

## THE DUKE OF ALBA: THE IDEAL ENEMY

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### EL DUQUE DE ALBA: EL ENEMIGO IDEAL

**RESUMEN:** En este trabajo voy a presentar cómo la imagen de Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, III Duke of Alba (1507-1582) ofrecida por los propagandistas neerlandeses durante la Revuelta holandesa se corresponde con antiguos estereotipos holandeses sobre los españoles en general. El duque de Alba es ampliamente criticado por su orgullo, un pecado más claramente visible en la estatua de su figura erigida en Antwerp en 1571. La conexión entre Alba y el vicio de orgullo se usa reiteradamente en la propaganda holandesa anti-española durante el gobierno del duque de Alba en las Provincias Unidas pero igualmente permanece como un tema popular con algunos ejemplos de textos menos conocidos de este período que tratan sobre el duque de Alba. Finalmente mostraré cómo el nombre del duque de Alba vive todavía en la lengua holandesa.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Fernando Álvarez de Toledo (Duque de Alba), propaganda visual, Revuelta holandesa, Guerra de Ochenta Años, estereotipos españoles.

**ABSTRACT:** This article I will show how the image Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, III Duke of Alba (1507-1582) portrayed by Netherlandish propagandists during the Dutch Revolt corresponds with older existing Netherlandish stereotypes of the Spanish people in general. The duke of Alba is widely criticized for his Pride, a sin which most clearly visible in the statue of himself which the duke erected in Antwerp in 1571. The connection between Alba and the vice of Pride is used over and over again in Dutch anti-Spanish propaganda during Alba's reign in the Netherlands but also remains a popular theme well into the seventeenth, eighteenth and even nineteenth centuries. I will illustrate this popularity with some examples of less well-known Dutch prints from these periods dealing with the duke of Alba. Finally I will show how the duke of Alba's name still lives on in modern day Dutch language.

**KEY WORDS:** Fernando Álvarez de Toledo (Duke of Alba), Visual propaganda, Dutch Revolt, Eighty Years' War, Spaniards stereotypes.

Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, 3rd Duke of Alba (1507-1582), holds the questionable reputation as the Spaniard figuring most prominently in Netherlandish propaganda from the period of the Dutch Revolt (1568-1648), also known as the Eighty Years War. The role of the duke of Alba in the Black Legend (Leyenda negra) is well-known<sup>1</sup>. In this article I will illustrate several of notable aspects of the characterization of Alba in some less and some

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<sup>1</sup> For an overview of the development of the Black Legend during the Dutch Revolt, see: Swart, 1975.

more familiar Dutch propaganda images published during the war and show how the duke in the following centuries remained a easily recognizable symbol of Spanish arrogance and cruelty<sup>2</sup>.

As an introduction, and to set the tone on Alba's reputation in the Netherlands, it is illuminating to recall an anecdote the Netherlandish artist and art-historian Karel van Mander conveys in his famous *Schilder-boeck*, a volume of the lives of Netherlandish artists first published in 1604. The anecdote concerns the painting of a portrait of the duke by the Antwerp painter Willem Key (ill. 1)<sup>3</sup>. Van Mander tells us that Willem Key overheard the duke while posing for his portrait in 1568 confirm to a member of the Council of Troubles the death sentences of the Dutch counts of Egmont and Horne. As a supporter of these noblemen Key was so shocked that he fell ill and died shortly after. Van Mander also mentions another possible reason for the sudden death of the painter: others say that the painter while painting was so shocked by the cruel countenance of the duke that he instantly fell ill and died<sup>4</sup>.

This little story can present the correct perspective in which the objects which will be further discussed below should be seen.

Early stereotyping of the Spanish people can be found in the writings of the Flemish traveler and writer Nicolaes Cleynaerts or Clenardus (1493-1542) who travelled through Spain in 1535 and whose journals were first published in Latin in 1550 and summarized in 1706 under the Dutch title *Naauw-keurige voyagie, van Nicolaas Clenard, hoog-leraar in d'Academie tot Leuven, door Vrankrijk, Spanjen en Portugaal, na Africa; gedaan in het jaar 1535, en vervolgens. Handelende beknoptelijk van de wellustigheyd der Franssen, de armoede, en belacchelijke grootsheyd der Spanjaarden en Portugysen [...]*<sup>5</sup>.

According to this Dutch title Clenardus writes that the book will deal, among other things, with «the poverty en ridiculous grandness of the Spaniards and Portuguese». In his journal Clenardus complains of the scanty meals and inhospitality he encounters in the Castilian inns which he visits. Even the meals the nobles enjoy are meager and consist merely of such staples as bread and water, carrots and turnips. For this reason he calls the Spaniards *raphanofages*, «eaters of turnips». At the same time he notices in contrast to this poverty a laziness combined with misplaced arrogance and pride<sup>6</sup>. This haughtiness seems to be the main characteristic attached to the Spanish people from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards.

In both religious and humanist circles the Netherlands the sin of Pride was seen as the source of all other vices. In allegorical parades and print series from Antwerp in the 1560's the sin Pride is shown in the cycle of human activity to be the driving force in the downfall of man. Pride leads to Envy, Envy leads to War and War leads to Poverty, after which things take an upturn with Poverty leading to Humility which begets Peace whose rewards Wealth

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<sup>2</sup> The most important sources on the duke of Alva in Dutch propaganda pamphlets and prints are: Geurts, 1956, Becker, 1971: 75-115, Tanis and Horst, 1993, Van Nierop, 1995 and especially Horst, 2003 and Arnade, 2008: 166-211. The most recent biographies of the duke include Kamen, 2004; and Fernández Álvarez, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Jonckheere, 2011: 107-110. The original portrait by Willem Key in the Dukes of Alva Collection in the Palacio de Liria, Madrid. See Ribot and Herrero, 1998: 378, n. 190. The copy in the Rijksmuseum is an anonymous seventeenth-century copy.

<sup>4</sup> Van Mander, 1604: fol. 232v-233r.

<sup>5</sup> Also known as Clénard or Clenardus. First Latin edition: *N. Clenardi Peregrinationum ac de rebus machometicis epistolae elegantissimae*. Petrus Phalesius, Lovanii, 1550.

<sup>6</sup> Meijer Drees, 1997 quotes from Clénard, 1706, column 2.

and Prosperity in turn lead to Pride starting the whole cycle over again. An engraving by Cornelis Cort after a design by Maarten van Heemskerck in the printseries *Circulus Vicissitudinis Rerum Humanarum*, published by Hieronymus Cock in Antwerp in 1564, shows the triumphal chariot of *Superbia* (Pride) as it figured in the Antwerp civic parade *Ommegang* of 1561 (ill. 2)<sup>7</sup>. Pride carries a mirror and peacock feather as her attributes, her chariot is driven by *Contemptus* (Contempt) and other vices such as *Inobedientia* (Disobedience), *Derisio* (Derision) and *Iactantia* (Boastfulness) follow on foot. *Invidia* (Envy) sits at Pride's feet, gnawing on a human heart. These prints illustrate the reasoning in which Pride is seen as the main cause of war among men.

An anonymous German print from c. 1567 continues on the theme of the Spaniard's pride in contrast to his humble origins (ill. 3). This etching must be one of the earliest, if not the earliest of prints aimed against Alva's rule in the Netherlands (1567-1573)<sup>8</sup>. The image shows four soldiers from different nations. In the center a Spanish soldier stands beside the duke of Alva (*Albanus*) who defiantly stares out of the print at the beholder. On the left side is a German lansquenet (*Hoichtuitscher laness*) and on the right a Dutchman (*Hollander*). The print focusses on the changes which have taken place in the Netherlands since the arrival of Alva in 1567. The German mercenary is dressed in rags and complains that once he could make a good living, but now with the arrival of the Spanish army he has become unemployed and poor: «now the duke of Alva teaches us the beggar's trade». With the arrival of Alva's army in the Netherlands many German mercenaries in the service of the governess Margaret of Parma were made redundant. The Dutchman also has a complaint. Once the Dutch used to be successful merchants on water and on land, «but now the enemy Alva has taught us how to make war». In the background are small figures of the German and the Dutchman, happy in their former professions. The Spaniard however has also undergone a transformation. He declares that in Spain they used to be men of low esteem, nothing more than weavers of fig baskets and chimneysweeps<sup>9</sup>. But now in Holland their status has changed for the better, here they are fine gentlemen and proud companions fighting for the papal cause. He is fashionably dressed in panned trunk hose and a plumed beret but at his feet lie a scraper, rope and chimney broom, symbols of his former profession as chimneysweep. To summarize: the governorship of Alva has brought negative effects on the lives of the German and the Dutchman but has proved to be a big improvement for the Spaniard.

The duke of Alva makes an symbolic reappearance in an interesting and surprisingly original print which dates from c. 1580, seventeen years after Alva's departure from the Netherlands in 1573 (ill. 4)<sup>10</sup>. In a coastal landscape the Dutch lion armed with a spiked club defends a fenced off piece of land. This enclosed space of a *hortus conclusus* is a traditional iconographic motive of biblical origin where it is connected with divine protection and inviolability. The usage of this motive during the revolt as the *Hollandse Tuin*, the Dutch Garden, is still connected to the divine protection of a righteous cause<sup>11</sup>. Here it stands for the liberated province of Holland. The flags of liberated cities in the province of Holland are

<sup>7</sup> Veldman, 1986: 47-57; *The New Hollstein: Cornelis Cort*, part 2, p. 50, nr. 23.

<sup>8</sup> Muller, 1863-1882, part 4: 64, no. 525B; Horst, 2003: 63-66, 313, ill. 11. Although the print bears the handwritten later added date 1573 the content of the print makes a creation date around 1567 more plausible.

<sup>9</sup> «Weavers of fig baskets» and «chimneysweeps» are used as derogatory terms for Spaniards in several of the Beggars' songs, see Kuiper 1924-1925, part 1: no. 84 (1573), 194 (commentary), no. 114 (1576), p. 261, no. 115 (1576), 263; and Horst, 2003: 65, 105 (notes 6-7).

<sup>10</sup> Muller, 1863-1882, part 1: 93, no. 701; Horst, 2003: 288-292, 361, ill. 94. Date based upon the towns depicted as liberated, Oudewater being the latest in 1580.

<sup>11</sup> For the development of the motive of 'the Dutch Garden' see Winter, 1957. Also Ribot and Herrero, 1998: 274, no. 79.

attached onto the fence, the coat of arms of William the Silent, prince of Orange, adorns the gate. The lion defends the freedom of his country against an army of Spanish pigs which swarms over the countryside. Many pigs have turnips tied to their backs and some are armed with swords. In the foreground a sow wearing a crucifix tows a litter of piglets behind her. Several pigs are mating with each other, in the background a boar mounts an ass who continues grazing as if nothing is happening. In the first line of the Dutch inscription the pigs are identified as *Spaensche Beeren*, Spanish Boars. The Dutch verse under the image translates as follows:

Stop rooting in my garden Spanish boars  
 Turn your pig's back around and leave  
 Or my Beggar's bludgeon will teach you a lesson  
 It will break your head or stretch your neck  
 The noble prince [of Orange] who you tried to fool  
 Will fight you on sea and on land  
 Leave with your dirty sows and your piglets  
 Run rogues run, or the Beggars will force you to.

Significantly one pig the right of the image carouses with a checked banner, the flag of the duke of Alva. This flag is the only specific individual reference to any Spaniard in the print, the duke is not mentioned in the inscriptions. Evidently in 1580 Alva and not king Philip II nor the current governor Alexander Farnese was still the most recognizable symbol for referring to Spanish enemy.

The use of the word pigs as a term of abuse for Spaniards in pamphlets and songs is well-known, but images of such are more rare<sup>12</sup>. In this print all the warring parties are depicted as animals. The geese on the left are the *Watergeuzen* (Sea Beggars) fighting from boats which bear the names of the major cities in the province Zeeland. In this context the choice to use pigs to symbolize the Spaniards in negative way seems logical. The conspicuous use of turnips in the image is striking. Is it too far stretched to see a link here with Clenardus' description of the Spaniards as «eaters of turnips» as we have seen above?

At this point I would like dwell a bit longer on the issue of the duke of Alva and the Spanish pride. In 1571 the duke of Alva had a statue of himself erected in the fortress in Antwerp (ill. 5). The bronze statue was made by the sculptor Jacques Jonghelinck and the Spanish humanist Benito Arias Montano was responsible for the iconological program<sup>13</sup>. The statue was cast from the bronze of the cannon captured by Alva in his victory over the rebel troops led by count Louis of Nassau, prince William of Orange's brother, in the battle of Jemmingen in July 1568. In this sense the statue could be regarded as a trophy of war. The statue was thus meant to celebrate the duke's crushing of the rebellion, iconoclasm and heresy and to emphasize his role as a strong and pious leader. Contemporaries on both sides were however quick to condemn the monument as proof of Alva's foolish personal pride and vainglory. For wasn't Alva merely doing his duty in the service of the king? Alva was glorifying himself and thus usurping the king's authority, for all deserved praise should surely come to the glory of the highest ruler, and not to his servant.

<sup>12</sup> For the origin of «pigs» as a term of abuse for Spaniards see Swart, 1975, pp. 46-47 and Meijer Drees, 1997: 96.

<sup>13</sup> On the statue, its commission and maker see Smolderen, 1996: 117-151. For the iconographic program and the statue's reputation see Becker, 1971: 75-115. Also Horst, 2003: 130-136 and Arnade, 2008: 198-203.

A large and iconographic complex print condemns the pride of the duke (ill. 6)<sup>14</sup>. In the image the iconography of the statue is reversed. Where in the original statue Alva defeats rebellion and iconoclasm, in the propaganda print he is shown trampling upon a widow and an orphan as well upon Justice and Truth. A flying horned devil wearing a papal tiara encourages Alva to continue in his good work and promises to reward him with riches. Time however tells the truth and condemns the mortal being for this foolish, arrogant and weak gesture against his divine creator. The blood of the innocent cries for vengeance and the duke's end is near. At the same time the foolishness of the statue is proven by having the opposite of its desired effect as it emboldens the Dutch in their armed struggle against the Spanish. The rebels find new courage as they literally retrieve their hearts and prepare to support the prince of Orange and his cavalry in the right of the image.

Although the controversial statue was destroyed several years after Alva's departure from the Netherlands, the ill reputation the statue acquired made Alva an easy target for the duke's enemies and remained a potent symbol of Alva's foolish pride in Dutch propaganda throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In an historical dictionary of the Netherlands published in 1725 the lemma on the duke of Alva is not illustrated with a portrait, as are the Spanish king Philip II and other historical figures, but with an etching of the infamous statue (ill. 7)<sup>15</sup>. Here the statue is shown in a frame which is full of scenes and symbols which are meant to characterize and make clear the true nature Alva's government in the Netherlands: tyranny, inquisition, torture, executions and so forth.

After Alva left the Netherlands and returned to Spain in 1573 his successor as governor Luis de Zúñiga y Requesens, realizing very well the controversy the statue caused, decided to have it removed from the Antwerp citadel. What further became of the statue is not exactly clear, evidently it was smelted down sometime between February 1576 and March 1577 and the bronze reused for other purposes<sup>16</sup>.

One way or another later in the seventeenth century Alva's thumb, a fragment of the original statue, came into the possession of the eminent Dutch historian and poet Pieter Cornelisz Hooft. A print from 1719 shows the bronze thumb (ill. 8)<sup>17</sup>. Joost van den Vondel, Holland's most important poet from the seventeenth century, wrote a short poem about the thumb for his friend Hooft in which he cleverly makes use of Hooft's name (which means 'head' in Dutch) and the reversal of fortunes:

Your [he addresses Hooft] hand now plays with Alva's thumb  
 But were he still in power  
 His hand would have played with your head [Hooft]  
 As with a ball in a game  
 How brittle and fragile tyranny is!  
 Once you [Alva] had the nation under your thumb  
 Now your thumb only inspires this poem<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> Muller, 1863-1882, part 4: 66, no. 569A; Horst, 2003: 130-134, 330, ill. 40, Arnade 2008: 207-209.

<sup>15</sup> Muller, 1863-1882, part 1: 81, no. 569, *The New Hollstein: Philips Galle*, part 3: 219-221, no. 504, copy g. The print was published in: F. Halma, M. Brouërius van Nidek, *Tooneel der Vereenigde Nederlanden en onderhorige landschappen, geopent in een algemeen historisch, genealogisch, geographisch en staatkundig woordenboek*, Leeuwarden, H. Halma, 1725, part 1: fol. 298/299.

<sup>16</sup> Smolderen, 1996: 50-54.

<sup>17</sup> Muller, 1863-1882, part 4: 67, no. 570A; Becker, 1971: 108.

<sup>18</sup> My translation. Vondel's poem dates from 1641. Sterck, 1927-1940, part 4 (1640-1645): 209.

The poem emphasizes the transient nature of earthly power and the foolishness of earthly pursuits such as fortune and fame. Unfortunately there is no information of the present whereabouts of the bronze thumb.

In a print from 1748 which celebrates the centennial anniversary of the Peace of Münster in 1648 which ended the Eighty Years War, the statue of Alva returns (ill. 9)<sup>19</sup>. Central in the composition is the Netherlandish Maid. With symbols of Freedom in her right hand she gestures with her left hand towards three figures lying on the ground under her feet. These figures represent three aspects of the defeated enemy: slavery of the Netherlands under the Spanish reign, violent persecution of the protestants by the Catholic Church and the tyranny under the duke of Alva. But the tyranny of Alva is not portrayed by the duke himself but by the fragments of his broken statue. An enlargement of this detail shows that the printmaker was aware of the existence of fragment of the thumb, because it is clearly missing from Alva's hand (ill. 10).

There are many more examples of the use of Alva and his statue in Dutch propaganda. I would like to describe just one more of example of this usage.

An anonymous Dutch engraving celebrates the death of the Spanish governor Don John of Austria on the first of October 1578 (ill. 11)<sup>20</sup>. The figure of Death on horseback shoots the fatal arrow which kills the governor who lies on the ground in the right side of the image. Under the feet of the horse lie the bodies of Death's previous victims in the Netherlands during years 1572-1577. They include Don John's predecessor Luis de Zúñiga y Requesens and other prominent Spanish military commanders and Catholic church leaders<sup>21</sup>. According to the printmaker all belong to a false and ungodly government and their death should be seen as righteous punishment by the hand of God. The inscriptions which are in Dutch and French contain many citations from the prophecies in the Old Testament. A verse at the bottom of the print summarizes the moral message the print seeks to deliver: all the worldly kings are in God's hands, He gives and takes for they are his servants.

The story of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in the Old Testament book of Daniel is given as an example of an ungodly and proud king who was cast from power and humiliated by God (*Daniel*, 4, 31-32). The printmaker draws a comparison between the duke of Alva and the fate of Nebuchadnezzar who was thrown from power and led to graze in a pasture as a wild animal. *Duck Dalbe* crawls on his knees with his ankles in fetters. A figure representing Conscience presents the duke a trough overflowing with blood in which two heads float and also offers him a clump of grass. The inscription here warns Alva that for all his bloodshed, to be saved he must follow the example of Nebuchadnezzar and humble himself and seek God's forgiveness. Otherwise he will be killed like Belshazzar. The link between Alva and Nebuchadnezzar is of course that both erected a statue, an idol against God. To be sure the beholder does not miss this similarity Alva's statue is pictured in the upper left hand corner. In front of it a group of men is gathered among whom we can recognize the counts of Egmont and Horne. This group most likely represents Alva's victims, the victims whose blood fills the trough held before the duke. One of the men points at the statue and mocks Alva by kicking his behind. The roles have been reversed: the victims

<sup>19</sup> Muller, 1863-1882, part 2: 173, no. 3961a.

<sup>20</sup> Muller, 1863-1882, part 1: 101, no. 794 and part 4: 82, no. 794a, Horst, 2003: 252-254, 354, ill. 81.

<sup>21</sup> The other bodies are those of governor Requesens (signified here by his Dutch nickname *Grote Commandeur* = Mighty Commander, died 1576), the Spanish military commander Julian Romero (died 1577), the Italian military commander Chiappin Vitelli (died 1575), bishop of Antwerp Franciscus Sonnius (died 1576) and the inquisitor Pieter Titelmans of Ronse (died 1572).

witness the humiliation of their prosecutor. The statue is proof of Alva's foolish pride and ungodly ways for which he is now being punished.

The chance to identify Alva with Nebuchadnezzar was not lost on the prince of Orange either. In his letter *Sendbrief* to the king Philip of Spain in 1573 he makes the same comparison. Although the prince addresses the pamphlet to the king, the main purpose was to justify the revolt and to raise support for it in Germany<sup>22</sup>.

The humiliation of Alva returns in a similar fashion in a much later print probably made in 1817 or 1827 (ill. 12)<sup>23</sup>. The print celebrates the anniversary of the freedom won by the Protestant Church in the Netherlands. On the left the defeated Spanish forces and the Catholic Church flee the country. The charred remains of a person burned at the stake for his faith slumps at the left border of the image as a reminder of the religious persecution of the Protestants in the Netherlands in the sixteenth century. The center stage is for prince William of Orange and the personification of the Protestant faith. The rays of a rising sun illuminate their group while the Catholics and Spaniards on the left remain in darkness.

On the right-hand side a strange monument can be seen. It is composed of two figures in armor standing upon the back of a third person, also in armor, who crouches upon the ground. In the features and clothing of this person it is easy to recognize the duke of Alva. If this person represents Alva then the two men standing on this back must be the counts of Egmont and Horne, the duke's two most important victims. Here we once again see a reversal of fortunes which is very similar to the one in the previous image. In the final outcome the victims triumph over their persecutor. The punishment of humiliation befits the proud aggressor. History vindicates the counts and presents their deaths as a sacrifice in the struggle for freedom in the Netherlands. It is significant to realize that this print proves that even in the nineteenth-century the duke of Alva was still considered to be the most recognizable and potent symbol of the Spanish tyranny in the Netherlands.

In many propaganda prints the duke of Alva is shown as a tyrant and oppressor of the Netherlands. In terms of propaganda the most successful early image of Alva as tyrant must be the engraving dated 1569 which is commonly known as 'the throne of Alva' (ill. 13)<sup>24</sup>. Although the inscriptions are in German and French the subject of the print is the tyranny of Alva in the Netherlands. In this print the duke of Alva is shown sitting on a throne. At his feet the seventeen enslaved provinces of the Netherlands kneel in submission. A rope is tied around their necks which is attached to Alva's throne. The members of Alva's Council of Blood stand to the right of his throne. Positioned behind the throne are the dukes inspirers: the cardinal Granvelle and the devil. On the right-hand side of the image stand the dumbfounded and powerless members of the States-General, the representatives of the provinces. The scenes in the background show the horrors of war and religious persecution. In the center of the print space has been reserved for the beheading of the counts of Egmont and Horne in Brussels in 1568.

Over the years the composition of this print was copied in various different printed and painted versions. This composition returns some fifty years later in what must be by far the most widespread image of the duke of Alva. In this later version of Alva's throne dated 1622 we can see that all the main elements from the older image have been preserved (ill.

<sup>22</sup> Geurts, 1978: 47-48, 208, Arnade, 2009: 207.

<sup>23</sup> Muller, 1863-1882, part 1: 96, no. 728.

<sup>24</sup> Muller, 1863-1882, part 1: 76-77, nos. 517-518, Sawyer, 2000; Van Nierop, 1995; Horst, 2003: 84-86, 319, ill. 21.

14)<sup>25</sup>. However, the setting was been transformed into a much more realistic architectural space. Alva now governs from a large palace hall which offers through a vaulted passage a view onto the Grote Markt in Brussels where the beheading of the counts of Egmont and Horne is taking place. The print seems to have been very popular. Many copies still exist, some of which were hand colored or printed on silk to be sold as a luxury item. Also at least twenty-two painted versions of this image are known, most of rather poor quality, as is the copy in the collection of Rijksmuseum, which is actually only a fragment with the left part of the painting with the throne of the Duke of Alva missing entirely<sup>26</sup>. In the Getty Provenance Database there are at least four inventories from the years 1629-1678 which list a framed copy of the print meant to hang on the wall, as well as many of the painted copies of this scene<sup>27</sup>.

This leads to the question why these images were so popular around the year 1620? The answer must lie in the fact that the Twelve Years Truce in the war with Spain came to an end in 1621, and the print which was published in 1622 can be seen as part of a propaganda campaign to rally support for Maurice, the prince of Orange, William's son and successor. In the debate between the prince and his supporters who wanted to continue the war on one side and the States-General who were in favor of continuing a peace agreement on the other side, the image was a reminder of how and why the war against the Spanish began. The duke of Alva is used as the symbol of the Spanish tyranny at its worst but is also proof that the Dutch were capable of beating the Spanish.

A last example shows how the duke of Alva's legacy has been preserved over the centuries even into modern times. In Dutch a tall wooden mooring-post for a boat is called a *duc d'Alva*, the French name for the duke of Alva but also the name commonly used for Alva in the Netherlands in the sixteenth-century (ill. 15). The usage probably originates from the Sea Beggars who saw a resemblance between the black and white stained wooden mooring post and the figure of the duke: tall and thin, with a stern face, dressed in dark clothes, with white or grey hair and beard<sup>28</sup>. The joke being that when mooring their boat the sailors would throw a rope over the post as if throwing a rope around the duke of Alva's neck.

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<sup>25</sup> Muller, 1863-1882, part 1: 76, no. 514 and part 4: 62, no. 514, Tanis and Horst, 1993: 62-63, no. 12, Ribot and Herrero, 1998: 274-275, no. 80, Sawyer, 2003: 181-186.

<sup>26</sup> The fragment in the Rijksmuseum is inv.no. SK-C-1551. Sawyer, 2003: 202-210, supplies a list of all known painted and printed versions.

<sup>27</sup> See the website of the Getty Provenance Index Databases. Print listings in Dutch inventories: *Een prent vande bloetraet van Duc d'Albe*, Adriaen van Beverwyck, 1629; *Een printbortgen van Duc'd Alba ende van d'Nederlandse Staten*, Jacob Andriess Wormbout, 1642; *Een printbort van Duc d'Alva met een ekenhoutte lijst*, Janneken Hendrix, 1648; *Een prent op sijde van Duck d'halva, met rollen*, Elisabeth Francken, 1678.

<sup>28</sup> For descriptions of Alva's physique and features see: Bor, 1621-1634, vol. 1: fol. 349v, Kuiper 1924-1925, part 1, no. 84: 195, Maltby, 1983, p. 13, 134 and Kamen, 2004: 75.



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Illustrations

1:



Willem Key (copy), Portrait of Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, duke of Alba, c. 1620. Oil on panel. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. SK-A-18.

2:



Cornelis Cort after Maarten van Heemskerck, published by Hieronymus Cock in Antwerp, The Triumph of Pride (Nr. 3 in the series: The cycle of vicissitudes of human affairs), 1564. Engraving, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-1911-434.

3:



Anonymous (Germany), The complaint of the German and the Dutchman, 1567. Etching, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-79.022.

4:



Anonymous (Netherlands), Stop rooting in my garden Spanish pigs!, c. 1580. Etching and letterpress, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-77.682.

5:



Anonymous copy after Philips Galle's engraving of Jacques Jonghelinck's sculpture, Monument to the duke of Alva of 1571, c. 1650. Engraving, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-79.156.

6:



Anonymous (Netherlands), Satire on the duke of Alva's statue, c. 1572. Etching, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-79.166.



7:



Anonymous copy after Philips Galle's engraving of Jacques Jonghelinck's sculpture, Monument to the duke of Alva of 1571, 1725. Etching, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-79.154.

8:



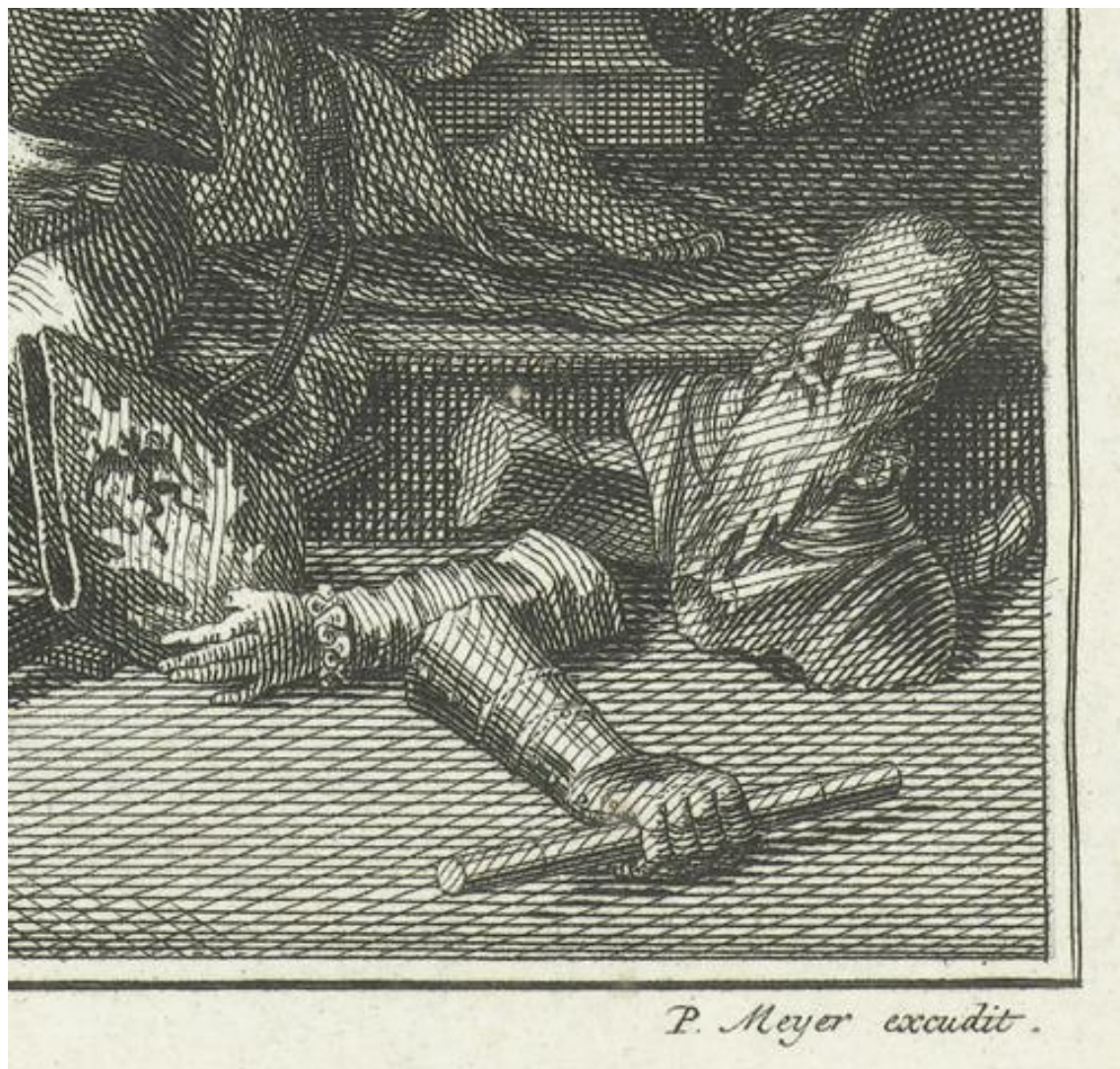
Anonymous (Netherlands), Alva's thumb and a poem by Joost van den Vondel, 1719.  
 Engraving and letterpress, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-79.162.

9:



Simon Fokke, Centennial of the 1648 Peace treaty of Münster, 1748. Etching and engraving, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-84.046.

10:



Detail from ill. Nr. 9.

11:



Anonymous (Netherlands), The death of Don John of Austria and the humiliation of Alva, 1578. Engraving, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-79.397.

12:



Joannes Bemme after C. Meyer, Celebration of the freedom of Protestant religion in the Netherlands, c. 1827. Stipple etching, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-80.441.

13:



Anonymous (Germany or the Netherlands), The throne of Alva, 1569. Engraving, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-79.002.

14:



Willem Delff, published by Jan Pietersz. van de Venne in Middelburg, The throne of Alva, 1622. Engraving, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. RP-P-OB-79.001.



15:



‘Dukdalf’, photograph by the author, Amsterdam 2013.