity, it also opened up the door for the further spread of Protestantism. Friedrich and his Reformed son Johann Casimir of course hoped that the Reformed Religion would establish an even stronger foothold in France as a result of a prolonged period of freedom of worship. Toleration for Johann

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[89] 'si sa [Majesté] desire d'avoir & maintenir en son Royaulme paix repose et unie seure ... et ... ne vouldroit veoir une horrible et esponantable ... desolation, et par fin la ruine de son Royaulme, qu'il est necessaire d'y aviser ... abolir les horribles persecutions & effusions de sang des chrestiens innocens de la religion refformee, et suivant l'example de la germanie ..., liberté soit donnee a un chascon de prescher ... la pure parole de Dieu.' Friedrich III to the Bishop of Rennes, 3 November 1567, BNF, 15918, f. 27-42.

[90] 'Octroyer a vos subiects qui sont de la Religion Reformee ... liberte et exercise de leur religion.' Johann Casimir to Charles IX, 6 January 1568, BNF, 15918, f. 162.

[91] 'conservation et seurete de leurs honneurs, biens, et vies: quilz sont promtz (comme loyaux subjects sont tennuz) demployer corps et biens soubz v^re obeissance.' Ibid, f. 154-155.

Casimir also had attractions closer to home. For the German Lutherans, however, the hope was that in a relatively open and tranquil religious environment Lutheranism could start to make headway in France. Wilhelm of Hesse in December 1571 called it 'a Christian duty' to promote religious freedoms, even for those who 'misunderstand one article or another', 'so that after that we can endeavour that the King will in due course be won for the Religion and that thus the realm of Christ might be expanded.'[92] Due to these advantages, the introduction (or maintenance) of limited religious freedoms in France became the preferred option for many German princes, especially during the late 1560s and early 1570s. In 1571, August of Saxony brought together the most influential Protestant princes (Palatinate, Saxony, Brandenburg, Hesse, Braunschweig, and Württemberg) to pressure the King of France into maintaining the 'Edict of Religion' (Peace of Saint-Germain-en-Laye).[93] By 1571, the consensus amongst the German princes was that the Edicts - and the religious liberties that they protected - represented the best chance of restoring order and tranquillity in France.

German advocates of religious liberties were strengthened in their convictions by the existence of legislation that allowed various levels of freedom of conscience or freedom of worship in France. Like the Edict of Saint-Germain (January 1562) and the Edict of Amboise (March 1563), the Peace of Saint-Germain-en-Laye (August 1570) allowed for limited freedom of worship.[94] Though these edicts were only intended to be temporary compromise solutions, they provided a legal precedent for tolerant policies in France and were repeatedly invoked in

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[92] 'Christenpflicht' 'in dem einen oder anderen Artikel ein Misverständnis seen möchte' 'so wie darnach zu streben, das der König mit der Zeit für die Religion gewonnen und damit das Reich Christi gemehrt werde.' Wilhelm of Hesse to Erich Volkmar von Berlepsch, 3 December 1571, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 431-432.

[93] 'den Häusern Pfalz, Sachsen, Brandenburg, Hesse, Braunschweig und Würtemberg' 'Religionsedict' Opening statement of the meeting of the meeting of German Protestant princes, 12 December 1572, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, pp. 428-429.

[94] M. P. Holt, The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): pp. 8-75.

the letters of the German princes. The Landgrave of Hesse, for instance, wrote to Charles IX in September 1568: 'I think that the strict observation [of the edicts] is especially in these times the only means by which ... your majesty can return your subjects to their ... obedience and maintain your kingdom in tranquil peace ...'[95] The existence of these 'edicts of toleration' added great strength to their arguments. Conveniently ignoring the fact that they were half-hearted affairs granting the Huguenots severely limited forms of religious freedom, the princes argued that their calls for freedom of conscience were not an innovation, but merely the maintenance of legislation that already existed. In line with much of the Huguenot propaganda published in Germany in the 1560s, it is assumed that the cause of the crisis in France was not the Huguenot demands for religious freedoms, but rather ultra-Catholic resistance to the royal edicts granting them these freedoms. The edicts thus allowed French and German advocates of freedom of worship to present themselves as the voice of conservatism and moderation and as defenders of the power of the monarchy.

4.7.2 *Religious tolerance in the principality of Orange*

Of all the princes studied in this thesis, William of Orange was most famous for promoting tolerance. By 1569, Orange had become closely involved in the conflict in France (see Chapter VI). Around this time, the prince wrote repeatedly about the nature of the conflict and its possible solutions. His comments are disappointingly unoriginal. In a letter to the Duke of Saxony, written in July 1569, Orange echoes the simplistic tone of many pro-Huguenot pamphlets. He argues that the conflict is caused by the fact that 'the poor Christians' are being 'robbed of their

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[95] 'que le stricte observation iceulx est principalement en ce lemps y le seul moyen par laquel ... v^re ma^re peut retenir ses subjects en leur ... obeisance et maintenir son^d royaume en paix tranquil ...' Wilhelm of Hesse to Charles IX, 6 September 1568, BNF, 15608, f. 199-200.

religion.'[96] Orange added that he believed 'that all prominent lords have advised the crown of France [to restore] peace, and unity, and the freeing of the Religion.'[97] For an observer with a seemingly keen eye for the practical dimensions of religious policy, this statement is rather vague. Orange's public statements of intent in relation to France are no more developed. In August 1568, the prince signed a treaty with the Huguenot leaders Condé and Coligny. The public announcement of the treaty uses a language that very closely resembles the Huguenot polemic that had been rolling off the printing presses since 1562. The text of the treaty laments the actions of evil 'councillors' whose 'intention it is to exterminate the true religion and also the nobility' in order to 'enlarge their dominion.'[98] It adds that the 'Christian alliance' has been established for 'the glory of God, the benefit and service of our King, and the public good, and the freedom of religion, without which we cannot live in peace.'[99] Although 'freedom of religion' is mentioned as a necessary prerequisite for a lasting peace, it is nowhere explained what exactly such freedom of religion would entail. In the absence of such an explanation it remains a somewhat hollow phrase.

The best insight into the prince's vision for the future of France is provided by the example of the religious policies introduced in his principality of Orange in southern France. The principality, just north of Avignon in Provance, had been the basis of William's international prestige since he inherited it from his uncle in 1544. However, its isolated location far away from Orange's other possessions ensured

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[96] 'armen Christen' 'der Religion beraubt werden' William of Orange to August of Saxony, 19 July 1569, Blok, *Correspondentie van en Betreffende Lodewijk van Nassau*, p. 80.

[97] 'das alle vornehme herrn der khron Frankreich zu friede und einigkeit und freylassung der Relligion gerathen haben …' Ibid, p. 81.

[98] 'conseilliers' 'leur intention est d'exterminer la vraye religion et aussy la noblesse' … 'agrandir leurs dominations' Treaty between Orange, Condé, and Coligny, August 1568, G. Groen van Prinsteren, *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau, Volume III, 1567-1572*, (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1836): p. 284.

[99] 'alliance Christienne' 'la gloire de Dieu, le profict et service de nos Roys, et le bien publicq, et la liberté de la religion, sans laquelle nous ne pouvons vivre en paix.' Ibid, p. 284.

that for much of his life the prince did not gain much from the principality apart from his title. For a brief period, however, the Orange-Nassau family did gain control over the principality when the Peace of Saint-Germain-en-Laye stipulated that it had to be returned to its rightful lord.[100] This gave Orange the opportunity to dictate policy in the principality. The pursuit of independent religious policy in territories with sovereign status inside the Kingdom of France was not unheard of. Henri Robert de la Marck, for instance, in the 1560s exploited the independence of his strategically located principality of Sedan in order to make it a safe haven for Huguenots.[101] As in the Empire, the ambiguities of sovereignty allowed de la Marck and Orange to implement policies that contravened those of the Kingdom. Louis of Nassau, who spent the years 1568 to 1572 in France, was the ideal person to see to the execution of the prince's policies in Orange.[102]

In many ways, the principality of Orange resembled France in microcosm. It was positioned in the Midi, which was a hotbed of Huguenot activity, and consequently was home to a sizable and influential Protestant population. However, Orange was also located in the middle of the Comtat Venaissin, a region surrounding the city of Avignon that fell directly under papal jurisdiction. The presence of an influential Protestant party in an area dominated by Catholic authorities set the stage for recurrent outbreaks of religious violence. The council of the city of Orange in a letter to Louis spoke of 'infinite internal enmities, the ones against the others', which polluted social relations within the principality.[103] The council therefore suggested that only a clean break with the past could lead to a stable peace. Moreover, they insisted that the official introduction of Protestantism in

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[100] van Herweden, *Het Verblijf van Lodewijk van Nassau in Frankrijk*, p. 198.

[101] S. Hodson, 'Politics of the frontier: Henri IV, the Marechal-Duc de Bouillon and the sovereignty of Sedan', *French History*, 19 (2005): 413-439, on p. 419.

[102] Blok, *Lodewijk van Nassau*, pp. 56-92.

[103] 'infinies inimities intestines des ungs contre les aultres.' van Herweden, *Het Verblijf van Lodewijk van Nassau in Frankrijk*, p. 199.

Orange should happen 'without prejudice against and hindrance of the Roman Catholic religion.'[104]

Realising that a solution in which one of the two religions would be excluded was not feasible, Louis of Nassau, with the consent of his brother, introduced in 1571 a policy that aimed to 'reunite [the inhabitants of Orange] in concord and stable friendship as members of one and the same body.'[105] The policy that was developed by Louis rested on two principles.[106] The first can be seen as a relatively far-reaching form of religious tolerance. Although no mention is made of radical sects (the document speaks in terms of two religions, Catholic and Protestant), the inhabitants of Orange were granted the same rights and privileges regardless of their religion. In Louis' plans, Catholics and Protestants were given the right to worship, maintain ecclesiastical institutions, and participate in public functions and offices. Moreover, outsiders were welcome to settle in Orange and could expect to enjoy the same rights. Secondly, the past 'troubles' were to be forgotten. Those who lost possessions during the troubles were to be compensated and the continuation of disputes from the time of the troubles were strictly forbidden, as was the use of inflammatory and provocative language. Louis thus attempted to make a fresh start in Orange, neutralising old enmities and creating a tranquil environment in which a tolerant religious policy could succeed.

Due to the many parallels between the situation in Orange and that in France as a whole it is safe to assume that the Nassau brothers envisaged a similar solution for the entire country. Moreover, the policy in Orange in many ways foreshadows the *Religievrede* Orange attempted to introduce in the Netherlands in the late 1570s. The problem was, however, that it failed miserably. A mere seventeen days after the implementations of Louis' religious policies in Orange, the

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[104] 'sans preiudice et empechement de la religion Catholicque et Romaine' Ibid, p. 199.

[105] 'reunir en concorde et amitie stable comme membres d'ung mesme corps.' Ibid, p. 200.

[106] Ibid, pp. 200-204.

principality descended into chaos, leading to the killing of Protestants known as *la massacreuse*.[107] The failure of religious tolerance in Orange fits into a wider pattern. In their attempts to formulate a solution for the violence in France, the German princes were time and again confronted by reality on the ground. The solutions presented by the princes were therefore as much, if not more, shaped by what was deemed realistic and feasible as by idealism.

4.8 Protestant loyalists

The three solutions discussed above reflect the dominant opinions amongst most German Protestant princes studied in this thesis. Between 1560 and 1572, their opinions in many cases progressed from favouring complete religious reconciliation, via a model resembling the Peace of Augsburg, to calls for freedom of conscience or freedom of worship. All three solutions have in common that they provide for the preservation of the 'true religion'. Another alternative, however, has largely been overlooked. Its distinguishing feature is that it placed the protection of the political and social order above the promotion of doctrinal purity. Stuart Carroll has recently demonstrated that a significant proportion of France's evangelical princes did not join the Huguenot party. Instead, these 'Protestant loyalists' often fought against their coreligionists.[108] It is tempting to interpret this position as pragmatic or un-ideological. However, it has to be remembered that an emphasis on the God-given authority of the monarchy can be found in both Lutheran and Reformed thought. Despite the fact that both Lutheranism and Reformed Protestantism tentatively developed theories of resistance, a strand of thought also existed in both traditions that underlined loyalty to the monarch as a sacred obligation, even when the monarch belonged to a different religion. Both in

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[107] Ibid, pp. 205-207.

[108] S. Carroll, '"Nager entre deux eaux": The princes and the ambiguities of French Protestantism', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 44 (2013): 985-1020, on pp. 991 and 997.

contemporary public opinion and in much of the historiography individuals whose political engagement did not seem to match their confessional identity have often been dismissed as Nicodemites, opportunists, or hypocrites. These labels, however, are misleading since they do not reflect the profundity of their commitment to their duties as subjects and magistrates.

4.8.1 *Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar and the preservation of monarchical power*

Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar has often been described as a hypocrite who prioritised personal political and financial concerns over loyalty to either his faith or the Empire. His longstanding service to the kings of France and his role as mercenary captain in the French Catholic forces have made him infamous for being an adventurer and political opportunist. Although a desire for adventure and the expectation of financial reward could well have featured amongst his motivations, I believe it is too simple to dismiss his motives as purely cynical. Instead, I will argue that Johann Wilhelm's position should be approached in a similar fashion as the Protestant loyalists.

Like the Protestant loyalists, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar was driven by a concern for the preservation of order and stability and by a sense of loyalty to the French royal family, who he served for more than a decade. Although his association with the King of France complicated his relationship with Emperor Maximilian II, he continued to profess his loyalty to the Emperor. This social and political conservatism merged with his deeply orthodox interpretation of Lutheranism to shape his vision for the future of France. This vision is reflected in the language he used when writing about the Wars of Religion. Rather than referring to the French Protestants as 'Christians', as was common amongst the German princes, Johann Wilhelm adopted the vocabulary of Catholic polemicists. In a letter to Charles IX from January 1568 he lamented 'the great predicament of the affairs of Your Majesty' adding that 'as loyal servant' he was committed to 'secure and protect your crown' by

'supressing the rebels.'[109] In April 1569 he reasserted his intention to 'establish a good and lasting peace' by supressing the Huguenots.[110] Johann Wilhelm thus saw the suppression of the Huguenot faction as the best way of achieving peace in France. The Duke of Saxe-Weimar also felt the necessity to explain his understanding of the Wars of Religion publicly. In a pamphlet published in 1568 he asserted that:

> Although we are now noticing, that for some time here and there, among high and low estates, clerical and secular persons, in the Empire of the German nation, also amongst the members of our true Christian religion, similarly amongst our own subjects and associates, there are all sorts of contradicting opinions concerning the current warlike uproar in France, in particular it is being said, that [the conflict] ... is about the Christian religion, and its suppression, we can give this [rumour] no credence ... Instead we have learned, from the account, given to us by the King's Majesty, and on top of that from a large number of decrees, which the King's Majesty had published during the growing unrest ... and then ... had called out publicly and which came to us first in French and then in the German language ..., that it is purely a rebellion ..., which has been put in place by the subjects against the authority established by God.[111]

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[109] 'grande necessity des affaires de vᵣₑ maᵗᵉ' 'comme fidele serviteur' 'secourir sa couronne et la maintenir' 'reprimer les Rebelles' Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar to Charles IX, 10 January 1568, BNF, 15544: f. 49-50.

[110] 'faire une bonne & perdurables paix' Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar to Charles IX, 24 April 1569, BNF, 15549: f. 149.

[111] 'Wiewol wir nun vermercken/ Dass jetziger zeyt hin und wider/ bey hohes unnd nidrigen Standes Geistlichen und Weltlichen Personen/ im Reich Deutscher Nation/ auch bey den Verwandten unserer waren/ Christlichen Religion/ Dessgleichen bey unsern selbst unterthanen/ und zugehörigen/ von allerhand ungleicher meinunge/ jetzigen Frantzöschischen Kriegs empörunge/ Sonderlich aber davon geredet wird/ Ob es ... umb die Christliche Religion/ und derselben vertrückunge/ zu thun sey/ So können wir doch demselben keinen glauben zusetzen/ ... So haben wir doch/ auss dem bericht/ welche uns die Kön. W. derwegen thun/ und darüber auss etzlichen vielen Mandaten/ die ire Kön. Wirde/ unter entstandener unruhe... unnd denn ... aussruffen lassen/ Die uns in Französischer/ und dann in die deutsche Sprach ... zukommen ... vernommen/ dass es ein lauter Rebellion ... sey/ Welche von den unterthanen/ gegen ire von Gott geordente Obrigkeit/ ... angestellet wirdet/' Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, *Ausschreiben. Des Durchlauchtigen Hochgebornen Fürsten unnd Herrn, Herrn Johans Wilhelmen Hertzogen zu Sachssen. An seiner F. G. Getrewe Landschafft von Prelaten, Graffen, Herrn, Ritterschafft und Stedte, Seiner F. G. jtzigen zugs in Franckreich, unnd warumb die Könniglische Wirde doselbst Seine F. G. Auff sonderbare benentliche ausziehunge unnd vorbehaltunge derselben Dienstbestallung,*

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Johann Wilhelm's perspective on the troubles in France was also shaped by his unusually strict Lutheran orthodoxy. Like many of his peers, the Duke was a driving force behind the reformation of his territories. The title page of Saxe-Weimar's official theology, the *Corpus Doctrinae Christianae*, underlines the religious importance of the Duke by stating that the doctrines presented are those that Johann Wilhelm 'through the grace of God harmoniously professed and taught.'[112] This is again illustrated on page two, where we find a portrait of the Duke encircled by the text: 'Lord govern me through Thy Word.'[113] Johann Wilhelm also issued legislation in his duchy outlawing the preaching of anything but 'the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Augsburg Confession as presented to the Emperor in the year 1530 [not the *Variata* edition], together with the its apologies, the Schmalkaldic Articles, Doctor Martin Luther's blessed books and our Christian ... Confutations'.[114] Johann Wilhelm's university at Jena was the epicentre of Gnesio-Lutheran activity and the theologians in his service espoused a deeply conservative version of Lutheranism, which was highly critical of Philippism let alone of Reformed Protestantism. Johann Wilhelm's commitment to the Gnesio-Lutheran agenda made him much less likely to sympathise with the Huguenots than his Philippist peers in Hesse and (to a lesser extent) Zweibrücken. Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar's commitment to the preservation of monarchical power in France,

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auch Ehren unnd Glimpffs wegen nicht vorlassen können (Weimar: s. n., 1568): f. 3 v – f. 4 r.

[112] 'durch Gottes gnade eintrechtig bekant und geleret wird' Anon., *Corpus Doctrinae Christianae, Das ist Summa der Christlichen lere/ aus den Schrifften der Propheten und Aposteln/ sein Kurtz/ rundt/ und gründlich D. Martinum Lutherum sonderlich/ und andere dieser Lande Lerer zusamen gefasset. Die dieselbige in unser von Gottes gnaden Johans Wilhelm/ Hertzogen zu Sachssen/ Landgraffen in Thüringen/ und Marggraffen zu Meissen/ Fürstenthumen und Landen/ durch Gottes gnade eintrichtig bekant und geleret wird*, (Jena: Donatum Kirchtzenhau, 1571), f. 1 v.

[113] 'Her Regier Mich Durch Dein Wordt' Ibid, f. 2 v.

[114] 'Prophetischen und Apostolischen Schrifften Augsburgischen Confession Rom. Kai. May. Anno 1530 ubergeben, sampt derselben Apologien den Schmalkaldischen Artikeln Doctoris Martini Lutheri seligen Büchern und unsern Christlichen ... Confutation.' Declaration by Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 16 January 1568, ThHStA A 195, Bl. 185 r.

together with his deeply rooted prejudice against Reformed Protestantism, made it possible for him to endorse the agenda of the Catholic party in France. In this he closely resembles the Protestant loyalists. He too believed that the best solution for the troubles in France was the crushing of the Huguenot 'rebellion' that he considered the root of the problem.

4.9 Conclusion

During the twelve years between the Naumburg Convention and the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre the Protestant princes of the Empire developed four distinct solutions for the troubles in France. On the eve of the Wars of Religion, they were largely in agreement about what was to be done. Assuming a lack of familiarity with Lutheran doctrines among French Catholics and Huguenots, they concluded at Naumburg that the expounding of the theology of the Augsburg Confession was likely to win over the French. Lutheranism, they argued, could serve to bridge the gap between Catholicism and Reformed Protestantism. At the Colloquy of Poissy, this proposal was on the table but was emphatically rejected. The failure of Poissy led a number of princes to consider alternative solutions. Inspired by the success of the Peace of Augsburg in the Empire, they discussed the possibility of introducing a similar settlement in France. Christoph of Württemberg, Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, Wilhelm of Hesse, and Louis of Nassau assumed that the respectable Lutheran religion was easier to accept for Catholic monarchs than socially-subversive Reformed Protestantism. Moreover, they were encouraged by the Edict of Amboise, which, like the Peace of Augsburg, placed the right to reform firmly in the hands of the aristocracy. The prospects of this solution were hampered by the Huguenots' continued disinterest in Lutheran doctrine and by the outbreak of war again in 1567.

　　After 1567, the need for a speedy end to the violence in France led many princes to consider a policy of religious tolerance. The Reformed Elector Palatine and his son Johann Casimir were the most

ardent advocates of religious freedoms for the Huguenots. They were soon joined by a number of Lutherans, including the princes of Saxony, Hesse, Brandenburg, and the new Duke of Württemberg. Their advocacy of religious tolerance was made easier by the existence of various French 'edicts of toleration'. These made it possible to promote tolerant policies and at the same time defend royal authority. The most concrete expression of German calls for tolerance in France was the introduction of religious freedoms in the principality of Orange. In Orange, Louis of Nassau attempted to break the vicious circle of religious violence and to encourage good neighbourliness. The example of Orange revealed the limitations of tolerance as the community descended into violent conflict only weeks after the policy was introduced.

The German Protestant princes were not always in agreement about what was to be done in France. Instead of religious tolerance, the strictly Lutheran Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar advocated the destruction of the Huguenot 'rebels'. The attitude of Johann Wilhelm resembles the position of Protestant loyalists in France, who also regarded the preservation of royal authority as more important than the spread of Protestantism. This position was a practical expression of the doctrine that royal authority was divinely ordained and needed to be obeyed at all times. Moreover, Johann Wilhelm's intense hostility towards Reformed Protestants fuelled his conviction that the Huguenots were a destructive force that needed to be eradicated.

These four German solutions for the turmoil in France were shaped by a number of different influences. First and foremost, they were the product of the intellectual and religious climate of the 1560s and depended heavily on theoretical discussions of concepts such as religious plurality, obedience, tolerance, and reconciliation. Secondly, they were informed by the princes' own experiences in the Empire, and in particular their experience of dealing with religious conflict. Finally, the reality of the conflict in France forced the German princes repeatedly to reconsider their solutions. The impact of events in France

and beyond on the attitudes of the German Protestant princes was considerable, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter.

V.   The Catholic Conspiracy

German perspectives on the French Wars of Religion were to a large extent shaped by domestic events. Their own experiences of dealing with the consequences of religious plurality informed the German princes' visions for the future of France. However, they were also influenced by developments abroad. By far the most influential event occurred close at hand: the outbreak of unrest in the Netherlands in the summer of 1566 and subsequent response of the Habsburg authorities resonated strongly among German Protestants. Talk of an international Catholic Conspiracy designed to roll back the Reformation and restore Catholic dominance circulated in Protestant circles and grew in strength in the years after 1566. Instances of Catholic violence throughout Europe fed these fears and strengthened the position of those advocating international Protestant solidarity.

This chapter will demonstrate how the prophecies of propaganda seemed to be fulfilled and a wider belief in the struggle between good and evil began to influence the Rhineland princes' attitudes to the French Wars of Religion. After summarising the chronology of the quick escalation of religious tensions in the Netherlands and France in 1566 and 1567, it will be demonstrated that these new developments proved to be a turning point in German understandings of the French Wars of Religion. In these years, the Catholic Conspiracy dominated discussions about France. Moreover, after 1566, the princes of the Empire were subjected to a second wave of Huguenot diplomacy and a large number of anonymous German pamphlets on the subject of the Conspiracy were published. This chapter will explore the ways in which the Conspiracy was discussed in diplomacy, in print, and among their German audiences. Moreover, it will be demonstrated that the narrative created a new atmosphere amongst the German Protestant princes. This new sense of the

connectedness of religious conflict throughout Europe opened the door for German intervention in the French Wars of Religion.

5.1 The tumultuous years 1566 and 1567

In the spring of 1566, a crisis in the Netherlands set in motion a series of events that more than ever proved the transnational nature of the French Wars of Religion. In April of that year, the slumbering tensions in the Netherlands, which were caused by a combination of religious, constitutional, and economic grievances, boiled over. [1] After the initiatives of the country's *grands seigneurs* to soften the anti-heresy laws and curtail the power of the hated Cardinal Granvelle, a group of minor noblemen, calling themselves the Compromise, took matters in their own hands.[2] On 5 April a group of around 200 noblemen marched through Brussels and presented a petition to the governess Margaret of Parma. Alarmed by this show of force, Margaret conceded to their demands and temporarily suspended the heresy placards.[3] Rather than safeguarding peace and tranquillity, this concession gave Protestants the courage to profess their religion publically. During the tumultuous summer that followed, large congregations of Protestants, often protected by armed guards, gathered publically to listen to sermons.[4] In August, iconoclastic riots broke out in many cities across the Low Countries, including Antwerp and Amsterdam.

The Catholic backlash that followed set in motion a series of events that radically changed German perceptions of the French Wars

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[1] J. I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic, Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995): pp. 129-154.

[2] H. van Nierop, 'A Beggars' Banquet: The Compromise of the Nobility and the Politics of Inversion', *European History Quarterly* 21 (1991): 419-443.

[3] H. van Nierop, 'The nobility and the Revolt of the Netherlands: Between church and king, and Protestantism and privileges', in P. Benedict, G. Marnef, H. van Nierop, and M. Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555-1585*, (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999): pp. 83-97, on p. 92.

[4] A. Duke, *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009): pp. 179-197.

of Religion. Enraged by the blatant breakdown of order and flaunting of the law, Philip II in the spring of 1567 dispatched the Duke of Alba with a force of around 10,000 soldiers to the Netherlands.[5] Alba's force made use of the so-called Spanish Road, an established route that connected the Habsburg territories in Spain, northern Italy, the Franche-Comté, and the Netherlands (see Figure 7).[6] This route not only brought Alba's troops uncomfortably close to France, but also to the territories of the princes studied in this thesis. The proximity of the hated Duke of Alba and his large force of veterans sent a wave of panic through Protestant France. The fragile peace established at Amboise in March 1563 was rocked by the breakdown of order just beyond France's borders. Alarmed by the prospect of renewed Catholic violence, Condé decided that a pre-emptive strike was necessary to remove Charles IX and his mother from the influence of Catholic courtiers. On 28 September 1567 Condé attempted to abduct the King and his mother from the castle at Montceaux in what has become known as the Surprise of Meaux.[7] However, the scheme failed as the king and his mother narrowly escaped. The next day, agitated and enraged Huguenots in Nîmes murdered twenty-four Catholic clergymen. This eruption of unrest led to the outbreak of the Second War.

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[5] Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 155-168.

[6] G. Parker, 'The Spanish road to the Netherlands', *History Net*, 28 September 2012, accessed 4 November 4 2015, http://www.historynet.com/the-spanish-road-to-the-netherlands.htm.

[7] N. M. Sutherland, *Princes, Politics and Religion, 1547-1589*, (London: The Hambledon Press, 1984): p. 166.

Figure 7: Route taken by Alba and his forces in 1567.[8]

     The events of 1566 and 1567 marked a new phase in the European religious conflict. For the first time, tensions in France, the Low Countries, and Germany were explicitly linked. Besides underlining the transnationality of the conflict, the events of 1566 and 1567 created a new intellectual and emotional climate. As a result of the escalation of the confessional conflict in the Netherlands and the aggressive Spanish reaction, distrust and hostility in France turned into panic. Conspiracy theories that before 1566 had been confined to the

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[8] Parker, 'The Spanish road to the Netherlands'.

fringes of public discourse now came to dominate it. A very elaborate narrative about an international Catholic plot was developed and circulated widely both in print and in private correspondence. Even among Europe's Protestant elite the theory was popular. In the anti-Catholic atmosphere of the early Elizabethan court, for instance, the theory thrived. A number of influential English diplomats, including Nicholas Throckmorton, Francis Walsingham, and the ambassador to Germany Christopher Mont, were convinced of the truthfulness of the theory.[9] This narrative was so widely disseminated and so evocative that during the late-1560s it came to dominate discussions about France.

5.2 The theory of the Catholic Conspiracy

The various narratives of the Catholic Conspiracy that were developed in 1566 and 1567 had a number of core elements in common. Firstly, proponents of the theory were convinced that the individual outbreaks of religiously motivated violence were manifestations of a larger Catholic strategy. There was a strong sense that the events unfolding in 1566 and 1567 were planned in the highest echelons of Catholic power. An anonymous German pamphlet from 1568 sums up this feeling, arguing that 'It is certainly true and no sensible person can doubt that the current war, which at this moment is being waged in France and the Netherlands, is actually by the Pope designed and intended.'[10]

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[9] M. R. Thorp, 'Catholic conspiracy in early Elizabethan foreign policy', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 15 (1984): 431-448.

[10] 'Es ist gewiszlich war unnd kan kein verstendiger darann zweiffeln / das der jetzige krieg / so nun mehr in Franckreich und Niderland erzegt worde[n] / eygendlich dahin von dem Bapst gerichtet und gemeint werde' Anon., *Newe Zeittung von Franckreich unnd Niderlandt. Christlichen und hochwichtige gründe und ursache[n]/ Warumb die Teutschen kriegsleut die Christen inn Franckreich und Niderlandt nicht verfolgen helffen/ oder auff einige weise sich zu iren feinden wider sie gestellen sollen. Allen Ehrlichen, unnd Frommen Teutschen zu einem newen Jar geschenckt*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568), f. 2 v.

Secondly, advocates of the theory identified precise moments at which the conspirators developed and executed their plans.[11] Some pointed to the council of Trent, whilst others saw the 1559 Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis as the moment of the plot's conception.[12] After decades of Franco-Habsburg conflicts, the negotiating parties at Cateau-Cambrésis justified the cease of longstanding hostilities by emphasising that the Peace opened the door to joint action against the Protestant heresies.[13] As a result, subsequent encounters between representatives of the kings of Spain and France were viewed with great suspicion. In particular, a meeting that took place in the Pyrenees town of Bayonne in June 1565 raised alarm. A German pamphlet published anonymously in 1569 formulates the often-repeated accusation of foul play: 'After this it became known that they [Charles IX and his entourage] had the intention of travelling to Bayonne and to visit the Queen of Spain [Charles' sister Elisabeth]. However, in truth they misuse the King's youth and have as goal the [Catholic] alliance, which we fear from this day onward.'[14] Due to the feared Franco-Spanish connection and the contact between Alba and Catherine de' Medici – both regarded as driving forces behind the plot – Bayonne soon came to be seen as a pivotal moment in the Conspiracy's development.

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[11] C. P. Clasen, *The Palatinate in European History, 1559-1660*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963): p. 9.

[12] Thorp, 'Catholic conspiracy in early Elizabethan foreign policy', p. 435.

[13] L. Romier, *Les Origins Politiques des Guerres des Religion, Volume II*, (Geneva: Slatkine-Megariotis Reprints, 1974): pp. 225-293.

[14] 'Nach disem werd es laut / das man nach *Baiona* zu reysen / und die königin zu Hispanien zubesuchen in vorhabens. Aber in der warheit war es / da man sich ihrer Kön. Mai. jugent mißbrauchen / und die verbundtnuß / welcher furcht man heutigs tags nach vor augen siehet.' Anon., *Frantzösischen kriegsempörung. Das ist Gründlicher Warhafftiger Bericht/ von jüngst verschienenen ersten und andern/ und jetz zum dritten mal newer vorstehender kriegsempörung in Franckreich. Darinnen angezeigt wirdt/ Auß was genotdrangten hochheblichen ursachen/ die newen Reformierten Religions verwanthe/ (wie man sie nennet) widerumb gegenwertige unvermeidliche Defension und Nothwehre wider des Cardinals von Lottringen/ und seines Angangs der Papisten unerhörte Fridbrüchtige verfolgung für die handtzunemen getrungen. Deßgleichen was er gestalt obgedachter Cardinal durch zerrüttung wachsen auff und zunemmen gesucht. Item/ Abschrifft einer Werbung/ So der königin auß Engelandt Gesandter/ bey der königlichen Würden in Franckreich etc. gethan. Auß Frantzösischer Sprach trewlich verdolmetschet*, (s. l.: s. n., 1569), p. 43.

Thirdly, the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy was integrated in the culture of anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic sentiment that already existed in Germany, France, England, and especially the Netherlands. From the 1540s, stories about the Spanish Inquisition and its horrors not only circulated in the Habsburg-controlled Netherlands but also in Germany.[15] Moreover, although the publication in England of large bodies of 'anti-Guise, anti-Jesuit, antipapal, and anti-Spanish' polemic only kicked off in earnest in the 1580s, anti-Spanish sentiments already had deep roots in the English public imagination.[16] The central role attributed to Philip II and Alba in the conception and execution of the Conspiracy thus came as no surprise to European Protestants.

In his article 'Security politics and conspiracy theories in the emerging European state system', Zwierlein dissects the working of conspiracy theories in an early modern context and identifies a number of key characteristics that are particularly helpful for understanding the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy. The first useful premise is the recognition that a credible theory needs to be rooted in real and visible events:

> [Proponents of conspiracy theories] use the information of "true" present and/or past facts such as deeds and movements of political actors as perceived in their newsletters, *avvisi*, dispatches and journals, draw connections between them, interpret coincidences as causalities and give a sense to the whole. The political project tries to predict possible outcomes from a given starting situation if one adds this or that action to it; it often outlines a tableau of different possible futures. The conspiracy theory gives an ex-post explanation for an event or a deed showing a different possible past from the prevalent normally accepted narrative of that past. Often this different possible past is also narrated to make a certain (mostly threatening) possible

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[15] Duke, *Dissident Identities*, pp. 119-135.

[16] L. Ferraro Parmelee, 'Printers, patrons, readers, and spies: Importation of French propaganda in late Elizabethan England', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 25 (1994): 853-872, on p. 858; J. Eldred, '"The just will pay for the sinners": English merchants, the trade with Spain, and Elizabethan foreign policy, 1563-1585', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 10 (2010): 5-28, on p. 7.

future plausible, so past and future narratives go hand in hand. To be plausible, the conspiracy theory has also to be fed by a good deal of "true" and commonly accepted factual elements.[17]

This interplay between knowable and imagined realities - past, present, and future - is encased in a broader moral or ideological understanding of the world:

> A narrative of a possible past which may be believed becomes a conspiracy theory when it contains and adheres to the moral judgment that the event executed is a (shocking, scandalous) evil; necessarily, a conspiracy theory can only be true or at least likely and believable within a given community of values.[18]

The prevalent anti-Spanish sentiments and fear for the Inquisition served as such a moral underpinning for the theory. The linking of events such as Bayonne with the Conspiracy plus the existence of a framework in which the narratives of the Conspiracy fitted perfectly greatly increased their persuasiveness. These deep-seated sentiments together the traumatic events of 1566 and 1567 go a long way towards explaining both the origins and the success of the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy.

Historians have debated whether there was any basis to the Conspiracy.[19] This is not at issue here: the narrative of the Catholic Conspiracy and the disturbing events that informed it strongly altered

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[17] C. Zwierlein, 'Security politics and conspiracy theories in the emerging European state system (15th/16th c.)', *Historical Social Research*, 38 (2013): 65-95, on p. 66.

[18] Ibid, p. 71.

[19] For an argument for the existence of the Catholic Conspiracy, see: N. M. Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle for Recognition*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980): p. 123. Malcolm Thorp, by contrast, has argued that the origins of the myth of the Catholic plot lie in a combination of 'Protestant fears of security' and 'Catholic fantasies: Thorp, 'Catholic conspiracy in early Elizabethan foreign policy', p. 438. Similarly, Alistair Duke has dissected the origins of unfounded Dutch fears of the Spanish Inquisition, a central theme in the narrative of the Conspiracy: Duke, *Dissident Identities*, p. 135. For a discussion of the origins of the Black Legend, see: A. Gordon Kinder, 'Creation of the Black Legend: literary contributions of Spanish Protestant exiles', *Mediterranean Studies*, 6 (1996): 67-78, on p. 67.

German attitudes to the Wars of Religion. This new understanding created a climate in which a number of German Protestant princes deemed it necessary to take new and far-reaching steps to influence the outcome of the conflict in France.

5.3 The transnational dimensions of religious conflict

The way in which historians have organised their research strongly shapes our understanding of the European Reformation. Though comparative studies have recently been conducted, the German Reformation, the French Wars of Religion, and the Dutch Revolt all have their own distinct historiographical traditions.[20] This rigid separation does not reflect contemporary interpretations of the relationship between events in France and the Netherlands. Throughout the Wars of Religion, events in the two countries were explicitly linked. Already before 1566, there was a fear among the Catholic authorities that, seeing the similarities between French and Dutch Calvinists, the Netherlands would be engulfed in the Wars of Religion. As early as August 1560, Cardinal Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, one of the foremost Habsburg statesmen in the Netherlands, feared that the religious unrest in France would soon spread north: 'The religion [Roman Catholicism] is lost in all parts of the Netherlands: it is a miracle, that with such bad neighbours and the example of France, there still has not been any agitation in these provinces.'[21] When the war in France broke out in 1562, Granvelle once again emphasised the danger of the conflict spreading to the Low Countries, exclaiming that

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[20] H. van Nierop, 'Similar problems, different outcomes: The Revolt of the Netherlands and the Wars of Religion in France', in K. Davids and J. Lucassen (eds.), A Miracle Mirrored, The Dutch Republic in European Perspective, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995: pp. 26-56; P. Benedict, G. Marnef, H. van Nierop, and M. Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555-1585*, (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999).

[21] 'La religion se perd dans toutes les parties des Pays-Bas: c'est miracle, qu'avec de si mauvais voisins et l'example de la France, il n'y ait encore eu aucune émotion dans ces provinces.' Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle to Gonçalo Perez, 9 August 1560, M. Gachard (ed.), *Correspondance de Philippe II sur les Affaires des Pays-Bas*, *Volume I*, (Brussels: Librairie Ancienne et Moderne, 1848): p. 191.

'there is no one but God who could prevent the example of France being imitated in this country.'[22]

Protestants drew similar parallels between France and the Netherlands. The Habsburg administration and its critics shared a fear for the danger of a French scenario unfolding in their territories. During the tumultuous summer of 1566, William of Orange remarked in a letter to the dukes of Brunswick and Cleves, the Count of Schwartzburg, and the Landgrave of Hesse that he feared that in the Netherlands 'a similar game might just arise as for some years has been taking place with our neighbours in France.'[23] As early as 1563, Louis of Nassau concluded that the outbreak of religiously motivated strife in the Low Countries was likely to lead to a situation 'worse than in France'.[24]

Great similarities can also be detected in the language used to describe the two conflicts. Using tropes that echo Huguenot narratives, the Cardinal of Granvelle was regularly described as a Habsburg version of the Cardinal of Lorraine, complete with tyrannical ambitions, the determination to exterminate the Reformed Religion, and the tendency to usurp the rightful authority of the native nobility. On 7 June 1563, for instance, Louis of Nassau wrote to Wilhelm of Hesse that

the Governess [Margaretha of Parma] because of the encouragement of the red hound [Granvelle] has recruited a number of regiments of *knechten,* without the judgement and approval of the lords and the council, in my view to act sharply and with violence against the poor Christians, against which the lords of these lands have protested that this was done against their will and that a revolt throughout these lands would follow such acts … In short, the situation is such, that this

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[22] 'il n'y a que Dieu qui pourrait empêcher que l'example de la France ne fût imité en ce pays' Ibid, p. 230.

[23] '… dasz sich woll eben ein solichs spiell alhier erheben möchte als von wenig jaren bey unsern nachbarren in Franckreich geweszen …' William of Orange to the Duke of Brunswick, the Duke of Cleve, the Count of Schwartzburg, and the Landgrave of Hesse, 31 August 1566, G. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite d'Orange-Nassau, Volume II*, (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1835): p. 262.

[24] 'erger dann in Frankreich' Louis of Nassau to Wilhelm of Hesse, 26 July 1563, P. J. Blok, *Correspondentie van en Betreffende Lodewijk van Nassau en Andere Onuitgegeven Documenten, Verzameld door Dr. P. J. Blok*, (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1887): p. 10.

country, if God does not prevent it, in the same way as France will descend into rebellion and all this because of this red hat.[25]

Comparisons between the situation in France and the Netherlands continued to pop up in the correspondence of the German Protestant princes throughout the 1560s. In many cases, the two are mentioned in one breath. This sense was reinforced by the tendency of militant Calvinists from both countries to regard their fates as intertwined.[26] Examples of cooperation between Huguenots and the Dutch rebels are available in abundance. For instance, the Sea Beggars, in many ways the embodiment of Dutch resistance, found a base from which to operate not only in England and Emden, but also in the Huguenot stronghold of La Rochelle.[27] As the conflict unfolded this connection remained strong, with both sides offering each other military support.

Explicit connections between events in France and the Netherlands also appeared in German print, especially after 1566. It was not uncommon to bundle news from both countries together in one pamphlet.[28] Printed works of polemic also regularly discussed the turmoil in France and the Low Countries together. A pamphlet printed

[25] '... die Gubernantin durch ahnregung des rothen bluthundes etzliche feinlin knechte hat richten lassen ohn vonissen unndt verwilligung der herren unndt des raths, der meinung gegen disse armen Christen mit gewalt unndt aller scherpf zu procediren, dawidder die herren von dissent landen protestirt, das disser wider ihren willen geschehe unndt, da meuterey in dissent gantzen landen drause erfolge ... In summa, die sachen lasses sich dermassen ahn, das dise landt, wo es got nit verhut, Franckreich gleich inn eine afruher gerathen mussen unndt alles durch dissen rothen hut.' Louis of Nassau to Wilhelm of Hesse, 7 June 1563, Ibid, p. 9.

[26] O. P. Grell, 'Merchants and ministers: the foundation of international Calvinism', in A. Pettegree, A. Duke, and G. Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): p. 267.

[27] P. J. van Herweden, *Het Verblijf van Lodewijk van Nassau in Frankrijk, Hugenoten en Geuzen, 1568-1572*, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1932): pp. 105-118; H. G. Koenigsberger, 'The organization of the revolutionary parties in France and the Netherlands during the sixteenth century', *The Journal of Modern History*, 27 (1955): pp. 335-351.

[28] Anon., *Newe Zeitungen/ Ausz Franckreich und Niderlanden/ Von zwaien treffenlichen Schlachten im Monat November diß 1568. Jars gehalten/ Als zwischen dem könig in Franckreich und den Guisischen an einem/ und dem könig von Navarren/ auch Printzen von Bourbon und Conde andern thails. Deßgleichen zwischen dem Duca von Alba eins/ un[d] Herrn Printze[n] von Uranien/ Nassaw und Catzelnbogen/ am andern thail. Mit anderm mehr so sich jedem ort und auff baiden seiten zugetragen/ Warhafftiglich beschriben*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

in 1568 aimed at 'all honest and pious Germans', for example, presented 'Christian and highly important grounds and reasons why the German soldiers should not help persecute the Christians in France and the Netherlands.'[29] Throughout the pamphlet, the turmoil in the two countries is continually described as one event with the same set of causes and the same solution. This understanding of the connectedness of the conflicts in various countries not only fuelled the theories of the Catholic Conspiracy, but also made the plot seem all the more menacing.

5.4 The Catholic Conspiracy in French diplomacy

After the flurry of diplomatic activity that accompanied the Conspiracy of Amboise, the Colloquy of Poissy, and the outbreak of the First War, contact with France died down somewhat during the years 1564 and 1565. The events of 1566 and 1567 led to a second wave of French diplomacy in the Empire. The atmosphere of suspicion and conspiracy that characterised these years makes this phase much harder to untangle. It will be demonstrated below how the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy provoked a second diplomatic contest between French Catholics and Huguenots in the Empire. In contrast with earlier activity, this phase was more secretive and, more importantly, much more international. Whereas the years 1560 to 1563 were dominated by discussions about France, 1566 to 1568 resonated with talk of a European conflict that was slowly unfolding.

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[29] 'Allen Ehrlichen unnd Frommen Teütschen' 'Christlichen und hochwichtige gründe und ursache[n] / Warumb die Teütschen kriegsleüt die Christen inn Franckreich und Niderlandt nich verfolgen helffen ... sollen.' Anon., *Newe Zeittung von Franckreich unnd Niderlandt. Christlichen und hochwichtige gründe und ursache[n]/ Warumb die Teutschen kriegsleut die Christen inn Franckreich und Niderlandt nicht verfolgen helffen/ oder auff einige weise sich zu iren feinden wider sie gestellen sollen. Allen Ehrlichen, unnd Frommen Teutschen zu einem newen Jar geschenckt*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568), f. 1 v.

5.4.1 *A Protestant diplomatic offensive*

In March 1568, five months after the Conspiracy of Meaux, Guillaume Rabot de Valènes, a French diplomat travelling in Germany, remarked in a letter home that

> On the eleventh of the last month [February] the Bishop of Speyer encountered at Heidelberg my lord the Elector Palatine with a gentleman sent by the Emperor. It is being said here amongst some people that his Majesty [the Emperor] has sent the same [envoy] to the other Protestant princes in particular to inform them that the Pope, and our king, and King of Spain, and the Italian potentates have decided to overcome in France those of the Religion and having established there the Council of Trent to make war on them.[30]

This anecdote is illustrative of the way in which rumours of the Catholic plot circulated in German aristocratic circles. In the absence of concrete information, discussions of the Conspiracy were often based on rumour and hearsay. In this case, Valènes based his information concerning interaction between the Emperor and the Protestant princes of the Empire partly on conversation with the Bishop of Speyer and, even more unconvincingly, on the claims of a number of unspecified locals. As is typically the case with conspiracy theories, it is hard to distinguish reliable from unreliable information. In this case, for example, the narrative of the Catholic Conspiracy is consistent with other sources, but the writer curiously identifies the Emperor as the source of this information. This unusual element does not return in any of the other letters or reports studied in this thesis. It is this combination of returning themes and unexpected additions that characterises much of the correspondence about the Conspiracy.

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[30] 'Le XIe du passe l'Evesque de Spire est venu trouver a Heildelberg Monsieur l'Electeur Palatin avec un seigneur envoie de la part de l'Empereur. Il se dict icy entre quelques uns que sa Maieste a envoie de mesmes aux autres Princes Protestans a chascun en particulier pour les advertir que la Pape nostre Roy celuy d'Espaigne et les Potentats d'Italie ont delibre estans venis a bout en France de ceux de la Religion et y ayant establi le Consile de Trante de leur faire la guerre …' Rabot de Valènes to Pierre de la Vieuville, 3 March 1568, BNF, 15545, f. 12-13.

This makes it difficult to discern where the princes got their information about the Catholic plot from. In their correspondence, they often did not speak about their sources of information. In a letter from May 1567, the time at which Alba and his forces had just begun their journey north, the princes of the Palatinate, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden simply speak of

> tidings of an alleged Catholic alliance, which on the initiative of the Cardinal of Lorraine has been established between the Pope, the Emperor, the kings of Spain and Portugal, the dukes of Savoy and Bavaria and their relatives –they also want to involve the King of France – for the destruction of all Lutherans and Huguenots.[31]

Especially characteristic of correspondence related to the Conspiracy are the words 'tidings' and 'alleged'. The princes in this and many other cases seem either unwilling or unable to disclose the origins of such reports. Interesting too are the discrepancies that can be found in the various reports of the Conspiracy. In this case, the Cardinal of Lorraine and not the Pope or Philip II is identified as the initiator of the Conspiracy. This might indicate that this particular version of the story originated in France, where a significant body polemic against the Cardinal was being produced.

Despite the covert and shadowy nature of the stream of information about the Conspiracy, it is clear that these accounts formed part of a concerted effort by Protestants to spread the theory widely. The best example of the coordinated nature of this diplomatic offensive is a hand-written document that in 1567 circulated among Protestants

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[31] 'Es handelt sich um Nachrichten von einem angeblichen Katholischen Bündniß, das auf Anstiften des Cardinals von Lothringen zwischen dem Bapst, dem Kaiser, dem Königen von Spanien und Portugal, den herzogen von Savoyen und Bayern und ihren Blutsverwandten – auch den könig von Frankreich wünschte man herein zuziehen – zur Vernichtung aller Lutheraner und Hugenotten abgeschlossen werden.' The princes of the Palatinate, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden to the Elector of Saxony, 30 May 1567, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume II* (Braunschweig: C.A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1870): pp. 50-51.

throughout Europe.[32] This document was said to be a transcript of a meeting between Lorraine and Granvelle at which the Catholic plan was further developed. The document provided an extremely detailed insight into the supposed plan, including seventeen articles that arranged for the execution of the Conspiracy throughout Europe. These articles included marriage arrangements between the major Catholic families of Europe (for instance the houses of Guise and the Bavarian branch of the Wittelsbachs), the (re)appointment of Catholic individuals to positions of power, and the expulsion of the Protestant aristocracy and Catholic princes who refused to cooperate. This document was a fake and the agreement did not exist but the level of detail together with the amount of real information about events around Europe included in the text made it very persuasive. It was evidently fabricated by someone with access to the latest information about European developments. Moreover, through networks of correspondence the text was disseminated very widely. The text was widely read at the Protestants courts of the Empire and soon also came to the attention of Catholics.[33] The document, which never appeared in print and whose writer or writers are unknown, became one of the most discussed texts of the late-1560s.

Though these news reports and rumours circulated throughout Protestant Europe, many of them clearly originated in the Netherlands and France. Protestants in these countries, who were directly confronted with the dangers of Catholic aggression, developed a large body of anti-Catholic polemic. The stories that form the backbone of the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy were conspicuous in the public discourse of these countries. Printed texts, imagery, songs, and even pageantry, for instance the symbolism developed by the Beggars, shaped and reflected the mood among many Protestants in France and the Low Countries.[34] Public preaching, which had played a central role

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[32] Zwierlein, 'Security politics and conspiracy theories, pp. 83-84.

[33] Ibid, 84.

[34] Duke, *Dissident Identities*, pp. 137-156.

in sparking the iconoclasm of 1566, also reinforced the sense that Protestants were locked in an epic battle with the idolatrous and violent Catholics.[35] Between 1566 and 1568, this type of polemic was much more intense in France and the Netherlands than in other parts of Europe. In England, stories of the tyrannical intentions of Philip II and his Spanish Inquisition only started to dominate public discourse in the wake of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre, which brought large numbers of Huguenot refugees to the country, and in the context of the coming of the Spanish Armada in 1588.[36] Already embroiled in violent conflict with Catholics, Dutch and French Protestants were the driving force behind the development and dissemination of the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy. As a result of their diplomatic initiatives, the theory came to replace more complex understandings of confessional relations among the German princes.

5.4.2 *Catholic denials*

Catholic potentates around Europe were quick to deny their involvement in the Conspiracy. The fact that Protestant pamphleteers presented the story of the Conspiracy with so much detail must have surprised Catholics, who were supposed to be the architects behind the plot. The fabricated account of the meeting between Lorraine and Granvelle baffled and enraged many Catholic princes, including the Emperor and the King of France. Catholics attempted to demonstrate that the theory was a fantasy. Charles IX and Catharine de Medici, keen to protect their good relations with the German Lutheran princes, dispatched a number of diplomats to the Empire to counter the Conspiracy story.[37] The bishop of Rennes, a protégée of Catherine and

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[35] P. M. Crew, *Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm in the Netherlands, 1544-1569*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978): pp. 140-181.

[36] Ferraro Parmelee, 'Printers, patrons, readers, and spies; J. Cooper, *The Queen's Agent, Francis Walsingham at the Court of Elizabeth I*, (London: Faber & Faber, 2011): pp. 289-325;

[37] Zwierlein, 'Security politics and conspiracy theories, p. 84.

one of the French diplomats in Germany, was unequivocal: he insisted that the rumours were 'complete lies'.[38] Similarly, the Württemberg envoy Petrus Paulus Vergerius reported back from the French court that he had been assured that 'His Majesty has no intention to undertake or initiate anything against the German princes with the King of Spain, or the Pope, or any other person.'[39] The need to deny the existence of a Catholic plot had a distinctly political dimension. The Protestant panic of 1567 and 1568 could severely disrupt Franco-German relations. As described in Chapters I and II, these ties, which had been cultivated for decades, were of strategic importance since they mitigated the danger of the formation of an international Protestant alliance and ensured French access to the Rhineland's mercenary markets. The effect of the emphatic Catholic denials was mixed. It is in the nature of conspiracy theories that insistent denials do little to undermine the conviction of those who subscribe to them. In many ways, Catholic denials confirmed the validity of the theory since the secrecy and covertness of the Conspiracy was a central element of the narrative. Nonetheless, for those who were not quite convinced of the validity of the theory, the Catholic denials could plant the seed of doubt.

5.4.3 *Evidence*

In response to the Catholic denials, proponents of the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy felt the need to add weight to their argument by providing evidence. In the absence of watertight proof, Friedrich III, the most avid German promoter of the narrative, was determined to seize every opportunity to expose the conspirators. He was particularly keen to underline the moments at which the Catholic conspirators

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[38] 'eitel Unwarheit' August of Saxony to Friedrich III, 31 December 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 160.

[39] 'Es hetten I. K. M. nie in sin genomen, das sie etwas mit dem konig aus hispanien, dem papst und eynichem menschen wider die Teutschen fursten anfahren oder anstiften wolten …' Report of Peter Paul Vergerius' audience with Charles IX, 14 November 1567, Ibid, p. 130.

themselves admitted their aggressive anti-Protestant agenda. He wrote to Württemberg in November 1567 that 'indeed the Duke of Guise and his followers [demonstrated in] the horrific and pitiful actions carried out in Vassy and other places and also in their public writings, in which they explained themselves expressly, that they have the intention to eradicate our true Christian religion.'[40] When responding to the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy, the Catholic leadership of France faced similar difficulties as during the First War, when they felt the need to present contrasting narratives to different audiences. The emphatic denials presented above lost much of their force in the light of the aggressive anti-Protestant rhetoric that was dominating public discourse in France. Moreover, the popular violence against Huguenots that erupted throughout France together with the repressive policies introduced in the Netherlands seemed to confirm the ferocity of the Catholic wish to exterminate Protestantism. Thus in the eyes of many Protestants the narrative was at the same time denied and confirmed by Catholics.

These statements and instances of violence by themselves did not prove the existence of a coordinated plan. Therefore, the Elector wasted no time in exploiting every scrap of news that could indicate the workings of the Catholic Conspiracy. In February 1568, when the effects of Alba's rule in the Netherlands were becoming visible, he wrote to August of Saxony:

> In good faith I cannot keep from you that I have learned from a certain and reliable source [that the pope intends] to gather from merchants in Italy and other place a very considerably sum of money of up to 900,000 crowns and to use the same in Germany, our beloved

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[40] '… und zwar des herzogen zu Guisa sambt seines anhangs daruf ervolgte erschrodliche und erbarmegliche handlung zu Vassy und allen anderen orten, desgleichen iere offentliche ausschrieben, darinnen sie sich austrudenlich ercleret, das sie umb die ausrottung unserer waren christlichen religion zuthun were …' Friedrich III to Christoph of Würrtemberg, 15 November 1567, Ibid, p. 135.

fatherland, to create there a similar unrest and bloodshed as has been going on in other places.[41]

A fortnight later, Friedrich also sent a letter with the same message to Wilhelm of Hesse. Friedrich used this anecdotal evidence to convince his peers of the scale of the Catholic violence that was about to descend on Europe. On one occasion, 'three ships with money and valuables … [intended for] the Duke Alba to pay his soldiers' were intercepted on the Palatinate stretch of the Rhine.[42] This incident served as very tangible evidence of the fact that Alba's policies were part of a coordinated international effort. The Elector made sure that his German peers were aware of this event and that they understood its connections with the Catholic Conspiracy.

For proponents of the theory, the arrival of Alba in the Netherlands and the policies he implemented there were by far the most convincing piece of evidence for the existence of the Conspiracy. The panic caused by Alba's march along the borders of France and through the Rhineland was exacerbated by the way he conducted the business of government when he arrived in Brussels. The backlash against Dutch Protestants directed by Alba was a diplomatic and public relations disaster.[43] His draconian measures, such as the infamous Council of Troubles (created in September 1567), together with his megalomaniac style of government not only alienated Dutch Catholics, but also handed Protestant polemicists plenty of ammunition.[44]

[41] 'Ich kan auch E. L. in freuntlichem vertrauen nit verhalten, das ich in gewisser bestendiger erfahrung … bey den Italinischer und andern kauffleuten ayn namhaffte grosse summa gelts und biss un neun mahl hundert tausent kronen uffzubringen und dieselbige in das deutsch und unser geliebtes vatterlandt, darinnen ayn gleyche unruhe und blutvergiessen wie an andern orten zu erwerben, zu verschaffen …' Friedrich III to August of Saxony, 19 February 1568, Ibid, p. 189.

[42] 'grossere summen gelts' '3 Schiffe mit Geld und kostbaren waaren … dem Duca de Alba zur Bezahlung seines Kriegvolkes …' Friedrich III to Wilhelm of Hesse, 5 March 1568, Ibid, 193-194.

[43] J. Pollmann, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520-1635*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): pp. 68-93.

[44] Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots*, pp. 166-211.

Especially the trial and execution of the counts of Egmont and Hoorne at the hands of the Council of Troubles disturbed the Imperial princes. In their eyes, the executions illustrated the illegality of Spanish rule. The two counts, both Catholics and knights of the prestigious Order of the Golden Fleece, were put to death on charges of treason despite having remained loyal to their monarch.[45] Moreover, the prosecution of the two counts broke both rules and conventions and undermined the position of the high nobility. The whole affair was in the eyes of many, both Catholic and Protestant, the prime example of the tyranny and cruelty of the Duke of Alba and the regime he represented. After the arrest of Egmont en Hoorne on 9 September, Friedrich wrote to Emperor Maximilian, urging intervention, that 'the cause of this harsh measure is unknown to him, since Egmont has never altered at all in religious matters, and has always served the King with loyal diligence.'[46] The news of the 'deplorable' execution of the counts was met with anger and disbelief.[47] Orange wrote that the executions went 'not only directly against the constitutions and ordinances of the said Empire, but also against all justice, both human and divine.'[48] The Emperor was quick to emphasise that 'he had done everything that was possible to do to prevent of this bloodshed.'[49] Egmont and Hoorne's death was the most evocative example of Alba's tyranny and the clearest indicator that the Catholic Conspiracy did exist.

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[45] Ibid, pp. 188-189.

[46] 'die Ursach dieser schweren Ungabe ist ihm unbewußt, indem Egmont niemals in Religionssachen etwas geändert, dem könig mit treuem Fleis gedient hat.' Friedrich III to Emperor Maximilian, 4 October 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 101.

[47] 'jamerlich' Friedrich III to Wilhelm of Hesse, 17 June 1568, Ibid, p. 222.

[48] 'n'est pas seullement directement contre les constitutions et ordonnances du dit Empire, mais contre tout droitct devin et humain …' William of Orange to Lazarus von Schwendi, 19 June 1568, G. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite d'Orange-Nassau, Volume III* (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1836): pp. 247-248.

[49] 'zu Verhütung dieses Blutvergiesens alles gethan, was zu thun möglich …' Konrad Marius to Friedrich III, 29 June 1568, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, pp. 225-226.

5.5 The Catholic Conspiracy in print

The flare-up of the conflict in 1567 and 1569 was accompanied by a spike in the number pamphlets about France published in the Empire. In 1568, a relatively large proportion of printed texts about France were published anonymously, especially compared to 1562.[50] This anonymity fits within the atmosphere of secrecy that surrounded the narrative of the Catholic Conspiracy. It is clear, though, from their content that they were especially written for German audiences. They speak of France from an outsider's perspective and in many cases draw conclusions for Germany. Even more so than the First War and the Massacre of Vassy, the events of 1566 and 1567 and the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy made very suitable topics for polemics. These pamphlets contributed heavily to the creation of an atmosphere of apprehension among the Protestants in the Empire.

5.5.1 *The language of conspiracy*

Between the years 1566 and 1569 almost all German pamphlets about France mention the Catholic Conspiracy. Though in some texts the plot is mentioned only briefly, the routine inclusion of the theory in news reports about France is illustrative of the influence of the narrative. The types of language used in print to describe the Conspiracy contributed directly to the creation of a feeling of connectedness between Protestants throughout Europe.

First of all, the emotive language that is used in almost all pamphlets was designed to mitigate Lutheran hostility to the Huguenots, which had been evident in their dismissal of Calvinists' political motives and religious doctrines. Most publications included descriptions of the cruelty of Catholics in the Netherlands and France. By 1566, complaints about the infringements of the rights of Huguenots were of less importance in the printed texts. Instead, polemicists

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[50] 12 out of 27 in 1562 and 11 out of 17 in 1568: See Figure 6 in Chapter III.

described a struggle of life and death. A 1569 German publication presented more than 100 pages of anecdotes and translated documents illustrating the ferocity of Catholic aggression to prove that it was their attention 'to exterminate all Protestants in the Kingdom.'[51] A much shorter pamphlet from 1568 described how in France the Huguenots were already forced to fight in order to 'safe their life and limbs, wife and children from the cruel tyranny of the persecutor.'[52] Images were an even more powerful means of painting a stark and persuasive picture of events in France and the Netherlands. The evil regime of the Duke of Alba, who was presented as 'a new Nebuchadnezzar', was the topic of a significant body of polemical pamphlets, ballads, and prints.[53] The situation in the Netherlands provided a bleak insight into the future of Protestantism throughout Europe if the Catholic plot succeeded. The graphic imagery that was being produced by the opponents of Alba's regime reinforced this message in a particularly distressing manner. One example of this comes in an engraving from 1569. The captions are largely in German, with the occasional translation in French, suggesting that it was primarily intended for a German audience. The print in essence provides a catalogue of 'all the executions and persecution committed by the Duke of Alba amongst the evangelicals in the

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[51] 'alle die Religions verwante in seinem Königreich auszutillgen' Anon, *Frantzösischen kriegsempörung. Das ist Gründlicher Warhafftiger Bericht/ von jüngst verschienenen ersten und andern/ und jetz zum dritten mal newer vorstehender kriegsempörung in Franckreich. Darinnen angezeigt wirdt/ Auß was genotdrangten hochheblichen ursachen/ die newen Reformierten Religions verwanthe/ (wie man sie nennet) widerumb gegenwertige unvermeidliche Defension und Nothwehre wider des Cardinals von Lottringen/ und seines Angangs der Papisten unerhörte Fridbrüchtige verfolgung für die handtzunemen getrungen. Deßgleichen was er gestalt obgedachter Cardinal durch zerrüttung wachsen auff und zunemmen gesucht. Item/ Abschrifft einer Werbung/ So der königin auß Engelandt Gesandter/ bey der königlichen Würden in Franckreich etc. gethan. Auß Frantzösischer Sprach trewlich verdolmetschet*, (s. l.: s. n., 1569), p. 50.

[52] 'auff das sie ir leib und leben / Weib und Kinder von de grausammer Tyranney der vervolger erretten.' Anon., *Newe Zeitung von Franckreich unnd Niderlandt. Christlichen und hochwichtige gründe und ursache[n]/ Warumb die Teutschen kriegsleut die Christen inn Franckreich und Niderlandt nicht verfolgen helffen/ oder auff einige weise sich zu iren feinden wider sie gestellen sollen. Allen Ehrlichen, unnd Frommen Teutschen zu einem newen Jar geschenckt*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568), f. 2 v.

[53] Arnade, *Begars, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots*, p. 169; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 155-168.

Netherlands from the year 1567 up to this time.'[54] In the centre the Duke, 'the Pope's lieutenant', sits on a throne flanked by the devil, Cardinal Granvelle, and 'the bloody and murderous Spanish Inquisition.'[55] In the background the executions of 'Christians' by hanging, burning, and beheading are visible.[56] The beheading of Egmont and Hoorne occupies a particularly prominent place in the centre of the picture. Importantly, the artist explicitly links Alba's political and religious crimes. In the foreground, allegorical representations of the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands sit kneeling, chained to Alba's throne. Behind them stand the magistrates of the Netherlands, their 'authority changed into stone pillars, silent and languid ...'[57] The subjugation of the Netherlands by the Duke of Alba was thus complete. Not only had Protestantism been violently rooted out, the once proudly independent provinces had also lost all their political authority. The dual prospect and religious and political coercion played a central role in the narrative of the Catholic Conspiracy. The example of the Netherlands, proponents of the theory argued, showed with alarming clarity what the impact of the Conspiracy on Protestants throughout Europe could be.

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[54] 'alle Execution und verfolgung die der Duc de Alba gethan hat under die Evangelisten im Niderland von Anno 1567 bis auff dise zeit.' Anon., 'De Troon van de Hertog van Alva', Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1569.

[55] 'des Bapsts lütenant' 'Die blütige morderische spanische inquisition' Ibid.

[56] 'Christen' Ibid.

[57] 'Oberkeit ist in steine seülen verwandelt, ist stumm und mat ...' Ibid.

Figure 8, 'The throne of the Duke of Alba'.[58]

Occasionally, descriptions of Catholic violence were packaged in Biblical or even providential language. In one anonymous pamphlet, the pope is said to have designed the Conspiracy so 'that he can once again erect his Pharaonic Roman chair in the Temple of God, so that sitting there he may reign and tyrannise …'[59] The Catholic leadership is often likened to the archetypal tyrants from the Old Testament, such as the Kings of Babylon or the Egyptian Pharaohs, who subjugated God's chosen people. This identification of Protestants with the people of Israel was not new, but was perfectly suited for capturing the threat of the Conspiracy in an instantly recognisable and easily understandable image. In one pamphlet, the Conspiracy is explained as a direct consequence of sinfulness of Europe's Protestants: 'If we remain

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[58] Ibid.

[59] 'sein Pharaonischen Römischen Stul widerumb in dem Tempel Gottes forthin auffrichten / alda sitzen / regieren und Tyranniseren möge …' Anon., *Newe Zeittung von Franckreich unnd Niderlandt. Christlichen und hochwichtige gründe und ursache[n]/ Warumb die Teutschen kriegsleut die Christen inn Franckreich und Niderlandt nicht verfolgen helffen/ oder auff einige weise sich zu iren feinden wider sie gestellen sollen. Allen Ehrlichen, unnd Frommen Teutschen zu einem newen Jar geschenckt,* (s. l.: s. n., 1568), f. 2 v.

obstinate and do not abandon our sins and instead heavily offend God, the Lord will shorten our days.'[60]

This providential language, however, was relatively rare. Much more common was the use of the language of conspiracy. An anonymous pamphlet entirely devoted to alerting German audiences to the dangers of the Conspiracy explained how the Catholics:

> diligently wanted to deny and hide and twist the Conspiracy and alliance between the Pope in Rome, the King of Spain, and also France and his other followers recently created in Bayonne for the destruction and extermination of the true Christian religion and for the implementation and consolidation of the Antichristian and popish idolatry and tyranny.[61]

By drawing the readers' attention to the equivocation and scheming of those involved in the Conspiracy, the anonymous writers of these pamphlets at once increased the plausibility of the theory and undermined Catholic denials. Emphasising the secrecy of the plot, the pamphlets provided a unique insight in its clandestine workings. One publication from 1568 claimed to contain the text of two writings that by chance had ended up in the hands of French Protestants and that proved the existence of the Conspiracy.[62] Another celebrated Friedrich

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[60] 'Aber wenn wir harneckig bleiben / nit ablassen von unnsern sünden / unnd Gott gröblich erzürnen / so will der Herr die tage verkürtzen' Anon., *Newe Zeitung/ Warhafftige Newe Zeitung/ vonn siben Stetten/ welche mit dem Volck/ und alles was darinn war/ in den Grentzen von Franckreich/ versunckenn unnd undergangenn*, (Augsburg: Hanz Zimmerman, 1566), f. 2 r.

[61] Das nemblichen wie hoch unnd fleissig man biß anher die Conspiration un[d] bündtnuß zo zwischen dem Bapst zu Rom / dem könig zu Hispanien / auch Franckrych unnd anderm ihrem anhang kurtz verrückter zeit zu ausrütung und vertilgung der Wahren Chritlichen Religion und dagegen zu pflantzung und bestätung der Antichristlichen Bäptischen abgötterey und Tyranney zu Baiona uffgericht / ... verneinen und verbergen und berbogen hat wöllen.' Anon., *Kurtzer warhaffter un[d] Grundtlicher Bericht/ von der Baptischen Conspiration und Bündtnuß/ auch derselbigen jetzigen kriegsexpedition in Franckrych und Brabanct sampt deren ursachen. Zu Christlicher getrūwer Warning der Frommen Tütschen/ so sich deßwegen in dienst und bestallung und geringes zergeugkliches guts und gelts willen begeben und inlassend*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568), p. 2.

[62] Anon., *Abdruck Zweier Nidergeworffener Schreiben/ daraus zuersehen/ mit was geschwinden Practicken die Papisten inn Franckreich umbgangen/ wider die Herrn vom*

III as the exposer of the plot. It described how advisors of Condé had 'twice been in Germany with the Elector Palatine, from whom they had learned much about the popish Conspiracy and attack.'[63]

Finally, the transnational nature of the plot was often emphasised. The majority of the pamphlets studied here discussed both the situation in France and the Netherlands. The outbreak of unrest in the Netherlands was universally represented as an escalation of the French conflict. During this new phase, it was argued, the Catholics stepped up their game and constructed new strategies to root out Protestantism. This sense of a second phase of increased Catholic aggression is articulated clearly in yet another anonymous pamphlet form 1568. The writer described how Huguenots defended themselves 'with the same valour and steadfastness against the new practices and attacks of the Guise that the Cardinal of Lorraine recently has arranged together with the foreigners, since without them they will not achieve the suppression and endless destruction of this kingdom.'[64] According to this narrative, the French Catholic party, led by the Guise, had realised during the First War that the Protestants were not easily supressed. Therefore, they had used the respite provided by the Peace of Amboise to covertly construct an international alliance to aid them in their cause. The conclusions to be drawn from this assessment were

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Adel/ unnd andere so sich der Reformation der Religion in Franckreich gebrauchen, (s. l.: s. n. 1568).

[63] 'zweymal in Deutschlandt beim Pfaltzgragen Churfürsten gewesen / von welchen er viel des königes und der Papisten heimligkeit und anschlege verstonden.' F. Hotman and A. Osiander, *Newe Zeitung aus Franckreich/ welche sich mit dem Pritzen von Conde/ unnd dem Könige in Franckreich newlich zugetragen/ etc.*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568), f. 4 r.

[64] '…mit gleicher dapfferkeit und standhafftigkeit / den newen Pracktiken und anschlegen dere von Guise / so newlicher zeit der Cardinal von Lottringen durch heimliche verstendnus / so er mit den auslendischen hat / auff die dan bracht / die sonst anderstwohin nicht / dann zu unterdruckung und endlichen verderben dieses Königreichs gereichen.' Anon., *Warhafftige Beschreibung des Gesprechs/ so sich zwischen dem Durchleuchtigsten und Hochgebornen Fürsten von Conde/ und denen von der Königlichen Maiestat in Franckreich darzu verordneten Herren/ begeben. Darin auch die ursachen/ warumb itzgemelter Fürst von Conde und seine mitverwandte/ zur wehr gegriffen/ angezeigt warden. Sampt des Königs aus Franckreich Patenten und erklerung/ belangende die Richter von Diener der Justitien/ und ire Religion. Aus Frantzösischer Sprach verdeutschet*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568), f. 8 v.

obvious: Protestants throughout Europe needed to cooperate to stand a change against the coordinated attack that awaited them. To underline this point, the idea that the conspirators tried to divide their victims against each other was often voiced. One pamphleteer wrote that 'the aforementioned allies do not know how to pull down and subjugate the combative German nation in another way but by letting Germans spill German blood.'[65]

These three types of language, present in most German pamphlets about the Catholic Conspiracy, together created a new mood among the Protestants of the Empire. The emotive language that characterised the pamphlets of 1568 made discussions about France more urgent and immediate to German concerns than they had been during the First War. The focus on the secrecy of the Conspiracy and the idea that the plot was slowly unfolding out of the sight of the Protestants increased the feeling that something needed to be done. Finally, the pamphlets contributed heavily to the belief that the Empire would not to be spared by the Catholics. The theory of the Catholic Conspiracy in many ways internationalised local anti-Catholic sentiments and provided a common narrative framework which envisaged clear confessional divisions. In this way it brought together the diverse Protestant family against a shared enemy. Their shared anxieties and fears for imminent Catholic aggression reinforced the feeling that the Reformation and its consequences transcended borders.

5.6 The Catholic Conspiracy in Germany

The realisation that events in France and the Low Countries were two manifestations of the same international struggle led some German princes to conclude that there was no reason why the violence could

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[65] 'Weil ubgedachte Bundtgenossen die streitbare Teutsche Nation uff andere weg nit zuschwechen und underzutrucken wüssendt / dann das sie / Tütsch blut mit Tütschen vergiessen möchten' Anon., *Kurtzer warhaffter un[d] Grundtlicher Bericht/ von der Baptischen Conspiration und Bündtnuß/ auch derselbigen jetzigen kriegsexpedition in Franckrych und Brabanct sampt deren ursachen. Zu Christlicher getrüwer Warning der Frommen Tütschen/ so sich deßwegen in dienst und bestallung und geringes zergeugkliches guts und gelts willen begeben und inlassend*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568), p. 5.

not spread into Germany. The porous border regions separating the Empire from France and the Low Countries was already home to a growing number of Reformed Protestants, whose numbers were swelled by the arrival of refugees. Therefore, it was feared that the violence between Catholics and Calvinists that played a central role is provoking the two conflicts might also erupt in the Rhineland. In the Autumn of 1567 Friedrich III warned Wilhelm of Hesse that 'what up to now has been going on and has been done in the Netherlands and is still going on, that the same also in France … has been undertaken, that from there without doubt it will also affect others and we, the princes and other German estates, who oppose popery and its horrors and idolatry, will not be the last …'[66] Similarly, William of Orange emphasised in a letter to August of Saxony 'that the current pitiful and dangerous unrest … not only in France and the Netherlands … but … could cause the entirety of Christendom … universal irreversible detriment and damage.'[67] Although Orange of course had obvious personal reasons for describing the conflict in the Netherlands as an event of international significance, it is nonetheless clear that there was a sense amongst the princes that the French Wars of Religion and the Dutch Revolt were not simply domestic events. They were in the eyes of many contemporary observers part of a larger European struggle.

The prospect of this type of violence spilling over from France and the Netherlands into Germany was of course a cause for concern amongst the Imperial princes. The question was, however, how likely it was that such a scenario would unfold. For Friedrich and others who ardently believed in the Catholic Conspiracy this was only a matter of

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[66] '… was bißhero in den Niederlanden furgangen und getrieben worden und noch, das sollichs auch in Frankreich … ins werf gericht werden, von dannen es sonder zweifel auch an andere gerathen und wir die chur- und fursten auch andere stende Teutscher nation, so dem bapstumb, seinen greuweln und abgöttereyen widersprechen, nicht die letsten sein möchten …' Friedrich III to Wilhelm of Hesse, 16 October 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 105.

[67] '… das die ytzwherende erbärmliche und gefhärliche unruwe … nicht alleyn Franckreich und die Niederlände … die gantze Christenheit … zu eynem allgemeynen unwiederspringlichem nachteyl und schaden möchte gereichen …' William of Orange to August of Saxony, 30 December 1567, Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou Correspondance … Volume III*, p. 142.

time. After all, the plot was essentially international in scope and intended to reverse the fortunes of the Protestant Reformation throughout Europe. 'Germany has never been in greater danger than now', the Palatinate academic Christoph von Ehem wrote in August 1568, 'since also the foreign potentates, the Pope, Spain, and France have never been so united in their intention to exterminate the religion with force as now.'[68] The fear was that the success of Catholic violence in the Netherlands and France would cause a domino effect that would engulf Protestant Europe. Friedrich feared 'that because of the Spanish dominance in the Netherlands also its neighbours, and especially Germany, are being put at risk.'[69] The princes were also concerned by the outcomes of the Council of Trent. As illustrated above, many Protestants considered the Council to be nerve centre of the Catholic Conspiracy. At the 1566 Diet of Augsburg, the Catholic princes of the Empire ratified the decrees of Trent, alarming their Protestant peers. A letter written in July 1567 to August of Saxony illustrates that these fears were widely shared. The letter, which was not only signed by Friedrich III, but also by Christoph of Württemberg and Philibert of Baden, posed a pressing question: '… because already the execution of the godless Council of Trent has started all too much in the Netherlands, … what then will prevent that …through incitement by the pope and his followers the Germans may encounter and experience the same?'[70] Judging by the frequency with which he wrote letters on this precise topic in 1567 and 1568, Friedrich was not convinced that all his peers were sufficiently appreciative of the urgency of the situation. For

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[68] 'Deutschland is niet in grösere Gefahr gestanden als jezt. So sind auch die ausländischen Potentaten, Papst, Spanien und Frankreich nie so einig gewesen, die Religion mit Gewalt auszurotten, als jezt. Christoph von Ehem to Dr Craco, 29 August 1568, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 239.

[69] '… das durch den spanischen Uebermath in den Niderlanden auch die Nachbarn und besonders Deutschland geführdet werden …' Friedrich III to August of Saxony, 26 March 1568, Ibid, p. 208.

[70] 'Und dieweil leyder nur zuvil albereyt die execution des gottlosen Trientischen Concilii in der Niederlanden auch angestellet … was wolle dann hinder … Deutschen ein gleiches durch ansiftung des babst und seinen anhangs begegnen und widerfahren möchte?' The princes of the Palatinate, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden to August of Saxony, 17 July 1567, Ibid, p. 69.

instance, in June 1567 he warned the Catholic Archbishop of Mainz of the chaos that could befall the Empire: '… that some of the estates of the Holy Roman Empire want to put in place the decrees of the so-called Tridentine Council. This will disrupt both the religious and secular peace and next expose the neighbouring estate to grave danger.'[71] And again in July of the same year: 'That not only the foreign potentates but also some princes inside the Empire have the intention to execute and implement the so-called Council of Trent and also to commence the unchristian bloodletting.'[72]

Occasionally, news and rumours surfaced that seemed to confirm the workings of the Conspiracy within the borders of the Empire. Friedrich used these reports to lend weight to his warnings. In February 1568 he wrote to August of Saxony, who proved difficult to convince, alerting him to

> reports that have recently arrived from many places that place [the existence of] the popish alliance more and more beyond doubt and it is strongly to be feared that also many clergymen in Germany are part of the popish confederation or at least support it. For instance, it has recently become known that the Bishop of Rennes and Ludwig of Bar [also known as Seigneur de Lus] have raised money in Bamberg.[73]

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[71] '… daß von etlichen dem h. Reich zugehörige Ständen des Tridentinischen vermeinten Concils Decreta ins werf zu richten unternommen werden wolle. Dadurch werde fowohl der Religions- als der Proganfriede zerstört und zunächtst den benachbarten Ständen die gröste Gefahr bereitet werden.' Friedrich III to Heinrich Riedesel, June 1567, Ibid, p. 56.

[72] '… das nit allain die auslendische potentate sonder auch etliche fursten im heiligen reich zu erequirung und volnstredung des vermeinten Trientischen concilii und also zu unchristen blutvergiessen anzuheßen understanden …' Friedrich III to the Archbishop of Mainz, 30 July 1567, Ibid, p. 77.

[73] 'Neuerdings von manchen Orten eingetroffene Nachrichten stellen dase bewuste päpistliche Bündnis immer mehr außer Zweifel und ist sehr zu fürchten, daß auch manche Geistliche in Deutschland zur päpistliche Conföderation gehören oder dieselbe wenigsten unterstüzen. So hat E. jüngst erfahren, das der Bischof von Rennes und Ludwig von Bar besonders in Bamberg Geld gesammelt haben.' Friedrich to August of Saxony, 2 February 1568, Ibid, pp. 184-185. For more information on Ludwig of Bar see B. Nicollier-de Weck, *Hubert Languet (1518-1581), Un Réseau Politique Internationale de Melanchthon à Guillaume d'Orange*, (Geneva: Droz, 1995): p. 151.

Other princes too on occasion became aware of reports that seemed to support the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy and its impact on Germany. With evident alarm, Wilhelm of Hesse shared with Friedrich that he learned 'that the aforementioned Duke [Albrecht of Bavaria] intends to organise a general visitation conducted by the Jesuits, which will not be unlike the Dutch Inquisition. May our Lord God change everything for the better.'[74] Reports of this nature underlined the seriousness of the situation. They indicated that the implementation of the Catholic Conspiracy in Germany was closer than it seemed. Therefore, they were a catalyst for the more interventionist stance of many Protestant princes in the years 1567-9.

5.6.1 *The responses of the Protestant princes*

It is clear that the German princes themselves did much to spread of the theory. Their habit of mutually sharing news ensured that rumours of the Conspiracy were often topical in their letters. Unsurprisingly, Friedrich III was the catalyst behind the dissemination of the narrative. Between 1567 and 1569 his correspondence was dominated by talk of the Conspiracy. He showed no trace of doubt. His efforts were therefore aimed at convincing his more sceptical peers of the urgency of the situation. Although Friedrich's interpretation of the unrest in France had always put emphasis on the malice of Catholics, it was the situation in the Netherlands that underscored in his mind the transnational nature of Catholic aggression. One of the earliest mentions of the Conspiracy dates from November 1566, only months after the iconoclastic riots in the Netherlands, when Friedrich wrote Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar to convince him 'that [Catholic aggression in the Netherlands is] a general conspiracy and practice, aimed against the true Christian religion and its followers, [taking place] in other places in

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[74] '… das der gedachter herzog [Albrecht zu Bayern] im werk stehe, eine general-visitation durch die Jesuiten verzunehmen, die der Niderlendischen inquisition nicht fast ungemes sein solle. Gott der her wolle alle ding zum besten wenden.' Wilhelm of Hesse to Friedrich III, 19 December 1569, Ibid, p. 372.

the Empire as well as in the Netherlands, where is will start but not end.'[75] This was the first of a stream of correspondence revolving around the Elector Palatine that made the Catholic Conspiracy the most pressing issue in German Protestant circles.

The fact that the Catholic Conspiracy was the on the lips of all the Protestant princes did not go unnoticed in France. Ludwig of Bar reported back to Catherine de' Medici in the Summer of 1567 that

> [the Landgrave of Hesse] has not only heard of certain murders and injustices that have taken place in some towns … but also reports … that say that there is [an alliance] between the King, the King of Spain, the Pope and other potentates, who tend all the time towards the oppression of the princes … in France and the Low Countries.[76]

The Frenchman's report is further evidence that the fear for the Conspiracy had rooted fairly deeply amongst the Protestant princes, and not just in the Reformed Palatinate. With the increasing acceptance of the existence of the plot came a growing sense that something needed to be done. The instinct of those princes who subscribed to the theory was to underline the importance of cooperation. The efforts to formalise such cooperation give an insight into the attitudes of the various different princes. Friedrich III's position is particularly clear, and the diplomatic reports reveal that the Landgraves of Hesse too bought into the narrative of the Catholic plot. Moreover, Christoph of Württemberg and Margrave Philibert of Baden were sufficiently concerned that they too felt the need to coordinate a collective

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[75] '…das es ein gemaine conspiration und praktik, so wider die christlichen wahren religion und derselben anghengere, sowel anderer orten im reich, als in Niderlanden, do es izo den anfang haben solle, aber nit dabei bleiben wirdet …' Friedrich III to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 3 November 1566, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume I* (Braunschweig, C.A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1868): p. 708.

[76] 'Luy [landgrave de Hesse] ayant faict entendra non seullement quelques meurtas et injustice qui sont advenus en quelques villes beaucoup plus grands et oppressifs … mais aussi les intelligence …: quil dissent ester entre le Roy, le Roy despaigne, le pape et aultre potentats, qui tendent touts … le tempt a l'oppression des princes … de France et du Pays Bas …' Ludwig of bar to Catherine de' Medici, 7 August 1568, BNF, 15608, f. 174-176.

response. In July 1567, Palatinate, Württemberg, and Baden together wrote to August of Saxony to persuade him to subscribe:

> it is considered very necessary that, when faced with such a shared danger and for the sake of the maintenance of peace and quiet and the unity of our beloved fatherland, everyone puts their minds together and one more time [takes part in] a common meeting of all estates of the Augsburg Confession or their councils ...[77]

The Elector of Saxony was the recipient of many of the above quoted letters. As one of only three Protestant electors, August was a particularly important player. The Elector, however, could not be persuaded. August's deafness to the narrative of the Catholic Conspiracy is partly explained by geography. Very broadly speaking, an east-west divide can be detected in the popularity of the narrative. Whereas the princes of the Palatinate, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden, all in the western half of the Empire, were very concerned, the Protestant princes of Brandenburg, Saxony, and Saxe-Weimar were not so distressed. The proximity of the western regions to France and the Low Countries, and, more importantly, the route taken by Alba and his forces was a key factor determining their response. Their geographical location ensured that Württemberg, Hesse, Baden, and the Palatinate were amongst the first to come in contact with news, rumours, pamphlets, and exiles from France and the Netherlands as well as the first to suffer from a potential spilling over of the violence. This strongly increased the sense of urgency amongst the princes of the Rhineland. A second explanation for August's reluctance to accept the existence of a Catholic plot can be found in his religious and political position.[78] Like his kinsman Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, the Elector was a Gnesio-

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[77] '... wird fur sehr nöttig erachten, das man in so allgemeyner gefahr zu erhaltung fridens ruhe und eynigkeyt unsers geliebten vatterlands mehr allerseits die gemütter zusamen gethan und nachmalen einer gemeinen zusamenkunft aller der A. C. verwandten stenden oder dero rethe ...' The princes of the Palatinate, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden to August of Saxony, 17 July 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume II*, p. 70.

[78] Clasen, *The Palatinate in European History*, p. 11.

Lutheran and resistant to seeing Dutch and French Protestants as his coreligionists. Moreover, he maintained strong ties with the Emperor and the Duke of Bavaria, who were both accused in the pamphlets of complicity in the Conspiracy, making it particularly difficult for the Duke to accept the theory.

Despite sharing a general appreciation of the acuteness of the situation, the princes of the Rhineland all had their own ideas about how best to approach the problem. Christoph of Württemberg was keen to build upon his strong connections with the French court. In their struggle with the Catholic powers of Europe, Christoph argued, the Protestant princes needed a strong ally. As they had done in the 1550s, the German Protestants should rely on France as a buffer against Habsburg aggression. In March 1567 he wrote to Friedrich:

> Seeing that peace has been made between the Imperial Majesty and the Turks, and in case that His Majesty shall ally himself with the pope, Spain, and other lords in Italy with as aim the destruction of the Word of God, first in Brabant and then in France, and thereafter in Germany, therefore it seems good that the estates of the Augsburg Confession create an alliance or confederation with the King of France, since through it the poor Christians in France and Brabant as well as in Germany may be protected and safeguarded ...[79]

On the 17th of July 1567, Friedrich of the Palatinate, Christoph of Württemberg, and Philibert of Baden met at Maulbronn, just north of Stuttgart, 'to contemplate the constantly threatening and growing

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[79] '... dieweil ain friden zwischen der Kay. Mt. und dem Turken gemacht seie, und in dem werf, das I. M. sich met dem papst, Hispanien, auch andern herrn in Italia verbinden solle zu ausrottung des wort Gottes erstlich in Brabant und dann Frankreich, volgends in Teutschland, so sehe ine fur gut an, das die U. G. verwandte stende ain bundnuß und conföderation mit seinem herrn dem konig von Frankreich gemacht hetten, damit die arme christen sowol in Frankreich, Brabant, als Teutschland geschukt und geschirmbt möchten werden ...' Christoph of Württemberg to Friedrich III, 1 March 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume II*, pp. 8-9.

foreign and domestic war making and dangerous practises.'[80] There, the three decided that 'better cooperation between the princes' was necessary. Moreover, they advocated an 'understanding' with the King of France, promising the support of German troops if the King declared 'not to let himself be exploited in religious and other matter, namely the execution of the Tridentine Council against the evangelical princes, and also not to introduce the same Council in France.' [81] German interpretations of the role of Charles IX in the Conspiracy are particularly interesting. The King is never mentioned among the instigators of the plot. Rather, as in 1562, it was feared that the militant Catholics at court, especially the Guise, would manipulate the young King, whose predecessors had been allies of the German Protestants, into taking part in the scheme. The reinforcing of the ties between the Protestant princes of the Empire was intended to deflect the danger of a Catholic attack. However, as will become clear, it proved very difficult to coordinate a joint response that was more concrete than these general formulations of intend.

5.6.2 *The consequences for German attitudes to the French Wars of Religion*

In 1565 an unnamed member of the Guise party remarked that 'friend and foe used to be separated by the borders of countries and kingdoms: one used to call himself Italian, German, French, Spanish, English, etc.. Now one must be called Catholic or heretic.'[82] Although this is an

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[80] 'In Betrachtung des immer bedrohlicher anwachsenden aus- und inlandischen kriegsgewerbes und der gefährluchen Practiken …' Report of the meeting at Maulbronn, 17 July 1567, Ibid, pp. 66-67.

[81] 'Verständnis' 'sich nicht in Religions- und andere Sachen, namentlich mit Execution des Tridentischen Concils gegen die evangelischen Fürsten verhezen zu lassen, jenes Concil auch nicht in Frankreich zu erequiren …' Report of the meeting at Maulbronn, 17 July 1567, Ibid, p. 67.

[82] 'Freund und Feind schiefen sich ehemals nach den Grenzen der Landschaften und Königreichen: man nannte such Italiener, Deutscher, Franzose, Spanier, Engländer usf. Heute muß es heißen: Katholiken und Ketzer …' A. Wirsching, 'Konfessionalisierung der Aussenpolitik: Die Kurpfalz und der Beginn der Französischen Religionskriege (1559-1562)', *Historische Jahrbuch*, 106 (1986): 333-360.

observation from a Catholic perspective, it does poignantly illustrate the mood of the second half of the sixteenth century. The story of the Catholic Conspiracy had a transformative effect on this mood. Though the fragmentation of Europe's confessional landscape had not disappeared overnight, the theory of the Conspiracy ensured that a simple Protestant-Catholic opposition increasingly often overshadowed inter-Protestant tensions. It was the perceived indiscriminate targeting of 'the Protestant heresy' by the Catholic powers, rather than a sense of Protestant solidarity, that was the main catalyst of this change in perspective. The instinct of Württemberg, Baden, and the Elector Palatine is telling. The magnitude of the danger predicted by the theory of the Catholic Conspiracy made the princes realise that this was not a crisis that they could contain by themselves.

The crisis of the Catholic Conspiracy introduced a new perspective on the wars in France. Whereas before, the princes viewed the conflict from the perspective of what they considered right for France, now it seemed that the fortunes of the Huguenots and the German Protestants were more than ever intertwined. In their discussions of the First War, the princes considered the compatibility of their religion with that of the Huguenots, the justifiability of resisting a monarch, and the possibility of restoring peace and harmony through religious or constitutional rapprochement. Though these discussions did not entirely disappear, they became largely overshadowed by the princes' much more urgent concern for their own self-preservation. This shift in priorities was in the first place caused by the concept of the domino effect, which was a central element of the narrative of the Catholic Conspiracy. It was not only the sense that Protestants throughout Europe shared the same predicament, but particularly the idea that the Catholic powers hoped to crush Protestantism region by region, starting in France and the Netherlands, that was cause for alarm. Moreover, this understanding of the nature of Catholic aggression also put the princes under considerable pressure. If something were to be done about the danger of the Catholic plot, it had to be done before the Huguenots in France and the Dutch rebels were

defeated. In 1567 the prospects of both these groups looked bleak. In the Netherlands, Alba's resolute and violent response had crushed the optimism of the previous summer and in France the uneasy peace had turned into open warfare.[83] The calls for actions could no longer be ignored.

5.7 An international Protestant alliance

Between 1567 and 1570, various attempts were made to create an international Protestant alliance to counter this threat. As Hugues Daussy demonstrates, the first initiatives towards concrete cooperation between Protestant powers were undertaken by Huguenot diplomats, who from September 1567 onwards 'again criss-crossed Europe looking for support.'[84] Once again, they found in the Palatine their most receptive audience, making Heidelberg 'the principal centre of Huguenot diplomacy.'[85] In a letter to Friedrich III written in July 1569, the Palatinate councillor Christopher von Ehem clearly presented the reasons why the Palatinate thought that the German Protestant princes should take part in an international protestant alliance, especially involving England:

> The alliance with England is beneficial and necessary for the following reasons. First, that the oppressed Christians in France can receive help … Moreover, the alliance is necessary for the sake of the Netherlands, since because of it the country can be helped and the Duke of Alba can be driven out of the same … Thirdly, the alliance is necessary, beneficial, and good since because of it Germany will not be without England when the kings of Spain and France after a victory over the Huguenots, with help of the pope and the alliance of his followers, will

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[83] R. J. Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598*, (London: Longman, 1996): pp. 39-40.

[84] 'sillonnent à nouveau l'Europe, en quête de soutien.' H. Daussy, *Le Parti Huguenot, Chronique d'une Désillusion (1557-1572)*, (Geneva: Droz, 2014): p. 678.

[85] 'centre principal de la diplomatie huguenote.' ibid, p. 689.

make war on the German princes ... Finally, many are aware of how much is being done to make Germany a monarchy, or to divide the same amongst the potentates; when all efforts are still aimed towards this, such an alliance is very necessary to prevent it and to protect the German liberties.[86]

A domino effect is clearly visible in Ehem's analysis of the benefits of an alliance. Of course, the Reformed Palatinate was keen to see its French and Dutch coreligionists relieved from Catholic oppression. However, Ehem put extra emphasis on the importance of the alliance for Germany, which was in danger of being isolated from its potential allies. Germany's predicament was both religious and secular. Returning to the classic trope of the infringement of German liberties, he asserted that the Protestant princes were not only at risk of losing their religious prerogatives, but their independent political authority as well.

As principal driving force behind the Protestant alliance, Friedrich in 1568 set out to make it a reality. The plans drawn up by the Elector were certainly not lacking in ambition. His detailed proposals reveal that he hoped to create an alliance 'that could count on an army composed of 9000 horse and 75 regiments of *landsknechts*.'[87] Also in terms of participation, Friedrich was ambitious. He hoped to enlist all the Empire's Protestant magnates, including the reluctant princes in the East. Most importantly, Elizabeth I's England was to become an important player in the alliance. During the secretive negotiation

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[86] 'Auch folgenden Gründen ist das Verständnis mit England nüzlich und nothwendig. Einmal, damit den beträngten Christen in Frankreich Hülfe zu Theil würde ... Sodann sei das Verständnis der Niederlande wegen nöthig, damit denselben geholfen und der Herzog von Alba daselbst vertrieben werde ... Drittens ware des Verständnis nöthig, nüzlich und gut, damit nicht Deutschland, wenn die könige von Spanien und Frankreich nach einem Sieg über die Huguenotten, mit Hülfe des Paptes uns seines Anhangs kraft gemachten Bündnisses, die deutschen Fürsten bekriegen würden, ohne Hülfe von England, unterliege ... Zuletst ist männiglich bewust, wie viel verher practicirt worden, eine Monarchie aus Deutschland zu machen oder daselbe zwischen den Potentaten zu theilen; wenn den alle Auschläge noch dahin gerichtet, ist zur Abwehr dessen und zur Erhaltung der deutschen libertät solche Verständnis hoch nöthig.' Christoph von Ehem to Friedrich III, 17 July 1569, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume II*, pp. 348-349.

[87] 'pourrait compter sur une armée compose de 9 000 reitres et 75 régiments de lansquenets.' Daussy, *Le Parti Huguenot*, p. 699.

process, the scholar Immanuel Tremellius acted as a mediator. The professor of Old Testament studies at Heidelberg University was an ideal go-between, due to the years he spent in England as professor at the University of Cambridge and the contacts he had built up during this period. [88] The biblical language employed in Tremellius' correspondence concerning the alliance illustrates its religious nature. The proposed alliance between Elizabeth and 'all the German princes who escaped the Babylonian whore' was described as 'a legitimate defence against the unjust violence of the Antichrist and his accomplices' intended to avert 'the tragedy of the extirpation of the Gospel and the pious …'[89]

It is very questionable, however, whether this was the right tone with which to pitch to Elizabeth. Although the basis of the proposed alliance would be their shared Protestantism and, crucially, their shared antipathy against the Catholic powers, the flourishing of the 'Truth of the Gospel' in Europe was not Elizabeth's primary political concern. Moreover, Elizabeth's caution not to get involved too openly was a theme of her foreign policy in relation to the French Wars of Religion, as was her reluctance to spend big on continental ventures. [90] For England, choosing sides was likely to increase rather than reduce the danger of a Catholic attack by antagonising Spain and disturbing its already complicated relationship with the French crown. In 1568 and 1569, Elizabeth's position was much less precarious than that of the Protestants of the Rhineland. Separated from the turbulence on the continent by the Channel, and less troubled by Scotland after the

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[88] A. Hamilton, 'Tremellius, (Joannes) Immanuel (1510–1580)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004): [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27694, accessed 25 April 2015].

[89] '… omnibus principibus Germanicae qui a babylonica meretrice defecerunt …' 'legitimam defensionem contra iniustam vim Antichristi et suorum complicium …' '… tragaediam ad extirpationem evangelii piorumque …' Secret report of Immanual Tremellius' mission in England, 8 April 1568, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, pp. 211-212.

[90] E. I. Kouri, *England and the Attempts to Form a Protestant Alliance in the Late 1560s: a Case Study in European Diplomacy*, (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1981): p. 62.

abdication of the Catholic Mary Stuart, it is not difficult to see why, despite pressure at home and abroad, Elizabeth and her administration did not wholeheartedly embrace the idea of an international Protestant alliance.

The culmination of the attempts to form an international alliance was a conference held at Erfurt in September 1569, at which twenty-one Protestant princes and a Huguenot diplomat were present.[91] The conference, however, proved to be a disappointment for Friedrich and the other princes who favoured an alliance. The problem was not an unwillingness to cooperate in the face of a collective threat. The princes present declared that:

> It is considered of the greatest necessity that Protestant princes and estates together closely observe the doings of the pope and help each other in case of emergency. … Moreover, the same message should be conveyed to the coreligionists abroad, such as the monarchs of Denmark, Sweden, England, and the Swiss and with the same to maintain a neighbourly correspondence in the interest of the protection of the religious and secular peace … With as goal to prevent … that one coreligionists after the other will be attacked and destroyed.[92]

The formation of a formal alliance that also included the Huguenots and the Dutch Calvinists was a step too far for a number of influential princes. Especially the delegations from Brandenburg and Saxony were adamant that such an affiliation was out of the question. They argued that Reformed Protestants could in no way be regarded as the

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[91] Daussy, *Le Parti Huguenot*, p. 702.

[92] 'Für hohe Nothdurf wurde gehalten, das sämmtliche protestantische Fürsten und Stände auf die Praktiken des Papstes achten und einander in Falle der Noth die hand bieten sollten … Die gleiche Mittheilung sei ferner die ausländischen Religionsverwandten wie der Krone Dänemark, Schweden, England un den Schweizern zu machen und mit diesen behufs Erhaltung des Religions- und Profanfriedens nachburliche Correspondenz zu halten … Um endlich zu verhüten, daß … ein religionsverwandter Stand nach dem andere angriffen und vernichtet werde …' Declaration of the princes at Erfurt, 1569, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, pp. 289-290.

Lutherans' coreligionists.[93] Moreover, they suspected that the troubles in France and the Netherlands were for a large part the result of the political ambitions of the Protestants. Once again the political and religious landscape of Europe proved much more complicated than the rhetoric presented. Rather than an epic struggle between the forces of the Gospel and the legions of the Antichrist, the Erfurt meeting once again underlined the antagonism within the Protestant camp. The differences between the various forms of Protestantism again proved insurmountable and as a result dreams of a universal alliance were stillborn.

5.8 Conclusion

The Reformation and its consequences were phenomena that transcended borders. The reality of the international dimension of religious strife in the mid-sixteenth century is reflected much more strongly in the commentaries of contemporaries than in its historiography. The outbreak of unrest and open conflict in the Netherlands in the summer of 1566 in the eyes of many contemporaries confirmed their impression of the Europe-wide impact of religious violence.

The *Wonderjaar* set in motion a series of events that further underlined the connectedness of religious strive in different countries. The journey of Alba and a large army along the Spanish Road was a cause for concern in both France and the Rhineland. In France, it provoked the Protestant coup d'état at Meaux. During the subsequent turmoil the idea of a Catholic Conspiracy was developed. The narrative circulated around Protestant Europe and in 1568 saw a peak in its popularity. The escalation of violence in the Netherlands and the heavy-handed response of the new regent, the Duke of Alba, provided a horrific foreshadowing of what was to follow if the plot succeeded. In particular the execution of the counts of Egmont and Hoorne was the

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[93] Daussy, *Le Parti Huguenot …*: p. 703; Kouri, *England and the Attempts to Form a Protestant Alliance,* pp. 137-164.

cause of consternation amongst the German princes, fearing not only an attack on their religion but also the undermining of their independent princely powers. News of the chaos in France and the Netherlands, was accompanied by Protestant diplomats presenting German audiences with an interpretive framework in which to place these reports. Anonymously printed polemical texts and images did much to increase a sense of urgency amongst those who subscribed to the theory.

The Protestant princes themselves contributed directly to the spread of the theory. Amongst them, Friedrich III was the most active in promoting the narrative. Other Protestant princes of the western half of the Empire too seemed to have at least accepted the possibility of the truthfulness of the theory. In the east, far removed from Spanish Road and the hotbeds of religiously motivated violence, the mood amongst the princes was much more sceptical.

In light of the increasingly transnational nature of the threat of violence a renewed effort was made at formulating a common response. The princes of the Rhineland generally agreed that this was an international problem warranting an international response. On the initiative of the Elector Palatine and the Huguenots, attempts were made to form an ambitious international Protestant alliance including the Scandinavian monarchs and the Queen of England as well as the Huguenots and the German princes. Despite these intentions the alliance never materialised. The main obstacle blocking the formation of such a comprehensive confederacy was the tension between Lutherans and Reformed Protestants. A significant and influential group of Lutheran princes argued that there was no common confessional ground for such an alliance and, following from that, that the struggle that was taking place in France and the Low Countries was not a confrontation between the 'true religion' and idolatry.

The theory of the Catholic Conspiracy had a transformative effect on German perspectives on the French Wars of Religion. More than ever, the princes perceived the conflict in France as an event that had direct and potentially catastrophic effects on their own territories. No longer was involvement discussed in terms of confessional

solidarity, or the need to uphold peace, stability, and the social and political order. The idea of the domino effect directly linked the fortunes of Protestantism in France, the Netherlands, and the Empire. The Protestant princes of the Rhineland now had a distinctly self-centred reason to work towards a resolution in France that benefitted the Huguenots. Intervention had become a form of self-defence. The next chapter will focus on five occasions at which Protestant princes intervened militarily in the French Wars of Religion.

VI.   German military campaigns in France

Historians of the French Wars of Religion have long recognised the importance of German military involvement in the conflict. Their interest, however, has largely focussed on the impact of this involvement on France. When the motives of the German princes are discussed, the analysis is often somewhat simplistic and does not do justice to the complexity of the political, religious, and intellectual context in which the decisions to engage militarily in the French Wars of Religion were made.[1] The use of force was not the most obvious option for the German princes, which is illustrated by the fact that the first German campaign was only launched in 1567, five years after the initial outbreak of the conflict. This chapter concentrates on five military campaigns launched from the Empire in 1567 and 1568. Though all were undertaken by Protestant princes, two operations were launched in support of the royal army and against the Huguenot forces. Before focussing on these campaigns in detail, the failure of diplomacy, the preferred means of influencing events in France, will be addressed. In addition, we will examine the justifications for military intervention, and highlight the practical and moral problems encountered. Next, the campaigns of William of Orange, Louis of Nassau, Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, and Philipert of Baden, all launched in 1567 and 1568, will be studied in detail. When discussing these campaigns, the focus will not be on the military or logistical side of the story. Rather, I will attempt to uncover the motivations and justifications behind these campaigns. Attention will also be given to the reactions of their peers, both in France and the Empire, and to the political, financial, and social consequences of the campaigns. I will demonstrate how decisions to intervene in France were shaped by a complex mix of factors, including the protagonists' religious beliefs, their ties to the French crown, their international

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[1] See the introduction for an extensive discussion of the historiography of German intervention in the French Wars of Religion.

outlook, and their own understanding of their identity as noblemen. This mix of influences suggests that each decision to act was highly individual. Though the princes saw themselves as members of large and seemingly uniform confessional groups, their own personal beliefs shaped their receptiveness to French propaganda and led them to pursue different agendas with regards to France.

6.1 The failure of diplomacy

Throughout the 1560s, there was persistent German diplomatic engagement with French affairs. In diplomatic correspondence the longstanding ties between the Valois and the German princes were celebrated in flowery language. For instance, in a letter to Charles IX, Wilhelm of Hesse expressed his hopes 'for the stable continuation of the friendship that now for a good time … has existed between Your Royal Majesty's praiseworthy forefathers the kings of France and this princely house of Hesse.'[2] The French monarchy too hoped that the mutual goodwill built up over decades would prove helpful for keeping the Protestant German princes and the Huguenots apart. Catherine de' Medici, for instance, invoked 'the constancy and sincerity of this affection' between the French crown and the princes of the Rhineland and expressed her intention to 'augment this … shared and perfect amity.'[3]

However, the German princes were not afraid to make forceful comments about events in France. The landgraves of Hesse, for example, repeatedly exhorted and criticised the French crown

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[2] '… zue bestendiger continuation der feundschafft die nun ein guete zait … zwischen E. Kon. Matt. loblichen voralten koningen zue Frankreich unnd diesem fürstlichen haus Hessenn gewesen …' Wilhelm of Hesse to Charles IX, 17 August 1568, BNF, 15608: f. 168.

[3] '… la constance et sincérité de l'affection …' '…augmenter ceste … commune et parfaicte amytié …' Catherine de' Medici to the princes of the Palatinate, Zweibrücken, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden, November 1566, H. de la Ferrière, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, Volume II: 1563-1566*, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1885): p. 397.

concerning the persecution of Protestants.[4] In order to increase the strength of their message, the princes of the Rhineland cooperated, presenting their opinions to the King of France together in jointly-written letters. The archive of the Dukes of Württemberg in Stuttgart houses a number of documents related to such collective attempts to influence events in France.[5] A draft letter from 1563, written by the Lutheran princes Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, Christoph of Württemberg, Philipp of Hesse, and Karl of Baden-Durlach, was addressed to Charles IX. They expressed their 'pitiful and loyal disposition towards Your Majesty' at having heard all the news of 'the damnable and internal destruction and bloodletting in Your Majesty's kingdom.'[6] Interestingly, the princes continued by expressing support for Condé's case. They wrote that 'the Prince of Condé, and also his supporters, only intend to uphold Your Majesty's reputation and authority and also to save the poor oppressed innocent Christians ...'[7] Recognising the fact 'that the truth of God's Word is suppressed and persecuted with terrible bloodletting' as the cause of the war, the princes urged that 'peace both in religious and secular things' should 'strictly be maintained.'[8] This letter is only one example of a number of collective attempts by the Protestant princes to apply diplomatic pressure on the French king.

The message presented by the princes echoed the Huguenot justifications for war that were already well known. Rather than calling for concrete measures to solve the problems in France, the collective diplomatic efforts represented a rather vague consensus amongst the

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[4] G. Menk, 'Landgraf Wilhelm IV. von Hessen-Kassel, Franz Hotman und die hessisch-französischen Beziehungen vor und nach der Bartholomaüsnacht', *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Hessische Geschichte und Landeskunde*, 88 (1980): 55-82.

[5] The princes of Württemberg, Zweibrücken, Hesse, and Baden-Durlach to Charles IX (draft), 1563, HStASt, A 71 Bü 920, 42.

[6] 'mittleidelich treuherzig gemüet' 'Die verderbliche unnd innerliche zerruttung unnd blutt vergiessen euer Khon. Würd. Königreichs' Ibid.

[7] 'dem prinzen vonn Conde, auch seinen mitverwanndten furgenommen, allain zuerhaltung E. Kon. W. reputation unnd authoritet auch rettung der armen betrengten unschuldigen Christen ...' Ibid.

[8] '... das die ... warhait gottlichs wortts undergedrucket unnd mit erschreckenlichen blutvergiessen vervollgt wordden ist ...' '... fried so woll inn Religion alls prophan sachenn ... vestiglich gehanndhabt ...' Ibid.

Protestant princes that was rarely more precise than a general call to end religious persecution. Concrete ideas about the way in which the problems could be solved, as discussed in a previous chapter, can rarely be found in these collective letters. Maintaining the edicts of pacification had proved difficult and Charles IX and Catherine de' Medici did not need to be reminded of the undesirability of the unrest in their country. But the admonitions of the German princes were not, at least at this time, reinforced by the threat of military intervention.

The frequency and persistence of the German princes' diplomatic efforts indicates that this was their preferred method of influencing events in France. However, reflecting on the effects of their attempts, it must be concluded that they were not very successful. Although German appeals for the restoration of peace and stability were addressed to both Catholics and Huguenots, they had no discernible impact on either. The failure of German diplomacy opened up the debate on military intervention.

6.2 The idea of military intervention

Although the idea of intervention was raised as early as 1563, the first campaigns were not launched until four years later. The reason for this German hesitation was that the prospect of getting involved in the violence in France was fraught with difficulty. In order to undertake a successful campaign, a number of practical problems had to be overcome, ranging from issues of finance to logistics. The grounds for war also needed careful preparation unless the fine balance of power created by the Peace of Augsburg was unsettled and relationships with Catholic princes imperilled. Launching a campaign from the Rhineland, a patchwork of Catholic and Protestant states and cities, was particularly complicated. The raising of thousands of soldiers for the Wars in France was likely to create confessional friction. Once an army was assembled, it would have to be moved across the lands of neighbouring princes to reach France. The delicate diplomatic repercussions of such a venture can be seen in Casimir's negotiations

with the Duke of Lorraine in 1567. Requesting permission to 'pass through the Duke's lands', Casimir promised to pay for any goods taken by his troops and that the Duke's 'subjects as much as possible will remain untouched.'[9] Especially the phrase 'as much as possible' is indicative of the difficulty of regulating contact between soldiers and civilians. Finally, an invasion from the Rhineland was likely to move the theatre of war closer to the Imperial border. The undesirable effects of the exploits of a nearby army, even one led by an allied commander, is illustrated by a comment made by Andelot to Friedrich: 'He [Aumale] is not entirely in control of his troops, since they have not been paid for a long time, and therefore he has to overlook that they plunder in the German lands.'[10] Looting was a common way for sixteenth-century armies to supply themselves. As a result, the proximity of an army could wreak havoc in the surrounding countryside, towns, and villages.[11]

It was also feared that German military involvement in France could have international repercussions. A number of German princes feared that such an undertaking was likely to provoke the wrath of the Catholic powers of Europe, and especially the monarchs of France and Spain. Reflecting on Casimir's mission in 1567, the Catholic Albrecht of Bavaria in a letter to Christoph of Württemberg warned of 'the dangers of this undertaking … namely that they will not only provoke the King of France, but also of Spain.'[12] These fears were shared by Wilhelm of Hesse, who argued that

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[9] 'den herzogs land berühren' 'die Unterthanen so viel immer möglich verschont … werden sollen.' Johann Casimir to the Duke of Lorraine, 26 November 1567, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume II*, (Braunschweig: C. A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1870): p. 146.

[10] 'Er sey aber seins kriegvolks nit mechtig durchaus, weil sie in langer zeit nit bezalt. also das er durch die finger sehen müß, das sie im Teutschen land sollen plündern …' Friedrich III to Wilhelm of Hesse, 24 February 1569, Ibid, p. 296.

[11] J. B. Wood, 'The impact of the Wars of Religion: a view of France in 1581', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 15 (1984): 131-168.

[12] 'die Gefahren des unternehmens … namentlich darauf hinweisen, daß sie nicht allein den könig von Frankreich, sondern auch den von Spanien auf sich laden würden.' Albrecht of Bavaria to Christoph of Württemberg, 13 December 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 153.

it is above all also important to consider how severely France and Spain will be offended and how close the Lower Palatinate is to the aforementioned crowns of France and the Netherlands and that once, and especially since the case of the Huguenots is built on stilts, a grave vengeance may be planned and you as an innocent may be pulled into the bath with them[13]

These unusual metaphors not only reveal apprehension on the part of Wilhelm about the possibility of being sucked into the conflict, but also about the chances of winning such a war. Even Friedrich III, famed for his almost unconditional support for the Reformed cause, shared these fears, at least before 1566. Though he wholeheartedly supported his son's endeavour in 1567, the Elector Palatine was in 1563 still very apprehensive about the idea of German military involvement in the Wars of Religion. In a letter to Wolfgang of Zweibrücken from March 1563, Friedrich urged the Duke to give up his plan to take an army into France.[14]

The abovementioned concerns are mostly practical. However, there were also moral objections raised against military intervention. In 1563, Wolfgang of Zweibrücken was one of the first to openly consider invading France. In reaction to these plans, Christoph of Württemberg wrote Wolfgang a frank letter, arguing against active intervention in the war in France. Christoph opened his letter by urging Wolfgang 'to consider … whether [he] can plan and wage such a large and dangerous war with a clear conscience before God', before continuing to answer this question in the negative: 'if a war is no godly and orderly war … then it is impossible, that one can justify the adversities of war before

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[13] 'Darzegen aber ist vornemblich … auch wol zu betrachten, wie hart Frankreich und Spanien offendirt und wie nahe die under Pfalz an gedachter cronen Frankreich und den Niederlanden gelegen und das einmal und sonderlich dieweil izo der Huguenotten sach uff stelzen stehn soll, ein *gravis vindicta* vorgenommen und du als ein unschuldiger ins bad gezogen werden kontest.' Wilhelm of Hesse to Ludwig of the Palatinate, 19 October 1569, Ibid, p. 366.

[14] Friedrich III to Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, 24 March 1568, A. Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume I*, (Braunschweig: C. A Schwetschke und Sohn, 1868): pp. 379-389.

God', and since the war in France is waged 'against the public order', taking part in it is not justifiable. [15] To reinforce what was a quintessentially Lutheran argument, Christoph quoted extensively from Scripture: 'he that passeth by and medleth with the strife that belongeth not unto him, is as one that taketh a dog by the ears.'[16] More sinister was the reference to the story of the Jehoshaphat and Ahab, the kings of Judah and Israel, who despite the warnings of the prophet Michaiah decided to go to war together, leading, as was predicted, to the death of the King of Israel. [17] Christoph, as well as other opponents of intervention, considered the war in France too morally compromising to justify German intervention. Although there was some sympathy for the Huguenots, this was overridden by suspicion of their political motivations. Furthermore, as long as the conflict did not spread into Germany, it was still possible to stand aside and observe it from a position of safety. Württemberg also argued that intervention would merely stir up Europe's Catholic powers and provoke retaliation.[18]

A final argument against German military intervention in France came from an unexpected quarter. Gaspard de Coligny was very uneasy about the idea of soliciting German military support in 1562. At the national synod of the French Reformed churches, he voiced strong opposition: 'Almost all concluded that it was necessary to ask a prompt and sufficient succour from German princes. The Admiral, however, altered the decision, saying that he would rather die than consent to let those of Religion be the first to bring foreign forces into France.'[19] Coligny's fear was not unjustified. Relying on German military support

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[15] 'wol zubedencken ... ob E. L. sollichen grossen weittleuffigen unnd hochgefarlichen krieg mit guettem gewisse vor Gott dem herr, fürmenem unnd füren möge' 'da ain krieg kain ordenlicher göttlicher krieg ist ... das es unmüglich, das er des kriegs onlüsst vor Gott verantworten ... khan' Christoph of Württemberg to Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, April 1563, HStASt, A 71 Bü 917, 29.

[16] Proverbs 26:17 (1599 English translation of the Geneva Bible).

[17] 2 Chronicles 18 and 19 (1599 English translation of the Geneva Bible).

[18] M. Langsteiner, *Für Land und Lutherum: die Politik Herzog Christoph von Württemberg (1550-1568)*, (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2008): p. 384

[19] J. Shimizu, *Conflict of Loyalties, Politics and Religion in the Career of Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France, 1519-1572*, (Geneva: Droz, 1970): pp. 87-88.

could undermine the Huguenot claims that they were merely interested in protecting their rights and those of the King of France and their claim to be the true patriotic party against the Guise. Despite these earlier reservations, the years 1567 to 1569 saw five German-led campaigns in France. Considering the opposition at home and abroad, these ventures required careful planning and justification.

6.3 Johann Casimir

In the autumn of 1567, Johann Casimir, son of the Elector Palatine, became the first German prince to prepare for military intervention in France. Like his father, Casimir was an ardent supporter of the Huguenot cause. Nonetheless, some important questions remain about his motives, in particular why he should have waited until 1567 and remained aloof in 1562-3. For Bernard Vogler:

> The Palatine interventions in the affairs of France were the work of two surprisingly dissimilar characters, and yet very representative of the sixteenth century, at once austere and brutal: the Elector Friedrich III, called the Pious, ardent disciple of reform, and his son Johann Casimir, bad boy and jolly fellow, in search of adventure ...[20]

This interpretation of Casimir's motives, which contrasts his playboy image with the austerity of his father, is far too simplistic and suggests that active commitment to the Reformed cause was shaped by personal habits and lifestyle. Whatever his personal qualities, Casimir's continued commitment to furthering Reformed Protestantism through political alliances and military action suggests that he was looking for

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[20] 'Les interventions palatines dans les affaires françaises seront l'oeuvre de deux personnages étonnamment dissemblables, et pourtant si representatives de ce XVIᵉ siècle à la fois austere et brutal: l'Electeur Fréderic III, surnommé le Pieux, ardent disciple de la Réforme, et son fils Jean-Casimir, mauvais garçon et joyeux drille en quête d'aventures ...' B. Vogler, 'Le role des Électeurs Palatins dans les Guerres de Religion en France (1559-1592)', *Cahiers d'Histoire*, 10 (1965): 51-85, on p. 54.

more than adventure.[21] Vogler fails to explain why Friedrich, despite his initial opposition to military intervention in France, once his son had made the decision to go did not disown him, but instead gave his blessing.

Elsewhere, the news of Casimir's campaign provoked significant hostility, not only among Catholics in and outside the Empire, but also from German Lutherans. The Emperor Maximilian II reminded Casimir that his campaign broke 'the laws of the Empire' and was opposed by 'most princes'.[22] The extent of the Protestant princes' opposition to Casimir became apparent at the *Kurfürstentag* held in January and February 1568 in Fulda. At the gathering, the Palatinate delegation was 'attacked vigorously' over the issue of Casimir's meddling in the war.[23] A combination of the questionability of the Huguenots' motives and the fear that the conflict would spill over into the Empire was cause for the Protestant princes to protest strongly against Casimir's invasion.

In order to counter these criticisms, Casimir and his father were forced to formulate clear justifications. Religion formed the core of these justifications. At Fulda, Friedrich ensured his peers 'that the business of Duke Johann Casimir was only being undertaken for the prevention of the slaughter of the innocent Christians.'[24] In reply to Emperor Maximilian, Casimir wrote the Emperor that he had three motives: 'against the pitiful oppression and the threatening extermination of the confessors of the true Christian religion, for the restoration of the authority of the earlier adopted peace edict and for

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[21] J. Raitt, 'The Elector John Casimir, Queen Elizabeth and the Protestant League', in D. Visser (ed.), *Controversy and Conciliation, The Reformation and the Palatinate, 1559-1583*, (Allison Park: Pickwick Publications, 1986): pp. 117-145.

[22] 'Reichsgesez' 'den meisten Fürsten' Emperor Maximilian to Friedrich III and Johann Casimir, 20 November 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 142.

[23] 'heftig angezogen' Report from the Kurfüstentag at Fulda, January and February 1568, Ibid, p. 174.

[24] 'das nämlich die Gewerbe herzog Johann Casimir's einzig zur Verhütung unschuldigen christlichen Blutvergießens … vorgenommen würden.' Ibid, p. 174.

the creation of a religious peace.'[25] Casimir was keen to emphasise his respect for the authority of the Catholic King of France.

These arguments sound very familiar. In fact, they almost directly echo the words of the Huguenot envoys and the pro-Huguenot pamphlets published in the Empire, which indicates the success of the Huguenots' diplomatic efforts towards the Palatinate. The connection between these diplomatic efforts and Casimir's campaign was made clear in two letters. The first was a report by the Bishop of Rennes to Charles IX, written in October 1567:

> I have arrived at this court of the Elector Palatine, where I have found that the Prince of Condé has had his men for more than six weeks, who have concluded and arranged the levying of 4500 *Reiters* ... the leader and colonel is Duke Johann Casimir, second son of the said Elector ...[26]

The Bishop of Rennes' report gives us an insight into the central role played by Condé's envoys in initiating and organising this mission. To Rennes's discomfort, the Huguenot message had been so successful as to spur the Elector and his son into far-reaching action. The second document, a joint letter sent by Friedrich and Casimir to the Emperor's envoy, shows how the Huguenots' message was received. In this letter, father and son explained how they weighed both the Royal and the Huguenot interpretations of the Wars. They heard

> what the envoy of Condé argued against the testimony of the Royal envoys, especially the unreliable Lignerolles, and concluded that it was

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[25] '... gegen die jämmerliche Verfolgung und die drohende Ausrottung der Bekenner des wahren christlichen religion, zur Wiederherstellung der Auhorität des früher erlassenen Pacificationsedict und zur Erlangung eines Religionsfriedens ...' Johann Casimir to Emperor Maximilian, 17 November 1567, Ibid, p. 141.

[26] 'Je suis venu iusques en ceste court de l'Electeur Palatin ou J'ay treuve que le prince de conde avoit ses gens il y a plus de six semaines qui ont conclud et accorde d'une levee de quatre mil cinq cent Reistres ... le chef et Coulonnel est le Duc Johann Casimirs, second filz dudict Electeur ...' The Bishop of Rennes to Charles IX, 30 October 1567, BNF, 15918: f. 19.

> not a matter of a rebellion. All the blame was to be put on the Cardinal of Lorraine, who persecuted the Christians lamentably ...[27]

The success of Huguenot diplomacy in the Palatinate is no surprise. We have already seen that the Elector was the primary spokesperson and advocate for their cause in the Empire. Nor is it unexpected that this message was the foundation for Palatinate military involvement in the Wars of Religion. There is nothing here to suggest that Casimir's decision to intervene was based on anything other than religious conviction. Why, then, did he not intervene sooner? Various historians have acknowledged Friedrich's changing attitude to the idea of military intervention. Henry Cohn remarked that 'after initial hesitation until 1566, Frederick III was never in doubt about the justice of military aid for the threatened Protestants' adding, though, that he 'wished to avoid both imperial stricture and isolation from the Lutheran princes.'[28] Vogler too noticed that 'in 1567, Friedrich III radically changed his attitude.'[29]

The reason for Friedrich's change of heart is not to be found in France, but in the Netherlands. The intervention of Alba changed everything, as it seemed to confirm the existence of the Catholic Conspiracy. In letters to the German Protestant princes, the link between the Catholic plot and Casimir's decision to invade was repeatedly emphasised. A diplomat from the Palatinate, for instance, told the Landgrave of Hesse that the campaign was intended for 'the saving of many thousands of Christians from the bloodbath that the pope and his party have caused', adding that 'the irons in France and

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[27] '... was der Gesandte Condé's entgegen den Aussagen der Königlichen Gesandten, besonders des verdächtigen Lignerolles, vorgebracht, und constatirt, daß es sich um keine Rebellion handle. Alle Schuld wird auf den Cardinal von Lothringen geschehen, welcher die Christen jämmerlich verfolge ...' Friedrich III and Johann Casimir to the Emperor's envoy, 6 December 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume II*, p. 149.

[28] H. J. Cohn, 'The territorial princes in Germany's second Reformation, 1559-1622', in M. Prestwich, *International Calvinism, 1541-1715*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985): p. 153.

[29] Vogler, 'Le role des Électeurs Palatins, p. 59.

the Netherlands clash together … and that one should offer each other support.' [30] Also Friedrich himself, in a letter to Christoph of Württemberg, linked the Conspiracy and Casimir's campaign:

> … that we now cannot keep Duke Johann Casimir from his intention with any possible decree … [since] he strongly pities the oppressed Christians in the Kingdom of France as our coreligionists [and] therefore to prevent that the pope, who implements his will in France, the Netherlands, and other places, finally attempts to subject us Germans in the same fashion.[31]

The narrative of the Catholic Conspiracy, which was promoted vigorously by Friedrich and Casimir, made intervention in France a matter of urgency. Without decisive action, Protestants in France, the Netherlands, and eventually also Germany would be overrun.

A second wave of criticism of Casimir's intervention naturally came from French Catholics. Before Casmir's army departed, the Bishop of Rennes tried to forestall its departure. Rennes directly evoked the bond between France and the Palatinate, and in particular the debt owed by the Protestant German princes to the King for his support for their cause in 1552:

> … these causes should be sufficient in itself to move the heart of both the Prince Electors and the others of the Holy Roman Empire, that also the foreign princes have received plenty of benefits from the said crown … my lord the prince Casimir in particular has plenty of reason

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[30] 'die Erretung vieler tausend Christen aus dem Blutbade, das ihnen von dem Papst und seinem hausen angerichtet' 'daß die Gloden in Frankreich und den Niederlanden zusammen schlagen … und daß man einander die hand sein biete.' W. Buleger to Wilhelm of Hesse, 11 November 1567, N. Japikse (ed.), *Correspondentie van Willem den Eerste, Prins van Oranje* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1934): pp. 126-127

[31] '… das wir mit einichem gueten fueg gedachten unserer sone herzog Johann Casimir von seinem fürnemen nunmer nit wol abhalten können … das billich mit den betrangten christen in der cron Frankreich als unserer mitgliedern ain herzlichs mitleiden zu haben … darumben die fürsorg getragen, do der babst sein willen in Frankreich, Niderland und andern orten erlangt, er zuletst auch sein heil und practisen an uns Teutschen gleichergestalt zuversuchen sich understeen mechte.' Friedrich III to Christoph of Württemberg, 15 November 1567, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 134

that press him incessantly and rightly [to refrain from acting against the King of France].[32]

This was a powerful argument that needed to be countered. To do so, Casimir presented himself as a bringer of peace and stability and, more importantly, as the king's loyal servant. Casimir parried accusations of sedition by arguing that he was preserving royal power, claiming 'to serve for the glory of God, a good and perpetual peace, the royal dignity of his realm, and the poor oppressed Christians ...'[33]

For Casimir, the edicts of toleration provided the glue holding these twin ambitions together. In a long letter to Charles IX written in September 1568 he lamented the continuous breaking of the edicts:

> I assure your majesty, sire, that there is no prince in this world who regrets more such calamities in your kingdom and who desires more to see your majesty obeyed according to the edicts ... since we have heard to our great regret from this country at this time for a while news of horrible massacres, murders, inhumane acts, and other enormous deeds, which daily have been ordered against your edicts.[34]

For Casimir, reinstating and expanding the religious freedoms granted to the Huguenots in the edicts was the only way to create 'a good and lasting peace.'[35] He once again restated his commitment to '... the singular pretext of religion', expressing the hope 'that it may be

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[32] 'que ces causes soient soufficantes de soy pour esmouvoir le Coeur tant des Princes Electeurs et autres du Sainct Empire qu'ausi des Princes estrangieres que en ont recue beaucoup de bien de ladicte Courronne ... mondict seigneurs le Prince Casimir a beaucoup de raisons en particulier qui le pressent inessament et iustement ...' Bishop of Rennes to Friedrich III, 7 November 1567, BNF, 15918, f. 52-58.

[33] '... server a la gloire de dieu et a une paix et bien perpetuel de la dignité royalle de son royaulme et des pauvres Chrestienes oppressé ...' BNF, 15544: f. 232-233.

[34] 'J'assure vre Ma[te], (sire), qu'il n'y a Prince en ce Monde qui regretted tant la Calamité de vre Royaume & qui desire plus voir vre Ma[te] obeye selon ses Editz ... comme nous entendons à grand regret en ce Pais de iour à autre, nouvelles des horribles massacres, meurtres, inhumanités & autres actes enormes qui se commedant iournellement contre voz Editz ...' Johann Casimir to Charles IX, 29 September 1568, BNF, 15608: f. 225.

[35] '... bonne et ferme paix ...' Johann Casimir to Pierre de la Vieuville, 4 January 1568, BNF, 15544: f. 11.

exercised freely in the Kingdom of France, with the conservation and ...
safety ... of the honour of the subjects following the Reformed Religion
...'[36] This, according to Casimir, was the only way 'to preserve the crown
of France from an extreme and total ruin ...'[37] This argument was not
well received at the French court. The efforts of French royal diplomats
were aimed at persuading Casimir that the King was not benefiting
from his intervention. Pierre de la Vieuville, for instance, in February
1568 reminded Casimir that 'the king does not prevent his subjects
from living in liberty as he has declared many times ...'[38] Since the
Huguenots were not being oppressed, as Casimir claimed, the
justifiability of his campaign was open to question.

6.4 William of Orange and Louis of Nassau

The second German campaign was launched by William of Orange and
his brother Louis of Nassau in 1568. Though the venture was in the first
place a response to the situation Orange found himself in – he was
outlawed by the Council of Troubles and was in danger of losing all his
power and influence in the Netherlands - the campaign was also firmly
built on ideological foundations. The text of the treaty agreed between
Orange, Condé, and Coligny in August 1568 provides the best insight
into Orange's motivations and justifications at the start of the Third
War:

> We therefore, considering these things, to overcome these
> disadvantages and to counter the designs of the aforementioned
> counsellors [most notably Lorraine, Granvelle, and Alba], after having
> attentively pondered these things and recognised that their intention

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[36] '... le seul pretext de la religion, pour y avoir exercise libre par le Royaulme de
France, avec le conservation et ... seurete de ... honneurs des Subjects de la religion
reforme ...' Ibid, f. 11.

[37] '... et pour preserver la couronne de France d'une extreme et totalle ruyne ...' Ibid, f.
11.

[38] 'le Roy n'empesche point ses sujects de vivre en liberté comme il a beaucoup de fois
declaré.' Pierre de la Vieuville to Johann Casimir, 7 February 1568, Ibid, f. 194.

is to exterminate the true religion and also the nobility and other people of good pedigree, without whom kings cannot be maintained in their kingdoms, hoping under this pretext to establish their tyrannies over all and to increase their domination, have, both for ourselves and in name of the nobility, … promised with the faith of princes and good men to pursue … the glory of God, the profit and service of our kings, and the public good, and the freedom of religion, without which we cannot live in peace; and because this cannot be carried out, because of the great powers of our adversaries, but through a true understanding and Christian alliance, we have at this occasion promised to aid, promote, and secure each other …[39]

This text is a culmination of the various modes of justification developed in the previous decade. First of all, it contains elements of Calvinist resistance theory. It emphasises that passive resistance is no longer a viable option since the pressure on those of 'the true religion' has become so severe.[40] Thus, as magistrates with their own God-given authority and responsibilities ('without whom kings cannot be maintained in their kingdoms'), Orange, Condé, and Coligny have the duty to resist.[41] Secondly, the text has a Ciceronian dimension. Harking back to Condé justification six years earlier, it argues that their 'adversaries' (among others, Alba and the Guise) intend to seriously

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[39] 'Nous doncques consydérants ces choses, pour obvier à ces inconvéniens et retrancher les desseings des susdicts conseilliers, après avoir meurement pesé les affaires et cognu que leurs intention est d'exterminer la vraye religion et aussy la noblesse et autres gens de bien, sans lesquels les Roys ne peuvent estre maintenus en leurs Royaulmes, espérant sur le prétext de cela establir leurs Tyrannies par tout et agrandir leur dominations, avons, tant pour nous que au nom de la Noblesse … promis en foy des Princes et d'hommes de bien de pourchasser … la gloir de Dieu, le proficts et service de nos Roys, et le bien publicq, et le liberté de la religion, sans laquelle nous ne pouvons vivre en paix; et pour ce que cela ne se peult affectuer, à cause des grandes forces de noz adversaires, que par une vray intelligence et alliance Christienne, avons à ceste occasion promis de nous ayder, favoriser et secourir l'ung à l'autre …' Treaty between Orange, Condé, and Coligny, August 1568, G. Groen van Prinsteren, *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau, Volume III, 1567-1572*, (Leiden: S. & J. Luchtmans, 1836): pp. 284-285.

[40] 'la vraye religion' Ibid, pp. 284-285.

[41] 'sans lesquels les Roys ne peuvent estre maintenus en leurs Royaulmes' Ibid, pp. 284-285.

disrupt and destroy the balance of power in the commonwealth.[42] They plan to 'exterminate … the nobility and other people of good pedigree' and to 'establish their tyrannies'.[43] In doing so, these enemies usurp the power of monarchs, severely damage the rights and privileges of the nobility, and place their own interest above the common good. Finally, the text makes references to the Catholic Conspiracy. The covert nature of Catholic intentions is underlined by claiming that these only became clear after they were 'pondered attentively'.[44]

However, the most important foundation of Orange's first campaign in France is only implicitly present in the text. Orange, Condé, and Coligny in their treaty make no distinction whatsoever between events in France and the Netherlands. This recognition of the transnational nature of their shared struggle underpinned the cooperation. The treaty demanded significant investment and risk-taking without the guarantee that there would be an opportunity at which the other party could reciprocate. After peace had been agreed in France in 1570, Coligny demonstrated a great determination to fulfil his side of the agreement, despite the great risks and small reward that this was likely to bring.[45] These actions were primarily inspired by the conviction that the conflicts in France and the Netherlands were intertwined. Louis of Nassau's central role in this campaign further underlines these theoretical underpinnings. In many ways the embodiment of the interconnectedness of Europe's religious conflicts, Louis demonstrated his international outlook through his continued efforts to coordinate international cooperation between Protestants in France, the Low Countries, England, and Germany.[46]

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[42] 'adversaires' Ibid, pp. 284-285.

[43] d'exterminer … la noblesse et autres gens de bien' Ibid, pp. 284-285.

[44] 'meurement pesé' Ibid, pp. 284-285.

[45] N. M. Sutherland, *The Massacre of St Bartholomew and the European Conflict, 1559-1572*, (London: Macmillan, 1973): pp. 302-303.

[46] P. J. van Herweden, *Het Verblijf van Lodewijk van Nassau in Frankrijk, Hugenoten en Geuzen, 1568-1572*, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1932): pp. 82-104.

The chance to prove his sincerity came two months later when Orange led an army, largely consisting of German mercenary troops, into Brabant. The expectation was that the invasion would be the cue for the towns and cities of the Low Countries to expel the loyalist leadership and join the revolt. In the event, the expedition turned out to be a disaster. Barely any support from within the Netherlands came and Alba refused to meet Orange in battle. Without help and lacking 'all necessary provisions', Orange decided instead to attempt to ease the 'unbearable suffering of the poor besieged Christians in France'.[47] In December he led his unwilling army into Picardy in the hope of joining forces with Condé. According to Louis of Nassau, 'the French have requested and asked my lord the Prince …' to intervene, in accordance with 'the established treaty.'[48]

The presence of Orange's forces in France led to an uneasy diplomatic exchange between the Prince and the crown. The tone of the negotiations, conducted by Marshal Artus de Cossé-Brissac, was surprisingly courteous. Although Cossé reminded Orange that his troops 'burn mills and barns and pillage the subjects', he also attested that the King 'doubts that [Orange] wants to undertake anything against the position of the said sire my master and to the damage of his subjects.'[49] Orange on his part, although he exclaimed that he did not fear the royal army 'since God, who gives victories, … has no regard for numbers', lacked a clear military objective.[50] When this campaign too threatened to end in failure, he offered the King his services as a mediator between the monarchy and the Huguenots. This plan failed to

[47] 'aller nöttigen proviant' 'das unleidlich Elendt der armen betrangten Christen in Franckreich'. Ibid, p. 24.

[48] 'die Franzosen bey mein hern dem Pritzen angesucht und gebetten' 'der ufgerichte vertrag' Johann of Nassau to an unnamed recipient, 25 December 1568, Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives ou Correspondance Inédite … Volume III*, p. 306.

[49] 'faire brusler des moulins, granges, saccaiger les subjects' 'doubte que vous veuillez entreprendre chose contre l'estat du dict Sʳ mon maître et au dommaige de ses subjects.' Report of the negotiation between Artus de Cossé-Brissac and William of Orange, December 1568, Ibid, pp. 313-314.

[50] 'car Dieu, qui donne les victoires, … n'a aucune regard au nombre' Herweden, *Het Verblijf van Lodewijk van Nassau in Frankrijk,* p. 25.

materialise and Orange, who was quickly running out of the funds necessary to pay his troops, was forced to pull back to Strasbourg, where he had considerable difficulties to disband his disgruntled and underpaid forces.[51]

6.5 Wolfgang of Zweibrücken

The third German expedition in France, conducted by Wolfgang of Zweibrücken in 1569, has traditionally been dismissed as a vanity project led by an adventure-loving nobleman. Bernard Vogler, for instance, described the count as 'an adventurer without political ideas'. [52] This is an incorrect interpretation as Wolfgang of Zweibrücken's correspondence from the 1560s suggests that he had well informed and sometimes even original ideas about the French Wars of Religion, its causes, and its possible solutions. His position was relatively complex and a number of seemingly contradictory episodes from his life have made him susceptible to accusations of hypocrisy. However, a closer look at his life, character, and ideas reveals that his actions throughout the 1560s are entirely consistent with his ideological outlook.

Rather than being an opportunist, Wolfgang in his correspondence shows himself to be ideologically committed to the idea of international Protestantism. This went hand in hand with reform at home. He commissioned a new church order for his county in 1557 (for which he consulted Melanchthon and Brenz), organised visitations, and was directly involved in the crafting of edifying literature designed to serve as moral guidance for his subjects.[53] One pamphlet warned against 'unchristian blaspheming, cursing, and swearing'. Another attacked the 'damned and seductive sect' of the

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[51] Ibid, pp. 20-45.

[52] 'un adventurier sans idées politiques' Vogler, 'Le role des Électeurs Palatins, p. 62.

[53] Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Christoph of Württemberg, 21 August 1557, HStASt, A 71 Bü 856, 30.

Anabaptists.[54] In a letter to Christoph of Württemberg from June 1560 Wolfgang gives an insight into his personal commitment to the Lutheran faith: 'I have liberated myself from the Babylonians, and moved to the true [interpretation of the] Gospel' adding that 'God has been so gracious with me, since he made from a Saul a Paul.'[55]

As a Lutheran, Wolgang was hostile to Reformed Protantism and was strongly opposed to Friedrich III's conversion. Nonetheless, as early as 1560 he spoke in favour of the Huguenots in France. Contrasting strongly with the usual respectful language used to describe the monarchs of France, Wolfgang spoke with barely disguised disdain of the King's role in the persecution of the Huguenots. On having heard of an illness that plagued Francis II in 1560, Wolfgang remarked that it was clearly 'a punishment by God … since he [Francis] against the Word of God and the poor Christian, has instituted a tyranny.'[56] This providential understanding of the situation the French Protestants and of the role of French Catholics in their persecutions was partly the work of Huguenot propaganda, but his own beliefs and character also made the count more receptive for further Huguenot polemic.

Throughout the 1560s, Wolfgang looked favourably upon the Huguenots. He downplayed the differences between the two creeds and, though strongly committed to the Augsburg Confession, believed that these differences could be bridged.[57] In a letter to Christoph of Württemberg written in September 1563, he discussed the relation between Lutheranism and Reformed Protantism. Wolfgang was

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[54] 'das unchristlichen Gottslestern, schweren und fluchen' 'verdambten verfürischen Sect' HStASt, A 71 Bü 856, 33.

[55] 'Ich mich von der Babilonishen … erlöst, unnd dem rhainen Evangelio begeben' '… Gott … der so gnediglich mit mir gethan, Inn dem er aus ainem Saulo ainem Paulum gemacht …' Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Christoph of Württemberg, 1560, HStASt, A 71 Bü 883, 148.

[56] 'straff Gottes … dieweill er wider das Göttlich wortt, und die armen Christen, … aine … tyranny sieen that.' Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Christoph of Württemberg, 13 Febuary 1560, HStASt, A 71 Bü 878, 126.

[57] J. Ney, 'Pfalzgraf Wolfgang, Herzog von Zweibrücken und Neuburg', *Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte*, 29 (1911): 1-124, on p. 75.

aware 'that our Christian opinions are condemned and dismissed publicly by their ministers'.[58] But instead of denouncing the doctrines of the Huguenots, he 'in a friendly manner asked and admonished the ministers of the churches in France … to abolish such a practice [and instead to make sure] that the confession of the French churches from now on in all articles and especially in the … articles of the Lord's Supper and predestination [follow] the beatifying Word of God and our Christian Augsburg Confession.'[59] Believing that the Huguenots' erroneous interpretation of Scripture was the product of mistakes rather than malice, he hoped that the situation could be rectified if the Huguenots 'in all articles will be instructed of the true foundation of our Christian doctrines …'[60] For this reason he was more credulous in regards to Huguenot propaganda. The intensity of his religious conviction and his direct involvement in the Reformation of his territories led Wolfgang to develop distinct religious ideas independently of his court preachers and theologians. His unorthodox understanding of the relationship between Lutherans and Reformed Protestants is a good example of this mindset. This independent attitude put him on a collision course with some influential Lutherans. His own court preacher, Tileman Heßhus, was particularly critical, questioning the Huguenots' religion and motives.[61]

Wolfgang was a man of action. As discussed above, he was the first of the Protestant princes who considered militarily intervention in France. According to the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, the Duke also

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[58] 'das unsere Christliche mainung also offentlich vonn Iren kirchen dienern … verdammet unnd verworffen würde' Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Christoph of Württemberg, 22 September 1563, HStASt, A 71 Bü 920, 62.

[59] 'Beten und vermanten wir freuntlich solchs bei den dienner der … kirchen inn Franckreich … abzuschaffen … das der Französisch kirchen confession hinfuro inn allen articuln sonderlich aber inn dem … articulo *de coena domini & de preadestinatione* dem seligmachenden wortt Gottes und unserer Christlichen Augspurgisch Confession ….', Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Christoph of Württemberg, 22 September 1563, HStASt, A 71 Bü 920, 62.

[60] 'in allen articuln des rechten waren fundaments unnseren Christlichen Lehre möchten underwissen …' Wolfgang of Zweibrücken to Christoph of Württemberg, 29 April 1561, HStASt, A 71 Bü 895.

[61] Ney, 'Pfalzgraf Wolfgang, p. 80.

worked together with the famous mercenary and adventurer Wilhelm von Grumbach, who in the summer of 1564 planned to capture the Bishop of Metz and the Cardinal of Lorraine. This story, however, is shrouded in mystery, as there is no clear evidence to indicate that this plot even existed. Another example of Wolfgang's activity on the international political stage was his association with Philip II. On 1 October 1565 the Duke entered the service of the King of Spain for the duration of three years in exchange for an annual pension of 4500 Guilders. Although the terms of his contract stipulated that Wolfgang would not be used against the Emperor, the Imperial princes, or the Augsburg Confession, this association has cemented Wolfgang's reputation among historians as an adventurer and opportunist. This assessment of his character, however, is not accurate. In 1565, Philip's reputation was not yet tainted by the narrative of the Catholic Conspiracy and the King still enjoyed the loyalty of the high nobility of the Netherlands, including William of Orange. Moreover, Wolfgang was neither the first nor the last German prince to enter the service of a foreign Catholic monarch. Christoph of Württemberg, Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, and Philibert of Baden all had similar arrangements with the King of France. Wolfgang's contract with Philip II would thus not have raised too many eyebrows in 1565. The outbreak of violence in the Netherlands, however, complicated this relationship. During the summer of 1566, Wolfgang was still inclined to stand by Philip, believing, as many did of his Lutheran peers, that the unrest in the Netherlands was the responsibility of unruly and iconoclastic mobs. After the execution of Egmont and Hoorne, Wolfgang changed his position. He refused Alba's request to send 2000 *Reiters* and broke his association with Philip. Wolfgang's biographer, Julius Ney, estimated that 'what happened in the Netherlands and France completely opened Wolfgang's eyes.' [62] He interpreted the violence of 1567 as the vindication of the Huguenot explanation of the causes of the French Wars of Religion. According to Ney, the execution of Egmont and

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[62] Ibid, pp. 75-76.

Hoorne played a crucial role in persuading Wolfgang of the truth of the Huguenot narrative.

Despite the controversy of some of his views and actions, Wolfgang's campaign enjoyed much broader support in Germany than the others. His status as leader of a respectable, magisterial and, more importantly, Lutheran Reformation helped in winning the backing of significant numbers of German Lutherans. In addition, the threat of the Catholic Conspiracy had altered the mood amongst Protestant to such an extent that intervention in France was increasingly seen as necessary and legitimate. William of Orange and Louis of Nassau, who after the disastrous end of their own campaign had retreated to the Rhineland, were amongst the first to lend their support. The two brothers played a central role in Wolfgang's campaign and because of their military experience assumed the *de facto* military command of the German troops. Elizabeth I was another influential supporter, partly financing the mission. Other sources of money were also available. Odet de Châtillon reportedly provided '150,000 crowns', adding to 'the money of the merchants of Hamburg who presented 100,000 *écus* for the payment of the men of the Duke of Zweibrücken.'[63] In January 1569 Wolfgang moved through the Franche-Comté into France with 20,000 men.[64] Wolfgang, however, did not live to see the completion of his campaign, since he died of illness and exhaustion four days before his forces met up with the Huguenot army.[65]

Let us now turn to the way in which the mission was portrayed and interpreted by contemporaries. Wolfgang, like Casimir, was keen to emphasise his respect for the king's authority. Before he entered France on the 23rd of April, he wrote to Charles IX explaining that he had no

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[63] 'hundert und funfzig tausend kronen' Henry Killigrew to Christoph von Ehem, 11 May 1569, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II* …: p. 321; Anonymous letter from England, 28 April 1569, 'de l'argent des marchants, ceux de Hambourg luy present 100 mille escus d'or pour payer les gens du Duc des deux Ponts.' BNF, 15549, f. 138.

[64] T. A. Brady, *German Histories in the Age of the Reformations, 1400-1650*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): pp. 238-239.

[65] Herweden, *Het Verblijf van Lodewijk van Nassau in Frankrijk,* pp. 54-58.

intention to harm the King, whom he hoped to serve one day, but that he acted out of compassion for the French Protestants. [66] After Wolfgang's death, his heroic commitment to the Protestant cause was emphasised. His elaborate grave monument in the *Schlosskirche* in the Palatinate town of Meisenheim portrays Wolfgang in full armour kneeling underneath a crucifix, clearly visualising the prince's devotion to his religion and his willingness to defend it, even with his life.[67] Wolfgang's principal ally, the Prince of Orange, too made much of Wolfgang's sacrifice in service of Protestantism in France, the Netherlands, and the Empire:

> Your Grace as the most knowledgeable Prince Elector graciously has to appreciate what burdensome and irreversible service he has done not only for the poor Christians in this country of France, but also in the Netherlands and other countries, in which the Word of God already has been planted so extensively and truly and where people are being deprived of religion; and especially also [to prevent] the danger, misery, and woes that in our beloved fatherland of the German nation as a consequence of this may arrive since the entire war, as you know, has been started and is being waged with no other goal but the extermination of our common religion and liberties.[68]

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[66] Ibid, p. 52.

[67] K. Malisch, 'Pfalzgraf Wolfgang von Zweibrücken und Neuburg und die französischen Hugenotten', *France-Bayern: Bayern und Frankreich: Wege und Begegnungen, 1000 Jahre Bayerischen-Französische Beziehungen, France-Bavière; Allers et Retours, 1000 Ans de Relations Franco-Bavaroises*, (Paris: Biro, 2006): pp. 110-115.

[68] '... so haben E. G.. als der hochverständige Churfurst, gnedig zuermessen, in was beschwerliche und unwiederbringliche dhienstbarkeit nit allein die armen Christen in dieszem Frankreich, auch in den nieder und andern landen, darin Gottes wortt berritz so weitt und rein gepflantzet, gebracht und der Religion beraubt wurden, sondern was auch unserm geliebtem vatterlande deutscher nation vor gemeine gefahr, jammer und elende darausz endtsthen mochte, dieweill dieszer gantzen krieg, wie E. G. wiszen, su nichts anderm als anstilgung unser gemeiner Relligion und freiheiten angefangen is und gefurt wirt.' William of Orange to August of Saxony, 19 July 1569, P. J. Blok, *Correspondentie van en Betreffende Lodewijk van Nassau en Andere Onuitgegeven Documenten, Verzameld door Dr. P. J. Blok*, (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1887): p. 80.

This interpretation of Wolfgang's mission contrasts strongly with that of Vogler, who tends to rely on hostile sources. For example, in the correspondence between Charles IX and the Duke of Aumale, younger brother of the Duke of Guise, it is suggested that Wolfgang's campaign was primarily motivated by the prospect of personal gain and that he could not only easily be dissuaded from carrying it through, but 'that the Duke of Zweibrücken will quit the party of the princes and join that of the King' when he was offered 'a fat pension.'[69] The stark dichotomy between Protestant and Catholic interpretations of the purpose of the mission is telling. The idea that Wolfgang's services could be bought fits in the tradition of describing the Huguenots and their supporters as self-serving rebels striving for their own political and financial betterment. This Catholic interpretation, however, does not correspond to the reality of Wolfgang's mission, which was launched with the financial backing of a number of Protestant parties to support their coreligionists in France and to prevent the Catholics from tipping the confessional balance of power in Europe in their favour.

6.6 Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar

The fourth and most controversial German campaign in France was undertaken in 1568 by Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar. The Duke's decision to serve as a captain in the army of the Catholic king put him on a collision course with his Protestant peers who supported the Huguenots. Unsurprisingly, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar has not always been treated kindly in the historiography. Gregor Richter, for instance, though acknowledging Johann Wilhelm's ideological opposition to Reformed Protestantism, describes the Duke as an opportunist primarily interested in furthering his 'concrete political interests.'[70]

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[69] 'que le Duc des deux Ponts quittera le party des Princes pour prendre celuy de Roy' 'une grosse pension', Charles IX to the Duke of Anjou, 20 December 1568, BNF, 15548: f. 149.

[70] G. Richter, 'Württemberg und der Kriegzeug des Herzogs Johann Wilhelm von Sachsen nach Frankreich im Jahr 1568', *Zeitschrift für Württembergische Landesgeschichte*, 26 (1967): p. 254.

However, the sincerity of Johann Wilhelm's Lutheran beliefs should not be underestimated.

The foundations for the expedition of Johann Wilhelm were laid in late 1557, more than a decade before it took place. At this time, the eve of the conclusion of the wars between France and the Habsburgs, Henry II was recruiting German noblemen to fight for the French cause. On 16 December 1557, the King approached Johann Wilhelm and his relative Johann Friedrich, Duke of Saxony, with a proposal.[71] In exchange for an annual pension, the two dukes would recruit and command regiments of *Pistoliers* (German light cavalry) for the French.[72] In early 1558, a treaty was agreed on the condition that the troops would not be used against the Holy Roman Empire or the 'true Christian religion of [the] Augsburg Confession and its members'.[73] That same year, Johann Wilhelm was first called upon to fulfil his part of the bargain. Briefly, the duke and his regiment formed part of the French army, until the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis ended the demand for German troops in France.[74] Over the next decade, Johann Wilhelm kept receiving a French pension. To mitigate the controversy of this connection he published a pamphlet in 1558 in which he explained the conditions of his service.[75]

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[71] Barthold, *Deutschland und die Hugenotten*, pp. 221-284.

[72] K. Hahn, *Herzog Johann Wilhelm von Weimar und Seine Beziehungen zu Frankreich*, (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1907): pp. 41-96.

[73] 'die Ware/ Christliche Religion/ unserer Augspurgischen Confession und derselben verwandte' Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, *Ausschreiben. Des Durchlauchtigen Hochgebornen Fürsten unnd Herrn, Herrn Johans Wilhelmen Hertzogen zu Sachssen. An seiner F. G. Getrewe Landschafft von Prelaten, Graffen, Herrn, Ritterschafft und Stedte, Seiner F. G. jtzigen zugs in Franckreich, unnd warumb die Königliche Wirde doselbst Seine F. G. Auff sonderbare benentliche ausziehunge unnd vorbehaltunge derselben Dienstbestallunge, auch Ehren unnd Glimpffs wegen nicht vorlassen können* (Weimar: s. n., 1568): p. 3.

[74] Hahn, *Herzog Johann Wilhelm von Weimar*, pp. 41-96.

[75] Anon., *Warhaftiger Abdruck des Durchleuchten Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Johann Wilhelm/ Herzogen zu Sachsen/ Landgraffen in Döringen/ und Marggraffen zu Meissern/ ausgegangene Schreibens/ am Dato im feltlager bey Amiens/ den 27. Septembris negst vorschinē/ an etzliche Chur ūn Fürsten des Heiligen Reichs/ darinnen S. F. G. ursachen anzeigen/ Welcher halben sie sich in des konigs zu Frankreich kriegs und dienstbestestellung begeben/ und sich daneben ausdrücklich erkleren/ Das S. F. G. gemüt und vorhaben nicht sey/ einigen des heiligen Reich Deutscher Nation*

Johann Wilhelm's French pension brought far-reaching obligations. The Duke of Anjou made these explicit in a letter to Johann Wilhelm from February 1568: 'I beg that you make haste in your journey to France with your forces in order to oppose the troops of Casimir that want to advance into this kingdom, pillaging and burning everything.'[76] In a letter written two weeks earlier, Catherine de' Medici appealed to the longstanding connection between France and Weimar and emphasised the justness of the King's cause:

> My cousin, my lord the King, my son, has sent you the lord of Loubière to make you understand what the cause is for which you are being used and this first levy that is conducted in Germany for his service and to ask you to raise around 4000 *pistoliers* on horseback, which he hopes will enter his service before this spring if the affairs drag out for a longer time, assuring you that your good conduct will be of great benefit for his kingdom ...[77]

Johann Wilhelm replied using the language of friendship and loyalty. In his letters to Charles IX he spoke of 'the devotion that I have always had to the good of serving your majesty ...'[78] Johann Wilhelm felt the urge to

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einverleibten Standt/ durch S. F. G. oder die Iren zubeschwerē/ noch solchs zuthun den Iren wissentlich zu gestatten. Daraus dann zubefinden/ das S. F. G. und den Iren/ mit dem ausgesprengtem geschrey/ als solten S. F. G. in izigem vorstehenden Abzug/ das geurlaubte französische kriegsvolck an sich ziehen/ und damit inn Deutschland/ Krieg und unruhe anrichten wollen/ ungütlich geschicht/ Und das sölchs engweder durch S. F. G. missgünstige oder sonst unruhige leut/ die zu kriegs entbörung lust haben/ und die Herrn gerne in einander herzen wolten/ ausgebreitet wirdt, (s. l.: s. n., 1558).

[76] 'le prie de haster sa venue avec ses trouppes pour s'opposer aux troupes du Casimir qui veulent s'advancer dans le Royaume pillant et bruslant par tout.' The Duke of Anjou to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 3 February 1568, BNF, 15544: f. 171.

[77] 'Mon cousin, le Roy monsieur mon filz vous envoye le sieur de Loubeyre pour voes fair entendre qui a esté cause qu'il ne vous a employé en ceste première levée que s'este faicte en Allemaigne pour son service et vous prie tenir prestz quatre mil chevaulx pistolliers, lesquelz il espère faire venir à son service avant ce printemps si les choses tirent en plus grande longneur, s'assurent que vostre personne et vostre bonne conduicte seront d'ung grand fruict à son royaume ...' Catherine de' Medici to Jean-Philippe of Salm, 16 January 1568, H. de la Ferrière, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, Volume III: 1567-1570*, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1887): p. 335.

[78] 'la devotion que J'ay tousioure porter au bien de service de v^{re} Ma^{te} ...' Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar to Charles IX, June 1568, BNF, 15546: f. 214.

stress that he was fulfilling his obligations. For instance, he wrote to Catherine that he 'hoped … that His Majesty has without doubt recognised enough the devotion that I bare to the good of the crown of France.'[79]

However, the suggestion that Johann Wilhelm's mission was built exclusively on non-religious foundations, whether for the prospect of financial gain or a sense of loyalty to the monarchy of France, is incorrect. He entered the conflict with a clear conscience. Johann Wilhelm's Gnesio-Lutheran orthodoxy and his strong opposition to Reformed Protestantism were part of his identity and contributed to his sense of righteousness. However, it brought him into a conflict with Friedrich III that arose as a consequence of the mission. The Elector argued that Johann Wilhelm's actions constituted a fratricidal attack on his coreligionists and would lead not only to the destruction of the Huguenots, but also to the downfall of Protestantism throughout Europe. Friedrich went as far as to argue that the differences between the German Lutherans and the Huguenots were purely cosmetic:

> Although the Christian Reformed churches in France just in the outward ceremonies are not completely like us, it is much more important to keep a careful eye on the most important point, namely that the poor Christians will be entirely relieved from the yoke of Antichristendom, the wretched popery, and that the bloodletting of the poor Christians will be stopped and prevented.[80]

By serving in the Catholic army in France, Friedrich argued, Johann Wilhelm was complicit in the crimes against his fellow Protestants.

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[79] '… espera … que v^tre Ma^te ayant sans doubte suffisant … cougnueu la devotion que je porte au bien … de la chouronne de France …' Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar to Catherine de' Medici, June 1568, BNF, 15546: f. 215.

[80] 'obschon die christliche reformirte kirchen in Frankreich sich nicht eben in den außerlichen Ceremonien mit den unsern durchaus vergleichen möchten, sondern vielmehr die hauptsach, das nämlich die armen Christen vom Joch des Antichristenthums, des leidigen Papstthums, einst gänzlich entledigt und das Blutvergießen armen Christen abgewendet und verhütet, in gutter gewahrsamer Achtung zu haben …' Friedrich III to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 25 January 1568, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 179.

Friedrich also appealed to August of Saxony to persuade Johann Wilhelm to abandon his plans.[81] Through his daughter Dorothea Susanna, who was married to Johann Wilhelm, Friedrich hoped to exercise influence. He wrote to his daughter in February 1568:

> I cannot believe that my beloved son, your beloved lord, lets himself be persuaded and incited by the abovementioned pope to let himself be used against the poor Christians and coreligionists and that he has released such a public declaration against the Prince of Condé ...[82]

Friedrich initially assumed that Johann Wilhelm was misguided. He wrote to Dorothea Susanna in December 1567, asking her to help her husband see that he was being misled by 'the Bishop of Rennes, who presents himself as one of the envoys of the King of France.'[83] In line with Huguenot interpretations, Friedrich assumed that Rennes instead worked for the King's 'evil councillors' who were furthering an aggressive Catholic agenda. Friedrich's tone toughened, however, when two months later, Johann Wilhelm still had not abandoned his expedition, fuming that 'only for those who are willingly blind, it remains hidden, what the Pope and his adherents, who control the King of France, ... intend to achieve, namely ... the extermination of the Religion.'[84]

Of course Johann Wilhelm disagreed strongly. He denied vehemently that he 'let himself be used against the true Christian

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[81] Friedrich III to August of Saxony, 30 December 1567, Ibid, p. 159.

[82] 'Ich kan mich auch nit genugsam verwandern, das mayn freuntlicher liber sone, deyn geliebter herr, sich von dem obgemelten pfaffen dahin bereden und uffwiegeln lassen, das er sich wider die arme Christen und religionsverwandte gebrauchen und ayn solches ausschreyben wider den prinzen von Condé lest ausgehen' Friedrich III to Dorothea Susanna, 1 February 1568, Ibid, p. 183.

[83] 'dem bischoff zu Rennes, der vor aynen des konigs von Frankreychs gesandter sich dorgegeben' Friedrich III to Dorothea Susanna, 29 December 1567, Ibid, p. 156.

[84] 'nur denen, die muthwillig blind sein wollen, verborgen bleibe, was der Papst und sein Anhang, die den könig von Frankreich beherschen, ... beabsichtigen, nämlich ... die Vertilgung der Religion.' Friedrich to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 1 February 1568, Ibid, pp. 181-182.

religion of the Augsburg Confession.'[85] Moreover, in the pamphlet that he had published to justify his actions the Duke presented a very strong argument against the Elector Palatine's narrative. Johann Wilhelm argued 'that it is purely a rebellion …, which has been put in place by the subjects against the authority established by God.' [86] Similar language appears over and again in the documents related to his campaign. To Charles IX, Johann Wilhelm declared that his intentions were to 'secure your crown' by 'suppressing the rebels.'[87] Moreover, the Duke contrasted his attempts to 'create order' with the chaos that had enveloped France as a result of the Huguenots' actions.[88] Although these statements appear secular, based on ideas concerning the justifiability of resistance and the authority of the King, they are firmly rooted in religious beliefs. The Duchy of Weimar was a bastion of Gnesio-Lutheran thought. Characterised by a particularly narrow interpretation of Lutheran orthodoxy, this vision left little or no room for deviating doctrines or liturgical practices. It was particularly hostile to Reformed Protestantism. In Weimar, therefore, the idea that the Huguenots should be seen as the Lutherans' coreligionists was preposterous. Instead, discussions of the Huguenots' religion focussed

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[85] 'wider die wahre christliche Religion der A. C. gebrauchen lasse.' Friedrich III to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 1 February 1568, Ibid, pp. 181-182.

[86] 'Wiewol wir nun vermercken/ Dass jetziger zeyt hin und wider/ bey hohes unnd nidrigen Standes Geistlichen und Weltlichen Personen/ im Reich Deutscher Nation/ auch bey den Verwandten unserer waren/ Christlichen Religion/ Dessgleichen bey unsern selbst unterthanen/ und zugehörigen/ von allerhand ungleicher meinunge/ jetzigen Frantzöschischen Kriegs empörunge/ Sonderlich aber davon geredet wird/ Ob es … umb die Christliche Religion/ und derselben vertrückunge/ zu thun sey/ So können wir doch demselben keinen glauben zusetzen/ … So haben wir doch/ auss dem bericht/ welche uns die Kön. W. derwegen thun/ und darüber auss etzlichen vielen Mandaten/ die ire Kön. Wirde/ unter entstandener unruhe… unnd denn … aussruffen lassen/ Die uns in Französischer/ und dann in die deutsche Sprach … zukommen … vernommen/ dass es ein lauter Rebellion … sey/ Welche von den unterthanen/ gegen ire von Gott geordente Obrigkeit/ … angestellet wirdet/' Johann Wilhelm von Sachsen Weimar, *Ausschreiben*, p. 4.

[87] 'secourir sa couronne et la maintenir' 'reprimer les Rebelles' Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar to Charles IX, 10 January 1568, BNF, 15544: f. 49-50.

[88] 'donner ordre' Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar to Charles IX, 11 December 1567, BNF, 15918: f. 110.

on the seditiousness and rebelliousness that they considered an essential component of Reformed Protestantism.

In light of the perceived dangers of Reformed Protestantism, the decision to support the Catholic and, in Weimar's eyes, royalist party is understandable. In Saxony, the Gnesio-Lutheran princes maintained unusually good relations with the Catholic Emperors, which was reflected in the Saxons' conservative attitudes and respect for the Peace of Augsburg. Cooperation with Catholics was thus not unusual for Weimar's ruling family. Johann Wilhelm had a similar attitude to the French Catholics. He responded positively to the conciliatory language used by the Cardinal of Lorraine in 1560-1. When in the spring of 1562, the duke received a number of letters from the Huguenot camp, blackening the reputation of the Guise and blaming them for the violence in France, Johann Wilhelm was outraged.[89] Johann Wilhelm's religious outlook thus made him entirely unreceptive for Huguenot propaganda. In this case, it even backfired, cementing the idea that Condé and his adherents were troublemakers who were willing to tarnish the reputation of others in order to realise their own personal ambitions. Far from being motivated by material concerns, supported by cynical and insincere justifications, Johann Wilhelm's campaign was firmly rooted in both his understanding of his obligations to the King of France and his perspective on the nature of Reformed Protestantism.

The fact that Johann Wilhelm did not conduct his mission exclusively for reasons of personal gain or profit is illustrated by the damage it did to his standing amongst his Protestant peers. Friedrich III was unequivocal: 'therefore I do not want to regard him as a friend.'[90] In another letter to Dorothea Susanne, the Elector lamented the effects of this rupture in relations on his chances to see his daughter: 'I cannot write you how heavy it weighs on my mind that you (on your journey to

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[89] Hahn, *Herzog Johann Wilhelm von Weimar*, pp. 96-129.

[90] 'also ich inen nit vor aynen freund wolt halten.' Friedrich III to Dorothea Susanna, 1 February 1568, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 183

France) passed me by so closely and I could not meet with you.'[91] On his return to Germany, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar still felt the effects of the campaign on his reputation. The controversy surrounding the mission contributed to the process of gradual alienation from the other princes of the Empire, which in turn contributed the loss and break-up of his territories.[92] Even after his return, Friedrich continued his efforts to blacken the reputation of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar. He wrote to the Emperor in May 1568 'that a large number of the Duke's cavalry have been enlisted by the Duke of Alba.'[93] In doing so, Friedrich implicitly implicated Johann Wilhelm in the actions of Alba, which were the subject of so much vivid and frightening propaganda in the Empire. Wilhelm probably predicted this backlash since he already acknowledged in the pamphlet he published before his campaign that the conflict in France was by many German Protestants erroneously believed to be 'about the Christian religion and its suppression.'[94]

Johann Wilhelm's orthodox interpretation of Lutheranism was also cause for his decline and eventual downfall. In the years after his campaign, the Duke became heavily involved in a theological dispute between his own theologians, who supported the purist Flacian theology, and those of August of Saxony, who they deemed to be deviating from Lutheran orthodoxy. His stubborn insistence in supporting these controversial theologians provoked fierce criticism among the Protestant princes. A number of these princes (Brandenburg, Holstein, Ludwig of Württemberg, Hesse, and Karl of Baden) gathered at Heidelberg in 1570 and urged Johann Wilhelm to put an end to 'the harassing of his quarrelsome theologians, who

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[91] 'Ich kann dir nicht schreiben, wie schwer es mir zu Gemüth gegangen, das ihr (auf dem Zug nach Frankreich) so nahe an mich vorübergezogen und ich Euch nicht hab sollen ansprechen.' Friedrich III to Dorothea Susanna, 15 May 1568, Ibid, pp. 219-220.

[92] T. Kleine, 'Johann Wilhelm' *Neue Deutsche Biography*, 10 (1974): pp. 530-531.

[93] 'das von des herzogs [Johann Wilhelm] Reutern eine gute Anzahl sich für den Herzog von Alba habe anwergen lassen ...' Friedrich III to Emperor Maximilian, 22 May 1568, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 220.

[94] '... umb die Christliche Religion/ und derselben vertrückunge/ zu thun sey ...' Johann Wilhelm von Sachsen Weimar, *Aussschreiben*, p. 4.

through their vilifying and damning create so much evil.'[95] The Emperor too felt the need to intervene in this crisis. He admonished Johann Wilhelm to 'completely halt such arguments and unnecessary disputations about religion in your schools and pulpits.' [96] The combination of his unpopular campaign in 1568 and this theological crisis in 1570 cost Johann Wilhelm dearly. In 1570, the two sons of Johann Wilhelm's older brother, Johann Friedrich II, laid claim to their father's patrimony. Having alienated the Emperor and the powerful Elector of Saxony, Johann Wilhelm had no chance of winning the dispute. In the 1572 Division of Erfurt he was forced to surrender most of his territories, which were divided amongst his nephews.[97] The fact that in the end, Johann Wilhelm's troops were never used against the Huguenots, added to the scale of this personal disaster. By the time his regiment, slowed down by the difficulties of travelling long distances in winter, had reached France, the Peace of Longjumeau had been concluded.[98]

The case of Johann Wilhelm points to the costs of putting conscience above expediency. His ill-judgement left him isolated in the Empire and led to his political and personal demise. This is far from the traditional explanations of his actions, which stress his calculated attempts to gain wealth and influence in risky adventures. The common theme underpinning both his campaign in France and his theological militancy in 1570 was his strong commitment to a particularly strict and orthodox branch of Lutheranism. This set of beliefs included an unusually aggressive disposition towards 'sectarian' types of Protestantism, such as Philippism and Reformed Protestantism. These

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[95] 'dem Treiben seiner zanksüchtigen Theologen, die durch ihr Schmähren und Verdammen so groses Unheil anrichten ...' The princes of Brandenburg, Holstein, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 10 June 1570, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen … Volume II*, p. 397.

[96] 'alle solche unnöttige Disputationes in Religions Sachen, bey dero Schulen unnd Cantzlen genzlich abstellen.' Emperor Maximilian to Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar, 20 July 1570, ThHStA Fürstenhaus, A195, f. 150-151.

[97] Kleine, 'Johann Wilhelm', pp. 530-531.

[98] Hahn, *Herzog Johann Wilhelm von Weimar*, pp. 130-174.

beliefs had a political dimension, showing that we divorce religion and politics at our peril. While emphasising his own devotion to the Emperor and the King of France, Johann Wilhelm accused other forms of Protestantism of disobedience. This combination of Lutheran zeal and devotion to the French monarchy goes a long way towards explaining Johann Wilhelm's campaign in 1568.

6.7 Philibert of Baden

The final campaign discussed in this chapter is also the most difficult to explain. Philibert of Baden's decision to enlist in the army of the King of France was the result of a sudden change of heart in late 1567, an event that is shrouded in mystery. The Margrave himself, though an important Protestant prince of the Empire, was rather isolated from many of his Protestant peers. Raised for a while at the courts of the Emperor and the Duke of Bavaria, Philibert received a Catholic upbringing and education.[99] Nonetheless, on reaching maturity (and thus gaining full control over his patrimony), the Margrave converted to Lutheranism. This unusual background led Philibert to develop a form of Lutheranism with distinct characteristics: he was not only exceptionally hostile to Reformed Protestantism, but also continued to regard Catholicism, the religion of his youth, highly. This is reflected in the way he led the reformation of his margraviate. He was generous for his Catholic subjects and left the Cistercian nunnery at Lichtenthal untouched throughout his rule.[100]

During the 1560s, Philibert was certainly not at the forefront of German efforts to influence events in France. In comparison to Württemberg, Hesse, Zweibrücken and especially the Elector Palatine, Baden's contribution seems meagre. Nonetheless, the Margrave appears occasionally in the sources when collective action in relation to

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[99] A. Krieger, 'Philibert, Markgraf von Baden-Baden', *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 25 (1887): 739-741.

[100] Ibid, pp. 739-741.

France was taken. For instance, he was one of the contributors to the 100,000 florins raised by Andelot in 1562.[101] Similarly, his signature appears under a letter warning against the dangers of the Catholic plot in 1567, and he was present at Maulbronn, where in the same year the Conspiracy was discussed.[102] In contrast with some of his peers, Philibert's voice is hardly audible. Though he without doubt developed his own perspective on the French Wars of Religion, he did not often share this perspective with his peers, at least not before 1567. In that year the Margrave first joined Johann Casimir's force before changing sides and fighting for the King of France. The reasons for this change of heart are discussed at length, both by Philibert himself and by the French Catholic leadership. In a letter to Charles IX, Philibert claimed to have been tricked into joining Casimir's army:

> Sire, having had a great desire as a young prince to see the world and to follow and do service and aid foreign potentates and to show them, principally your majesty, my affection and if they require in their hour of need, to secure them with a good band and number of well-equipped cavalrymen. And ... that already my brother and cousin the Duke Johann Casimir, son of the Count Palatine, has ... asked me to be the commander of 1500 mounted *pistoliers*, assuring me that they would not be used against your majesty but for the conservation of ... the crown, with the promise of showing me letters that are clearly signed by your hand, [showing] thus that it is your will to undertake this levy for this purpose. For this reason I have accompanied him only with some gentlemen of my house until the border of my country, where I have recognised that this levy is against your majesty ... And having such a great desire to do humble service to your majesty I am

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101 Friedrich III and Christoph of Württemberg to Philip of Hesse, 9 August 1562, A. Kluckhohn (ed.), *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz, mit Verwandten Schriftstücken, Volume I* (Braunschweig, C.A. Schwetschte und Sohn, 1868): p. 326.

102 The princes of the Palatinate, Württemberg, Hesse, and Baden to August of Saxony, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume II*, pp. 51-52; Report from the meeting at Maulbronn, 17 July 1567, Ibid, 66-67.

well disposed to accord with my cousins and friends the Rhinegraves who are in your service …[103]

This statement is interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, it claims that Casimir attempted to persuade people of the justifiability of his campaign through lies and deceit. Secondly, it introduces an element that in the justifications of his peers plays little or no part. In this letter and others, the Margrave makes much of his long-standing dream to serve a foreign prince. This sentiment is at the heart of almost all evidence concerning Philibert's campaign. In another letter to Charles IX, for instance, he again wrote that he had 'always had the strong desire to serve your majesty.'[104] The question is, however, whether this deep-seated desire was the direct cause of the Margrave's decision to change sides in December 1567. Albert Krieger, the author of the entry on Philibert in the 1887 *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, suggests an alternative option. He speculates that influential Catholics who played a central role in Philibert's upbringing, namely his mother Franziska of Luxembourg and Albrecht of Bavaria, persuaded him to change sides.[105] However, Krieger presents no evidence to support this. A second possibility is that the Margrave's change of heart was inspired by the offer of a royal pension. Philibert was definitely paid for his services to the crown of France, but that does not necessarily mean that money

[103] 'Sire, Ayant grand envie comme Jeune Prince de veoir le monde et suivre en faisant server et plaisir les Potentats estrengiers et leur monstrer prinsipalement a vostre Maieste mon affection et sil besoing estoit en leur necessite les seccurir avec une bonne troppe et quantite de gens de Chevaulx bien equippez. Et … que deja mon frere et cousin le Duc Jean Casimir filz du Comte Palatin avoit capitule avec moy pour estre chief de XVᶜ Chevaulx pistoliers massurant que ce nestoit par contre vostre Maieste mais pour la conservation … de sa courronne avec promesse de mon monstrer lettres expressementes signes de vostre main que ainsi estoit vostre volunte de fair ceste levee en tel fin. Voila pourquoy je la accompaignue seulement avec quelques gentilhommes de ma maison iusques la frontir de mon pays, la ou j'a cogneu que ceste levee estoit contre vostre maieste … Et ayant si grande envie de faire treshumble service a vostre Maieste j'a bien voulu accorder a mes cousins et amys les Comtes Reingraves estant en vostre service …' Philibert of Baden to Charles IX, 31 December 1567, BNF, 15918: f. 138.

[104] 'E. Kon. Würd … selbst zudienen allezeit begirigs lust gehabt.' Philibert of Baden to Charles IX, 31 December 1567, Ibid, f. 136.

[105] A. Krieger, 'Philibert, Markgraf von Baden-Baden', *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 25 (1887): 739-741.

was the primary motive. There is no evidence for this, other than that he changed sides. This is supported by the relatively large number of letters sent by Philibert first to the King's lieutenant Vieuville and later to the King himself, in which he requests to enter royal service and apologises for briefly and unwittingly backing the King's enemies. Also letters sent between key players in the Catholic party seem to hint at the fact that Philibert changed sides on his own initiative. For instance, Vieuville wrote to Anjou on 9 January 1568 'that the Marquis of Baden, has left the Duke Johann Casimir with two hundred cavalry with the intention of serving his majesty ...'[106] His choice of words is significant. In this private letter between leaders of the same party Vieuville could easily have written that they had persuaded or even paid the Margrave to switch sides. Catherine de' Medici too suggests that Philibert made the decision at his own volition. She wrote to the Rhinegrave that

> the King, my lord my son, and I are very content to learn that my
> cousin the marquis of Baden does not want in any way to support his
> enemies and when he had learned the truth behind the troubles ... he
> rather wanted to do service to the King, my lord my son, which he will
> never forget, and the goodwill that he has shown to this kingdom
> clearly shows that he wants to follow his predecessors who for a good
> time have been such good friends and allies of this crown'[107]

Although it is impossible to prove the absence of pressures put on Philibert by his entourage, or that money did not play a role in his decision, the sincerity of these statements should nonetheless be considered. As discussed in the first chapter, the French monarchy was

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[106] 'et que le Marquis de Baden, s'est retiré d'avec le Duc Jean Casimir avec deux cens chevaux dans le dessein de servir sa Majesté.' Pierre de Vieuville to the Duke of Anjou, 9 January 1568, BNF, 15544: f. 36.

[107] 'le Roy monsieur mon filz et moy avons recue grand contantement d'entendre que mon cousin le marquis de Bade n'ayt voulu en aucune façon secourir ses ennemys et qu'ayant cougnu la verité des troubles ... il ayt mieulx aymé faire service au Roy monsieur mon filz, ce qu'il n'oublira jamais, et la bonne volunté qu'il a faicte au royaume monstre bien qu'il veut succéder à ses prédécesseurs, qui ont esté de bons temps si bons amys et alyés de ceste couronne.' Catherine de' Medici to Jean-Philippe of Salm, 16 January 1568, Ferrière, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, Volume III*, p. 335.

a great source of patronage for the nobility of the Rhineland. Serving in the entourage of a French king was certainly not uncommon and brought prestige. Christoph of Württemberg and Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar's role in the French military have already been discussed, as has the longstanding service of Jean-Philippe, count of Salm, better known as the Rhinegrave, another Protestant German in service of the King of France. Moreover, serving a foreign prince militarily brought obvious benefits. Though the chances of financial betterment were dubious at best (see the section below), it allowed aristocrats to fulfil the martial role that was still central to their noble identity. Baden's claim that he 'always had the heart to see the world [and] to employ [him]self in the secure service of renowned potentates abroad' illustrates how such service not only provided an opportunity to escape the humdrum of everyday life, but also to make a name in the entourage of a 'renowned' prince.[108] This, however, does not mean that service was incompatible with conscience in Philibert's mission. Philibert's religious outlook, which is not dissimilar to Johann Wilhelm's, explains this position. Having come to the conclusion that the Huguenots' insistence that they were the real advocates of the King's interests was false, Philibert, strongly aware of that the power of magistrates was divinely ordained, could do no other. His precise religious position ensured that when presented with contrasting narratives, the Catholic interpretation easily trumped the Huguenot message.

This is certainly the impression that the Margrave wanted to make publicly. The strongly moral tone of the public face of his mission contrasts somewhat with the message in his private correspondence. This is partly the result of the fact that his public justification was written in cooperation with four other Lutheran German noblemen fighting in the army of the King of France (the Rhinegrave and the

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[108] 'ayant … tousiours heu le coeur de veoir le monde … m'employer pour le secours service des potentats renommes estrangiers …' Philibert of Baden to Pierre de Vieuville, 10 December 1567, BNF, 15543: f. 73.

Counts of Leiningen-Westerburg, Betstein, and Diez). [109] In their collective pamphlet, which was printed in Latin, French, and German, the five noblemen made much of the Huguenots' disobedience, explicitly linking their religious and political identities:

> that now again for the third time … the disobedient subjects … against all equity and natural justice … under the pretext of the damnable and godless religion of the Calvinist sects, deny and destroy their King's Majesty and in the end aim to take away the royal crown from his head, which has been granted to him by the Almighty, … But according to the Augsburg Confession and the Christian religion, we cannot at all recognise this as a godly religion, since after all in the Holy Scripture of the Lord is written that one should always obey and honour the magistrate / and if the magistrate abuses his power, the wroth of God will be brought home [Romans 12:19], and not that of the subjects …[110]

The similarities between the positions of Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar and Philibert of Baden are clear. Putting a strong emphasis on the Christian duty of obeying the magistrate, the two princes were of the opinion that the Huguenots' opposition to their monarch was more than a political offense. This position also impacted on Baden's seemingly-secular motives. The success of his desire to build up his reputation hinged on his association with a prince whose authority was legitimate and actions justifiable. Philibert's actions in late 1567 and early 1568 are entirely consistent with his religious outlook and his understanding of his role as prince. Unlike Johann Wilhelm, Philibert

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[109] C. Zwierlein, *Discorso und Lex Dei, Die Entstehung neuer Denkrahmen in 16. Jahrhundert und die Wahrnehmung der Französischen Religionskriege in Italien und Deutschland*, (Göttingen: Vandenbroeck & Ruprecht, 2003): pp. 676-677.

[110] 'daß nu mehr zum dritten mal [… die] ungehorsame underthanen […] wider alle billicheit unn naturliche rechten … dieselb im schein der verfürischen unn gotlose Religion der Calvinischen Secten / ir Kün. Mai. zuversagen / zuvertilgen / unn endtlich von seinem Haupt die Küniglichen Kron abzunemmen / welche ime von Gott dem allmechtigen gegont / […] Daß aber solches der Augspurgischen Confession / und Christlichen glauben gemeß / können wir solchen gantz und gar nit für ein Gotselige Religion erkennen / dieweil doch inn der heiligen Schrifft / von got dem Herren vermeldt wirdt / daß man der Oberkeit in allwege soll gehorsam sein unn sie ehren / unnd ob schon die Oberkeit sich mißbraucht / so soll die raach Gott haimgestellt sein [Rm 12, 19] / unnd nit den underthanen / …' Ibid, pp. 676-677.

did get the chance to prove his worth on the battlefield. He fell at the battle of Montcontour on 3 October 1569, a fact that was recognised in amongst others a German pamphlet from 1570 and an Italian engraving from 1569.[111]

Figure 9, Detail of an engraving of the Battle of Montcontour, showing Philibert of Baden at the head of 1000 German *reiters*.[112]

6.8 The role of money

Many of the German princes fighting in France in the late 1560s were, of course, 'mercenary captains' fighting for pay.[113] However, I have attempted to demonstrate that social, political, and especially religious reasons played a central role in motivating the princes to involve themselves militarily in the French Wars of Religion. This view is reinforced when looking at the financial dimensions of the German missions. Rather than bringing wealth, the financial prospects of the campaigns were uncertain at best and ruinous at worst. Though the Huguenot leadership promised that the German princes would be compensated (technically they employed German princes to levy troops on their behalf), they did not have the funds to do so themselves. A chronic lack of money was a common feature of both the Huguenot and Catholic parties. The Huguenots were for a large part reliant on funds

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[111] Anon., *Summarischen und Kurtze doch warhafftige anzeig unnd erklärung/ als dessen/ so sich hin und wider in Franckreich/ zwischen dem königischen un[d] Hugenotischen kriegsvolck/ seid der grausamen Schlacht die jüngst abgelauffenen jars beschen/ biß in jetzigen noch werenden Monat Januarii/ des gegenwürtigen der mindernzal sibentzigsten jars/ mit einnem[m]ungen der Stett/ auch scharmützeln und anderm mehr zugetragen und verlossen hat*, (Cologne: Jacobus Weiß, 1570).

[112] Anon., 'Die Schlacht bei Moncontour', (Universitätsbibliothek, Salzburg, 1569).

[113] 'söldnerführer' Zwierlein, *Discorso und Lex Dei*, p. 676.

raised abroad, for instance amongst the German princes. In order to fulfil their financial promises, the Huguenot leadership had to ensure that compensation was arranged in the peace treaty accorded at the end of the Third War. This compensation, however, did not nearly cover the expenses incurred by the princes. Though Casimir was offered compensation by the crown of France, to be paid in three instalments, the 'leader of the Huguenots still owed him 50,000 francs.'[114] The archives of the *Bibliotheque Nationale de France* in Paris house a large number of documents chronicling the crown's very difficult negotiations with Casimir and Johann Wilhelm.[115] These letters clearly demonstrate that it was very difficult if not impossible to actually collect the payments promised. After returning to Germany, Johann Wilhelm found himself in danger of losing his lands and income, prompting the Duke to demand the payments and the house in France that he was promised by the King.[116] It is not entirely clear whether these payments were ever made, but the fact that Johann Wilhelm had to fight for his money is telling. This inability to pay the German princes is no isolated incident. The French crown regularly failed to fulfil their financial obligations. The cost of war in the sixteenth century outweighed the income of the crown by so much that it was almost impossible to keep an army in the field for more than a few months.[117] This imbalance between royal and noble revenues and the cost of waging war to a large extent shaped the military dimension of the French Wars of Religion, with major military campaigns ending when armies of mercenary soldiers fell apart when their wages were no

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[114] 'blieben die Führer der Hugenotten ... 50 000 Franken schuldig ...' Friedrich III to Wilhelm of Hesse, 13 April 1568, Kluckhohn, *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen ... Volume II*, p. 216.

[115] Amongst others, BNF, 15546: f. 77, f. 192; 15551: f. 115; 15608: f. 38, f. 44, f. 79, f. 81, f. 95, f. 100, f. 129.

[116] Ernest de Mandelslo to Charles IX, 6 October 1569, BNF, 15550: f. 63-64.

[117] J. B. Wood, *The King's Army, Warfare, Soldiers, and Society during the Wars of Religion in France, 1562-1576*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): pp. 275-300.

longer paid.[118] It is not surprising then that despite the French efforts to provide compensation, the German princes themselves bore much of the costs of their campaigns. Friedrich III 'devoted considerable financial resources to aiding the expeditions of his son Joh[an]n Casimir, and William of Orange', 'very little' of which was reimbursed.[119] William of Orange and Louis of Nassau after their first campaign in France faced acute danger after they failed to collect the funds to pay their troops their promised wages. The brothers were forced to flee their troops, camped near Strasbourg, hidden in a barge.[120] This incident shows that the levying of a mercenary army was not without risks, since the German princes leading these forces could be held accountable by their troops when payment was not forthcoming. The 'great financial sacrifices' made by the princes supporting fighting in France underline that their missions were not undertaken solely with the prospect of profit in mind.[121]

6.9 Conclusion

The differences between the five campaigns discussed in this chapter have never been properly explained in the historiography. Though it has been acknowledged that the German princes and their troops played an important role on the battlefields of the French Wars of Religion, the variety of the reasons behind these interventions are rarely discussed. With the exception of the Palatinate campaign led by Johann Casimir, there were no clear confessional ties that created obvious links to the parties in France. Johann Wilhelm's and Philibert's campaigns in support of the Catholic King of France are obvious examples of the way in which this German involvement defies the

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[118] J. B. Wood, 'The royal army during the early Wars of Religion', in M. P. Holt (ed.), *Society and Institutions in Early Modern France*, (Athens GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1991): pp. 1-35.

[119] Cohn, 'The territorial princes in Germany's second Reformation', p. 153.

[120] Herweden, *Het Verblijf van Lodewijk van Nassau in Frankrijk*, pp. 42-43.

[121] Vogler, 'Le role des Électeurs Palatins', p. 61.

traditional religious narrative of the Wars. The alliance between the Lutheran Wolfgang of Zweibrücken and the Reformed Huguenots too provokes questions. Moreover, the timing of the missions is difficult to explain at first sight. Why did the German princes choose to intervene in the Second and Third Wars whilst refraining from doing so during the First? What had changed between 1562 and 1567 that caused this changed in attitude? The explanations provided by the historiography until now do not answer these questions in a satisfactory manner. The German princes are regularly described as mercenary captains, selling their services to the warring parties in France. Bernard Vogler and others have characterised the same princes as opportunist adventurers, devoid of ideological commitments or ideas about the political dimensions of the conflict. A closer look at the evidence, however, shows that this assessment is incorrect.

Firstly, the practical and ideological problems faced when conducting a campaign were so great that it is very unlikely that the princes could have expected to benefit much from their efforts. The disturbance caused by raising and moving troops in the Rhineland and the moral implications of fighting for a cause seen by many as illegitimate was likely to severely disturb relations inside the Empire. Moreover, the endemic difficulties of financing warfare meant that any prospect of financial rewards was unlikely. In fact, all German princes fighting in France had to make financial sacrifices to do so. Moreover, Wolfgang of Zweibrücken and Philibert of Baden paid with their lives and Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar lost most of his patrimony as a result of his actions in France.

Instead, I argue that the origins of the campaigns need to be seen in the context of the princes' understanding of their own religious and political identities – these alone shaped their attitudes to the Wars of Religion. The confessional dimension of Casimir's mission was the most straightforward. He and his father had been ardent advocates of the Huguenot cause since 1562. Moreover, the Palatinate had throughout the Wars been the epicentre of Huguenot diplomatic efforts in the Empire. The impact of this diplomacy is illustrated by justifications

behind Casimir's campaign, which almost directly echo the Huguenot message. The compatibility of Casimir's beliefs with those of the Huguenots made him very receptive to the narratives presented to him by Huguenot diplomats and propagandists. However, despite their shared interpretation of the Wars of Religion, the decision to intervene militarily was not uncomplicated. During the First War, Friedrich had objected strongly to the idea of intervention. His support for his son's campaign in 1567 was thus a significant U-turn. The reason for this change of heart should entirely be sought in the rising fear for the Catholic Conspiracy. Much more than in 1562, Friedrich and Casimir were strongly aware of the predicament that they shared with the Huguenots. This not only made intervening in France necessary for the sake of the Palatinate, but also reinforced a sense of transnational confessional solidarity.

The feeling that they were facing a shared threat also lay at the foundation of William of Orange and Louis of Nassau's two campaigns in France. Though William and Louis are now often regarded as champions of Reformed Protestantism, their religious identity was more complex, especially in 1567-8. The Prince of Orange only (openly) converted to Calvinism in 1573 and his brother was a famously undogmatic evangelical committed to promoting cooperation and reconciliation between the various types of Protestantism. Despite the confessional differences between himself and the Huguenot leadership, Orange's own struggle in many ways closely mirrored that of Condé and Coligny. In Orange's eyes, the bloody persecution of Protestants was but a symptom of the wider problem of the usurpation of the traditional rights and privileges of the nobility. The aggression of militant Catholics such as Alba and the Guise was explained as an assault on the balance of power in the Low Countries and France as well as on Protestantism. Religious and constitutional concerns are thus closely intertwined in Orange's justification for intervention. Moreover, not unlike Friedrich and Casimir, William and Louis too believed that this was an international problem in need of an international solution. The Catholic

Conspiracy too played a role in shaping Orange's perspective, though not quite as explicitly as in the case of Friedrich and Casimir.

The motivations behind the third German mission, initiated by Wolfgang of Zweibrücken, hinged almost entirely on the question of whether Lutherans and Reformed Protestants should be seen as coreligionists. In this debate, the Duke of Zweibrücken defended a rather unusual position. Of all the German Lutheran princes, he was the most adamant that the religious differences between Huguenots and Lutherans could be overcome. Though very aware of the doctrinal and liturgical differences between the two confessions, Wolfgang was willing to look favourably on the French Protestants, arguing that this dichotomy was the result of mistakes and misinformation. Wolfgang was unusual too as the earliest advocate of military intervention in France amongst the German princes. His intentions to launch a campaign in 1563 led to a severe rebuke from Christoph of Württemberg. In 1569, however, the mood had changed sufficiently as a result of the narrative of the Catholic Conspiracy to guarantee Wolfgang support from a range of sponsors, including William of Orange, Queen Elizabeth I, and various German Lutherans. Though fear of the Catholic Conspiracy is likely to have inspired this more favourable climate for intervention, Wolfgang's earlier attempt to launch a campaign indicates that he was primarily driven by a sense of Protestant solidarity.

Religion also played an important role in the campaign of Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar. Although the immediate catalyst was the decade-long pension that Johann Wilhelm had been receiving from the French crown, the campaign too had to be explained in moral terms. These justifications, articulated both in private correspondence and in a widely distributed pamphlet, were entirely consistent with the Duke's religious beliefs. Considering himself a champion of Lutheran orthodoxy (or Gnesio-Lutheranism), the Duke was particularly hostile to Reformed Protestantism. This hostility made that Johann Wilhelm was not at all receptive to the same Huguenot message that persuaded Casimir and Wolfgang. Moreover, the idea that worldly authority was divinely ordained formed a central element of his religious outlook.

Emphasising the contrasts between his own respect for this God-given authority and the rebelliousness of the Huguenots, Johann Wilhelm's support for the King of France, who in his eyes was facing a reprehensible rebellion, was entirely compatible with his religious position. The Duke's commitment to his ideals eventually led to his downfall. Not only the campaign in France, but also his support for purist Flacian theology provoked fierce criticism from some of his Lutheran peers and from the Emperor, eventually leading to Johann Wilhelm losing most of his territories.

Of the five missions discussed in this chapter, the campaign of Philibert of Baden was the most ambiguous. The explanation for his decision to change sides provided by Philibert himself centres on the question of authority. Evoking a youthful spirit of adventurism, the Margrave repeatedly reiterated his longstanding desire to serve an illustrious foreign potentate. The condition for this support, however, hinges on the legitimacy of the cause of the potentate in question. In his letters, Philibert expressed his horror at discovering that he had been conned into believing that the Huguenots and not the Catholics represented the interests of the King of France. This discovery, Philibert claimed, was the reason for changing sides. Whether this is entirely true is difficult to verify. However, this explanation is not inconsistent with the Margrave's confessional identity. Raised at the Catholic courts of Vienna and Bavaria, Philibert, despite his conversion to Lutheranism, maintained strong relationships with the Empire's Catholic nobility. Moreover, he was said to be particularly hostile to Reformed Protestantism. This Lutheran orthodoxy, resembling Johann Wilhelm's religious position, is illustrated in the pamphlet produced to justify Philibert's mission. In this pamphlet a reference to the Bible is used to proof that the Huguenots' opposition to the King was an abomination in the eyes of God.

Rather than being motivated by the prospect of financial gain or the urge for adventure, all five campaigns were thus underpinned by their protagonists' distinct perspectives on the nature of the French Wars of Religion and on the role of religion in these conflicts. Going

beyond the simple narrative of the Wars as a conflict pitting Catholics versus Protestants, a closer investigation into the individual confessional and ideological identities of the princes demonstrates that these were entirely consistent with the justifications of their missions. The fact that the exact and often-unique constitution of an individual prince's beliefs was the deciding factor that determined his actions in relations to France contradicts many of the traditional narratives of the French Wars of Religion. The language used to describe sixteenth-century events often focuses on large blocks or groups of people. Discussions range from crude Catholic-Protestant opposition to the slightly more nuanced labelling of individuals as for instance *politiques*, *moyenneurs*, or ultra-Catholics. The historiography of Confessionalisation, which studies the formation of more or less uniform religious groups, has contributed to this interpretive framework. Discussions about the workings of propaganda and polemic have similarly focussed too much on target groups. Despite their shared Lutheranism, the reception of Huguenot narratives among the Protestant princes was to a very large extent determined by the exact beliefs held by the individual prince. Of course it is very difficult for historians to study the individual reception of news, polemic, and propaganda among the wider population. Therefore, the study of the Protestant princes, who through their correspondence provided a unique insight into their ideas and convictions, is very helpful in enhancing our understanding of this process.

Of course confessional blocks played an increasingly important role as the sixteenth century progressed. Nonetheless, an overreliance on the supposed ideological uniformity of these groups has led historians such as Vogler to dismiss the ideological dimension of the campaigns discussed above. Only by appreciating the individuality and complexity of ideology and religious belief is it possible to make sense of the sometimes-surprising decisions made by the Protestant princes of the Holy Roman Empire during the French Wars of Religion.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have looked at the French Wars of Religion from a transnational angle. I have explored the ways in which the French Wars of Religion were explained, debated, and understood among the Protestant aristocracy of the Holy Roman Empire. Presenting a comprehensive picture, I have discussed the variety of factors that shaped German interpretations and demonstrated how these interpretations changed as a result of developments in France, Germany, and beyond. Moreover, I have shown how these different understandings lay at the basis of German involvement in the Wars of Religion, inspiring a variety of individual interpretations of the nature of the conflict.

The first factor shaping German aristocratic attitudes towards the Wars of Religion was their conceptual understanding of the border separating them from France. The use of modern national borders as a convenient way to define the scope of research projects has overshadowed the ambiguity of the regions on the boundaries between France and the Empire. This reading of the French Wars of Religion as a national story suffers from serious flaws. It was not even entirely clear where the boundaries of France and the Empire were, especially after the annexation of the *Trois-Évêchés* by Henry II, provoking debates about where the 'natural borders' of France should lie. A similar argument can be made about national identity. Though terms such as 'German' and 'French' were used with increasing frequency, this terminology was fluid and used without any consistency. In humanist circles interest in Tacitus's *Germania* provoked debates about the existence of a German nature, inherited from the peoples that historically inhabited the territories of the Empire. Though this trend contributed to the tentative formation of a sense of Germanness, this did not necessarily increase a feeling of separation between France and

Germany. On the contrary, Henry II was only one of many commentators who accentuated the shared Germanic and Carolingian ancestry of both France and the Empire. Language, another important shaper of national identity, does not provide much more clarity. The Rhineland, and especially its major urban centres such as Strasbourg, was multilingual and home to large numbers of migrants. Moreover, in many cases, political entities straddled language boundaries.

Most of the German princes studied in this thesis embody the connectedness of France and the Rhineland. Building on the transnational ties cultivated by their families, the internationality of their outlook was reinforced in their formative years. They were often educated abroad or at least in a cosmopolitan environment. Spending a significant part of their youth at the courts in Paris or Brussels or at university in France helped young noblemen to establish social ties with peers from across Europe. These educational practices also ensured that multilingualism was more norm than exception among the Rhineland's aristocracy. Proficiency in French and Latin were common, facilitating easy interaction with peers abroad. Moreover, the French monarchy provided opportunities for patronage for the Empire's nobility. Christoph of Württemberg and Jean Philippe of Salm served in the French army during the 1550s and the Duke of Saxe-Weimar received a French pension for more than a decade. The international outlook encouraged by their education and their ties with French peers formed an important part of the identity of the princes studied in this thesis. The princes believed themselves to be members of an international aristocratic elite. This membership was expressed in visual statements, such as art, architecture, and fashion. The consequence of the permeability of the Franco-German border was that there was no natural separation between domestic and foreign issues. There was no sense that the violence that erupted in 1562 would be confined to France or that the troubles of France were not the concern of Germany. On the contrary, the German princes were from the outset of the conflict invested in finding a solution. Consequently, any inaction was not the result of a natural or logical separation or distance from

French affairs, which is often assumed in the existing historiography, but the product of a conscious decision-making process.

Confessional categories too should be carefully interrogated. Categories such as Catholic and Protestant, Lutheran and Calvinist, are very important, but the 1560s was the crucible when these identities were being formed. They therefore need to be applied with care. The consequence of the rigid application of these categories is that historians have misinterpreted German involvement in the French Wars of Religion. Since the activity of the German princes does not match the existing expectations of how Catholics, Reformed Protestant, or Lutherans should have behaved, historians have concluded that religion was not the driving force behind their actions. In concluding this, they have ignored the complexity of the European confessional landscape. In recent decades historians, such as Mario Turchetti and Thierry Wanegffelen, have challenged this sense of confessional uniformity. They and others have pointed towards the variety of religious positions existing in sixteenth-century Europe. The Rhineland is an excellent example of the ambiguities of the early modern confessional landscape. Home to a large variety of different confessional groups from the Empire and beyond, the region was the location of both violent clashes, but also of co-existence, of fierce debates, but also of experiments in getting along. Strasbourg and its region, as well as Heidelberg were a melting pot for all sorts of religious ideas.

The clarity that the Peace of Augsburg seemed to have brought to the confessional landscape of the Holy Roman Empire was undermined when less than a decade after the Peace's creation the Elector Palatine converted to Reformed Protestantism. His conversion did not only call into question the legal status of Reformed Protestantism – excluded from the Peace of Augsburg – but also challenged prevalent Lutheran understandings of the nature of the Palatinate's new religion. Contrary to the common perception of Reformed Protestantism, the conversion of the Palatinate did not bring

sedition or social unrest, but followed the same pattern as the orderly princely Reformations presided over by Friedrich's Lutheran peers. More importantly, the debates provoked by Friedrich's conversion gave questions about the nature of the relationship between the various Protestant confessions a new relevance. These debates were part of longstanding disputes within Lutheranism about the definition of orthodoxy and about which parts of doctrine and liturgy were *adiaphora* and which were essential. Friedrich passionately argued that despite some theological differences Lutherans and Reformed Protestants were coreligionists. These debates, and especially the role played by Friedrich, had a strong impact on German understandings of the Wars of Religion in France. The question of whether the Huguenots could be regarded as the German Lutherans' coreligionists to a large extent determined whether their cause could be seen as legitimate. Moreover, suspicions about the seditious nature of the Huguenots' religion also had the potential of disrupting transnational Protestant cooperation. Therefore, the question of France was directly integrated into both the dispute between Gnesio-Lutherans and Philippists and into the controversy about the Palatinate's conversion. This integration of French and German affairs is fundamental to the formation of German understandings of the Wars of Religion. The separation of one from the other, for instance the study of French propaganda without reference to the German context, has led to distorted interpretations.

After his conversion, Friedrich became the most ardent advocate of the Huguenots among the German princes. He tirelessly championed their cause, putting moral pressure on his Protestant peers to intervene on the Huguenots' behalf. He emphatically downplayed the differences between German and French Protestants, brushing over controversial theological issues such as disagreement over the nature of the Eucharist. Friedrich's arguments could also be found in the many pro-Huguenot pamphlets published in German. These often-polemical texts painted a stark picture of the nature of the conflict, emphasising the cruelty of French Catholics, and heavily criticised any Lutheran-Catholic cooperation. Some Lutheran princes adopted a similar position.

Wolfgang of Zweibrücken also argued that doctrinal disagreements did not remove the ties of solidarity that bound Huguenots and Lutherans. Wolfgang differed in opinion with his friend and mentor Christoph of Württemberg, who was less positive about the compatibility of the two confessions and instead urged the Huguenots to embrace Lutheranism as a condition for German support. Other Lutherans, who chose a narrower definition of orthodoxy, rejected Friedrich's arguments completely. These debates about orthodoxy, confessional reconciliation, and the compatibility of the various branches of Protestantism cast a long shadow over the question of France. The role of Germans in the French Wars of Religion can therefore never be fully understood without extensive reference to the religious situation inside the Empire.

Throughout the Wars of Religion, German audiences, and especially the Protestant princes, were subjected to intense French diplomatic and propaganda campaigns. French narratives about the nature of the Wars of Religion reached Germany primarily through two avenues: diplomacy and printed propaganda. Ambassadors from the two warring parties were almost continuously present in Germany, touring the courts of the Protestant princes. Important players in France were also in contact with their German peers through correspondence. At the same time, printed pamphlets of varying length and sophistication were published in Germany. These texts reached much larger audiences, were often published anonymously, and were not conditioned by the conventions of diplomatic practice.

There were great contrasts not only between Catholic and Reformed readings of the conflict, but also between Huguenot narratives intended for different audiences. The protestations and manifestoes published in name of the Prince of Condé formed the backbone of the Huguenot leadership's diplomatic efforts in the Empire. The language of these protestations was carefully measured, avoiding overtly religious language and instead emphasising their legal and constitutional grievances, such as the usurpation of their legitimate position by the Guise and the breaking of the Edict of January. There is

evidence that religious language played a more prominent role in the efforts of Huguenot diplomats, such as d'Andelot, who travelled the Lutheran courts in Germany appealing for international Protestant solidarity. The tone of pro-Huguenot pamphlets published in German often differed strongly from the composed and legalistic language used by Condé. They instead explained the conflict in explicitly religious and sometimes even eschatological terms and intended to appeal to the emotions of the reader. Catholic narratives, by contrast, played directly to Lutheran suspicions of the disorderliness of Reformed Protestantism by persistently describing the actions of the Huguenots as a rebellion. In both pamphlets and correspondence, Condé and his party were accused of pursuing hidden private agendas, of using religion as a pretext to hide their seditious ambitions, and even of aiming to overthrow the monarchy. In this French polemic, religious and political motives were clearly separated. This dichotomy was artificial and served a rhetorical purpose.

The contrasts between these competing narratives did not go unnoticed and caused confusion among the German princes. In the process of making sense of these contrasts, they built on their own ideas and experiences. In particular, the reception of these interpretations in Germany was strongly influenced by the compatibility of French justifications with ideas about the legitimacy of resistance that had been developed in the Empire. The foundation of early modern ideas about the legitimacy of resisting monarchs was laid centuries earlier in the frequent conflicts between the aristocracy and kings of late Medieval Europe. This tradition was not lost in the mists of time. On the contrary, the 'longstanding liberties and privileges' of the nobility were treasured and frequently invoked. The religious conflicts that broke out in the Empire as a result of the Reformation gave a new dimension to tensions between Emperor and Imperial princes. In this context, new ideas about the justifiability of resistance were developed. These new theories were necessary since the bone of contention was now for the first time religion. The two most important theories developed in this context, the Saxon 'private law theory' and the

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'constitutionalist theory' from Hesse, emphasised the conditionality of Imperial and monarchical rule and argued that the breaking of the most important condition – the protection and promotion of the true religion – warranted resistance. The princes studied in this thesis were strongly invested in these theories since they themselves, or their families, played a central role in their creation. These German understandings of the legitimacy of resistance, therefore, formed the context in which French narratives about the nature of the Wars of Religion were interpreted.

In response to the news, polemic, and calls for support coming from France, the German Protestant princes developed their own ideas about the best way of solving the disputes in France. These ideas were shaped by both the narratives presented to them by the warring parties, and by their own experiences of dealing with religious and political disputes inside the Empire. Crucially, in response to contrasting interpretations and the accusations of covert agendas the German solutions on the whole aimed to address the religious troubles whilst safeguarding the political order and the authority of the monarch. Moreover, these ideas were changed, reconsidered, or abandoned when they proved impossible to implement.

The first and by far most desirable solution in German eyes was religious reconciliation along Lutheran lines. A religiously diverse society was almost universally regarded as undesirable or even dangerous. Strongly committed to the promotion of 'the religion of the Augsburg Confession', the princes recognised that their confession occupied the theological middle ground between Catholicism and Reformed Protestantism. This ideal quickly turned into policy when the Lutheran princes, with Christoph of Württemberg as a leading figure, decided to send Lutheran texts, including the Augsburg Confession, to France, to dispatch a theological embassy to the Colloquy of Poissy, and to put significant diplomatic pressure on French leaders to adopt the Lutheran religion. With the benefit of hindsight this policy seems naïve, but in promoting religious reconciliation they joined an important and

vocal group of Frenchmen, including Gallican and reform-minded Catholics, who advocated a similar conciliatory agenda. Moreover, religious reconciliation was in the early 1560s also French royal policy, which was most clearly manifested in the Colloquy of Poissy.

However, as the 1560s progressed it became increasingly clear that reconciliation, especially along Lutheran lines, was unattainable. Not surprisingly, the German princes looked to their own experiences of dealing with religious plurality in the Empire when formulating new solutions for France. The Peace of Augsburg, rather than allowing the existence of a religiously-diverse society, sought uniformity in smaller units. In line with Augsburg, German suggestions for France placed the aristocracy at the centre of the solution, allowing them significant religious freedoms. The situation in France too, contributed strongly to the popularity of this solution. Between 1563 and 1566, the time at which this proposal was most forcefully put forward, the Edict of Amboise was in place in France. Amboise shifted the focus of Huguenot activity from the urban to the seigneurial, making the households of the aristocracy the focal point for French Protestants. Once again, the interplay between French and German influences is evident.

Though religious tolerance was widely regarded as a negative concept, calls for some form of tolerance were increasingly often heard during the late-1560s. The advocates of tolerance can be divided into those few who made a moral case for tolerance and those for whom tolerant policy was a means rather than a goal in itself. The Elector Palatine in his zeal for the Huguenot cause advocated their complete religious freedom. Convinced of the truth of the Reformed religion, he expected that it, undeterred by Catholic persecution, would flourish in France. The less zealous William of Orange also famously advocated religious tolerance. The policy of *religievrede* he aimed to introduce in the Netherlands in the 1570s was foreshadowed by attempts to implement a similar policy in his French principality of Orange.

Finally, peace could of course also be achieved by the defeat of either of the warring parties. In line with his Gnesio-Lutheran perspective and echoing Catholic explanations of the conflict, Johann

Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar regarded the Huguenot cause as a political rebellion that needed to be crushed. Though hoping for a Lutheran future for France, Johann Wilhelm supported the French Catholic monarchy and therefore strongly opposed any German support for the Huguenot party. All proposed solutions were thus clearly shaped by both the news and propaganda received from France and by the German princes' own experiences and convictions. This mix of influences together led to the formation of individual interpretations of the conflict in France and its possible solutions. Too strong a historiographical focus on confessional and ideological blocks has overshadowed this individuality. By studying all of these influences together it is possible to make sense of the seemingly surprising divergence in opinions about the future of France that could be found among 'those of the Augsburg Confession'.

German understandings of the French Wars of Religion were shaken by the events of 1566 and 1567, which not only reignited the violence in France, but also plunged the Netherlands into chaos. In the summer of 1566 longstanding tensions between the population of the Netherlands and the Habsburg regime boiled over, leading to a summer marked by iconoclastic riots. In response to this break-down of order, the infamous Duke of Alba was dispatched to the Netherlands. With his army he travelled along the Franco-Imperial border, causing panic amongst Protestants on both sides. Alarmed by the proximity of Alba and his forces, the Huguenot leadership embarked upon the Surprise of Meaux, a pre-emptive strike intended to secure the King. The Surprise led to the outbreak of the Second War of Religion.

It is clear from both correspondence and from pamphlets that events in the Netherlands and France were widely seen amongst Germans as directly linked, or even as part of the same struggle. Moreover, these events seemed to confirm the theory of the international Catholic Conspiracy, said to have been masterminded by the Catholic powers of Europe, including Alba and Catherine de' Medici. What was unfolding just across the border, it was argued, was only the

first steps in a larger plan that would soon endanger Protestants throughout Europe. The years 1566 and 1567 saw a surge in the number of German pamphlets about the Conspiracy. Moreover, with Friedrich as most vocal promoter of the theory, talk of the Catholic Conspiracy started to dominate the correspondence of the princes studied in this thesis.

The *Wonderjaar* and the escalation of violence in France and the Low Countries it provoked was a turning point in German perceptions of the Wars of Religion. Whereas before, most princes studied in this thesis refused completely to buy into the stark French narratives and aimed to play a conciliatory role, a sense of fear for international escalation amongst some princes now overshadowed more nuanced assessments of the nature of the conflict. The instinct of the Protestants of the Rhineland was to seek safety in numbers. Between 1567 and 1570 they attempted to form defensive alliances, both among the German princes and internationally. The aim was to include Protestant princes and monarchs from across Europe, most importantly, Elizabeth I of England. The pursuit of such a broad Protestant alliance was a radical departure from the attitude the German princes had displayed before 1566. Whereas debates about France were characterised previously by intricate discussions about the nature of the relationship between the various branches of Protestantism, about the legitimacy of resistance, and the best way of restoring peace, these misgivings about doctrinal purity or legal justifiability were forgotten in the face of such an acute predicament. This change was directly brought about by the outbreak of violence in the Netherlands. The years 1566 and 1567 clearly show the interplay between theoretical and theological foundations of German understandings of the Wars of Religion and the impact of events as they unfolded. This interplay ensured that German attitudes were ever shifting. By the end of the decade, the mood had changed sufficiently to open the door to military intervention in France.

The culmination of a decade of diplomatic interaction and debate about the nature of the conflicts in France and its best solution was a series of

military interventions launched from the Empire. The lack of clear-cut confessional connections underpinning these campaigns has led historians to conclude that these were for the most part motivated by a desire for wealth and fame or a taste for adventure. In particular, the decision of the Lutheran Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar and Philibert of Baden to serve in the army of the Catholic King of France has been explained as simply an attempt to make money. This conclusion is the result of a lack of understanding of the political, intellectual, and religious context in which German decisions to intervene were made. Moreover, the tendency to think too much in terms of groups, assuming homogeneity, has overshadowed the diversity of opinion that could be found within these groups. I instead argue that all five campaigns are entirely consistent with the positions the princes had taken in the debates of the previous decade.

The cost, both financially and diplomatically, of intervening on behalf of either of the warring parties was significant and so was the damage a military campaign could do to the Rhineland. For this reason, the idea of military intervention was almost universally unpopular, even if the justifiability of such a venture was not always called into question. However, the dramatic change of the tone of the debate after 1566 opened the door for military intervention. In face of the perceived danger of the Catholic Conspiracy, Friedrich III and his Reformed son Johann Casimir threw caution to the wind in order to put military muscle behind the cause they had been supporting, morally and financially, for years. Though questions have been posed about the motives of Casimir, his decision to lead an army into France in 1567 is entirely consistent with his religious identity, opinion of the Huguenots, and with the mood that dominated discussions about France at that particular time.

The Lutheran Wolfgang of Zweibrücken has also been dismissed in the historiography as a mere adventurer lacking political ideas. However, his devotion to the Reformation of his territories, as well as his rich correspondence with Christoph of Württemberg, gives a very different impression. Wolfgang clearly formulated his ideas about the

relationship between Lutheranism and the religion of the Huguenots and, though he hoped and expected that they in the future would adopt Lutheran doctrine, he regarded French Protestants as his coreligionists. He was also among the earliest advocates of intervention, prompting Christoph to write extensively against the notion of a military campaign into France. Again, the climate had changed enough in 1569 to allow Wolfgang to launch his campaign with significant backing from Lutherans in Germany.

Most controversial of all, however, were the campaigns of Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar and Philibert of Baden. At first sight, Johann Wilhelm's motives seem straightforward. The Duke had been receiving a French pension for years when in 1568 he was asked by Catherine de' Medici to fulfil his side of the bargain. However, this campaign could not only easily have been avoided – Johann Wilhelm faced fierce opposition from his subjects, Protestant peers, and the Emperor – but also proved to be his ruin. In this light, the compatibility of Johann Wilhelm's strongly developed and clearly formulated religious ideas with the purpose of the campaign is a better way of explaining his motives. A champion of Gnesio-Lutheranism, Johann Wilhelm was fiercely against the notion that Lutherans and Reformed Protestants could be seen as coreligionists. Instead he highlighted both the heresy and sedition of the Huguenots, leading him to conclude that they needed to be crushed.

Historiographical misunderstandings of German involvement in France are not the product of a lack of interest, but rather of the tendency to think in national rather than transnational terms. For historians of the French Wars of Religion, German intervention has almost exclusively been studied from a French perspective. For historians of the German Reformation, and confessionalisation in particular, the German princes' French interests are but a side story. Only by marrying *both* historiographical traditions can German attitudes towards the Wars of Religion be understood. They were the product both of influences from France and of the religious, cultural, and intellectual climate inside the Empire.

The conclusions of my research have implications beyond the direct topic of this thesis. Firstly, the findings of this thesis have an impact on our understanding of the process of confessionalisation. The confessionalisation thesis as developed since the 1980s has put a strong emphasis on the process of creating more or less homogenous, or even uniform, confessional groups. This is not surprising since the tools of confessionalisation, such as catechisms, written confessions, and the creation of standardised school curricula, all lend themselves well for the formation of such confessional homogeneity and uniformity. Though historians have highlighted the failures of the process of confession building, for instance by demonstrating the lack of knowledge of key theological concepts among the rural population, they have so far failed to recognise the diversity of opinion on important topics that could be found among individuals who saw themselves as members of the same confessional group. In the debates about France that took place among the German aristocracy, these disagreements surfaced. At first glance, confessional uniformity can be expected more from the German Lutheran princes than from most other groups. They were themselves responsible for, and committed to, the creation of confessional uniformity, played a central role in the creation of church orders, and consciously subscribed to the Augsburg Confession. Moreover, they regarded this text as central to their identity, referring to themselves as the 'Princes of the Augsburg Confession'. Nonetheless, they struggled to reach a consensus about the nature of the conflict in France, and particularly their relation with the Huguenots. These contrasting positions were the consequence of seemingly subtle differences in interpretation of Lutheran orthodoxy, but yet had far reaching consequences for the cause of the Wars of Religion. The interpretive framework presented by the confessionalisation thesis makes us blind to this individuality of belief. The study of the collective has thus led to the creation of a caricature of inter-confessional relations during the sixteenth century. A more sophisticated approach to this topic is warranted. This approach needs to focus on the variety

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of components that collectively formed individual confessional identities. As I have demonstrated, these components include not just theology as captured in catechisms and school curricula, but also concrete life experiences and news and rumours of events further afield.

The second broad conclusion of this thesis pertains to the workings of propaganda, polemics, and justifications of violent resistance. Though these have been studied extensively, the focus has overwhelmingly been on the various modes of persuasion employed during the Reformation, from pamphlets to hymns and sermons to visual culture. In this thesis I have demonstrated the ways in which the reception of such polemic was conditioned by prior-held ideas and convictions. The intensity of French diplomacy and propaganda ensured that the German princes were all familiar with the variety of French interpretations of the conflict. This was reinforced by the practice of sharing news and information through peer networks. Despite this intense exposure to French narratives about the Wars, a variety of different responses can be found among the princes. Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar's complete rejection of the Huguenot narratives, for instance contrasts strongly with Wolfgang of Zweibrücken's almost complete appropriation of these same arguments. Between these two extremes we find Christoph of Württemberg, at once sympathetic towards the Huguenots' cause and protective of French royal authority. These three princes were all Lutherans, all the leaders of the princely reformations of their territories, all committed to the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession, and all unhappy about the conversion of Friedrich III. Nonetheless, they disagreed about their religion's relationship with the Huguenots and about the possibility of future doctrinal rapprochement between the two confessions. These differences were subtle, but yet had great consequences for the reception of French narratives. Johann Wilhelm's emphatic rejection of all doctrine that deviated from the original Augsburg Confession ensured that Huguenot diplomacy was doomed to fail in Weimar. Wolfgang's more positive outlook, and his expectation

that the Huguenots could be persuaded to adopt Lutheran doctrine in the future, meant that Zweibrücken was fertile ground for the message. The success of propaganda was thus conditioned by the precise set of ideas already held by the audience. Building on this observation, it has to be concluded that the study of the Reformation's large body of polemical texts and images is incomplete without close attention to the precise confessional and ideological make-up of its audiences.

Thirdly, this thesis contributes to our understanding of the workings of transnational information transfer. The emerging interest in transnational history has opened up avenues for investigation into the streams of information crossing Europe's borders. Historians have studied pamphlets, news reports, and the stories of the many migrants that travelled the continent in the sixteenth century. This, however, is not just a story of the logistics of information transfer. Information travelling across political, cultural, and linguistic boundaries was not left unaffected by this process. It was subjected to translation, interpretation, and appropriation. Ideas crossing or transcending borders were tweaked, twisted, and shaped to fit regional, local, familial, or even personal contexts. This study of the reception of information about the French Wars of Religion among the German Protestants has shown the ways in which this information was treated and transformed. French pamphlets were translated, but also adapted to suit the particular context in which they were published. For instance, pro-Huguenot pamphlets not only restated much of the polemics that formed the core of their propaganda aimed at French audiences, but also made clear concessions to the Lutherans they were targeting. In doing so they downplayed doctrinal differences and emphasised their shared Christianity. Similarly, some pamphlets strongly hinted at the composure and orderliness of the Huguenot party and thereby addressed German suspicions of the sedition of Reformed Protestants. Besides pamphlets, private correspondence was an important means through which news from France was disseminated in Germany. Narratives about France were shared through the German aristocratic peer networks, but never without the addition of qualifying

remarks or assessments. Impressions from France were frequently placed in a German context, linked to events in the Low Countries, or used as a tool for shaping debates already taking place among the princes. This layer of interpretation contributed to shaping responses, pushing one interpretation over the other. The problems of translation too played an important role. The Duke of Württemberg's envoys in France struggled with their inability to speak directly to Navarre, Coligny, or de' Medici, relying on interpreters to communicate their master's already complicated message. The tracking of this process of information transfer across borders is central to the methodology developed by transnational historians. Local events and the ideas they generated simultaneously became part of concerns that transcended the localities. Only through adopting a transnational approach is it possible to make sense of this interplay between local, national, and transnational influences. Since the historiography of both the French Wars of Religion and the Reformation in Germany has overwhelmingly focussed on the national and, more so, on the local, our understanding of both is incomplete. In this thesis I have attempted to redress this imbalance by demonstrating how information about France profoundly influenced German attitudes to major questions (for instance about interconfessional relations or the concept of tolerance) and visa versa. Adopting a transnational approach is thus not only relevant for the study of European history, but also for national and even local history. The interpreted frameworks of global, transnational, and connected history that is largely being developed in the context of modern history needs to be applied more consistently to the sixteenth century. In this thesis I have shown the fruits of such an approach and demonstrated how it can lead to surprising new insights into the formation of individual confessional identities.

Finally, this thesis has opened up further questions that could not be answered within the time and word limit of this research project. In this thesis, I have focussed on the aristocracy. Not only were they heavily invested in the affairs of France for the reasons highlighted in Chapter I,

but they also left extensive bodies of correspondence. This makes them the ideal case study for investigating German understandings of the French Wars of Religion. However, I have also touched upon the many pamphlets about France published in German. These were aimed at larger audiences. The question thus remains: how did they understand the nature of Wars of Religion in France? Were their attitudes shaped by similar factors? Secondly, the choice to limit the thesis to the years 1552-1572 has left questions about the longevity of German attitudes towards France. What was the effect of the St Bartholomew Day's Massacre? Were there generational differences in German attitudes towards France? Did German interest in France tail off as the conflict dragged on? Why was German military involvement largely limited to the years 1567-1569? I hope to be able to answer some of these questions in the future.

Abbreviations

BNF   -   Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département de Manuscrits, Français.

HStASt   -   Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart

HStaM   -   Hessisches Staatsarchiv Marburg

ThHStAW   -   Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar

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Anon., *Abdruck des Durchlauchtigen/ Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herren/ Herrn Johans Wilhelmen/ Herzogen zu Sachssen/ etc. auff und abforderung/ des Schlosses Grimmenstein/ und Stadt Gotha/ sampt aller seiner F. G. Lehenleuten/ geschwornen Unterthanen und Verwanten/ So itziger zeit sich darinnen enthalten*, (s. l.: s. n., 1567).

Anon., *Abdruck Zweier Nidergeworffener Schreiben/ daraus zuersehen/ mit was geschwinden Practicken die Papisten inn Franckreich umbgangen/ wider die Herrn vom Adel/ unnd andere so sich der Reformation der Religion in Franckreich gebrauchen*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

Anon., *Andere Erclärung des Hertzogen von Conde/ in welche die anfänger und ursächer diser jetzigen empörung in disem Königreich Franckreich offenbaret: und was irem F. G. bißher zu hin[n]legung derselben fürzunemen gebürt hat/ un[d] noch gebüren will/ angezaigt wird*, Heidelberg, (s. l.: s. n., 1562).

Anon., *Apologia/ darin Königlicher Maiestat zu Franckreich gut gerucht verstendinge und verantwort würt/ von synem seiner getrewen/ wider der Keyserlichen lügen hasstigen/schentlichen verleumbdung/ damit irer Ma. zugemessen/ sie habe der Türcken kriegsvolck/ die Christenheyt anzugriffen/ und zubekriegen/ bewegt*, (s. l.: s. n., 1552).

Anon., *Articul Durch der Königin von Navarren/ und der Herren Printzen von Navarren/ und Conde abgeordnete Rätheder Kön. Würd. in Franckreich diß 70. Jars underthenigst uberraicht. Sampt dero kön. W. gegenantwort/ mit angelelften kurtzen erinnerungen/ warumb auff die fürgeschlagene Artickel der frid nit ervolget ist*, (s. l.: s. n., 1570).

Anon., *Auszschreiben des Printzen von Conde/ Darinnen erkleret/ auß was ursachen und gerechtigkeiten Ire F. G. nach dem tödtlichen abgang des Königs von Navarren/ sich der Regierung der Königlichen Kron Franckreich/ neben der Königin/ so lang die königliche Würde daselbst in minderjerigem Alter/ anzunemen un[d] zuuncerwinden habe*, (s. l.: s. n., 1563).

Anon., *Brußkets Bedencken ann der könig inn Franckreich vonn gegenwertigen burgerlichen kriegsempörungen/ so von wegen der Religion in Franckreich widerum entstanden etc. Ausz sprach verteutschet*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

Anon., *Catechismus der evangelischen Kirchen in Frankreich*, (Heidelberg: s. n., 1563).

Anon., *Confession oder Bekan[n]tnuß des Glaubens der evangelische[n] kirchen in Franckreich/ der Königlichen wirden dasselbst/ sampt einer Supplication ubergeben*, (Heidelberg: s. n., 1563).

Anon., *Confession/ oder Bekan[n]tnuß des Glaubens in gemain und ainhelliglich von den kirchen so hin[n] und wider in Franckreich zerstrouwet/ nach dem lautern rainen Evangelio unsers Herzen Jesu Christi zuleben begeren/ gestellt/ un[d] sampt ainer Supplication der K. M. übergeben. Ausz Frantzösischer sprach ietzt neüwlich in Teütsch bracht*, (Heidelberg: Ludwig Lück, 1662).

Anon., *Confutation, Gründlicher und ausfürlicher Beweis/ aus Gottes Wort/ der Veter schrifften/ Doctor Luthers Büchern/ Catechismo/*

kirchengefangen/ unnd Collecten/ Augspurgischer Confession/ Apologia/ Schmalkaldischen Artikeln/ Fürstlicher Sechsischer Confutation/ unnd andern standthafftigen Argumenten. Das Victorini Strigelii Declaration durch welche die vorhin wolbestalte Thüringische kirchen verirret/ und verwirret/ falsch verfürisch und verwerfflich. Auff Christliche verordnung/ des Durchlauchtigen Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Johans Wilhelmen/ Hertzogen zu Sachssen Landgragen in Düringen/ und Marggraven zu Meissen/ etc. gestellet, (s. l.: s. n., 1567).

Anon., *Corpus Doctrinae Christianae, Das ist Summa der Christlichen lere/ aus den Schrifften der Propheten und Aposteln/ sein Kurtz/ rundt/ und gründlich D. Martinum Lutherum sonderlich/ und andere dieser Lande Lerer zusamen gefasset. Die dieselbige in unser von Gottes gnaden Johans Wilhelm/ Hertzogen zu Sachssen/ Landgraffen in Thüringen/ und Marggraffen zu Meissen/ Fürstenthumen und Landen/ durch Gottes gnade eintrichtig bekant und geleret wird*, (Jena: Donatum Kirchtzenhau, 1571).

Anon., *Der Königin zu Engeland Außschreiben/ darinnen sie die ursachen anzaiget/ warumb sie etliche irer underthanen auffgebracht/ ire und ires vilgeliebten Brüders Carols des Neündten/ Königs in Franckreich/ underthanen damit zubeschützen*, (Frankfurt: Ludwig Lück, 1563).

Anon., *Des Prin[n]tzen von Conde gesanten Herrn Honorat vonn Chastellirs bericht/ des itzigen in Franckreich abermals enstandene[n] kriegs/ So er dem Durchleuchtigste[n] Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Friederichen Pfalzgraven bey Rhein/ des Heiligen Römischen Reichs Ertztruchsessen un[d] Churfürste[n]/ Herzoge[n] in Bayern etc. in personlicher gegewert des königlichen würde in Franckreich gesanten/ Herrn von Lansacs/ erstlich müntlich gethan/ und hernacher ihren Churfürstlichen Gnaden in schrifte[n]/ auff gnedigst erfordere[n]/ ubergeben den 4 Decembris Anno 1567, Auß Französicher sprach trewlich verteutschet*, (Heidelberg: Agricola, 1568).

Anon., *Edict und Erclerung/ von der Königlichen würden in Franckreich/ CAROLO dem IX. ausgegangen/ von wegen der friedtshandlung und hinlegung der netbörungen so in gemeltem königreich entstanden*, 1563. *Edict und Erklärung des Durchleuchtigen und Christlichen Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Carlen den Neundten dieses namens, könig in Franckreich/ Von wegen der fridshandlung/ und hinlegung der Empörung/ so gegenwertige zeit zwischen seiner königlichen Würden und dem hochgebornen Pritzen von Conde sampt seinen mitverwanten wider in gemeltem königreichs entstanden und eingerissen*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

Anon., *Edictum der entstandenen Empörung halben in Franckreich, So den 28. Marcii diß 68. Jars zu Pariß/ und hernach den 3. Apprilis zu Mötz Publiciert worden ist/ ungeverlichen nachvolgenden Inhalts*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

Anon., *Een Nieu Geusen Lieden Boecxken/ Waerinne Begrepen is/ den Ganstschen Handel der Nederlandtscher Gheschiedenissen/ dees Voorleden Jaeren tot noch toe Ghedragen/ Eensdeels Onderwylen in Druck Uitghegaen/ Eensdeels nu nieu By-ghevoecht* (s. l.: s. n., 1581).

Anon., *Erclärung un[d] Schreiben der Herzogen von Guise/ Connestabels und Marschalcks von sanct Andre/ dem König und der Königin in Franckreich gethan/jetzige kriegsrüstung/ und wie derselben zuhelffen/ belangend'*, Heidelberg, Ludwig aus der Wetterau, (s. l.: s. n., 1562).

Anon., *Erzelung was sich nach des Königs von Navarren thod in der friedshandlung in königreich Franckreich zugetragen hat. im Monat December, Anno M.D.LXII.*, (s. l.: s. n., 1563).

Anon., *Frantzösischen kriegsempörung. Das ist Gründlicher Warhafftiger Bericht/ von jüngst verschienenen ersten und andern/ und jetz zum dritten mal newer vorstehender kriegsempörung in Franckreich. Darinnen angezeigt wirdt/ Auß was genotdrangten hochheblichen ursachen/ die newen Reformierten Religions verwanthe/ (wie man sie*

nennet) widerumb gegenwertige unvermeidliche Defension und Nothwehre wider des Cardinals von Lottringen/ und seines Angangs der Papisten unerhörte Fridbrüchtige verfolgung für die handtzunemen getrungen. Deßgleichen was er gestalt obgedachter Cardinal durch zerrüttung wachsen auff und zunemmen gesucht. Item/ Abschrifft einer Werbung/ So der königin auß Engelandt Gesandter/ bey der königlichen Würden in Franckreich etc. gethan. Auß Frantzösischer Sprach trewlich verdolmetschet, (s. l.: s. n., 1559).

Anon., *Friefhandlung in Franckreich. Warhafftige beschreibung des Edicts unnd befehls des königs ausz Franckreich/ uber den Vertrag un[d] hinlegung der zwispalt und zerrüttung derselbigen königreich/ etc. Ausz dem Frantzösischen Exemplar trewlich verteutscht,* (Langingen, Emmanuel Seltzer: 1570).

Anon., *Gebett die in des Härzogen von Conde Veldleger in Franckreich gehalten und nach gelegenheyt der zeit gerichtet warden,* (s. l.: s. n., 1562).

Anon., *Libertas Sendtschrifften des Königlichen Maiestat ze Frankreich etc. An die Chur und Fürsten, Stende und Stett des Heiligen Römischen Reichs Teutscher Nation, darinn sie sich ytziger Kriegsrüstung halben uffs kürzest erkleret,* (s. l.: s. n., 1552).

Anon., *Kurze beschreibung des Aufflauffs/ so sich newlich in Franckreich zu Ambosen/ wider deren von Guysze Regierung/ von dem Frantzösischen Adel in dem Mertzen/ des yetzlauffenden sechsigsten jars erhaben hatt. Darbey aycg angeschenckt/ Das offentlich auszschreiben beider Königreich Engellandt/ und Franckreich gemelter von Guyss Regierung betreffende,* (s. l.: s. n., 1560).

Anon., *Kurtzer warhaffter un[d] Grundtlicher Bericht/ von der Baptischen Conspiration und Bündtnuß/ auch derselbigen jetzigen kriegsexpedition in Franckrych und Brabanct sampt deren ursachen. Zu*

Christlicher getrüwer Warning der Frommen Tütschen/ so sich deßwegen in dienst und bestallung und geringes zergeugkliches guts und gelts willen begeben und inlassend, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

Anon., *Mittel und weg/ durch welche gegenwertige Empörung inn Franckreych könne verglichen unnd hingelegt werden/ von dem Durleüchtigen hochgebornen Fürsten unnd Herren/ Herren Ludwig von Borbon/ Herren von Conde/ dem König und Königin inn Franckreich fürgeschlagen*, (s. l.: s. n., 1562).

Anon., *Neüwe Zeittung/ Von der Schlacht so der Hörtzog von Condes in Franckreich, mit dem Hörtzogen von Guiß gethan/ wie es ist ergangen/ auch wie der Frantzösisch Adel und grossen Herren auff beiden seiten umbkommen unnd gefangen worden seind/ auch wie der Hörtzogen von Guiß erschossen und umkomen ist/ etc.*, (Strabourg: Peter Hug, 1563).

Anon., *Newe warhafftige Zeitung aus Franckreich, Nemlich das Edict unnd Erklerung des Durchleuchtigen und Christlichen Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Carlen des Namens des 9. Von Wegen der fridshandlung und hinlegung de Empöru[n]g so gegenwertige zeit zwüschen seiner königlichen würden und dem hochgebornen Printzen von Conde sampt seinen mitverwanten wider in gemeltem königreich entstanden und eingrissen, Auß dem französichen trewlich und fleissig verdolmetscht*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

Anon., *Newe Zeitung aus Franckreich/ welche sich mit dem Pritzen von Conde/ unnd dem Könige in Franckreich newlich zugetragen/ etc.*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

Anon., *Newe Zeitungen/ Ausz Franckreich und Niderlanden/ Von zwaien treffenlichen Schlachten im Monat November diß 1568. Jars gehalten/ Als zwischen dem könig in Franckreich und den Guisischen an einem/ und dem könig von Navarren/ auch Printzen von Bourbon und Conde andern thails. Deßgleichen zwischen dem Duca von Alba eins/ un[d] Herrn*

Printze[n] von Uranien/ Nassaw und Catzelnbogen/ am andern thail. Mit anderm mehr so sich jedem ort und auff baiden seiten zugetragen/ Warhafftiglich beschriben, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

Anon., *Newe Zeittung von Franckreich unnd Niderlandt. Christlichen und hochwichtige gründe und ursache[n]/ Warumb die Teutschen kriegsleut die Christen inn Franckreich und Niderlandt nicht verfolgen helffen/ oder auff einige weise sich zu iren feinden wider sie gestellen sollen. Allen Ehrlichen, unnd Frommen Teutschen zu einem newen Jar geschenckt*, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

Anon., *Newe Zeitung/ Warhafftige Newe Zeitung/ vonn siben Stetten/ welche mit dem Volck/ und alles was darinn war/ in den Grentzen von Franckreich/ versunckenn unnd undergangenn*, (Augsburg: Hans Zimmermann, 1566).

Anon., *Ordnung der Evangelischen Kirchen in Franckreich/ so gehalten wird/ im Gemeinen Gebet/ Reichung der Sacrament/ Einsegnen der Ehe/ Besuchung der Krancken/ Und Christlichem Catechismo*, (Heidelberg: Johannes Mayer, 1563).

Anon., *Pfalzgrave Friederichs Churfürsten/ etc. auffgerichte Christliche Policey Ordnung*, (Heidelberg: Mayer, 1565).

Anon., *Protocoll Des gesprechs zwischen den Pfaltzischen und Wirtenbergischen Theologen/ im April des 1564 Jars zu Maulbrun gehalten. Aller dings dem Originali gleichlautend/ ohn zusatz und abbruch getrewlich von dem Wirtembergischen Theologen/ so gedachten Colloquio beygewonet/ in Truck verfertigt*, (Tübingen: s. n., 1565).

Anon., *Relation und Bericht des Cardinals von Chastillon was sich zwüschen der königlichen Würden in Franckreich Verordneten auch ihme und anderen von wegen des Printzen von Conde abgesanten/ der*

verströsten unnd hernacher zerschlagnen friedshandlung halben inn newligkeit verlauffen etc., (Heidelberg: Agricola, 1568).

Anon., *Summarischen und Kurtze doch warhafftige anzeig unnd erklärung/ als dessen/ so sich hin und wider in Franckreich/ zwischen dem königischen un[d] Hugenotischen kriegsvolck/ seid der grausamen Schlacht die jüngst abgelauffenen jars beschen/ biß in jetzigen noch werenden Monat Januarii/ des gegenwürtigen der mindernzal sibentzigsten jars/ mit einnem[m]ungen der Stett/ auch scharmützeln und anderm mehr zugetragen und verlossen hat*, (Cologne: Jacobus Weiß, 1570).

Anon., *Supplication Carolo dem Neundten/ König in Kranckreich/ am neundten Tag des Brachmonats/ dises Ein und sechzigsten Jars ubergeben/ von den geordneten der Christlichen versam[m]lung/ so hin und wider durch gantz Franckreich zerstreuet/ un[d] nach dem Evangelion unders Herzen Jesu Christi zuleben begeren*, (Nuremberg: Christoff Heußler, 1561).

Anon., *Suplication der Catholischen vom Adel in der Cron Franckreich and iren Kunig Carolo dem neundten etc. in disem einundsechtzigsten Jar ubergeben*, (Dillingen: Mayer, 1561).

Anon., *Verantworttung für die Konigklich Mayestet von Franckreich wider derselben Rebellen Schrift/ ihr Mayestet vollkom[m]ens Alter belangend, Auß dem Frantzösischen inns Teutsch gebracht*, (s. l.: s. n., 1561).

Anon., *Warhafftige Beschreibung des Gesprechs/ so sich zwischen dem Durchleuchtigsten und Hochgebornen Fürsten von Conde/ und denen von der Königlichen Maiestat in Franckreich darzu verordneten Herren/ begeben. Darin auch die ursachen/ warumb itzgemelter Fürst von Conde und seine mitverwandte/ zur wehr gegriffen/ angezeigt warden. Sampt des Königs aus Franckreich Patenten und erklerung/ belangende die*

Richter von Diener der Justitien/ und ire Religion. Aus Frantzösischer Sprach verdeutschet, (s. l.: s. n., 1568).

Anon., *Warhafftiger bericht von der schlacht/ so auff den XIII. Merzen 1569 durch küniglichen würde auß Franckreich brüder zwischen dem schloß Chasteanneuf und der stat Jarnac mit dem Printzen von Conde geschehen/ in wolcher gemelter Pritz von Conde todt bliben,* (s. l.: s. n., 1569).

Anon., *Warhaftigen Neuwe Zeytung/ von dem Großmächtigen König zu Franckreich/ wie seine Königliche Maiestat/ en Parys/ im[m] Thurnier/ von einem Edelman[n] und Capitan beschedigt worden/ den eylften tage des Hewmonats/ dieses neun un[d] fünftzigsten Jars/ durch ein züschlahend tüdlich Fieber/ in Gott saliglich verschyden'*, (s. l.: s. n., 1559).

Anon., *Warhaftige neuwe Zeytung auß Franckreich/ So sich zwischen den beyden Partheyen/ als dem Herzogen von Guise/ Connestabel/ unnd dem Marschalckh von Sanct Andree/ auff einer seyten: und auff der andern seyten mit dem Herzogen von Conde/ zugetragen hat. Geschehen den einundzweyntztigsten Decembris/ Anno M.D.L.XII.,* (s. l.: s. n. 1563).

Anon., *Warhaffter Summarischer Articulierter Außzuge, Vonn der Capitulation das abgeredten Friedens zwischen Künig Philippen zu Hispanien etc Erzherzoge zu Osterreich etc. an eynem Und Künig Heinrichen zu Franckreich etc. anders teyls. Welcher massen der selb frieden/ in allem seinem inhalt/ und mit ungehsster erklerung/ was für Potentaten und Stende der Christenheyt derinn begriffen/ auffgericht/ und am dritten Aprilis diss 59. jars auft ayn gantz ewigs ende glückseliglich beschossen worden,* (s. l.: s. n., 1559).

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---, *Warhaftiger Abdruck des Durchleuchten Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn/ Herrn Johann Wilhelm/ Herzogen zu Sachsen/ Landgraffen in Döringen/ und Marggraffen zu Meissern/ ausgegangene Schreibens/ am Dato im feltlager bey Amiens/ den 27. Septembris negst vorschinē/ an etzliche Chur ūn Fürsten des Heiligen Reichs/ darinnen S. F. G. ursachen anzeigen/ Welcher halben sie sich in des konigs zu Frankreich kriegs und dienstbestestellung begeben/ und sich daneben ausdrücklich erkleren/ Das S. F. G. gemüt und vorhaben nicht sey/ einigen des heiligen Reich Deutscher Nation einverleibten Standt/ durch S. F. G. oder die Iren zubeschwerē/ noch solchs zuthun den Iren wissentlich zu gestatten. Daraus dann zubefinden/ das S. F. G. und den Iren/ mit dem ausgesprengtem geschrey/ als solten S. F. G. in izigem vorstehenden*

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Abzug/ das geurlaubte französische kriegsvolck an sich ziehen/ und damit inn Deutschland/ Krieg und unruhe anrichten wollen/ ungütlich geschicht/ Und das sölchs engweder durch S. F. G. missgünstige oder sonst unruhige leut/ die zu kriegs entbörung lust haben/ und die Herrn gerne in einander herzen wolten/ ausgebreitet wirdt, (s. l.: s. n., 1558).

---, *Warhafftiger Abdruck des durchleuchten Fürsten ū Herrn Johann Wilhelm, Hertzogen zu Sachssen, Landgragen in Dōringen, und Marggrafen zu Meissen, aussgegangen schreibens am Dato im Veltlager bey Amiens den 27. Sept. an etzliche Chur und Fürsten, darinnen sein ursachen anzeigen, welcherhalben sie sich in des Königs zu Franckreich kriegs- u[nd] dienstbestellung begeben*, (Leipzig: Bapst, 1558).

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