

Distant Neighbors

The role of the German unification between 1864 and 1871
in Dutch nineteenth-century nation-building

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Abstract

The historiography on Dutch national consciousness depicts the dissemination of that phenomenon between 1815 and 1900 to a broad part of Dutch society as a process initiated and maintained by the upper class of Dutch society, due to a strong focus on societal elites. Despite the lack of a sharp periodization, the focus suggests that national consciousness was entrenched among the Dutch upper class at an early stage during the nineteenth century, which therefore only had to be concerned about the dissemination of that consciousness to the 'lower' societal groups. It was only from the 1870s onwards, the historiography indicates, that that process became less stable due to confessional opposition and input of the lower classes. Despite recent research showing that it is imperative to use a bottom-up perspective to study the process, this thesis argues that the role of the elites has not yet sufficiently been understood. As hinted at by an explorative study by Jacco Pekelder, the historiography lacks attention to the Dutch elite's use of the German unification for the development of national consciousness among Dutch citizens. Hence, this thesis aims to answer the question how Dutch elites in the context of the German unification between 1864 and 1871 stimulated the development of national consciousness among the citizens of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The research shows that in the context of a debate about the question what the Netherlands should do against a potential threat of Germany to the Netherlands, Dutch liberal publicists and newspaper editors used the unification as a means to stimulate the development of national consciousness by means of two rhetorical devices. The debate started during the Austro-Prussian War, but became especially of importance during the war between France and Prussia. Whereas political, military and diplomatic measures were initially the only means proposed to fend off a potential danger, by 1870-1871 the indicated persons envisioned the development of national consciousness as one of the main measures. They stimulated this development through leading, trend-setting media, which indicates that it is plausible that between 1815 and 1900 a larger number of Dutch citizens started to exhibit national consciousness due to the rhetorical devices used during the German unification. The main suggestion of the findings is that national consciousness was not as strongly entrenched among Dutch elites as indicated by the historiography. This implies that the depiction of the upper classes only having to be concerned about the dissemination of national consciousness to the other layers of Dutch society after the early nineteenth century is too simplistic, and that that process should be seen as less stable than currently suggested by the historiography. Additionally, the research shows that the modern Dutch relation towards Germany did not merely have its roots in structural factors, but also incidental circumstances.

Keywords: *Dutch national consciousness, Dutch-German relations, Dutch liberalism, contrasting, German unification.*

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I. Introduction

1.1 Main question and relevance

Following the tumultuous era of the Batavian Republic and French occupation, order was temporarily restored (as some contemporaries would have put it) after the founding of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1815. Building on the state structures laid down since 1795, whilst simultaneously expanding the Dutch territory by gaining control over Belgium and Luxemburg, King Willem I introduced various state- and nation-building activities¹ with which the unification of the Netherlands, as started around 1800², was continued. These phenomena were not new for the country. Nation-building, for example, was already conducted in the Dutch and Batavian Republic on a relatively informal level. At the start of the nineteenth century, however, national consciousness remained limited to the elite.³ Given the new, additional role of the state, the dissemination of national consciousness seems to have become important especially after the kingdom's founding. From then on, the Dutch government worked systematically towards the reinforcement of an "official" national consciousness.⁴ It should be noted, however, that except for Willem I's government, the Dutch state rarely furthered national consciousness: especially the citizenry i.e. *grote burgerij* tried to do so. Furthermore, the Dutch liberals (who dominated state affairs after 1848) considered society, not the state, as the ideal promotor of national unity. Liberals thought of themselves as the nucleus of the nation and believed that liberal politics would guarantee national unity. Furthermore, they considered freedom to be the essential element of Dutch national identity.⁵

¹ C.A. Tamse and E. Witte, 'Inleiding', in: C.A. Tamse and E. Witte, *Staats- en natievorming in Willem I's koninkrijk (1815-1830)* (Brussel 1992), 15-55, there 15.

² Hans Knippenberg and Ben de Pater, *De eenwording van Nederland. Schaalvergroting en integratie sinds 1800* (Nijmegen 1988) 13-14.

³ Henk te Velde, 'Nederlands nationaal besef vanaf 1800', in: Ton Zwaan a.o. (eds.), *Het Europees Labyrint. Nationalisme en natievorming in Europa* (Amsterdam 1991) 173-188, there 174-175.

⁴ Frans Groot, 'Vlaggen in top en stenen door de ruiten. De natie in de stijgers, 1850-1940.', in: J.C.H. Blom and J. Talsma (eds.), *Godsdienst, stand en natie in de lange negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam 2000) 171-200, there 171; Te Velde, 'Nederlands nationaal besef vanaf 1800', 179.

⁵ Ibidem, 176 and 178-179. Te Velde does not employ the term *grote burgerij*, but he often employs the term *burgerij* (citizenry) without additional specification (see: 174-178). On page 179, however, he states that before 1870 a homogeneous, liberal 'upper layer' was the foremost group of Dutch society discussing about the meaning of national traditions and symbols. According to Friso Wielenga in his book *Geschiedenis van Nederland. Van de Opstand tot heden* (Amsterdam 2013), Dutch society was divided during the nineteenth century in classes along the lines of the aristocracy, *grote burgerij* (both consisting of persons occupying important positions in governance, finance and economics), *kleine burgerij* (e.g. shopkeepers, self-employed persons, teachers) and the common people (laborers). Wielenga designates the former two as the 'top layer' of Dutch society (page 267). Given Te Velde's reference to 'upper layer', *grote burgerij* seems the best interpretation of *burgerij*. This word translates in English to 'bourgeoisie', but due to its negative connotation, this thesis will employ the relatively neutral 'elite' or 'upper class' for both the aristocracy and *hogere burgerij*, and 'middle class' for the *lagere burgerij*.

Fast forward to the last decades of the nineteenth century. Since the 1860s, the liberals had been embroiled in conflicts with Catholic and Orthodox-Calvinistic minorities who opposed the national culture as it was represented by the established elite of Protestant liberal and conservative politicians (socialists were already active during this time, but they only started to oppose the national culture near the end of the nineteenth century), although it was only after 1870 that these minorities were able to challenge the liberal consensus.⁶ Related to that process, the groups mentioned started developing different kinds of national consciousness compared to the one represented and disseminated by the establishment, accompanied by the formation of culturally segregated (*verzuilde*) socio-cultural environments.⁷ Therefore, during the last decades of the nineteenth century national consciousness became redefined, resulting in a ‘reinvention’ of the Netherlands as a ‘pillarized society on a firm national fundament’. As paradoxical as it might sound, the friction between these various conceptions of nationhood was not problematic for the development of national unity: according to the historian Niek van Sas, it namely spurred the creation of an ideological fundament that kept the Netherlands together as a society and nation-state. Although varieties of national consciousness existed, national consciousness as such had clearly become part of a larger audience: around 1900, it could be observed among a majority of Dutch society, regardless of economic position.⁸

Since national consciousness was not as broadly embedded in Dutch society around the start of the century, and nation-building seems to have become especially important from 1815 onwards, the question is how between 1815 and 1900 the dissemination of national consciousness to a larger number of citizens of the Kingdom of the Netherlands came about. As suggested by an explorative study conducted by Jacco Pekelder into Dutch perceptions of the German unification between 1848 and 1871, the role of the elites in that process has not yet sufficiently been understood. Argued more extensively below, the historiography on Dutch national consciousness lacks attention to the Dutch elite’s use of the German unification for the development of national consciousness among Dutch citizens, which they stimulated by contrasting the Netherlands against Germany.⁹ Pekelder’s study, however, was merely written with the goal to make a case for a new research direction, and follows in the footsteps of a

⁶ Ibidem, 176 and 178-179; Groot, ‘Vlaggen in top en stenen door de ruiten’, 172 and 177; Niek van Sas, *De Metamorfose van Nederland* (Amsterdam 2005) 59.

⁷ Groot, ‘Vlaggen in top en stenen door de ruiten’, 172; Michael Wintle, ‘Natievorming, onderwijs en godsdienst in Nederland, 1850-1900’, in: Henk te Velde and Hans Verhage (eds.), *De eenheid en de delen. Zuilvorming, onderwijs en natievorming in Nederland 1850-1900* (Amsterdam 1996) 13-28, there 21-23 and 25-26.

⁸ Van Sas, *De Metamorfose van Nederland*, 59-61.

⁹ Jacco Pekelder, ‘Nederland en de Duitse Kwestie’, in: Jacco Pekelder, Remco Raben and Mathieu Segers (eds.), *De wereld volgens Nederland. Nederlandse buitenlandse politiek in historisch perspectief* (Amsterdam 2015) 59-80, there 72-80.

similar call by Frits Boterman.¹⁰ Pekelder builds his argument on the basis of a small number of sources¹¹, and it therefore remains to be seen whether it stands ground in the context of a larger number of sources. Accordingly, the main question with which this thesis aims to address the aforementioned and more fundamental question is: How did Dutch elites in the context of the German unification between 1864 and 1871 stimulate the development of national consciousness among the citizens of the Kingdom of the Netherlands?¹²

This question will be answered on the basis of a study to three periods during which the unification became an explicit goal or even a concrete manifestation: The Second Schleswig War of 1864, Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871. Although 1864 did not yet witness worries among Dutch elites about a potential threat of Germany to the Netherlands, in 1866 and especially 1870-1871 a debate ensued that revolved around the question what the Dutch should do to prevent a German annexation or attack on the Netherlands. To maintain autonomy, initially only political, military, and diplomatic preventive measures were proposed by elites. In 1870-1871, however, the development of national consciousness was presented as one of the means. Given the various rhetorical stimulations to that end through authoritative media, they are likely of having achieved that goal. One of the suggestions of the findings is that national consciousness was not strongly entrenched among Dutch elites, thus implying that the historiographic depiction of the elites merely having to be concerned about the other layers of Dutch society after the early phases of the nineteenth century is wrong, and that the process of the dissemination of national consciousness between 1815 and 1900 should be seen as less stable than currently suggested by the historiography on Dutch national consciousness. Furthermore, the results prove valuable for the historiography on Dutch-German relations by illustrating that the modern Dutch relation towards Germany did not merely have its roots in structural factors, but also in incidental circumstances. Methodologically, the research has implications for both historiographies as well. Whereas the former should pay more attention to the stimulation of national consciousness in the discourse on current affairs, the latter needs to incorporate a broader perspective to determine elitist views on Germany during the nineteenth century. To provide the theoretical basis for these implications and the aforementioned research question, the thesis now turns to an analysis of the historiographies on Dutch national consciousness and Dutch-German relations.

¹⁰ Frits Boterman, *Duitsland als Nederlands probleem. De Nederlandse-Duitse betrekkingen tussen openheid en eigenheid* (Amsterdam 1999) 29; Pekelder, 'Nederland en de Duitse Kwestie', 79.

¹¹ Pekelder only uses two brochures by Groen van Prinsterer, an article by Cornelius van der Kulk and a brochure by Bernard Dominicus Hubertus Tellegen (the latter to be discussed below). See: Pekelder, 'Nederland en de Duitse Kwestie', 78-79.

¹² Pekelder in his article studies the German unification between 1848 and 1871, but this thesis will only focus on the period 1864-1871. The precise reasons for doing so will be discussed in paragraph 1.3.

1.2 Historiographical framework

1.2.1. *Historiography on Dutch national consciousness*

In order to demonstrate that the role of the elites in the dissemination of national consciousness has not yet been fully understood (as suggested by Pekelder's explorative study), it is first necessary to sketch the contours of the historiography on Dutch national consciousness. Below, each group that contributed between 1815 and 1900 to the dissemination of national consciousness will be introduced in combination with a discussion of the relevant historiography (although it might be rather artificial to separate the Dutch state and elites of Dutch society, it is useful for the sake of analytical clarity to do).

As indicated above, the Dutch state's role in the process of disseminating national consciousness was relatively small. Its efforts, however, should not be excluded from the historiographical analysis. The research conducted by Joep Leerssen, Frank Santegoets and Henk te Velde is particularly enlightening. Santegoets describes how the government of King Willem I committed itself from 1815 onwards to the task of nation-building due to the newly-found kingdom's function of being a buffer state. That function, the government's reasoning went, could only be executed optimally if there would be a "close and complete" unification of the southern and northern Netherlands. The Dutch government sought to do so not only via the integration of state institutions, but also by aiming to develop a national culture through language and education policies (amongst others). Despite its efforts, a national consciousness shared by both parts of the kingdom barely existed.¹³ Santegoets is not very clear about why the government's attempts did not succeed, but Joep Leerssen points out that they were rather 'hollandocentric' and took little notice of events and persons outside the history of Holland and the United Provinces. During the decades preceding the founding of the kingdom, an informal, cultural nationality awareness was established in the northern Netherlands by means of literature, history writing and memory culture (despite the various political regime changes between 1795 and 1813). Leerssen also names this phenomenon a *historical* consciousness. He states that on this basis a powerful *national* consciousness could develop there after 1813. The opposite was the case in the southern part of the new kingdom: Leerssen points out that the inhabitants of the southern Netherlands barely had a sense of historical continuity.¹⁴ Alongside of Leerssen and Santegoets, Henk te Velde also argues that the state contributed to the dissemination of national consciousness, because he presents the Dutch lower education system as an example of a means with which it sought to do so. Although Te Velde does not periodize this phenomenon, he also mentions that the education system was

¹³ Frank Santegoets, 'Het Verenigd Koninkrijk 1815-1830. Eenheid en scheiding', in: Wantje Fritschy en Joop Toebees (eds.), *Het ontstaan van het moderne Nederland. Staats- en natievorming tussen 1780 en 1830* (Nijmegen 1996), 215-242, there 224-225.

¹⁴ Joep Leerssen, 'De Nederlandse natie', in: Ido de Haan, Paul den Hoed and Henk te Velde (eds.), *Een nieuwe staat. Het begin van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (Amsterdam 2013) 319-339, there 333-339.

accused during the years of the so-called 'school struggle' (*de schoolstrijd*) that it did not fulfil the task of disseminating national consciousness satisfactorily.¹⁵ Although the struggle already developed during the first half of the nineteenth century, it sharpened during the second.¹⁶ Hence, Te Velde's suggestion seems that the state used education to disseminate national consciousness well after Willem I's rule ended.

Although the state thus clearly attempted to stimulate national consciousness, the upper class of Dutch society played a more important role during the nineteenth century. Multiple actors can be discerned on this level. One of these were associations such as the Society for Public Welfare (*Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen*). Henk te Velde argues that from the end of the eighteenth century onwards these associations sought to stimulate the dissemination of a homogenous national civic culture. He also states that after the French occupation a culture of forgiving and forgetting existed in the Netherlands, which the Society for Public Welfare was able to use as an opportunity to propagate a national culture revolving around an 'enlightened' form of humanism.¹⁷ Frans Groot describes how the organization sought to improve the material and mental living standard of the lower classes by activities such as improving the primary education system, disseminating reading matter and the organization of free lectures.¹⁸ The organization was able to continue this activity relatively undisturbed until roughly 1860-1870.¹⁹ During the 1860s, a broader, 'vaguely liberal' reform-movement arose that partially originated from the initiatives of the Society for Public Welfare. Just like the latter, the various involved associations sought to educate the masses by aiming to improve their cultural development by means of founding museums, choral-societies, fanfares, and gymnastics clubs. Furthermore, these movements aimed to tighten the cultural bonds between the elite and the people by founding a "common cultural space".²⁰

As touched upon above, the kind of national culture these organizations sought to disseminate became opposed by the 1860s by Orthodox-Calvinistic and Catholic minorities. From the 1860s onwards, political and intellectual representatives of these minorities started to arrive in the public and political arena.²¹ Although Henk te Velde mentions the appearance of these groups in the context of his analysis of the development of national consciousness²², he does not satisfyingly analyze the reasons for why these groups appeared, nor their consequential political activity. This is important, since this activity contributed strongly to the development of national consciousness: due to the Catholic and Orthodox-Calvinist

¹⁵ Te Velde, 'Nederlands nationaal besef vanaf 1800', 176.

¹⁶ Wielenga, *Geschiedenis van Nederland*, 243.

¹⁷ Te Velde, 'Nederlands nationaal besef vanaf 1800', 174-175.

¹⁸ Groot, 'Vlaggen in top en stenen door de ruiten', 174-175.

¹⁹ Te Velde, 'Nederlands nationaal besef vanaf 1800', 175.

²⁰ Groot, 'Vlaggen in top en stenen door de ruiten', 174-175.

²¹ Te Velde, 'Nederlands nationaal besef vanaf 1800', 178-179.

²² Ibidem, 178-179.

opposition, the phenomenon experienced growth and diversification. Namely, Michael Wintle argues that the development of conflict with liberals over religious and educational issues led to a political awakening among large parts of the religious middle- and lower classes. The political mobilization process of these people by their representatives, such as Abraham Kuyper, led to the development of an 'identity or consciousness' on the national level i.e. Calvinist and Catholic variants of national identity.²³ Frans Groot presents a similar argument, although his version suggests a slightly more complex situation in which the various communities were not living apart as strongly as suggested by Wintle's claim. He acknowledges that from the second half of the nineteenth century Catholic and Orthodox-Calvinist minorities started opposing the established liberal and conservative elite, but also recognizes that beside their wish for adapting the dominating national culture to their own, they themselves adapted to that same culture as well.²⁴ Nevertheless, the work of both historians indicates that Te Velde does not pay enough attention to the variety of national consciousness and, more importantly, the factors that contributed to their development.²⁵

Beside the developments instigated by these societal organizations and socio-political groups, on a more cultural and individual level certain initiatives were also unfolding. Although not dedicated to national consciousness as such, Joep Leerssen illuminates in one of his publications how during the nineteenth century the discourse of historians, poets, romanticists and philologists contributed to the development of a Dutch cultural self-image which indirectly assisted the process of Dutch nation-building (in his study, Leerssen also incorporates Flemish-Belgian, German and France developments).²⁶ Although he does not use the words 'national consciousness' here, the word 'self-image' denotes self-awareness. Describing it as Dutch, national consciousness seems an apt interpretation. Therefore, it can be distilled from his book that the actors mentioned contributed to the development of national consciousness during the nineteenth century. The research conducted by Lotte Jensen suggests something similar. She follows an approach similar to Leerssen's by studying the hero worship and glorification of the Dutch national past in Dutch literature during the first half of the nineteenth century. Jensen indicates that this phenomenon played an

²³ Wintle, 'Natievorming, onderwijs en godsdienst in Nederland', 21-24.

²⁴ Groot, 'Vlaggen in top en stenen door de ruiten', 172.

²⁵ One might wonder at this part of the historiographical analysis why Te Velde's dissertation *Gemeenschapszin en plichtsbef. Liberalisme en Nationalisme in Nederland, 1870-1918* (The Hague 1992) is not incorporated in the historiographical analysis. In this publication, Te Velde namely argues that liberals tried to counter the disintegration of the nation through various means, such as celebrations of the monarchy (page 121). In that sense, one might think that those means contributed to the dissemination of national consciousness. However, this seems not to have been the case. These means were merely meant to create unity between the various groups of Dutch society (page 121). Hence, it seems that they were not meant to entrench a specific kind of national consciousness. Given the function of the liberal initiatives, Te Velde's dissertation is not incorporated in the analysis.

²⁶ Joep Leerssen, *De bronnen van het vaderland. Taal, literatuur en de afbakening van Nederland 1806-1890* (Nijmegen 2011) 21-22.

important role in the nation-building process.²⁷ Following Leerssen's reasoning, it is plausible that the writers of this literature also contributed to the development of a Dutch cultural self-image. Lastly, Jan Bank's research is illuminating in understanding the initiatives by the group of persons studied in this paragraph. Instead of Leerssen's and Jensen's focus on literature, Bank employs a broader perspective by studying the political and cultural dimensions of phenomena such as civil initiatives for the monumentalization of the national past (i.e. founding of historic monuments), the characterological idealization of artists and the development of contemporary national (i.e. 'vaderlandse') art. Bank aggregates these phenomena using the term 'cultural nationalism', which according to him were 'aspirations to and expressions of a new consciousness of solidarity, a rising national consciousness.'²⁸ Hence, his research offers the possibility to draw valuable clues for this thesis. According to Bank, cultural nationalism in general was civic by nature, 'carried' by civil initiatives and able to cross the boundaries of religions, despite the existence of differences between them.²⁹ In the context of Bank's exploration of cultural nationalism, it is also valuable to mention Te Velde's observation that the citizenry organized national holidays and commemorations.³⁰

The historiography discussed above exhibits a strong focus on the elites of Dutch society, suggesting that the dissemination of national consciousness was mostly the result of initiatives by that group. This observation connects to a similar one by Anne Petterson. She states in her dissertation *Eigenwijs vaderland* (2017) that the development of the Netherlands as a cultural nation during the nineteenth century has mostly been studied as a process instigated and maintained by the 'societal elite'.³¹ Subsequently, she shows that the situation was rather different by arguing on the basis of a case study of nineteenth-century Amsterdam that the development of national identity was not merely a process instigated by the elite, but one that slowly developed towards a form in which upper and lower classes interacted with each other (from the 1880s and 1890s onward).³² Although Petterson does not dwell upon the issue of concern here (the dissemination of national consciousness to a larger public), her findings suggest that such phenomena cannot be fully comprehended without incorporating the perspectives and initiatives of ordinary citizens.

To recapitulate, the historiography suggests that the dissemination of national consciousness was mostly the result of initiatives by the elites of Dutch society. The research

²⁷ Lotte Jenssen, *De verheerlijking van het verleden. Helden, literatuur en natievorming in de negentiende eeuw* (Nijmegen 2008) 9.

²⁸ Jan Bank, *Het roemrijk vaderland. Cultureel nationalisme in Nederland in de negentiende eeuw* (The Hague 1990) 8-11 and 41.

²⁹ Bank, *Het roemrijk vaderland*, 41-42 and 53.

³⁰ Te Velde, 'Nederlands nationaal besef vanaf 1800', 176.

³¹ Anne Petterson, *Eigenwijs vaderland. Populair nationalisme in negentiende-eeuws Amsterdam* (Amsterdam 2017) 11.

³² Petterson, *Eigenwijs vaderland*, 264-265.

in general shows that up until 1870 the elites disseminated national consciousness by means of education, literature, art, national holidays and commemorations, the activities of civic societies and the founding of monuments to a larger number of citizens of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The problem is, however, that the historiography lacks a sufficient periodization, thus making it difficult to gain an indication of the question at which moment the dissemination of national consciousness was finished for each layer of Dutch society. The focus on the upper classes as the initiators and disseminators of national consciousness suggests, however, that that consciousness was entrenched among them at a relatively early stage, and that they therefore did not have to bother anymore with their own ranks, and merely had to deal with the societal groups 'beneath' them. As such, the dissemination of national consciousness seems to have been a stable process up until the 1870s. It was only from these years onwards, the historiography suggests, that the process became more dynamic due to the Catholic and Orthodox-Calvinist opposition, and the input of the lower classes.

Petterson's study shows that it is imperative to conduct research in the ways in which ordinary people contributed to the dissemination of national consciousness. Without dismissing the usefulness and necessity of conducting research from a bottom-up angle, this thesis stays with a top-down perspective since the role of the elites in that process has, as mentioned above, not yet been sufficiently understood. As suggested by the historiographic overview, the Dutch elite's use of the German unification for the development of national consciousness has not yet been sufficiently addressed.³³ To obtain a fuller understanding of the dissemination of national consciousness between 1815 and 1900, it is necessary to follow Pekelder's research direction.

1.2.2. *Historiography on Dutch-German relations*

Such research is also valuable for the research into Dutch-German relations. In his article, Pekelder argues that the foundation of national consciousness was accompanied by a distancing of the Dutch towards Germany. For this reason, he hypothesizes that the nineteenth century can be seen as the breeding ground (or: *Sattelzeit*) of the modern Dutch relation to Germany, which is characterized by a Dutch tendency to disassociate from Germany.³⁴ Given

³³ It needs to be said that the German unification did not go completely unnoticed to the historiography providing clues about the development of Dutch national consciousness. Niek van Sas writes in *De Metamorfose van Nederland* that worries about the unification resulted in an 'accentuation of Dutch nationality'. The problem is, however, that he does not present evidence or references for this development (see: page 563). Te Velde describes in *Gemeenschapszin en plichtsbef* that various reactions of prominent liberals to the Franco-Prussian war and the founding of the German empire reflected insecurity about the question whether the Netherlands still had a strong identity (see: page 31), but he does not argue whether this insecurity was the cause for liberals to develop a stronger sense of national consciousness among the Dutch.

³⁴ Pekelder, 'Nederland en de Duitse Kwestie', 80. Pekelder describes in his article that it can be distilled from public debates and the historiography on Dutch-German relations that the Dutch relation towards Germany was co-determined by five structural factors. Two of these will be presented in more detail. The first one is the

how the Dutch need to disassociate from Germany seemingly is determined by structural factors, Pekelder points out that a confirmation of his hypothesis offers the possibility to better estimate the ratio to which incidental or conjunctural factors (such as the German unification) and structural factors determined the Dutch relation to Germany.³⁵

Beside this benefit, the research also proves valuable for the research on Dutch-German relations during the nineteenth century as such. Most of the studies in this field are characterized by a tendency to singularly focus on a small number of publicists and higher-ranking politicians and officials to determine Dutch perceptions of Germany during the German unification.³⁶ Coenraad Tamse, for example, studies in his dissertation on the foreign policies of the Netherlands and Belgium the Dutch views on certain international tensions between 1859 and 1871, such as the events occurring in Germany. Given the theme of Tamse's research, the focus is strongly on the perceptions of the aforementioned actors, such as the liberal professor Opzoomer, Second Chamber deputy and foreign minister Van Zuylen van Nijvelt, the anti-revolutionary parliamentarian Groen van Prinsterer, and former minister Johannes Bosscha.³⁷ Renate Loos studies the perceptions and depictions of Germany from various publicists who wrote for *De Gids*, a periodical written by leading Dutch intellectuals. Especially H.P.G. Quack is a recurring name in her analysis.³⁸

asymmetry in the relationship due to the differences regarding phenomena such as territory, population size, economic importance and power. As such, the Netherlands constantly maneuvers between defending its independency and identity vis-à-vis Germany on the one hand, whilst intensifying the relations with Germany for the sake of her welfare and security on the other. This asymmetry resulted in a Dutch need to disassociate from Germany, which is strengthened by the close cultural proximity of Germany. Due to the high amount of cultural affiliation between the two countries, the Dutch have a tendency to highlight the differences rather than the similarities (this forms the second structural factor in the relation). See: page 61-62.

³⁵ Ibidem, 80. Pekelder also points out that a confirmation of his hypothesis enables to test Wielenga's and Horst Lademacher's supposition that factors such as the asymmetry in the relation have a larger explanatory power for certain struggles between the two countries after World War Two than the memory of the German occupation. However, since such a confirmation requires research incorporating a longer period than the one studied here, the thesis will not elaborate on this supposition (see: page 80).

³⁶ See: Hermann W. von der Dunk, 'Die Niederlande und die Reichsgründung', in: Walter Hofer (ed.), *Europa und die Einheit Deutschlands. Eine Bilanz nach 100 Jahren* (Köln 1970) 83-117, there 93-107; Horst Lademacher, *Zwei ungleiche Nachbarn. Wege und Wandlungen der deutsch-niederländischen Beziehungen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt 1990) 27-64; Renate Loos, *Deutschland zwischen „Schwärmertum“ und „Realpolitik“. Die Sicht der niederländischen Kulturzeitschrift De Gids auf die politische Kultur des Nachbarn Preußen-Deutschland 1837-1914* (Münster 2007) 77-175; Roelof Kuiper, *Zelfbeeld en wereldbeeld. Antirevolutionairen en het buitenland, 1848-1905* (Kampen 1992) 59-63, 88-93, 97-103; C.A. Tamse, *Nederland en België in Europa (1859-1871) De zelfstandigheidspolitiek van twee kleine staten* (The Hague 1973) 27-87; J.C. Boogman, *Nederland en de Duitse Bond 1815-1851 Deel 2* (Groningen and Jakarta 1955) 268-504. André Beening's dissertation *Onder de vleugels van de adelaar. De Duitse buitenlandse politiek ten aanzien van Nederland in de periode 1890-1914* (Amsterdam 1994) also presents Dutch views on the German unification, but builds strongly on some of the aforementioned publications and some brochures by writers such as Multatuli (see: page 63-66).

³⁷ Tamse, *Nederland en België in Europa*, 27-87. Tamse also notes how in the last quarter of the 1860s the Dutch started to grow aversion against Prussia and Germany due to the perception that Germany was becoming a threat. He subsequently states that Dutch national consciousness started to oppose itself against Germany (as well as France, which was also perceived as a threat). Tamse thus confirms Pekelder's hypothesis, although he does not provide any reference for his statements (see: 101-102).

³⁸ Loos, *Deutschland zwischen „Schwärmertum“ und „Realpolitik“*, 12-13, 77-175.

Although these subjects are necessary to study, such an approach is also problematic because it does not offer a representative view of the elitist conceptions of Germany. During the nineteenth century, the staff of newspapers could namely belong to the elite as well. As Joan Hemels indicates, the newspapers *Arnhemsche Courant* (AC), *Dagblad van Zuidholland en 's Gravenhage*, *Algemeen Handelsblad* (AH) and *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* (NRC) were known during the nineteenth century as the 'elite press'.³⁹ Hemels uses this term to designate the reading public of the newspapers, but it is also a useful term for referring to the newspaper's producers.⁴⁰ The only scholars employing these perspectives in the historiography on Dutch-German relations, however, are Anne Doedens and Pieter de Coninck.⁴¹ Although De Coninck and Doedens provide a relatively broad perspective (and an

³⁹ Joan Hemels, 'De pers als 'een der groote machten' ofwel het late gelijk van dr. Abraham Kuiper', *De Negentiende Eeuw* 15 (1991) 2, 53-69, there 55.

⁴⁰ During the 1860s and 1870s, for example, the main articles and commentaries of AC were written by Willem Olivier. He was the son of Nicolaas Olivier, the former secretary-general of the department of Justice in The Hague. Willem himself started studying law in 1839 in Leiden, concluded with a doctorate in 1847. See: J.H. von Santen, 'Olivier, Willem Christiaan Daniel (1820-1885)' (version 12-11-2013), <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/bwn1880-2000/lemmata/bwn4/oliviw> (07-07-2019).

Hartog Hijman Tels, the editor-in-chief of NRC between 1844 and 1869, and co-editor-in-chief between 1869 and 1885, followed a similar trajectory. The son of a merchant in jewelry and owner of a factory that produced mirrors and frameworks, Tels started studying law in 1830 in Leiden, finishing his studies with a doctorate in 1838 as well. Afterwards, he started a law firm. See: J.H. von Santen, 'Tels, Hartog Hijman (1810-1885)' (version 12-11-2013), <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/bwn1880-2000/lemmata/bwn4/tels> (07-07-2019).

Between 1860 and 1866, Sjoerd Vening Meinesz was the editor-in-chief of AH. He was the son of a tax-collector who by 1846 had become one of the most affluent persons of North-Holland and possessed multiple pieces of land in Drenthe and Overijssel. Sjoerd Vening Meinesz himself went to the *Atheneum* in Amsterdam, which was subsequently followed by a study in law in Leiden. Just like Tels and Olivier, he also concluded his studies in 1856 with a doctorate. See: T.J.C. van Hengel, *The Diving Dutchman: het marien-gravimetisch onderzoek van F.A. Vening Meinesz (1887-1966)* (w.p. 2014) 22; Historische Kring Erica, 'Stamreeks van Sjoerd Anne Vening Meinesz. Directeur van de N.V. Drentsche Landontginnings Maatschappij (1833-1909)' (version 20-10-2014), <http://historischekringierica.nl/genealogie/sjoerd-anne-vening-meinesz/> (07-07-2019).

As described above, Wielenga indicates that during the nineteenth century the persons occupying important positions in governance, finance and economics belonged to the upper class. Thus, the background, studies and occupations of persons such as Olivier, Tels and Vening Meinesz indicate that they belonged to that layer.

⁴¹ Pieter de Coninck does so in his dissertation *Een les uit Pruisen*, which studies the Dutch perceptions on the *Kulturkampf* between 1870 and 1880. Although the book is thus not completely focused on the period under consideration here, the French-Prussian War of 1870 and the subsequent *Reichsgründung* in 1871 are incorporated as well. These events are considered from a balanced perspective using both the views of select publicists and officials on the one hand (such as Tellegen, Opzoomer, and Groen van Prinsterer) and the commentaries of newspaper editors on the other (e.g. from the staff of *Het Vaderland*, *Dagblad van Zuid-Holland en 's-Gravenhage*, AC and AH). Studying these sources, Coninck derives that the strong economic and cultural intertwinement between Germany and the Netherlands, as well as rumors about annexation, led to a higher awareness of 'national individuality' among Dutchmen. Thus, De Coninck already provides some confirmation of the suggestions presented by Pekelder and Boterman. The problem is that he does not connect his findings to the historiography on Dutch national consciousness, neither does he conduct a structural analysis of the German unification, thus impeding adequate judgements about the importance of the unification for the dissemination of national consciousness. One could, however, argue that this critique is unfair since applying these dimensions would stray from his actual research subject. See: Pieter de Coninck, *Een les uit Pruisen. Nederland en de Kulturkampf, 1870-1880* (Leiden 1998) 142-153 and 158-159.

An approach similar to De Coninck's is visible in Anne Doedens' dissertation on Dutch foreign policy during the Franco-Prussian War: instead of merely considering the imaging of Germany of a small number of prominent publicists, he also studies the perceptions of newspapers editors by studying newspapers such as NRC and AH. See:

indication of the necessity of conducting the type of research proposed by Pekelder and Boterman), there is a lack of structural analysis for the period of the German unification. In addition to the added value of such research for the historiography on Dutch national consciousness, it also offers the benefit of developing a fuller and more thorough picture of elite views on Germany during the period of the unification, and the origins of the modern Dutch relation to Germany.

1.3 Demarcation, sources and methodology

1.3.1 Demarcation

As indicated above, this thesis aims to study the formation of Dutch national consciousness in relation to the German unification between 1864 and 1871. Due to the inherent limitations of a thesis the size as this one, it is impossible to conduct a continuous analysis of all the years during the indicated period. The research will thus be limited to moments during which the unification became a possibility or an explicit goal/manifestation. Below, some further deliberations are presented about the specific temporal and thematic focus (in order to account for potential discursive changes as a result of the discussed moments, a month before and after the period of each case is included in the subsequent periodization).

The first period that will be scrutinized concerns the Second Schleswig War and Treaty of Vienna (January 1864-November 1864). During this phase, Prussia and Austria attacked Denmark in order to end the disputed status of the Holstein and Schleswig territories. After the London Protocol of 1852, it was decided that both areas belonged to Denmark, but needed to be treated as independent states. In 1864, however, Denmark decided to bring Schleswig under complete Danish control. This step was opposed by the son of Christian August of Augustenburg (a former claimant to Schleswig), who argued for the separation of the duchies from Denmark.⁴² Since Augustenburg was known as a German and a liberal, he gained strong support from the German liberal national unification movement. So-called Schleswig-Holstein-associations were founded across the country, with citizens from every political affiliation joining in.⁴³ In other words, a sudden rise of nationalistic agitation was visible in Germany. Together with Austria, Prussia declared war on Denmark (although they did not act on the basis of nationalistic concerns⁴⁴). Peace was concluded in October 1864 through the Treaty of Vienna. Another dimension of this treaty was the ceding of Holstein and Schleswig to respectively Austria and Prussia. Given the nationalistic fervor instigated by the liberal national unification movement, it is necessary to incorporate this period.

Anne Doedens, *Nederland en de Frans-Duitse oorlog. Enige aspecten van de buitenlandse politiek en de binnenlandse verhoudingen van ons land omstreeks het jaar 1870* (Zeist 1973) 70-77, 167-175.

⁴² David G. Williamson, *Germany since 1815. A Nation Forged and Renewed* (Basingstoke 2005) 72.

⁴³ Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866. Bürgerwelt und starker Staat* (München 1983) 770-771.

⁴⁴ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866*, 771-772; Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 72-73.

The second period is directly related to Schleswig-Holstein: conflict between Austria and Prussia over the acquired territories led to the Austro-Prussian War in July 1866.⁴⁵ The eventual Prussian victory resulted in the Prussian annexation of northern German states that had sided with Austria during the war. Furthermore, the North-German Confederation was founded: a reconfiguration of the German Confederation, excluding Austria and the south-German states. Although the new confederation was officially founded in July 1867 by adopting a new constitution, already in October 1866 the remaining northerly-situated states had joined the institution. Due to size limitations, only this period will be studied.

Finally, the thesis turns to an analysis of the Franco-Prussian War and the consequential founding of the German Empire, with which the southern German states were incorporated with the northern states into one single body (June 1870 – February 1871). It is necessary to study this period as a whole, seeing as already from the start of the war German citizens pleaded for the implementation of (or realization of) the German unification.⁴⁶ Although the Treaty of Frankfurt of May 1871, with which the Franco-Prussian War was ended, also gave Germany a few new territories (Alsace and Lorraine), the period between the Empire's founding and the treaty's conclusion will not be studied since it did not entail such a dramatic and symbolic territorial reconfigurations as the founding of the empire, with which the unification period was ended.⁴⁷

Although these periods were strongly characterized by political events, the research will also incorporate Dutch views on phenomena not related to the unification, such as society and culture. This is necessary, because a mere focus on events related to the unification will create a too simplistic portrait of the Dutch conceptions about Germany. Consider, for example, culture: since German philosophy, literature, theology, historicism, and classical music strongly influenced Dutch culture during the nineteenth century⁴⁸, it is reasonable to

⁴⁵ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866*, 774.

⁴⁶ Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866-1918. Zweiter Band. Machtstaat vor der Demokratie* (München 1992) 63.

⁴⁷ One might wonder at this stage why the Luxemburg crisis of 1867, in which the Netherlands was involved, will not be studied. This is simply because as an international territorial conflict between France and the Netherlands on the one hand and Prussia on the other about France's willingness to buy Luxemburg from the Netherlands (see: Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 80), it did not have anything to do with the theme of concern here (the German unification). Furthermore, one might note that the period of the German revolutions and rise and fall of the Frankfurt Parliament in 1848 and 1849 is not incorporated. As a consequence of the revolutions, the Frankfurt Parliament was founded and presented itself during its existence as the representative of the to be realized German national unity, grounded upon the political nationalism developed during the Napoleonic occupation of Germany. Although this attempt failed, the parliament was well known as a symbol of the political unity that had to be created in either the short or long-term (see: Pekelder, 'Nederland en de Duitse kwestie', 65; Remieg Aerts, 'Op gepaste afstand. De plaats van het parlement in de natievorming van de negentiende eeuw.', in: Carla van Baalen a.o. (eds.), *Jaarboek Parlementaire Geschiedenis 2007* (Nijmegen 2007) 25-41, there 25). Although this information makes clear that 1848 and 1849 are also necessary to study, it needs to be noted that the German national unification process reached a high during the 1860s under Prussia's lead (see: Pekelder, 'Nederland en de Duitse kwestie', 75). So, the period between 1864 and 1871, as argued above, is the most relevant option to pursue here.

⁴⁸ Boterman, *Duitsland als Nederland probleem*, 13.

expect that German culture was appraised by Dutchmen during the years of concern here. This notion suggests that Dutch views on Germany could have been more complex than a mere study of unification-related events might show.

Whether this is true will be determined by studying the views of Dutch liberals. Their perspectives need to be studied due to their influential political, cultural and societal position during the period of concern here. According to Henk te Velde, after the Dutch constitutional revision of 1848 the liberals gained a decisive position in the Dutch political system and started to dominate social and intellectual life. It was only from 1870 onwards, Te Velde notes, that their position started to crumble due to the confessional and socialist opposition described above.⁴⁹ Given the dominant position of liberals in Dutch society during the period studied in this thesis, it is assumed that their imaging of Germany gives the most insight in the question how in the context of the German unification between 1864 and 1871 Dutch elites stimulated the development of national consciousness among Dutch citizens.

1.3.2 Sources

Given the historiographic focus on a select group of publicists, politicians and officials, this thesis tries to avoid such singularity by drawing attention to perspectives of elites previously less discussed. This does not mean that the former perspective will be avoided: the critique presented here should be understood as a methodological improvement complementing the perspectives of the select group of persons discussed above. Their perspective of Germany will be reconstructed on the basis of brochures, magazines and newspapers with a liberal profile.

One might note that the scope of the research will be limited due to the audience for which the mentioned types of sources were available during the period of concern here. As argued below, magazines and newspapers were (except for brochures) during most of the period of concern here only available for the upper classes of Dutch society. During the nineteenth century, the writers of brochures aimed to inform a wide audience consisting of both the upper and lower echelons of society by employing a low to very-low price for their texts.⁵⁰ They are likely of having reached at least the middle class (in addition to the upper class), since during the 1840s books became available for a price within the range of the purchasing power of that group⁵¹ (since books were larger objects, they are likely of having generally been more expensive than brochures). Magazines, on the other hand, were fairly

⁴⁹ Te Velde, *Gemeenschapszin en plichtsbeseft*, 12.

⁵⁰ Ernestine van der Wall, 'De negentiende eeuw: eeuw van Verlichting. Brochures als bronnen van kennis.', in: Paul Hoftijzer a.o. (eds.), *Bronnen van kennis. Wetenschap, kunst en cultuur in de collecties van de Leidse Universiteitsbibliotheek* (Leiden 2006) 177-188, there 182.

⁵¹ Dick van Lente, 'De markt voor drukwerk.', in: H. W. Lintsen (ed.), *Geschiedenis van de techniek in Nederland. De wording van een moderne samenleving 1800-1890. Deel II. Gezondheid en openbare hygiëne. Waterstaat en infrastructuur. Papier, druk en communicatie*. (Zutphen 1993), 181-198, there 189.

expensive and subscriptions could only be afforded by the moneyed citizenry. They were, however, available to some degree for people with less financial means, since they could be read in libraries or by renting them through portfolio's (in Dutch: *leesmappen*).⁵² The audience of newspapers was initially also relatively small. According to the historian Dick van Lente, Dutch readers of newspapers until the mid-nineteenth century consisted largely of persons belonging to a 'small elite'. It was only from 1869 onwards, when the Dutch government abolished the newspaper stamp (in Dutch: *dagbladzegel*, a tax levied on newspapers, which compared to other European countries was relatively high), that the working-class and the middle-class were likely to buy and subscribe to newspapers.⁵³ Van Lente's observations suggest that newspapers were being read by a larger number of citizens of the upper class as well between 1850 and 1869. This is a likely assumption, since the number of subscribers to newspapers, and daily and weekly journals grew from 23.850 in 1850 to 89.189 in 1866 (although it needs to be said that these numbers are hard to verify).⁵⁴

To prevent arbitrariness in the selection of relevant source material, this thesis will conduct a structural analysis of titles that existed during the whole period. Due to the size limitations to which this thesis is bound, only one periodical and three newspapers can be studied in addition to the various brochures published between 1864 and 1871. Pieter de Coninck mentions that *AC*, *AH*, *NRC* and *Het Vaderland* were leading, trend-setting publications among liberals.⁵⁵ Hence, these seem the most relevant to consider. Because only three newspapers can be studied, *Het Vaderland* will be left out of the analysis since it was only available from 1869 onwards. Whereas *AC* was fiercely liberal, *NRC* and *AH* were moderately liberal.⁵⁶ Although citizens did not necessarily follow the opinion of these newspapers, one should note that due to their leading, trend-setting qualities they were likely to determine public opinion. The impact outside of those attracted to liberalism will, however, have been limited: those who did not affiliate with liberalism did not hold oppositional newspapers such as *AC* in high regard.⁵⁷

From this set, only articles will be studied that reflect discourse from the newspaper editors, such as the editorials. Articles that are not explicitly commented on or endorsed by the editors are therefore not incorporated.⁵⁸ The used articles were mostly printed on the

⁵² Van der Wall, 'De negentiende eeuw: eeuw van Verlichting.', there 182.

⁵³ Van Lente, 'De markt voor drukwerk.', 196.

⁵⁴ Ibidem, 195.

⁵⁵ De Coninck, *Een les uit Pruisen*, 9.

⁵⁶ Maarten Schneider, *De Nederlandse krant van 'nieuwstydninghe' tot dagbladconcentratie* (Amsterdam 1968) 152.

⁵⁷ Hemels, 'De pers als 'een der groote machten' ofwel het late gelijk van dr. Abraham Kuyper', 55-56.

⁵⁸ On the basis of 'Duits', 'Deutsch' or 'Pruis', the following query has been formulated to compile the sample of relevant newspaper articles: 'Du?t?* OR Du?t?ch* OR Pru??*'. The query has been limited to a few basic words to prevent missing out on relevant sources from all the political, cultural, economic and societal dimensions that are part of the views on Germany. The use of the operator '*' allows for retrieving word combinations that use 'Duits',

newspaper's front pages. The position will, however, not have made a dramatic difference: in contrast to the present-day, the newspapers studied here consisted only of a few pages (five to six), sometimes supplemented with an attachment. For the sake of clarity, however, it will be mentioned when an article was not printed on the front-paper. Furthermore, it needs to be noted that the newspaper articles will be annotated using 'author unknown', despite the description above of the various newspaper editors. Since the studied articles were almost always written anonymously, one cannot be entirely sure that the used articles were always written by them, because there might have been certain situations induced by everyday circumstances due to which the commentaries had to be written by someone else. To avoid unnecessary errors, the articles will be annotated using 'author unknown'.

The magazine that will be analyzed is *De Gids*. After 1840, the periodical gradually became a hub for people who considered themselves liberal.⁵⁹ According to Renate Loos, from 1850 onwards it became one of the leading Dutch periodicals. She states that the periodical's articles reflect the views of the politically most influential people and shaped the opinions of propertied and educated citizens, due to the close connection of the periodical's authors to the political and societal elite.⁶⁰ De Coninck also designates the periodical as one of the leading, trend-setting periodicals alongside the previously mentioned newspapers.⁶¹ Given these characteristics, it is the most relevant magazine to consider here.⁶²

The brochures have been collected using the digital services of the *Dutch Bibliography*, a service of the Dutch Royal Library based on their collection of all publications by acknowledged Dutch publishers as well as some 'unofficial' ones.⁶³ It is therefore likely that most of the relevant brochures were retrieved.⁶⁴ Only those brochures will be studied of authors which to the elite and were affiliated to liberalism. Combined with the structural analysis of the newspapers and magazines, a balanced depiction of the liberal views on Germany can be retrieved.

'Duitsch' or 'Pruis' as a basis. The operator '?' is used to incorporate results that the search engine recognizes as an 'f' instead of an 's', or an 'l' instead of an 'i'. The sample was compiled using the website Delpher of the Dutch Royal Library, consisting of digitized Dutch newspapers. Unfortunately, the 1864-editions of *AC* and the 1870-1871 editions of *NRC* are not available. This is not a large problem: the number of editions not available is relatively small and it is thus still possible to sketch a balanced depiction of the liberal imaging of Germany.

⁵⁹ Remieg Aerts, *De letterheren. Liberale cultuur in de negentiende eeuw: het tijdschrift De Gids* (Amsterdam 1997) 12.

⁶⁰ Loos, *Deutschland zwischen „Schwärmertum“ und „Realpolitik“*, 12.

⁶¹ De Coninck, *Een les uit Pruisen*, 9.

⁶² The multiple articles named 'Politiek overzicht.' by *De Gids* have the date on which the articles were written added to the title in the footnotes (not in the bibliography), so that it is clear for the reader to which article the second, shortened references refer.

⁶³ Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 'Informatie over de Nederlandse Bibliografie' (version unknown), <https://www.kb.nl/organisatie/voor-uitgevers/informatie-over-de-nederlandse-bibliografie> (25-04-2019).

⁶⁴ The brochure sample has been assembled using the query 'Duits* OR Pruis*'.

1.3.3 Methodology

As described above, the main question this thesis aims to answer is how Dutch elites in the context of the German unification between 1864 and 1871 stimulated the development of national consciousness among the citizens of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. To answer that question, three studies will be made of the periods discussed above. Each revolves around the question how Germany was conceived during each of the aforementioned unification periods by liberal elitist publicists and newspaper editors, and how they used the concerned events to stimulate the development of national consciousness among Dutch citizens. Although the events have already shortly been described above, each chapter is introduced with a comprehensive overview of the historical context. This helps to understand the sources presented in their context and prevents the main text from becoming cluttered with historical information.

These overviews are followed by a thematically structured presentation of the commentaries on Germany. The term ‘Germany’ is broadly conceived: not only will the discourse on the country as such be studied, but also the discourse on the individual German states. Employing a thematic structure is necessary, because it aids the understanding of the specific contexts in which the development of national consciousness was stimulated. To determine how the newspaper editors and publicists sought to do so, it is necessary to ascertain whether and how the rhetorical device of contrasting the Netherlands against Germany (as described by Pekelder) is employed in their discourse on the German unification. The hypothesis is that awareness of differences between groups make them conscious of their own identity. Accordingly, the activity of contrasting has the potential of stimulating the development of national consciousness. At this stage, the narrative will not be limited to a mere presentation of examples that use the device, but reflect the liberal imaging of Germany in general during the unification. This is necessary, because it facilitates an assessment of the importance Dutch national consciousness in the context of the unification, and the possibility to provide a relatively balanced representation of the contemporary liberal views on Germany.

After determining in every chapter how liberal publicists and newspaper editors perceived Germany, and how they used the unification-related events to stimulate the development of national consciousness, the answers will be recapitulated in the conclusion to answer the main question. This subsequently enables a renewed answer to the more fundamental question of how between 1815 and 1900 national consciousness became disseminated among a broader part of the citizens of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which will be combined with a discussion of the implications of the findings.

II. The Fate of the Small

2.1 Introduction

Following prince-regent Wilhelm's (the later King of Prussia between 1861 and 1888) appointment of a relatively liberal cabinet in 1858, Germans started to entertain the idea that a new political era might have started. In this context, national unification movements were founded that stimulated a renewed debate on the question how to realize the unification of Germany.⁶⁵ Eventually, this debate started to revolve more around the question of how to reform the German Confederation rather than how to proceed with the unification as such.⁶⁶ The Austrians and Prussians, however, were not able to come to an agreement over this question of reform, which by 1863 had led to growing tensions between the two parties.⁶⁷

The Danish King Frederick VII sought to exploit these tensions by declaring in March 1863 that Schleswig would be incorporated in a new unitary Danish constitution. Although the Danish monarchy ruled over this duchy, the Treaty of London of 1852 prescribed that Denmark was not allowed to incorporate both the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein into such a constitution. Following Frederick's death in November 1863, his successor, Christian IX, stirred up the crisis by confirming the new constitution. As this violated the London-agreements, the son of Christian August of Augustenburg (a former claimant to Schleswig) reacted by pleading for the separation of the duchies from Denmark.⁶⁸

Augustenburg gained strong support by German nationalists and liberals in general, and the middle-sized German states specifically. The former groups were naturally attracted to Augustenburg's cause, since he was known as a German and a liberal. Therefore, it is not surprising that the liberal national unification movement passionately devoted itself to his rights. For the first time since 1849, Germany witnessed the formation of a large mass movement again: so-called Schleswig-Holstein associations were founded across the country, with citizens from every political affiliation joining in.⁶⁹ As stated in the general introduction, Germany hence witnessed a sudden rise of nationalistic agitation. The middle-sized states, who did not want the hegemony of either Prussia or Austria, acted more out of power motives by realizing that the incorporation of the duchies in the German Confederation could serve as a counterweight to the power of Austria and Prussia. Bismarck on the other hand, favored the rule of the Danes over the duchies rather than an independent rule by Augustenburg, reasoning that the latter would not be likely to support Prussia in the Confederation.

⁶⁵ Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 65 and 70.

⁶⁶ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866*, 704-705.

⁶⁷ Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 72.

⁶⁸ Ibidem, 72.

⁶⁹ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866*, 770-771.

Furthermore, Bismarck believed that an escalation of the situation might lead to an intervention by British and Russian forces.⁷⁰ Prussia, at this moment in time, was therefore fully devoted to upholding the agreements made in London in 1852. Bismarck was namely convinced that a realistic form of politics regarding the Danish situation would need to be grounded on European treaties, since every major power was bounded to them. Austria eventually joined Prussia. One of the primary reasons for cooperating with Prussia was that Austria, in the capacity of a European power, needed to remain committed to the European treaties, a similar position as Prussia. Additionally, the Austrian government doubted as well whether a liberal and national duke such as Augustenburg would serve her interests. Thus, Prussia and Austria sought to temper the nationalistic fervor of the rest of the Confederation.⁷¹

Eventually, after Augustenburg by January 1864 had set up an unofficial court in Kiel, Prussia and Austria decided to occupy Schleswig on February 1. As such, they wanted to prevent the Confederate troops (Saxons and Bavarians) from entering the duchy and making the situation irreversible. Bismarck sought to avoid an intervention by the other major powers until Denmark was defeated. Hence, Prussia started delaying an international conference in London until it eventually defeated the Danes during the Battle of Dybbøl in February 1864. Denmark believed that it could expect support by the other Great Powers during the conference and was not willing to grant autonomy to Schleswig. Austria and Prussia subsequently declared that they would no longer commit themselves to the Treaty of London of 1852. Since England was not willing to intervene, the Danes against their expectations ended up in an isolated position. The fighting between the Danish and German armies continued after June 26, when the armistice ended that followed the Battle of Dybbøl. Shortly later, the Danish army was defeated again. Peace was re-established after the conclusion of the Treaty of Vienna on October 30, ceding the duchies of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg to Prussia and Austria, who ruled over them as a condominium.⁷²

How did Dutch liberals view these events? Did they sympathize with the unification movement, or did they identify more with the Prussian and Austrians? And how did they view the war in general? As a mere German-Danish conflict, or also as a warning for their own country? As will be argued below, in 1864 the liberal authors did not conceive Germany as a threat to the Netherlands. Although the former was depicted as dangerous, the authors did not connect this danger explicitly to their own country. Accordingly, no stimulations for the development of national consciousness are yet to be found. To illustrate this, let us turn to the main theme in the discourse on Germany between January and November 1864: the German nationalistic fervor that followed the Danish kings' decisions.

⁷⁰ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866*, 771; Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 72 and 74.

⁷¹ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866*, 771-772; Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 73.

⁷² Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866*, 772-773; Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 73.

2.2 The Whims of Nationalism

At the start of 1864, *AH* and *NRC* strongly condemn the nationalistic fervor. Whilst reflecting on 1863, *AH* kicks off the new year with a pessimistic view on Germany. The newspaper argues that 1863 in general witnessed a plethora of negative and positive developments. Diplomatic conflicts, reforms, and regime changes were alternated by ‘the largest intertwinements [...], the formation of bonds of civilization and beneficent development, [and] the maintenance of a state of general peace’. Subsequently, however, *AH* continues to elaborate on the more negative phenomena. Afterwards, the newspaper turns to a reflection on Germany. There, the newspaper notes that the German Confederation has been on the brink of turning to an occupation of Schleswig and Holstein, and argues that during the last days of 1863 some German states have already made a push in that direction by stationing troops in the concerned territories. Concluding its discussion of Germany, *AH* states that the German-Danish complications pose a dangerous situation, especially with an eye on the presence of multiple other ‘propellants’ across Europe.⁷³

Using the same metaphor as *AH*, *NRC* also argues in a reflection on the European political situation of 1863 that some easily ignitable ‘propellants’ can be traced in multiple European countries, capable of ‘igniting everything around them.’ In that regard, the newspaper notes how division is characterizing the domestic situation of some countries. Subsequently, the newspaper presents Prussia and Austria as two examples of that phenomenon.⁷⁴ Although *NRC* only refers to Austria and Prussia, the discourse is similar to the one presented by *AH*: either a few German countries or the German Confederation as a whole are considered dangerous entities.

Shortly after, *NRC* presents a relatively fierce consideration of Germany. After denouncing the early weapon-buying of the duke of Augustenburg for his contingency of volunteers in Schleswig, the newspaper turns to a discussion of the English newspaper *Morning Post*, which argued that England should not be primary preserver of European peace, since Prussia and Austria allegedly would have much more to gain from that situation. According to *NRC*, *Morning Post* also stated that the German annexation of Schleswig might lead to a growing need among other European powers to enlarge their territories (in order to preserve the balance of power). Subsequently, *NRC* seems to stop its description of the English newspaper text and states that it is ‘obvious’ that Germany merely wants to shrink the position of Denmark and create an opportunity to build a fleet in the harbor of Kiel. *NRC* then argues that it is about time that England presents a warning to Germany given the risks involved in

⁷³ Author unknown, ‘Het jaar 1863.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 01-01-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010139012:mpeg21:a0002> (12-04-2019).

⁷⁴ Author unknown, ‘Het jaar 1863.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 01-01-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111093:mpeg21:a0001> ((12-04-2019)).

such a move.⁷⁵ By doing so and pointing at the alleged ‘true’ motives of Germany, *NRC* presents the country as dangerous and opportunistic.

A few days later, *NRC*’s discourse is relatively differentiated. Prussia, as well as Austria, are no longer considered the sole culprits of an escalation of the Schleswig-Holstein question. During the first few weeks of January, the newspaper starts to make a distinction between these two states and the so-called ‘middle-states’. In the first of these articles, *NRC* discusses a proposal presented by Bavaria in the German parliament. This proposal revolves - among other things - around the assertions that the parliament is not bound to the London Protocol of 1852, and that the Duke of Augustenburg is the legitimate successor to the Danish throne. Subsequently, *NRC* states that the latter issue is the most delicate dimension of the whole conflict, and that Prussia and Austria will do everything to challenge it. *NRC* also mentions that Prussia and Austria presented a different proposal, which asserted that if the Danish king does not withdraw the November Constitution, they will occupy Schleswig. Although *NRC* indicates that this proposal is dangerous (which given the discourse of a few days earlier seems to refer to an escalation of the conflict to other European powers), it also states that Prussia and Austria might be eclipsed by the ‘passionate’ middle-states. Given the subsequent sentence that the German-Danish conflict might thus become more worrying, the suggestion is that the middle-states are capable of escalating the conflict to a much higher level than the one potentially resulting out of Prussia’s and Austria’s plan.⁷⁶ Although the newspaper still considers the two states as dangerous for the rest of Europe, it is thus also suggested that the politics of the middle-states entail a much larger danger than the politics of the former two. *NRC* continues this discourse in an article published a few weeks later discussing the recent German political developments. Noting that both the English government and newspapers are warning Germany for the risks involved in reckless procedures, the newspaper states that Prussia and Austria are much more inclined to take these cautions seriously. The middle-states, on the other hand, are accused of not bothering with these warnings. *NRC* describes the condition of these states as ‘exited’ and suggests that as a result of that condition the English cautions will not affect their war plans.⁷⁷

Although *NRC* thus presents a relatively refined conception of Germany during January, *De Gids* does not bother with such an approach and generalizes Germany. Hendrick Quack, one of the magazine’s writers about politics, bemoans in an analysis of the political situation across Europe that the continent is indifferent to the Russian suppression of the

⁷⁵ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 2 Januarij.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 03-01-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111095:mpeg21:a0001> (15-04-2019).

⁷⁶ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 4 Januarij.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 04-01-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111097:mpeg21:a0002> (15-04-2019).

⁷⁷ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 12 Januarij.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 13-01-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111105:mpeg21:a0001> (15-04-2019).

Polish January Uprising, which erupted a year before. Noting that nobody seems to care about the Polish nationality, Quack turns to Germany and states that simultaneously the whole country is in turmoil to help Schleswig-Holstein, since it might give the Germans an opportunity to obtain a port for a future fleet.⁷⁸ Implicitly accusing them of opportunism and double standards (given the fact that an important element of the Schleswig-Holstein issue was nationalism), the author later states that the war Germany waged against Denmark between 1849 and 1852 was a 'sad' event.⁷⁹ Additionally, the German population is accused of being incapable of achieving political progress. According to Quack, the idea of German unity could become very powerful among the German population due to the domination of foreign powers over Germany during the 17th and 18th centuries, and the territorial fragmentation after 1815. Since the idea was so powerful, Quack suggests that the German population was unable to make proper decisions with regard to the Schleswig-Holstein question. As such, he notes that this issue is a 'repetition of an old symbol', with which he seems to suggest that the population has returned again to her former, typical state of fragmentation (As shown above, the Second Schleswig War was preceded by discord between the German states about the question how to proceed with the Danish complications. As such, 'fragmentation' presumably seems a fitting term for Quack to describe the situation).⁸⁰

The negative portrayal of Germany is also visible in another article of the January-edition of *De Gids*, written by an unknown author who notes that the Dutch territories of Limburg and Luxemburg are officially part of the German Confederation, after which the author argues that the Netherlands is thus faced with the danger that at a certain moment 'one of our limbs' (Limburg) could be called to arms to participate in issues such as Schleswig-Holstein. By negatively answering the rhetorical question how a complete 'body' can be free when one of its limbs is entangled with other 'bodies', Germany is depicted as a potential violator of the integrity of the Netherlands.⁸¹

After the war between Germany and Denmark started on February 1, Germany is considered in more explicit terms. Exemplary is *De Gids*: the negative characterization visible in January continues in its February-edition. It needs to be said, however, that the periodical's articles that will be discussed are likely of having been written before the start of the war since they seem to discuss potential occurrences of an invasion or potential consequences of such

⁷⁸ H.P.G. Quack, 'Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 25 December 1863.', in: author unknown, *De Gids. Acht en twintigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1864), binding I, January, 172.

⁷⁹ Quack, 'Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 25 December 1863.', 174.

⁸⁰ Ibidem, 177.

⁸¹ Author unknown, '1813 en 1815 in onderling verband beschouwd.', in: author unknown, *De Gids. Acht en twintigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1864) binding I, January, 95-96.

an event. The first of these texts was written by Carel Engelbregt⁸², and is dedicated to the origins of the conflict between Denmark, and Schleswig and Holstein.⁸³ Although the largest part of the article thus concerns a historical description, Engelbregt also has a few remarks about contemporary Germany. In the article, he states that the German Confederate army does formally not have the right to cross the river Eider (which forms a border between Schleswig and Holstein) into Schleswig. Subsequently, he states that the ‘Eiderparty’⁸⁴ and the Germans are constantly threatening the peace of Europe with ‘dark clouds.’⁸⁵ In addition to the Danes, Germany is thus depicted by Engelbregt as an ominous country posing a danger for the stability of the continent as a whole. Whereas Engelbregt is quite resolute about Germany’s unrighteousness to invade Schleswig, Quack is less judgemental about a potential invasion of the duchy: concluding a section of a discussion of the Schleswig-Holstein question, he states that as long as Germany has not finished its own ‘state situation’, it should not ‘reach out to what smiles upon it from a distance.’⁸⁶ Germany is, in other words, allowed to invade a country such as Denmark, but only when it has put its own house in order. Quack is thus more condemning about the domestic situation of Germany. He namely refers with the words ‘state situation’ to the difference between Bismarck and the German people on the question how to proceed with the German-Danish question. Lamenting about this lack of unity, Quack thus continues his negative discourse of January on the political abilities of the German population.⁸⁷

Given the way *NRC* conceives in January of a war between German states and Denmark, it is not surprising that the newspaper entertains a similar negative stance in the wake of the invasion. After arguing that there are no doubts anymore about the potentiality of Prussian and Austrian troops crossing the Eider river, and that people who hoped that diplomacy might have offered a solution to the conflict, the newspaper states that the river-crossing has already occurred. Subsequently, *NRC* mentions that it does not want to speculate about the consequences that might evolve out of the German actions, but states that the invasion is ‘hazardous, very hazardous’.⁸⁸ Although the newspaper does not explicitly state

⁸² Besides his writing activities for *De Gids*, Engelbregt occupied various administrative positions in the Dutch educational system after he finished his doctorate in 1842. See: F. Jos. van den Branden and J.G. Frederiks, *Biographisch woordenboek der Noord- en Zuidnederlandse letterkunde* (Amsterdam 1888-1891) 235.

⁸³ C.A. Engelbregt, ‘Sleeswijk-Holstein tegenover Denemarken.’, in: author unknown, *De Gids. Acht en twintigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1864), binding II, February, 258.

⁸⁴ This term likely refers to the Danish nationalist party, also known as the ‘Eider Danes’ (due to the Eider river forming the border between Schleswig and Holstein), who argued for a closer integration of Schleswig in the Danish Kingdom. See: Michael Embree, *Bismarck’s First War: The Campaign of Schleswig and Jutland 1864* (Solihull 2016) 18.

⁸⁵ Engelbregt, ‘Sleeswijk-Holstein tegenover Denemarken.’, 317-318.

⁸⁶ H.P.G. Quack, ‘Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 25 Januarij 1864.’, in: author unknown, *De Gids. Acht en twintigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1864), binding I, February, 431.

⁸⁷ Quack, ‘Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 25 Januarij 1863.’, 425-431.

⁸⁸ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 1 Februarij.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 01-02-1864. (version unknown) [https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111125:mpeg21:a0002\(17-04-2019\)](https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111125:mpeg21:a0002(17-04-2019)).

what this hazard precisely entails, it is likely that it is the same as mentioned earlier (the Europe-wide escalation of the conflict.) This indicates that *NRC* still follows the idea that Austria and Prussia are not merely countries dangerous for Denmark.

By referring to the conflict between Germany and Denmark as a ‘high-stakes game’ (as will be elaborated below), *AH* entertains a conception of the situation similar to *NRC* in an analysis of the conflict a few days after the German troops had crossed the Eider following the nationalistic fervor. Especially Prussia is considered negatively: noting that the Prussian king and his inner circle did not respect the Danish king’s promise to grant Danish demands calling for a withdrawal of the November Constitution, the newspaper thus portrays the Prussian state as immoral. Despite the newspaper’s attempt to understand the Prussian and Austrian way of acting from their perspective, *AH* states that they play a ‘high-stakes game’, since the re-awakening of the German-Danish conflict led to multiple reactions in the international arena that are especially dangerous for themselves. Furthermore, *AH* indicates that the relations between England and Prussia might grow severe, which might have as a consequence that the French emperor makes demands on the German Rhine-provinces that are ‘impossible to counteract.’ *AH*, however, does not believe that the conflict will lead to a general war, since it explicitly states that the Prussian and Austrian actions are not as dangerous as one might believe.⁸⁹ The discourse is still mostly negative, given the earlier characterization in the article.

NRC, however, is more condemning of Prussia and Austria in a commentary discussing the views of English and German newspapers on the events occurring in Denmark, and the status of a rumor regarding a potential ceasefire between the German and Danish forces. Furthermore, the newspaper discusses the news that the Prussian general Friedrich von Wrangel removed the Confederate Army and Confederate-officials from their Denmark-related duties, because they are accused of having acted contrary to their instructions. *NRC* notes that this is the likely reason for the reinforcements sent to the front lines by Prussia and Austria. Subsequently, the newspaper suggests that this news is likely of having a major impact on German public opinion, and that the duke of Augustenburg is likely to miss out on his opportunity to become the sovereign of Schleswig and Holstein. In this context, the newspaper states that Prussia and Austria will, ‘as they have done from the beginning’, definitely not bother with public opinion nor the German Federal Diet.⁹⁰ Given the use of words in the citation, the newspaper gives the impression that Prussia and Austria completely go their own way and do not care about their assumed responsibilities to the larger German public in general and their nationalistic sentiment specifically. Thus, they are presented as egoistic.

⁸⁹ Author unknown, ‘Hoog spel.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 06-02-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010139054:mpeg21:a0001> (17-04-2019).

⁹⁰ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 13 Februarij.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 13-02-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111137:mpeg21:a0001> (18-04-2019).

In April, *AH* conceives similarly as negative of Germany in an article discussing the Battle of Dybbøl. After having described the battle's course and the Danish efforts since the start of the war, the newspaper notes that the sentiments in Germany are starting to calm down (thus making a reference to the nationalistic agitation that erupted in the wake of the constitutional decision by the Danish king), 'as they always do there when it is no longer about speeches, but about acts, and people start to encounter the consequences of their actions.'⁹¹ Note the use of the word 'there'. By referring specifically to Germany and by stating that the consequences of actions are only perceived after they have occurred, the newspaper characterizes the German people as pliable, short-sighted and easily persuaded by 'speeches' i.e. rhetoric. Thus, the country as a whole is characterized as instable and dangerous.

As described above, the Battle of Dybbøl was followed by the London Conference and a ceasefire until the end of June. During these months, there is barely any discourse on Germany in the discussions of the country in the type of sources of concern here. The only exception is a brochure on the so-called 'Limburg-question'⁹² written by the liberal Abraham van Karnebeek.⁹³ After describing the historical background of the Limburg question, Van Karnebeek tries to find out whether Limburg has any national connection to Germany. There, the author concludes that there is no connection. Subsequently, the author remarks that the patriotism visible in Germany during those days was completely random, whilst also indicating in the present tense that the 'germanization of those areas, where one can only smell the salty sea breeze from a distance, is a national password in Germany.'⁹⁴ The quote is interesting, since it exposes Van Karnebeek's views on Germany: by stating that Germany tries to obtain territories remotely located from the country, he suggests that its willingness to 'germanize' those areas is illegitimate. Furthermore, by stating that 'germanization' is a 'national password' in Germany, Van Karnebeek states that the whole country offers support for expanding abroad, thus suggesting that Germany and its nationalism pose a real threat to multiple countries.

⁹¹ Author unknown, 'Een stap tot den vrede.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 21-04-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010139155:mpeg21:a0001> (19-04-2019).

⁹² Although the brochure itself does not contain information on which date it was precisely published, a newspaper advertisement informs that it has most likely been somewhere in May:

Author unknown, 'Advertentiën', *Dagblad van Zuid-Holland en 's Gravenhage*, 03-05-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:000022001:mpeg21:a0016> (13-05-2019).

⁹³ After Van Karnebeek finished his doctorate in law at Utrecht University in 1861, he worked as a diplomat between 1864 and 1871 in London, Berlin, Paris and Washington. See: J. Woltring, 'Karnebeek, jhr. Abraham Pieter Cornelis van (1836-1925)' (version 12-11-2013), <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/bwn1880-2000/lemmata/bwn1/karnebeekapc> (16-07-2019).

Between 1885 and 1888 he was the Dutch minister of Foreign Affairs, and between 1891 and 1913 served as a liberal member of the Second Chamber. See: author unknown, 'Jhr. Mr. A.P.C. van Karnebeek' (version unknown), https://www.parlement.com/id/vgo9ll25ddpy/a_p_c_van_karnebeek (16-07-2019).

⁹⁴ Abraham van Karnebeek, *Ter toelichting van de Limburgsche kwestie* (The Hague 1864) 37.

It is only from August onwards, after the Germans and Danes earlier that month signed an armistice and started renewed negotiations in Vienna for a peace treaty, that nationalism becomes of concern again in the liberal debate about Germany. Discussing the invasion of Hannover in the duchy of Lauenburg as a presumed retaliation against Prussia, *NRC* states on August 12 that a new conflict can be expected in Germany. Subsequently, *NRC* states that the war against Denmark ‘has brought Germany a long way of its so desired unity’. It remarks in addition that ‘the German unity is the bitterest satire on the direction of the so philosophizing Germanic people’.⁹⁵ Given these statements, it can be argued that *NRC* exhibits an ambivalent attitude about Germany. The newspaper namely lauds Germany from a cultural point of view given the remark about the philosophic activities of the German people, but it is doubtful about the resiliency of the German nationalistic aspiration of unifying Germany, and the political behavior of especially Prussia.

This ambivalence is less visible in *AH* and an article in the August-edition of *De Gids*. Mid-August, *AH* reflects on the results of the peace congress thus far, and states that completion cannot be far away. Afterwards, *AH* starts a reflection on nationalism in general and the German nationality specifically. Characterizing nationalism as a form of egoism that cannot be condemned as long as it keeps attention for other human beings, the newspaper states that the German nation has lost track of the rights and merits of other people.⁹⁶ Subsequently, the newspaper states that German liberals and conservatives blindly chose to follow the route of an autocrat (with which a reference is made to Otto von Bismarck), which is reminding of *AH*’s earlier characterization of the German public as easily persuaded by rhetoric. What is the cause for these developments? *AH* claims that it has all to do with the idea that Germans could not fulfil the role they imagined themselves of having among other nations, which led to a discontent-inducing form of self-overestimation. The Schleswig-Holstein question allegedly presented a means to reach the desired state of being. Describing the Germany unity as a ‘temple of iniquity’, *AH* continues and suggests that freedom and rights, which presumably were achieved with the German unity, were used to impose these on others. It is precisely this move that *AH* considers iniquitous. Simultaneously, the newspaper states that Germans cannot be condemned for their achievements in the fields of science and the arts, although it points out that the accompanying high amount of attention for the virtues of honesty, knowledge and diligence led the Germans to suppress their sympathy for other people, thus leading to the negative form of egoism described above. Accordingly, the newspaper’s feelings towards Germany can generally be described as worrying given the

⁹⁵ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht, Rotterdam, 11 Augustus.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 12-08-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010110879:mpeg21:a0020> (20-04-2019).

⁹⁶ Author unknown, ‘Amsterdam, Zondag 7 Augustus.’ *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 08-08-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010139295:mpeg21:a0001> (20-04-2019).

expansionistic tendencies of the German population reinforced by cultural and political factors.⁹⁷

Still, however, it seems that *AH* is more worried about the German domestic political situation than a potential danger for the Netherlands or other European countries erupting in Germany. Discussing the progress made during the peace negotiations between Denmark and Germany on the basis of some preliminary documents, the newspaper notes that a clause generally considered as highly important is lacking, namely one stipulating that Schleswig and Holstein can never become part of Prussia. Hence, *AH* states that the Danish question is closed, but the German question has just started.⁹⁸ Thus, *AH* suggests that territorial conflicts are likely to re-emerge in the future, with Prussia as one of the main contenders. That *AH* does not conceive too positively of Prussia becomes clear in an article published a week later: there, the newspaper characterizes the state as reactionary. In this context, *AH* also indicates that it prefers to see the German Confederation as part of the governance of the conquered duchies instead of merely Prussia, which suggests that it conceives relatively positive about the former. Despite this differentiation, the newspaper also indicates that it is not too fond of the German population as a whole. It states that Germany has finally attained what is so eagerly desired: '[...] the fairy-tale of Schleswig-Holstein, which drove all Germans wild'. Thus, *AH* refers to the nationalistic agitation that followed Augustenburg's opposition to the Danish king. Subsequently, the newspaper asks whether the 'fever' is gone now that the 'sufferer' has its wish fulfilled.⁹⁹ Given the terminology used, the newspaper suggests that the conquest of Schleswig-Holstein was something abnormal and caused by a flight of fancy. This is reminding of the earlier discourse by *AH*, in which the German population was presented as easily persuadable by speech/rhetoric for political purposes.

During the following months, Germany is less frequently the subject of discourse than in August, although nationalism remains of concern. Discussing the treatment of Schleswig and Holstein in German newspapers, *NRC* states that before the German-Danish War of 1864 these publications showed a tendency to declare that the duchies wanted nothing more than to rid themselves of Danish rule and be incorporated in Germany. Now that the inhabitants of northern Schleswig are arguing that they want to remain in Denmark, *NRC* argues, the newspapers are declaring that the activities of the Danish population to that end need to be suppressed. *NRC* accordingly, the German newspapers normally show to be proponents of the organization of assemblies, associations and the signing of petitions, whereas they now want

⁹⁷ Author unknown, 'Amsterdam, Zondag 7 Augustus.' *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 08-08-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010139295:mpeg21:a0001> (20-04-2019).

⁹⁸ Author unknown, 'Amsterdam, Zondag 14 Augustus.' *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 15-08-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010139302:mpeg21:a0001> (20-04-2019).

⁹⁹ Author unknown, 'Amsterdam, Zondag 21 Augustus.' *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 22-08-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010139309:mpeg21:a0001> (20-04-2019).

to suppress the Danish political activities. After mentioning that large groups of North Schleswegians have already been imprisoned, the newspaper subsequently states that these observations are telling about how the Schleswig nationality will be respected henceforth.¹⁰⁰

AH similarly despises the instability of the German (political) behaviour. In an article describing the nature and inhabitants of the Jutland peninsula, *AH* states that the German immigrants in the area are relatively stronger mentally and are therefore more laborious. In this sense, the newspaper seems quite positive about Germans. Afterwards, however, the newspaper notes that in Jutland similar situations might occur as in Schleswig. It notes that the German inhabitants will behave peacefully, quiet and without hubris as long as they are in a minority, but will start to make demands as soon as their numbers are growing. Subsequently, the newspaper remarks that Jutland will quite surely be incorporated in Germany in a couple of years, similarly to how the English will once rule over the natives of New Zealand. As such, the newspaper again warns for the nationalistic, expansionistic tendencies of the German population (although a distinction is made as well between the ‘contemptuous’ Prussian and ‘polite’ Austrian soldiers stationed in Jutland, indicating that *AH*’s actual judgement about Germany might have been more complex/varied than the previous analysis suggests).¹⁰¹

2.3 The Responsibility of the Giants

One of the other major themes in discussions about Germany between January and November 1864 is Germany’s diplomatic and military conduct as such, regardless of concerns about nationalism. In February, *AH* observes that the threat of war has gone and indicates that the ‘road to negotiations’ has thus been reopened. However, in the same sentence the newspaper states that that very same road was abandoned by Prussia and Austria in ‘such a violent way’, with which the newspaper most likely refers to their invasion in Schleswig. By doing so, it makes clear that military action should have been the last thing those states should have resorted to, and that they should have adhered to the peaceful means of diplomacy and negotiation instead. Thus, the newspaper portrays them as morally flawed.¹⁰²

Early March, *NRC* does something similar in an editorial on potential border changes across Europe due to certain French and German plans for territorial reconfigurations. One of these concerns a plan between Prussia and the duchy of Oldenburg. In this context, the

¹⁰⁰ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 17 September.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 18-09-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010110916:mpeg21:a0003> (20-04-2019).

¹⁰¹ Author unknown, ‘Mengelingen. Het eiland Jutland.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 10-10-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010139373:mpeg21:a0016> (20-04-2019).

¹⁰² Author unknown, ‘Het begin van het einde.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 11-02-1864.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010139059:mpeg21:a0001> (18-04-2019).

newspaper states that the plan is ‘moreover’ founded on the ‘claims of the strongest’ instead of law. The newspaper thus argues that certain German entities, such as Prussia and Oldenburg, are adhering to the wrong principles: they should follow the logic of law instead of the claims by the strongest.¹⁰³ *NRC* thus also depicts German states such as Prussia as morally flawed. Subsequently, *NRC* states that the plan between Prussia and Oldenburg is indicative of a certain direction that is manifesting itself ‘here and there’ in Germany; one likely of having been inducing to the war between Denmark and Germany as well.¹⁰⁴ Given the negative assessment of the plan, and pointing out to what situations such plans might lead, Germany is portrayed as a country that is dangerous and likely of being that in the future as well.

NRC exhibits a similar view during April, although relatively specific by merely referring to Prussia. Elaborating on the prospects of the London Conference of 1864, *NRC* notes that one should not expect Prussia to remain committed to the aforementioned London Protocol of 1852. Furthermore, *NRC* states that all involved parties, except Prussia, are willing to create peace with Denmark. The newspaper namely states that Prussia wants to occupy the Danish peninsula of Jutland in addition to Schleswig, as a guarantee that Denmark will pay the costs created by the damage inflicted upon German citizens during the war. Stating that Denmark has to endure all of these ‘acts of violence’, Prussia and its diplomatic behavior are depicted negatively.¹⁰⁵ This continues in two articles published in the subsequent days. In the first, *NRC* mentions that Prussia will be everything except docile, and that the country will try to press as heavily as possible on Denmark during the London negotiations.¹⁰⁶ By stating that Prussia is uncontrollable and will resort to drastic measures, the newspaper suggests that Denmark will become prey to reckless behavior. In the second article, *NRC* states that a ceasefire between Prussia and Denmark is a mere illusion as long as Prussia’s military honor is not fulfilled. Furthermore, the newspaper states that even in the situation when Prussia has gained control of Jutland, the country will be able to find a pretext to demand more from Denmark.¹⁰⁷ Combining *NRC*’s April-discourse on Prussia, an image of the state becomes visible as a violent entity driven by basal passions and desires.

Despite the predominant moralistic and condemning language of the texts discussed here, the March-edition of *De Gids* shows something different as well. This becomes visible in

¹⁰³ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 8 maart.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 09-03-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111160:mpeg21:a0003> (18-04-2019).

¹⁰⁴ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 8 maart.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 09-03-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111160:mpeg21:a0003> (18-04-2019).

¹⁰⁵ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 21 April.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 22-04-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111203:mpeg21:a0002> (19-04-2019).

¹⁰⁶ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 22 April.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 23-04-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111204:mpeg21:a0001> (19-04-2019).

¹⁰⁷ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 24 April.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 25-04-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010111206:mpeg21:a0003> (19-04-2019).

an article written by Bernard Koster Jr.¹⁰⁸, describing a fictive journey of a German citizen to the Netherlands (or ‘Polderland’, as Koster names it).¹⁰⁹ Whilst sitting in a train from Germany to the Netherlands, the protagonist ponders ambivalently about his home country. Describing Germany as a beautiful but divided country, he recalls his love for Bavarian beer and Rhine wine amongst other things, but also notes how paper money and paper constitutions are both just as easily ‘drawn and quartered.’¹¹⁰ Given the contemporary context, it is likely that Germany’s relation to ‘paper constitutions’ refers to the November Constitution by the Danish king. In other words, the text describes German political and economic phenomena negatively, while describing cultural matters positively.

By August, *De Gids* was less positive as demonstrated by an article written by the liberal parliamentarian Anthony Modderman.¹¹¹ This article is of a similar nature as the two by Quack discussed earlier: it offers a reflection on the political status-quo across the globe. Especially the Schleswig-Holstein question is of concern.¹¹² Already before the extensive discussion of that subject, Modderman makes clear in the introduction how he conceives Germany: as a country committing a ‘collective crime’, which presumably refers to the German actions against Denmark.¹¹³ Especially Prussia and Austria are assessed negatively, since he argues that their legitimization of their use of violence and its goal was without any basis in truth and law.¹¹⁴ Discussing the London conference of June, Modderman states that the English government did not succeed in making Germany accept the London protocol of 1852 as a basis for the conference, since the German ‘conquerors’ lacked ‘love for peace’ and ‘feeling for justice and modesty.’¹¹⁵ Describing how during the conference the Germans rejected a potential border reconfiguration that according to Modderman gave them more advantages than they initially aimed at, he subsequently states that this offers proof that their greed made them lose every bit of respect for the ‘love for peace’ and ‘respect for public opinion.’¹¹⁶ Although he acknowledges that the Germans also renounced certain sanctions that could potentially have

¹⁰⁸ This was a pseudonym used by Johan Carl Zimmerman, one of *De Gids*’ editors and an Amsterdam-based broker in sugar. See: Van den Branden and Frederiks, *Biographisch woordenboek der Noord- en Zuidnederlandse letterkunde*, 915.

¹⁰⁹ Bernard Koster jr., ‘De hoofdstad van polderland.’, in: author unknown, *De Gids. Acht en twintigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1864), binding I, March, 513-532.

¹¹⁰ Koster, ‘De hoofdstad van polderland.’, 514.

¹¹¹ Modderman was a conservative-liberal professor in criminal law between 1871 and 1879 in Leiden, and was the Dutch minister of Justice between 1879 and 1883. See: author unknown, ‘Mr. A.E.J. Modderman’ (version unknown), https://www.parlement.com/id/vgo9lljdp9x2/a_e_j_modderman (16-07-2019).

¹¹² A.E.J. Modderman, ‘Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 24 Julij 1864.’, in: author unknown, *De Gids. Acht en twintigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1864), binding III, August, 329.

¹¹³ Modderman, ‘Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 24 Julij 1864.’, 328.

¹¹⁴ Ibidem, 330.

¹¹⁵ Ibidem, 334.

¹¹⁶ Ibidem, 340-341.

been imposed on Denmark if the congress would have been a success, Germany's i.e. Prussia's and Austria's diplomatic and military behavior is strongly condemned.¹¹⁷

NRC does something similar in the context of the renewed peace negotiations started in August. After mentioning that the preliminaries of the peace negotiations between Denmark and Prussia have been signed, *NRC* notes that the peace can be considered as re-established. The newspaper acknowledges that the definitive peace still has to be signed, but states that Denmark does not present a danger to that end. *NRC* points out, however, that Austria and Prussia might do so. The newspaper namely notes that despite the Austrian government's issuing of official documents declaring that Austrian diplomats need to cooperate with the Confederate-states regarding the Schleswig-Holstein question, such statements cannot be taken at face value. It thus suggests that there is chance that Austria does not want to cooperate with other German states regarding the Schleswig-Holstein question. *NRC*, however, is more negative about Prussia since it doubts less about the Austrian wish to cooperate with the Federal Diet (*Bundestag*) than the Prussian one. It namely shows that despite the Prussian government's issuing of documents similar to the mentioned Austrian ones, the newspaper *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (which according to *NRC* is the 'organ' of Bismarck) presented a derogative tone towards the parliament in one of its articles, by stating that the *Bundestag* does not have any rights on the duchies.¹¹⁸

NRC did not approve of the way the eventual peace treaty was achieved, as testified by a discussion presumably about the Treaty of Vienna. In the article, the newspaper notes how the Danish king lost control over a large part of his territories and needs to pay indemnities to Prussia and Austria. In this context, *NRC* states that the Danish king gave the territories of Schleswig and Holstein to Germany, whilst simultaneously emphasizing the sentence 'always when desire is standing before law.'¹¹⁹ This literally indicates that the Danish king had to give in to German i.e. Prussian and Austrian desires, who did not bother with law. Combined with the discourse of early August, *NRC* depicts Prussia and Austria as unreliable, immoral states.

2.4 Conclusion

As shown, Germany was discussed in the liberal newspapers between January and November 1864 in relation to nationalism and the country's diplomatic and military behavior. With regard to the former theme, there is a clear tendency in the liberal newspapers to describe Germany i.e. Prussia and Austria before the start of the Second Schleswig War as dangerous countries for the European stability. These cautions continue throughout the complete period

¹¹⁷ Ibidem, 335.

¹¹⁸ Author unknown, 'Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 5 Augustus.', *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 06-08-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010110873:mpeg21:a0017> (20-04-2019).

¹¹⁹ Author unknown, 'Amsterdam, Zondag 13 November.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 14-11-1864. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010139419:mpeg21:a0001> (20-04-2019).

studied in this paragraph, but are accompanied in February by the employment of a more explicit, condemning kind of language. Between May and July 1864, there is barely any clear imaging of Germany visible in the context of discussions about nationalism, except for a brochure by A.P.C. van Karnebeek. From August onwards, a negative kind of discourse prevails despite the return of peace. During this period, the publications do not exhibit a high amount of trust in Germany, which is e.g. exemplified by the texts with the discourse on the expansionistic tendencies of the German population. Regarding the second theme – Germany’s diplomatic and political behavior – the discourse by the liberal press is almost constantly negative. It needs to be said, however, that Germany as such is only referred to sporadically: the discourse in the context of this theme mostly relates to Prussia and Austria.¹²⁰

The most important aspect this thesis tries to illuminate, the stimulation of the development of national consciousness as a result of the German unification, is completely lacking in the sources studied for 1864. Both explicitly and implicitly there are no indications of that phenomenon to be found, most likely the result of the fact that the sources studied do not yet explicitly conceive Germany as a threat to the Netherlands (except for Van Karnebeek). This is interesting, since Henk te Velde notes that the Second-Schleswig War, as well as the later Austro-Prussian War, made a strong impression on the Netherlands due to the war’s demonstration of the growing importance of power at the expense of law in the context of international relations. According to Te Velde, this development was conceived by Dutchmen as a threat, since their country was dependent on law for the maintenance of its independence.¹²¹ The sources discussed in this chapter, however, barely give an indication in that direction.¹²² In contrast, the period that will be studied in the next chapter (on the Austro-Prussian War) witnessed more discourse on that phenomenon.

¹²⁰ Apart from these political contexts, Germany is culturally depicted positively by *De Gids* in its April edition. Discussing the differences between a number of European nations in the domains of art and industry, Constant Huijsmans states that the Belgians have to compete with the ‘sensitive’ French and the ‘deep thinking’ Germans, the latter ‘elevating nearly every ornament to a symbol.’ See: C.C. Huijsmans, ‘Een vraag des tijds. Kunst en Industrie.’, in: *De Gids. Acht en twintigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1864), binding II, April, 269. Although small, this instance partially follows the line of reasoning presented in the introduction: that due to the strong influence of German culture on Dutch culture, the Dutch conceived positively of German culture. All in all, however, the discourse on Germany is highly negative.

¹²¹ Te Velde, *Gemeenschapszin en plichtsbeseft*, 31.

¹²² Although it needs to be said that the authors did note that law as such was disintegrating due to the German war-related actions. See, for example, *NRC* of November 14.

III. Integration Through Disintegration

3.1 Introduction

Was the Schleswig-Holstein issue a closed book? German contemporaries would have answered a definitive ‘no’ to that question. German public opinion reacted rather ambivalently to the end result of the war. On the one hand, it did not appreciate the fact that Prussia and Austria had not granted the right of self-determination to the inhabitants of the two duchies, who wanted to have the Duke of Augustenburg as their ruler. On the other hand, the German victory led to a consensus across the political spectrum over the idea that the duchies needed to be annexed in Germany.¹²³

Prussia had the same ambition, but it could not proceed impulsively. Not only German public opinion, but the Austrian government as well felt that in the case of an annexation the Duke of Augustenburg had to become the sovereign of the duchies. Austria, however, ended up estranging the German middle-states in 1864, with whom it had so closely cooperated earlier. Additionally, Austria internationally started to lose room for manoeuvre. As such, the country began to entertain a confrontational kind of politics regarding Schleswig-Holstein.¹²⁴

During the summer of 1865, the Schleswig-Holstein dispute climaxed. Although tensions were eased for a short period with the Treaty of Gastein drafted in August 1865 (with which Austria and Prussia still administered Schleswig and Holstein respectively, but Prussia gaining special rights as well), they returned early 1866. Austria namely started favoring the *Augustenburgische Bewegung* in Holstein, which led to strong protests by Prussia.¹²⁵ For the latter, war seemed inevitable. In April, Bismarck even concluded a military alliance with Italy for a period of three months and proposed a reconfiguration of the German Confederation marginalizing the position of Austria.¹²⁶ On June 1, Austria raised the Schleswig-Holstein question in the Confederation. Since this violated the alliance concluded between Austria and Prussia in January 1864, the latter marched her troops into Holstein on June 9 and proposed an Austria-excluding reform of the Confederation. This situation then escalated into the Austro-Prussian War that very same month.¹²⁷ Major German states, such as Bavaria, Saxony and Hannover sided with Austria, whereas only the smaller states and enclaves such as Schwarzburg and Lippe chose to rally to Prussia. Following these developments, Bismarck dissolved the Confederation and occupied Kurhessen, Hannover and Saxony.¹²⁸

¹²³ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866*, 774.

¹²⁴ Ibidem, 774 and 776.

¹²⁵ Ibidem, 776-778.

¹²⁶ Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 75.

¹²⁷ Ibidem 75; Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866*, 782.

¹²⁸ Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 75.

The expectations were that the war would last a long time, but against all odds the situation developed differently. On July 3, the war was already decided in favor of Prussia after the infamous Battle of Sadowa.¹²⁹ At the end of July, under a veil of French mediation, Austria and Prussia reached an armistice with the Preliminary Peace of Nikolsburg. Peace was officially declared on August 23 with the Treaty of Prague. This agreement not only excluded Austria from Germany, but also gave Prussia the possibility to spearhead the formation of the North-German Confederation, replacing the former German Confederation. Additionally, the south-German states remained independent. Some of the northern ones that cooperated with Austria, however, awaited a different destiny: Hannover, Kurhessen, Nassau and Frankfurt were officially annexed by Prussia on September 20 (Saxony only needed to join the new North-German Confederation, despite her cooperation with Austria). Schleswig and Holstein, the catalysts of the Austro-Prussian War, were also annexed in Prussia.¹³⁰

Given the radical power reconfigurations that were involved in these developments, it can be safely assumed that they must have made a strong impression on Germany's neighbors. Although between May and November 1866 the development of national consciousness was not yet stimulated in the discussions on Germany by the liberal authors, an important difference compared to 1864 is that a context developed in which the application of the rhetorical tool of contrasting the Netherlands against Germany could be expected: a debate about the question what the Netherlands should be doing against a German threat. After discussing the foremost theme in the discourse on Germany between May and November 1866 (Prussia's expansionism), this chapter presents the contents of that debate as the second major theme in the discourse on Germany.¹³¹

3.2 The Demise of Law and Morality

Given the expansionist aspiration of Germany in general and Prussia specifically, which already disclosed itself shortly after the Second Schleswig War, it is not surprising that this aspiration is the main theme discussed by the Dutch liberal media between May and November 1866. In these discussions, Germany and Prussia are considered quite negatively.

De Gids presents a negative conception of Prussia's expansionism in its May-edition, in one of the political overviews by Quack. Whilst discussing the recent developments regarding the Austro-Prussian tensions, he turns to Bismarck's proposal for a reform of the German Confederation. According to Quack, Bismarck wants the German citizens to be heard for that goal, which he aims to do through the introduction of universal suffrage and a

¹²⁹ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866*, 785.

¹³⁰ Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 77.

¹³¹ Only newspaper editorials and articles of *De Gids* are discussed in this chapter, since no relevant brochures were found for the period under scrutiny here.

parliament. He suggests that this an opportunistic move by Bismarck, and states that his proposal touched the 'inner being of the German nation'.¹³² This might sound positive, but that is far from what Quack tries to communicate. Quack states that as a result of Bismarck's proposal, the 'ghost of 1848 and 1849' was re-awakened again, the German parliament turning up again in the 'imagination', and the 'oasis' of the democratic Germany re-emerging in the 'arid desert', green 'as never before'.¹³³ Given the terminology used, Quack aims to communicate that the German public is suffering from a flight of fancy. As described above, Bismarck presented his proposal for a reconfiguration of the German Confederation in the context of the Prussian state's ambition for expansion. By stating that German citizens suffer from a delusion, Quack suggests that Prussia's aim for expansionism is accompanied by irresponsible political measures that lead to a destabilization of Germany.

Early May, in a reaction to criticism of *Middelburgsche Courant* on articles by AC about the neutrality of the Netherlands in the event of a European war, AC wants to reclarify its position and states that the Schleswig-Holstein dispute between Austria and Prussia will soon evolve in a general conflict between all the European states and nations. Since AC states that the Schleswig-Holstein question has been used by Bismarck as a pretext to the conflict between his country and Austria, it implicitly argues that Bismarck i.e. Prussia poses a threat to the stability on the European continent. AC continues and argues that the Netherlands should not remain neutral in the situation of a European-wide escalation, since the general interests of the European state system are put at risk including the specific needs of countries like the Netherlands. The question whether the country might be surrounded by an expansionist country is, according to AC, especially of interest for the Netherlands. The newspaper namely states that Dutch citizens are fearful of France, and reminds its readers as well that despite the friendly relations with Prussia there is no reason to believe that the latter might not be of danger to the Netherlands. The newspaper illustrates this by stating that 'to become a North Sea-power, with annexation of the Netherlands, is no less Prussia's dream than France's dream of the Rhine as its natural border'.¹³⁴ It is thus fair to say that AC presents a negative depiction of Prussia. Although it acknowledges the existence of friendly relations between the Netherlands and Prussia, it does not turn a blind eye to the expansionist potentiality of Prussia. Thus, the country is depicted as dangerous.¹³⁵

¹³² H.P.G. Quack, 'Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 25 April 1866.', in: author unknown, *De Gids. Dertigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1866), binding II, May, 389.

¹³³ Quack, 'Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 25 April 1866.', 389.

¹³⁴ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 4 Mei.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 05-05-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087892:mpeg21:a0002> (01-05-2019).

¹³⁵ That same month, in an article on the relations between the Netherlands and the German Confederation, AC again thematizes Prussia's expansionism. According to the newspaper, Dutch citizens are afraid of Germany as a whole, but especially of Prussia. AC explains this situation by pointing at the weak military capabilities of the Netherlands. According to the newspaper, this situation is not resolved due to a lack of will among the Dutch population. Afterwards, it poses the question whether the country is capable of preserving its independence, or

However, with ‘Prussia’ *AC* does not necessarily mean Prussian society, since it clearly distinguishes the two. This becomes clear from an article aiming to explain the enduring absence of violence between Austria, Prussia and Italy (despite their presumed preparedness for war). After having described the situation between the mentioned states as a ‘comedy’, *AC* turns to the actual explanation and states that the absence of violence has to do with the attention of states for public opinion. Observing how societies have witnessed a transformation from a situation in which the ‘law of the fist’ was day-to-day practice to one in which people adhere to law and rights, *AC* states that war has become a disgrace in public opinion. According to *AC*, the latter has become such a strong power that it has the capacity to let even those who are aiming for combat think again about such an act. It has achieved such power due to the presumed contemporary ‘fusion’ of the interests of all nations, due to which the disadvantages experienced by one nation are also experienced by the others. Although *AC* does not rule out the possibility of war, it argues that these developments have done more and will be doing more for the preservation of peace than any instrument of the ‘finest diplomats’.¹³⁶ By emphasizing the importance of public opinion, it makes an implicit distinction between the immoral governments of German states such as Prussia and Austria on the one hand, and their moral, law-abiding societies on the other (given the inducement for the publication of the article, as described above).

Given *AC*’s lower appreciation for diplomatic instruments over the power of public opinion, it is not surprising that the newspaper does not have a lot of hope for the preservation of peace by means of the former. In an overview of the political situation in the Netherlands and Germany at the end of May, *AC* pessimistically notes that even the final ‘straw’ people want to clinch to, the congress, is so fragile, that even before it has been clinched, shows that it will not be able to prevent war. After describing the discourse by French and Russian sources on the views of some Great Powers on the organization of a congress, *AC* even argues that a congress as such has already become a point of conflict and will only be able to enlarge the existing complications. In a similarly pessimistic tone, the newspaper notes that the German parliament’s acceptance of a proposal by the German middle states for conducting research into means suitable for disarmament is not likely of recovering peace. *AC* namely thinks that in the situation that the Great Powers are not willing to disarm, it will probably lead to the

whether it will be described by a future historian as one that due to a lack of care for its army was forced for years to walk ‘on a leash’ behind Prussia and eventually needed to be annexed.¹³⁵ Highlighting Prussia as a state that is especially feared by the Netherlands, and subsequently presenting the former as one that might potentially annex the latter, it becomes clear that especially Prussia and its expansionism are of concern for *AC*. See: author unknown, ‘Onze weerbaarheid. II.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 12-05-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087898:mpeg21:a0001> (12-05-2019).

¹³⁶ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 17 Mei.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 18-05-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087903:mpeg21:a0001> (02-05-2019).

armament of states not yet armed.¹³⁷ This shows that *AC* lacks trust in governments, such as the German ones, clinging to the results of legal instruments such as parliamentary research, thus depicting them as immoral.

In the preceding discourse, a clear differentiation between German state and society can be discerned in the assessments of Germany by *AC*. A similar differentiation can be found in *NRC*, although it is slightly more negative. Around May 15, in a general overview of the current situation regarding the Austrian-Prussian tensions, the newspaper notes that ‘everything’ is prepared for war. This sounds like state and society are both willing to go to war. However, *NRC* clearly differentiates the two. Firstly, it states that the German population is not yet capable of accepting the idea of war, since they consider a war in their country as ‘monstrous’ due to their ‘delusions’ in which they ‘passionately wish’ their country to be internally connected by a ‘bond of brotherly love’. Secondly, *NRC* states that as long as violence has not yet occurred, every German keeps hoping for the preservation of peace. This is followed by the statement that the newspaper excepts ‘Bismarck and his following’ from this.¹³⁸ Thus, it becomes clear that the newspaper distinguishes state and society, with the state as the prime driver of Prussian expansionism (although this distinction should not make one believe that *NRC* as such conceives very positively of German society: note that the newspaper accuses the German population of having ‘delusions’).

A similar depiction can be found in *AH* during May. Discussing the potential organization of a congress by the French emperor due to the rumor that Prussia and Italy allied themselves with each other, *AH* argues that it is not a supporter of such congresses since ‘it will leave all difficulties unresolved’.¹³⁹ After having discussed the English origins of the French emperor’s proposal for a congress, the newspaper asks whether such an event will lead Europe to ‘calm down’. The newspaper itself states that it does not know the answer, but also mentions that the ‘devil of desirability’ is running freely again, which is followed by a historical description of the Austrian-Prussian relations’ development from unity to disunity due to conflicting Austrian imperial interests and Prussian royal ones. It states that the world has previously witnessed many wars due the lust of both powers for expansion, but also asks whether Hohenzollern (the royal dynasty of Prussia) will decisively bring the conflict with Habsburg (the monarchy of Austria) to an end. Given the reference to the ‘devil of desirability’ directly before this description, the newspaper thus indicates that Prussia is the present personification of that idea. Additionally, after asking who has an answer to all of its questions,

¹³⁷ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen overzigt. Arnhem, 25 mei.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 26-05-2019.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087910:mpeg21:a0003> (02-05-2019).

¹³⁸ See: author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzigt. Rotterdam, 14 Mei.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 15-05-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010113827:mpeg21:a0002> (01-05-2019).

¹³⁹ Author unknown, ‘Amsterdam, Zondag 6 Mei.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 07-05-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010140693:mpeg21:a0001> (01-05-2019).

AH indicates that everything is possible, since ‘the law of the fist goes above all rights’. Such statements indicate that Prussia is perceived by *AH* as an immoral, expansionist state.¹⁴⁰

However, despite the disapproval of the expansionism, *AH* is not frightened of it. In another May-article by *AH* on the geopolitical constellation in the midst of the tensions between Prussia and Austria, it presents a more explicit condemnation of Prussia. Comparing Bismarck to the Italian statesman Camillo Benso di Cavour, who played an important role in the unification of Italy during the 1850s and 1860s, *AH* states that there is a large difference between the two. If Bismarck would have truly been a Cavour, the newspaper argues, then he would have needed to give the various populations of Germany one goal and direction. *AH* states that in that situation the German unity might have already been a fact and Prussia what it desires to be. Afterwards, it states that it does not fear a powerful Prussia (even despite rumors of a possible annexation of the Netherlands, the newspaper notes) or a more closely integrated northern Germany. What it is truly worried about is that the latter will be realized under the lead of Bismarck. *AH* is convinced that this will result in Germany losing out on its presumed societal and political direction towards freedom, after which *AC* suggests that that situation might lead to revolutions across Germany.¹⁴¹ Despite *AH*’s lack of fear that Prussia’s expansionism will be consequential for the Netherlands, it becomes clear that its view on the phenomenon is still negative given the revolutionary upheaval that might indirectly result from it.

At the end of May, *AH* presents another article in which Prussian expansionism is discussed. Although the article does not use the words ‘Prussian expansionism’ explicitly, it is likely that it largely revolves around this phenomenon since the article discusses the question whether the contemporary circumstances are of such a nature that Prussia can repeat the politics of one of its former statesmen, Frederick the Great, with impunity. Note the use of the word ‘repeat’. Since Frederick greatly expanded Prussia during his reign between 1740 and 1786, it is likely that an analogy is made with Prussia’s contemporary aim for expansion. In the article, *AH* presents a negative characterization of Prussia. After doubting that peace will continue undisturbed, the article has to establish that the circumstances have changed so dramatically that a new war can only be a ‘furious venture’ for Prussia.¹⁴² It should be noted, however, that in the process of answering its question, *AH* distinguishes the Prussian state from the Prussian citizens in a similar vein to *AC* and *NRC*. By arguing that a war between Austria and Prussia is unpopular among the Prussian citizens, it suggests that the ambition

¹⁴⁰ Author unknown, ‘Amsterdam, Zondag 6 Mei.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 07-05-1866.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010140693:mpeg21:a0001> (01-05-2019).

¹⁴¹ Author unknown, ‘Amsterdam, Zondag 13 Mei.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 14-05-1866.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010140703:mpeg21:a0001> (01-05-2019).

¹⁴² Author unknown, ‘Amsterdam, Zondag 27 Mei.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 28-05-1866.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010140723:mpeg21:a0001> (02-05-1866).

for expansion is merely a governmental affair.¹⁴³ Given the use of the words ‘furious venture’, the other suggestion is that the Prussian state’s aim for expansion might result in potentially irresponsible behavior. The Prussian state is thus negatively portrayed.

The negative discourse on Prussia by the liberal media continues after the Prussians invaded Holstein on June 7. Reacting to the Prussian general von Manteuffel, who proclaimed in Schleswig that Prussia invaded Holstein merely as a defensive measure to protect her interests and sovereignty rights, *NRC* cynically states that such measures are threatening to ‘ruin half of Europe’.¹⁴⁴

Not long after, on June 8, a change becomes visible in *AC*’s discourse. Instead of differentiating German governments and their societies, in an article on the demise of diplomacy it conceives them as similar in their political behavior. After describing how diplomacy has been beneficial for the domains of technology, finance and services, *AC* notes that it has been less beneficial for political questions since they are relatively difficult to resolve due to the passions of emperors and kings on the one hand, and nations on the other. *AC* presents Germany as one example (amongst others) of places where such passions are visible. *AC* describes how the German parliament wasted its time on ‘foolish delusions’ of expanding its territory, and how that very same parliament and the German democrats cheerfully supported the invasion of Schleswig-Holstein. Additionally, *AC* states that no one in Germany has shown support for the Italian demands on Venice (ruled by Austria at the time), thus accusing German citizens of hypocrisy. On the basis of these German examples (among others) the newspaper posits that both nations and governments in general are not yet mature enough for a peaceful solution of the issues that have not been resolved sufficiently during the Congress of Vienna of 1815, and, now that the ‘international building’ created during the congress is in ruins, are in ever more urgent need of settlement.¹⁴⁵ Given the German examples, the newspaper suggests that both German state and society beside others are not capable of respecting the international diplomatic and legal standards set in 1815.

Similar to *AH*’s article of June 7, *AC* also points at the destructive capacity of a potential war between Prussia and Austria, but relates this to German domestic phenomena instead of Europe. After noting how an Austrian proposal for a mobilization of the German Confederate Army might trigger escalation, the newspaper approvingly cites a member of the

¹⁴³ This differentiation is also visible in an article published on June 1st. There, *AH* states that the rule of an anti-revolutionary party over Prussia frustrates and saddens everyone in Germany. Furthermore, it warningly suggests that because of the simultaneous rule of an anti-revolutionary party over the Netherlands, both parties might want to seek a closer relationship. See: author unknown, ‘De verkiezingen. II.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 01-06-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010140730:mpeg21:a0001> (02-05-2019).

¹⁴⁴ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 8 Junij.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 09-06-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010113851:mpeg21:a0003> (04-05-2019).

¹⁴⁵ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 7 Junij.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 08-06-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087921:mpeg21:a0001> (03-05-2019).

administration of Darmstadt, who asserted that an Austrian victory will be a ‘victory of the reaction’, whilst a Prussian victory would be one leading to ‘the destruction of the constitutional government in Prussia and the whole of Germany’.¹⁴⁶

Following the escalation of the tensions between Austria and Prussia on June 14, *AC* remarks that the thundercloud which hung ‘threatening above Europe for such a long time’ has finally burst. This is followed by the remark that Prussian politics finally achieved its goal: by forcing a break with Austria, Prussia is in a position to create a new Prussian empire out of Germany, and perhaps also some neighboring countries. Arguing how Prussia willingly sought to create a war with Austria, it is also observed that a Prussian victory of the war will stimulate a dramatic growth of ‘Prussian Stolz’ (pride). This growth, the newspaper warns, will lead the Prussians to neglect the existence of borders and search for ever more territory, which will be of danger for Europe in general and Germany specifically.¹⁴⁷ The consequences of Prussia’s ‘mentality’ and its actions continue to be thematized in an article by *AC* discussing the origin of the war. The immediate cause, the newspaper notes, is conflict about the Schleswig-Holstein duchies. In this part of the text, *AC* states that Prussia and Austria obtained the duchies illegitimately, but also notes that the German Confederation is similarly as guilty due to her efforts to involve Schleswig in the contestations over Holstein a few years earlier. However, *AC* especially pinpoints Prussia as the culprit. After stating that Austria’s involvement in the occupation of Schleswig and Holstein has been able to prevent Prussia from appropriating both duchies, it notes that appropriation has been the primary intention of ‘Bismarckian politics’. To fulfil that need, the newspaper points out that that very same politics manipulated presumed German passions of lust, ambition, pity, tranquillity, and enthusiasm to find support for a war on Denmark. The *actual* reasons for the war, *AC* subsequently asserts, are thus Prussia’s particular interests. Since Prussia wants to become a sea power, *AC*’s accusation goes, it now wants to exclude Austria from the administration of Holstein at the risk of instigating a war with Germany as a whole and Europe.¹⁴⁸ In an editorial commentary published by *AC* a day later, the newspaper relates Prussia more explicitly to the Netherlands by stating that Limburg’s entanglements with the German Confederation do not pose as large a danger for the Netherlands as a Prussian empire would. The Confederation, *AC* argues, is at the moment the only ‘guarantee’ against a ‘supremely powerful and irresistible Prussia.’¹⁴⁹ *AC* and *NRC* thus portray Prussia shortly before and after the war’s commencement as a

¹⁴⁶ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen overzigt. Arnhem, 14 Junij.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 16-06-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087928:mpeg21:a0003> (04-05-2019).

¹⁴⁷ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 21 Junij.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 22-06-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087933:mpeg21:a0001> (06-09-2019).

¹⁴⁸ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 23 Junij.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 25-06-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087935:mpeg21:a0002> (06-05-2019).

¹⁴⁹ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 25 Junij.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 26-06-2019. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087936:mpeg21:a0001> (06-05-2019).

reckless, expansionist state, with AC additionally noting that Prussia has the capacity to be of danger for neighboring countries such as the Netherlands as well.

In the July edition of *De Gids*, Hendrick Quack recapitulates the European political developments preceding the war, that developed according to him as a result of 'Bismarck's wish'.¹⁵⁰ In that process, Quack touches upon the French, Russian and English initiative at the end of May for the organization of a congress concerning the tensions in Germany. Noting how for a brief moment a belief developed in these states that peace might be within reach, Quack poses the question whether these 'voices of justice and conscience' were able to prevent the European cabinets from starting the 'most gruesome war'. By referring to England, France and Russia as 'voices of justice and conscience' due to their efforts to organize a congress on the conflict between the main German powers, the suggestion is that the latter are no voices of justice and conscience.¹⁵¹ Later in the text, however, Quack makes clear that he only conceives Prussia in such terms. He namely notes, after establishing that war has developed between Austria and Prussia, that 'all injustice is on the side of the Berlin cabinet'. Additionally, Quack states that the 'adventurous, reckless Bismarck' can make no claims on 'honesty and good loyalty'. Afterwards, Quack suggests that Austria and the smaller German states opposed against Bismarck were justified to 'raise their swords' against the violent way with which Bismarck treated their rights. Additionally, Quack states that the former were not spurred by their citizens to go to war, since they were on Bismarck's side. Stating that the 'politics of the people' obeys to the 'law of necessity', and that Germany's territorial fragmentation does not belong to that law, Quack suggests that it is only natural that the German people chose to cling to a different 'parole', namely the one called 'German unity'. Quack's use of the words 'law of necessity' suggests that he only blames Prussia for the situation Germany is faced with, he makes this explicit by stating that if Prussia could have taken the lead for the formation of a 'great, if necessary North-German, kingdom', it would have led to the realization of a 'great and good cause'. Or, as Quack puts it shortly later, instead of a Prussia whose state territory does not fit her political stature, a 'firmly established, quiet and calm kingdom' could be realized in such a situation. Describing a fictional scene, Quack thus suggests that Prussia is currently going the wrong way.¹⁵² Given how Quack conceives the Prussian government negatively, whereas the other states and German citizens positive due to their legitimate motives), his conception of Germany is ambivalent. This development needs to be highlighted, since Quack conceived negatively of German citizens in May due to the delusions they were accused of having.

¹⁵⁰ H.P.G. Quack, 'Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 26 Junij 1866.', in: author unknown, *De Gids. Dertigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1866), binding III, July, 153.

¹⁵¹ Quack, 'Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 26 Junij 1866.', 159.

¹⁵² Ibidem, 165.

In the wake of the Battle of Sadowa, similar disapprovals of Prussia can be found in *AC*. Spurred by the pace of Prussia's progress against Austria, *AC* discusses the question what will happen after Prussia has destroyed Austria and has turned to the German states that sided with the latter. The newspaper notes that in that question 'a future full of complications and dangers is embedded', followed by the cynical statement that Prussia, 'by virtue of the rights of needle-rifles', will claim the German territories of Austria. Subsequently, *AC* notes that it is unclear whom will be entitled for the non-German and non-Italian parts of the Austrian Empire, and that it is thus not only about the question whom will make a claim on these territories, but also about the question whom owns the strongest arsenal of weapons. Although it would be exaggerated to argue merely on the basis of this article that *AC* suggests that Prussia is to blame for the potential future developments, it does present a negative depiction of the country by referring to her use of weapons for satisfying her interests.¹⁵³ Roughly a week later, *AC* does something similar in a reaction to the positive discourse on Prussia's politics by the official Prussian governmental journal. By both agreeing with and questioning the article's assertions (e.g. that Prussia's conquests do not originate from a 'low desire for victory', and that its conquests fulfil the 'highest national goals') in a cynical and exaggerated style, *AC* tries to communicate that Prussia's politics is the opposite of what the journal aims to convey. In the last part of the article, statements made by Bismarck are discussed. Especially of concern is his statement that the Italian and German peoples need to rise against "the governments", who tried to arouse "blind hate" among those nations against Prussia. It is precisely this observation that *AC* concerns, since it 'explains, legitimizes and sanctifies everything.' The article concludes by cynically affirming that violence, destruction and pillaging are the righteous penalty for the 'sins of all sins', namely being anti-Prussian and anti-Bismarck.¹⁵⁴ Given the preceding discourse, 'sins of all sins' is clearly meant as an exaggeration. Using it, the article communicates that Prussia is taking extreme, out-of-proportion measures against political opponents. During July, *AC* thus presents Prussia as a violent, unreliable state. At the same time, it differentiates the actions of the German people from Prussia's behavior.¹⁵⁵ Thus, *AC*'s conception of Germany is ambivalent.

¹⁵³ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 7 Julij.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 09-07-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087638:mpeg21:a0026> (06-05-2019).

¹⁵⁴ Author unknown, 'Een staaltje van politiek Jesuïtisme.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 17-07-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087645:mpeg21:a0001> (07-05-2019).

¹⁵⁵ In an article of July 19, *AC* discusses Prussia-critical discourse of the German newspaper *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, during which it states that Prussia's idea of the 'people against the governments', as mentioned above, is nothing less than a 'poor comedy and a transparent lie'. This is followed by the assertion that the German nation will be fooled and duped again by its rulers. After describing how this occurred in 1813 and 1849 as well, the newspaper asks whether the 'good German nation' will let herself be deluded once more, and concludes with the question whether the history of Prussia will be the 'martyr history of the German nation'. See:

Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 19 Julij.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 20-07-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087648:mpeg21:a0002> (07-05-2019).

The dismissal of Prussia continues in the newspaper articles written shortly before the conclusion of the Preliminary Peace of Nikolsburg on July 26. At this stage, a clear dismissal of Prussia can be retrieved in the newspapers, since they bemoan the measures that were taken by the Prussians in the wake of their occupations. *NRC* notes how in Frankfurt ‘and elsewhere’ a lot of bitterness grew against Prussia due to general Von Manteuffel’s imposition of a war tax of twenty-five million guilders upon Frankfurt. The newspaper states that this is an excessive action, which is followed by the suggestive question whether Prussia held resentment in the case of Frankfurt, due to the city’s seating of the German Confederation, which was not always as supportive for Prussia’s politics.¹⁵⁶ *AC* also notes how Von Manteuffel is behaving ‘outrageously’ in Frankfurt, with Prussia exhibiting similar tendencies in Bohemia and Moravia.¹⁵⁷ Shortly later, *AC* states in an article discussing the Peace of Nikolsburg that Prussia is likely of occupying the southern German states and imposing similar taxes upon them as the ones imposed upon Frankfurt. The newspaper subsequently argues that in such a situation the sympathy of German citizens for Prussia might change dramatically, and will side against the Prussian army that ‘emaciates’ them in such a situation. Although the newspaper describes a potential situation, it is conceived whilst referring to the actual situation visible in areas where Prussia already demands war taxes. This suggests that *AC* believes that a figurative ‘emaciation’ is already occurring in places like Frankfurt, which indicates a negative conception of Prussia.¹⁵⁸ Given the use of such words, the reader might obtain the impression that *AC* has sympathy for the German citizens having to deal with Prussia’s politics. Nothing could be further from the truth. After arguing that Prussia’s abuse of power in the occupied states, and hypocritical discourse on the selfless motives regarding the occupation are ‘annoying’, *AC* notes that the ‘cowardly flattering’ of Prussia by the occupied states’ nations is ‘more annoying’, since they try to obtain grace and mercy by willing to be annexed in Prussia.¹⁵⁹

Later in August, *AC* observes that the mass of the German population has become ‘deluded’ by a ‘phantasm’ due to Prussia’s occupational politics. Still, the newspaper notes that the expression of her feelings are sincere and originate from a respectable motive, namely Germany’s century-old dream of one ‘large, undivided and undividable Germany.’ This motive, the newspaper asserts, has such a strong power over German citizens that they are able to withstand their antipathy against Prussia. However, *AC* also argues that despite believing in the sincerity of this motive, it doubts its correctness. It namely states that the

¹⁵⁶ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 24 Julij.’ *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 25-07-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010113441:mpeg21:a0003> (07-05-2019).

¹⁵⁷ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen overzicht. Arnhem, 25 Julij.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 27-07-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087654:mpeg21:a0002> (07-05-2019).

¹⁵⁸ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen overzicht. Arnhem, 28 Julij.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 30-07-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087656:mpeg21:a0003> (07-05-2019).

¹⁵⁹ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 3 Augustus.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 04-08-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087661:mpeg21:a0001> (07-05-2019).

alliance with Prussia for the fulfilment of that goal can only result in disappointment i.e. ‘a saddening awakening out of a ‘joyful dream’. The only goal Prussia has, *AC* asserts, is weakening Germany for the sake of empowering and enlarging Prussia.¹⁶⁰ Shortly before the Peace of Prague was signed on August 25, however, *AC* does no longer point at the ‘respectable motive’ of the wish for German unity as the cause of the ‘deluded and deceived stance’ of the German people towards Prussia. Instead, after an analysis of Bismarck and the kind of politics he follows, it argues that ‘baseness and a lack of knowledge’ are the main cause.¹⁶¹

Following the German occupations, the French started proposing a reconfiguration of the French borders as determined in 1814. Discussing this proposal, *AC* states that the French demands are no threat for the ‘balance of Europe’. Furthermore, it indicates that the demands are justifiable given Prussia’s ‘war of conquest’ that ‘completely unraveled’ the international affairs of the European states, and the antecedent it set that a state, ‘according to the justice of *Zundnadel*-rifles’, is allowed to ‘cut’ a new territory out of those of neighboring states. The newspaper asserts that it is no supporter of territorial reconfigurations such as those proposed by France, but acknowledges her right to do so now that the ‘harmless and peaceful German Confederation’ is dissolving in a ‘threatening, war and reign desiring Prussia.’¹⁶² Hence, Prussia is depicted once again as a country that due to her presumed unencumbered use of violence and desire for war and reign is depicted as an immoral, dangerous state.

Discussing the French demands as well, *NRC* posits various questions about their extent and the Prussian reaction to them. The newspaper has to establish that these are unanswerable as of yet, but also notes that answers are of high importance, since they give an indication of the consequential events that might erupt from a new reconfiguration of Europe. Additionally, *NRC* suggests that this might occur quickly, since one cannot expect Prussia to stop her ‘successful politics’ only ‘halfway on the road’ towards ‘Germany’s unity.’¹⁶³ A day later, *NRC* considers its expectation confirmed due to Prussia’s parliamentary proposal to annex Frankfurt, Hannover, Kurhessen, and Nassau. Although *NRC* understands that these states had to be occupied by Prussia during the war, it does not understand why the latter has to end their ‘independent existence’. Bavaria, Saxony, Wurttemberg, Baden and Hessen-Darmstadt, the newspaper asserts, were also opposed against Prussia, but they are still in existence. *NRC* believes that necessity was not the motive of Prussia’s (proposed) annexation,

¹⁶⁰ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 17 Augustus.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 18-08-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087673:mpeg21:a0001> (14-05-2019).

¹⁶¹ Author unknown, ‘Staatsmans-kunstenarijen. V.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 25-08-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087679:mpeg21:a0001> (14-05-2019).

¹⁶² Author unknown, ‘Algemeen overzigt. Arnhem, 14 Augustus.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 15-08-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087670:mpeg21:a0001> (09-05-2019).

¹⁶³ Author unknown, ‘Algemeen Overzigt. Rotterdam, 16 Augustus.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 17-08-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010113464:mpeg21:a0003> (14-05-2019).

but the 'eagerness to expand itself'.¹⁶⁴ *NRC*'s commentaries indicate not only that the newspaper expects the (near) future to be one of insecurity and doubts, but also that it will be shaped by an actor merely driven by selfish, expansionist concerns. Hence, Prussia is perceived by *NRC* disapprovingly and worrying.

With peace officially reestablished again after the signing of the Peace of Prague on August 23, and the North-German Confederation under construction, it can easily be guessed what concerns Quack in his political overview for the September-edition of *De Gids*. Although the largest part of the text revolves around a reflection on the German political developments before the conclusion of the Prague treaty, at the outset Quack has some implicit commentary on Prussia. Noting that with the treaty's conclusion a new political era has begun for Germany (which given the political reconfigurations that were part of the treaty seems to refer to the development of the North-German Confederation), Quack disapproves of the way in which this renewal has been brought about. Continuing his critique, Quack notes that it is reminding of the maxim 'nothing is true and everything is possible'.¹⁶⁵ Although Quack does not mention Prussia here by name, given the fact that the 'new political era' was instigated due to Prussia's pushes in that direction (as described above), it is fair to say that he accuses the state of being an immoral entity due to its unscrupulous and unbounded attitude.

Akin to Quack, *NRC* disapproves of the way how a Prussian parliamentary commission that drafted a study for a bill on the incorporation of Hannover, Kurhessen, Nassau and Frankfurt came to its conclusion that Prussia is allowed to incorporate these territories. After mentioning that this bill was accepted by the Prussian parliament early September, the newspaper states that the commission did not bother using the 'right of the strongest, the right of conquest' to permit incorporation. It argues that the commission's study goes beyond an incorporation proposal presented by the government, since it suggests that the former, in contrast to the latter, argues that it is only by means 'of an organic union between the remaining German states and Prussia' that the future state can develop well. Here, *NRC* disapproves again of the commission. It namely asserts that the words 'organic union' are nothing less than a euphemism that have to prevent the reader from thinking that Prussia wants an annexation of the mentioned territories. Furthermore, *NRC* criticizes the parliament that accepted the bill. Noting that the greatest part of the institution is liberal, it asks whether such actions can truly bear that name given the presumed violation of the rights of other states that accompanied the acceptance. Thus accusing them of hypocrisy, the newspaper also notes that the commission used artificial means to legitimize an annexation, since it was well aware

¹⁶⁴ Author unknown, 'Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 18 Augustus.', *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 19-08-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010113466:mpeg21:a0004> (14-05-2019).

¹⁶⁵ H.P.G. Quack, 'Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 25 Augustus 1866.', in: author unknown, *De Gids. Dertigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1866), binding III, September, 528.

of the voices that opposed themselves in Germany against annexation.¹⁶⁶ Given this discourse on the Prussian parliament in general and one of its commissions specifically, the newspaper characterizes the parliament as hypocritical and immoral.

Although going one step further, *AC* characterizes Prussia's politics similarly in an article reacting to discourse by the German newspaper *Kölnische Zeitung* on the annexation of Hannover. In the text, *AC* characterizes Prussia's 'revolutionary politics' in general, throughout history and in the present time, as immoral. Noting that all areas of Prussia (*AC* mentions Posen, Silesia, Saxony, and the Rhine provinces) have been acquired using 'conquest and annexation' instead of 'legal justice', the newspaper argues that Prussia's existence is 'of an injustice that, simply because it has been committed, is legitimized'.¹⁶⁷

AH, interestingly, considers Prussia's politics less negative. In one of its editorial commentaries it presents the measures the Prussian government will take for the administration of the aforementioned annexed territories, during which it notes that most of the existing institutions and customs will continue to function. This is followed by the statement that Prussia is 'sincere' and that one can only 'rejoice' on these 'wise and moderate measures'.¹⁶⁸ Shortly later, discussing a circular letter by marquis de La Valette (the French minister of Foreign Affairs at the time) directed to the Prussian ambassador in Paris, *AH* notes that the document consists of a sentence which might have been chosen intently for the group of persons who believes that a desire for conquest is the true motivation of Prussia's politics. Discussing this sentence, the newspaper acknowledges that it disapproves of the manner in which the Prussian state continued its politics, but it also asserts that it has never been able to believe that Prussia would continue its politics outside of Germany's borders, knowing that it is easy to confuse the 'plans and dreams of German democrats with those of practical statesmen'. Furthermore, following another passage from De La Valette's document, which declared that Prussia extended its power to populations "of similar morals and national character", *AH* states that it is difficult to believe that one can suspect Prussian statesmen of 'assaults on the independency of populations'.¹⁶⁹ *AH* thus presents an ambivalent picture of Germany. On the one hand, it points at the lackluster execution of Prussia's politics and suggests that some parts of the German population (German democrats) adhere to extreme political ideas. On the other hand, *AH* also acknowledges that Prussia has extended its politics only to those populations to whom it is culturally affiliated, and that it will administer these territories

¹⁶⁶ Author unknown, 'Algemeen Overzicht. Rotterdam, 9 September.', *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 10-09-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010113488:mpeg21:a0002> (14-05-2019).

¹⁶⁷ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 10 September.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 11-09-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087693:mpeg21:a0001> (14-05-2019).

¹⁶⁸ Author unknown, 'Amsterdam, Woensdag 3 October.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 04-10-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:000010676:mpeg21:a0005> (16-05-2019).

¹⁶⁹ Author unknown, 'Amsterdam, Vrijdag 5 October.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 06-10-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:000010679:mpeg21:a0002> (16-05-2019).

in a morally acceptable way. It is thus fair to say that *AH* conceives ambivalently about Germany, but not as negatively as the preceding September-sources.

Similar to *AH*, *De Gids* seems not to be worried as well about a potential Prussian expansionist threat to the Netherlands, but more about its consequences for Germany as a whole. In his now familiar political overviews, Quack states that people in general do not believe that calmness has returned again to the domain of foreign politics. Not yet specifying to what phenomenon he precisely refers, Quack states that many institutions have been cleared that stood in the way of 'general progress'. Although Quack does not approve of those institutions completely, he believes that the thought of their removal saddens one. Subsequently, Quack makes explicitly clear to which development he precisely refers: to the removal of German monarchs such as the King of Hannover, the Elector of Hessen and the Duke of Nassau. Hence, the preceding discourse specifically refers to the Prussian annexation of the German states described above (or, following the discourse of Quack, the Prussian removal of their respective institutions). Shortly later, Quack states that a potential dethroning by the citizens of the annexed state would have been legitimate, but also argues that the actual dethroning by the Prussian king was a 'comedy' (substantiated by suggesting that the king's actions and statements regarding the annexations were not based on 'justice and truth').¹⁷⁰ Given the discourse, Quack again presents an ambivalent conception of Germany. Although not completely positive about the government of the former independent states (since he argues that a dethroning of their kings by their citizens would have been legitimate), he regrets their 'loss' due to Prussia's policies. Therefore, especially Prussia is conceived negatively.

Contrary to *AH* and *De Gids*, *AC* is clearly worried about an annexation of the Netherlands by Prussia. Reacting to discourse by *Kölnische Zeitung*, which asserted that the time has not yet come for Prussia to annex the Netherlands, *AC* indicates that there are still a few years left for the Netherlands to prepare for this situation. That time, the newspaper asserts, should be used to think about the situations the Netherlands faces in the situation it is not able to defend itself: either outright annexation, or the preservation of some sort of autonomy due to the preservation of the Dutch nationality.¹⁷¹ Although the latter option indicates that Prussia might be lenient in some sort of way, *AC*'s suggestion is that regardless of the option something will occur to the Netherlands. Accordingly, Prussia is conceived as a state threatening the integrity of the Netherlands.

¹⁷⁰ H.P.G. Quack, 'Politiek overzicht. 's Gravenhage, 25 October 1866.', in: author unknown, *De Gids. Dertigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1866), binding IV, November, 340-341.

¹⁷¹ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 23 November.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 24-11-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087757:mpeg21:a0002> (17-05-2019).

3.3 Focusing Inward

As seen above, it is only *AC* that conceives Prussia and her expansionism between May and November 1866 as a threat to the Netherlands. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that *AC* is the only one concerned with the question what the Netherlands needs to do against a German threat, which forms the second major theme in the liberal discourse on Germany.¹⁷²

At the end of June 1866, it was not yet clear that Prussia would win its war against Austria: Prussia itself did not yet reflect a superior military capacity given its loss on June 27 against the Hanoverian army. Despite this situation, it seems that *AC* wants to be prepared for the worst: on June 28 it posits in a two-part article the question what Europe in general and the Netherlands specifically will be awaiting and need to do when Prussia achieves victory upon Austria and the German Confederation. The newspaper asserts that in such a situation ‘we’ are on the brink of a ‘general European war’. Prussia, *AC* continues, will namely become a major power replacing Austria and the German Confederation, thus ‘revolutionizing’ the European state system i.e. destabilizing the balance of power. Although *AC* is not fundamentally opposed against a revision of the international system of diplomacy set up after 1815, it notes that a change on the basis of Prussia’s growth at the expense of Denmark, Austria and Germany is wrong since it concentrates a diplomatic *force majeure* in only a few hands. As such, *AC* alleges, the existence of small states is threatened. After subsequently asserting that is of utmost importance that Prussia remains committed to the constitution of the German Confederation, it also noted that there is a chance that Prussia might not do so, leading to a general European war. It is thus not surprising that *AC* ends the first part of the article by asking again what the Netherlands should be doing in such a situation.¹⁷³ Before *AC* gives an answer in the second part, it wants to point out that the Netherlands should maintain the ‘strictest neutrality’ during contemporary situations in which conflicts, such as the German one, are still a purely German-internal affair. Hence, *AC* argues that the Netherlands should not choose sides and avoid extraordinary measures regarding armament, such as mobilizations. *AC* does want to point out, however, that the Dutch government should start to consider a long-neglected subject, namely the state of the country’s resiliency (*weerbaarheid*) and fortifications. The newspaper suggests that providing good equipment and armament for the troops, and looking after its inundation areas and fortresses should be top priorities for the government by stating that such measures are like a ‘wise family man who takes care of good closure, firm locks, and bars on windows and doors.’ In the case that a general war

¹⁷² Although it might come across as artificial to separate these two themes, it is necessary to do so since the articles in paragraph 4.3 do not discuss Prussian expansionism and the events related to this aspiration as such. In 4.3, it is much more about the implications of that aspiration. Additionally, grouping the concerned articles together with those of 4.2 would create a too complex narrative. Therefore, it is necessary to separate them.

¹⁷³ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 27 Junij.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 28-06-1866.

(version unknown) [https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087938:mpeg21:a0001\(06-05-2019\)](https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087938:mpeg21:a0001(06-05-2019)).

develops over a European question (such as territorial reconfigurations), however, the Dutch should not adhere to their neutrality and choose sides with states that entertain similar opinions and interests. Isolationist politics in such a situation, *AC* claims, is the most dangerous kind of politics to conform to since it will lead to lesser chances of fulfilling one's interests. *AC* concludes by warning that a people that is not able to assert itself in such a situation, does not deserve to be recognized as an independent nation.¹⁷⁴

During September, *AC* in a two-part article is again concerned with similar questions. On September 13, after noting how Prussia is going its own way without being disturbed by the other major European powers, it asks how the country can strengthen its diplomatic policy in order to prevent an attack.¹⁷⁵ After considering in both parts of the article various states with whom the Netherlands could pursue an alliance to that end, such as Belgium, England and France, the newspaper concludes that none of these options are satisfying. *AC* is worried about France, since it notes that the Netherlands might become a vassal state of that country in the case it pursues an alliance. It is only when the Netherlands has to choose between the lesser of two evils (domination by either Prussia or France) that the country should consider such an option. As long as those situations are not yet at the order of the day, *AC* argues, the Netherlands should try to remain as autonomous and independent as possible. Despite the lack of worthy alliances, *AC* does consider it important to find a strong ally in the diplomatic arena. It states that the Dutch cabinet and Second Chamber should do so, presumably since it indicates that Dutch diplomacy itself lacks diplomatic 'genius and policy'. However, given the German dangers the Netherlands is faced with, *AC* does consider it important that '*our diplomacy*' guards the Netherlands.¹⁷⁶ Hence, the suggestion of the article is that the Netherlands should firstly improve the quality of its diplomats as such before considering the actual policy executed by those very same diplomats, in order to face the German danger.

In the last weeks of September, *AC* emphasizes military measures in a reflection on the political and military condition of the Netherlands. After stating that the country has not witnessed any major setbacks since 1848, the newspaper establishes that this development, as so many earlier periods in Dutch history, has led to a weakening of the 'public mentality' and indifference regarding the countries 'highest interests'. One of those indifferences, *AC* argues, was the population's attitude towards the danger the Austro-Prussian hostilities presented to the Netherlands, despite the presumed general knowledge that the country's defense was in

¹⁷⁴ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 28 Junij.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 29-06-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087939:mpeg21:a0001> (06-05-2019).

¹⁷⁵ Author unknown, 'Over een eventueel bondgenootschap voor Nederland. I.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 13-09-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087695:mpeg21:a0001> (14-05-2019).

¹⁷⁶ Author unknown, 'Over een eventueel bondgenootschap voor Nederland. I.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 13-09-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087695:mpeg21:a0001> (14-05-2019);

Author unknown, 'Over een eventueel bondgenootschap voor Nederland. II.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 14-09-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087696:mpeg21:a0001> (14-05-2019).

an inadequate condition. Disappointed, the newspaper establishes that the condition of the Dutch army has not improved since the war.¹⁷⁷ After stating that ‘extraordinary times’, characterized by phenomena such as despotism and autocracy, need ‘extraordinary measures’, the newspaper notes that the Netherlands need to be more worried than other states. Especially Prussia concerns AC, since it argues that the Dutch rivers and harbors are very beneficial for Prussia. Noting that the ‘eventuality’ of a Prussian invasion might occur in the short term, one of the ‘extraordinary measures’ the Dutch need to take is armament: regardless of the question whether they can repel Prussia’s power, the Dutch should try to defend the country with all of their powers, since such an attitude exhibits a strong desire to be independent and might thus lead conquerors to respect that desire.¹⁷⁸ For AC, armament entails measures such as introducing a legion of mercenaries¹⁷⁹ and the purchasing of heavy artillery and new rifles (indeed, AC argued against armament in June, but the kind of armament it referred to in that context entailed large-scale measures such as mobilization). It also notes that the Dutch people should become a force that shows supports for AC’s plea for improving the country’s defense capabilities. By organizing manifestations and founding militias, the Dutch people can, according to AC, not only spur the government to introduce measures, but also exhibit their ‘firm willingness’ of not wanting to be incorporated in a foreign nation with which it does not sympathize in any way.¹⁸⁰ Given the preceding discourse on Prussia, it is very likely that ‘foreign nation’ refers to the German one.

In the subsequent months, the question what the Netherlands needs to do against a German threat is still visible, but less so than during September. Early October, AC relates Prussia’s expansionism to the Netherlands. This becomes explicit in AC’s discussion of a political ideology entailing the idea that small nations need to be abolished for the sake of a future Europe consisting merely of large empires. After describing how those who adhere to this position consider phenomena such as people who value an ‘independent existence’ as ‘provincialist’, the newspaper suddenly states that to these skeptics the idea of an incorporation of the Netherlands in Prussia does not present as abysmal a spectre as it does to others. Contrasting this ‘minority’ with ‘we’ (the majority of the people, including AC), the newspaper states ‘we’ want to oppose the ‘doctrine of large nations’ for the necessity of maintaining small nations.¹⁸¹ After suggesting that this is not a delusional path to follow, the

¹⁷⁷ Author unknown, ‘Onze politieke en militaire toestand. I.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 21-09-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087702:mpeg21:a0002> (15-05-2019).

¹⁷⁸ Author unknown, ‘Onze politieke en militaire toestand. II.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 22-09-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087703:mpeg21:a0001> (15-05-2019).

¹⁷⁹ Author unknown, ‘Onze politieke en militaire toestand. III.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 25-09-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087705:mpeg21:a0001> (15-05-2019).

¹⁸⁰ Author unknown, ‘Onze politieke en militaire toestand. IV.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 26-09-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087706:mpeg21:a0001> (15-05-2019).

¹⁸¹ Author unknown, ‘De kleine nationaliteiten. I.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 01-10-1866. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087710:mpeg21:a0002> (16-05-2019).

newspaper states ‘that there is an inner voice shouting that it is better to fight to the death than succumb to Prussian language, laws and customs’.¹⁸² In the second part of the article, *AC* reaffirms that its ambition is not a delusion, and that no tyrants like Bismarck and Napoleon can destroy Dutch particularity. The newspaper also notes that the Dutch people should thus not passively wait until someone conquers the country. Instead, the country should not only arm itself, but especially take every cause away that might lead to a war. *AC* states that notably the government and diplomacy have an important role to that end: whereas the latter should foresee and neutralize the difficulties that might arise abroad, the former should pursue a liberal politics centered around free trade, deregulation and a lowering of tariffs. *AC* concludes by arguing that by living an ‘own, powerful and independent life’, a small nation can show to be entitled to its own nationality.¹⁸³ Given the contemporary context of an expansionist Prussia, it is likely that the newspaper was at least partially inclined to the writing of the article due to that phenomenon. Note as well how the article uses a fictive incorporation of the Netherlands in Prussia as an example of an idea that does not scare the skeptics described above. Without taking a build-up to this example or introducing any other country that might be a threat, the newspaper conveys that Prussia is at the top of its mind, which indicates that Prussia is sensed by *AC* as a contemporary threat to the Netherlands.

This is also visible in an article by *AC* published in November. Using the contemporary concerns of the Dutch cabinet for elections as the introduction of the article, *AC* hopes that the security of the Netherlands becomes one of the main concerns of the cabinet again. Noting that Interior Minister Jan van Heemskerk’s ‘beautiful’ slogan “Orange and the Netherlands” does not avert a war threat or creates alliances, the newspaper again states that diplomatic and military measures need to be taken, spurred by a Prussia that has ‘revolutionized’ international law and the state system of Europe. Observing that militias are being founded across the Netherlands, the newspaper states that Dutch citizens are becoming aware that the ‘German poodle’ is becoming dangerous, and are ‘finally’ realizing that maintaining ‘absolute neutrality’ also has its disadvantages. After arguing that ‘absolute neutrality’ will not prevent Prussia from potentially invading the country, and showing that Prussia is becoming a real danger due to its growth from merely the German territories on the south-eastern border to the territories on the eastern border as a whole, the newspaper states that the Netherlands has finally started to realize that more is needed to counter Prussia’s ‘needle-rifle politics’ than merely upholding tractates, international rights and neutrality. The newspaper offers a helping hand for developing an alternative politics by stating that the Netherlands should

¹⁸² Author unknown, ‘De kleine nationaliteiten. I.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 01-10-1866.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087710:mpeg21:a0002> (16-05-2019).

¹⁸³ Author unknown, ‘De kleine nationaliteiten. (1) II.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 08-10-1866.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000087716:mpeg21:a0001> (16-05-2019).

practice ‘self-help’, and also by positing the question whether the country could form a military alliance with Belgium specifically, or like-minded states in general.¹⁸⁴ Especially the latter aspect is interesting, since *AC* now seems to consider an alliance with Belgium as possible, whereas it discarded such a cooperation in September.

3.4 Conclusion

Prussia to a larger extent, and Germany to a lesser were overall conceived quite negatively between May and November 1866 by the liberal publications discussed here. They were discussed especially in the context of Prussia’s expansionism and the related events. Whereas *AH* and *De Gids* present an ambivalent picture, *NRC* and especially *AC* talk in judgmental terms about Germany. *AC*, being the only medium concerned about the threat of Prussia’s aspiration for the Netherlands, continues its condemning discourse in the context of the second theme analyzed above: the question of what the Netherlands needs to do against a German threat. Despite some incidental positive remarks¹⁸⁵, it is fair to say that the discussed publications communicated a negative image of Germany between May and November 1866.

Although the rhetorical tool of contrasting the Netherlands against Germany was not yet applied during this period, paragraph 3.2 does convey that the underlying question guiding that tool, namely the question of what the Netherlands should be doing against a German threat, was becoming a point of concern in 1866 for some Dutch liberals. Only *AC* used the events related to the German unification to warn the Netherlands that measures needed to be introduced to maintain autonomy. Doing so was at this moment in time only dependent on diplomatic, political and military measures. The frequency with which military measures were mentioned suggests that it considered those of prime importance. Thus, immaterial, cultural factors, fundamental to the rhetorical tool of contrasting the Netherlands against Germany, were not yet emphasized in 1866. However, contrary to the previous chapter, the findings do confirm Te Velde’s statement that the demise of law due to the Austro-Prussian War was

¹⁸⁴ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 6 November.’, *Arnhemse Courant*, 07-11-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKBo8:000087742:mpeg21:a0002> (16-05-2019).

¹⁸⁵ *NRC*, for example, uses the progress visible in the law systems of countries like Germany to suggest that the Netherlands needs to develop its juridical system to a higher level as well. Germany is thus seen as an example to follow for the Netherlands, thus suggesting a positive conception of the former. See: author unknown, ‘Onze Wetgeving.’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 01-07-1866.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010282834:mpeg21:a0025> (06-05-1866).

Likewise, in a *De Gids*-article by the Dutch liberal politician and economist Nicolaas Pierson on the German economist Friedrich List and the times he lived in, Germany is appraisingly referred to as a country where economics has started to influence the ‘housekeeping of the peoples’ and the ‘views of individuals’ more and more. Although the article was written in March 1866, before the German political and military escalations (as suggested by the editors by emphasizing that the article only describes the ‘old’ German conditions given the article’s time of writing), it is unlikely that these views on the socio-economic impact of economics will have changed due to political and military developments (see: N.G. Pierson, ‘Friedrich List en zijn tijd.’, in: author unknown, *De Gids. Dertigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1866), binding III, September, 353, 386 and 388.

conceived by Dutch citizens as a threat to their country's independence¹⁸⁶, as testified by *AC*'s discourse (perhaps due to the proximity of the newspaper's office to the Dutch-German border, its authors were more fearful of the growing power of Prussia along the border than the Amsterdam and Rotterdam-based *AH* and *NRC*). This leaves us with the question why the authors did not yet stimulate the development of national consciousness at this moment in time. This most likely has to do with the fact that the Dutch did not doubt the viability of the Dutch nation during the second half of the 1860s, despite the uncertainties of some about the country's future.¹⁸⁷ However, as will be shown in the next chapter, the liberal views started to change in the period 1870-1871.

¹⁸⁶ Te Velde, *Gemeenschapszin en plichtsbeseft*, 31.

¹⁸⁷ Ibidem, 31; Tamse, *Nederland en België in Europa*, 102.

IV. Awakening the Nations

4.1 Introduction

Despite the confirmation of Prussia's power in northern Germany following the Treaty of Prague, Germany as such could still become unstable. David G. Williamson points out that the southern German states were divided and unable to develop a confederation independent from the northern one. Their economic and military connections with the Confederation gave the impression that they would eventually become members, but Napoleon III, the French emperor, did not approve.¹⁸⁸ Additionally, Thomas Nipperdey suggests that the instability resulted from the difference between the respective tempo's in which Bismarck and the national unification movement wanted to finish the unification. The latter was not satisfied with the order created in 1866. Nipperdey notes that the movement had its own dynamic and demanded completion from Bismarck. During 1866 and 1867, Bismarck himself became aware of the necessity of forming a *Nationalstaat*, although his motivation (the satisfaction of *großpreußischen* power ambitions) was different. By pointing at the particular dynamic of the unification movement, Nipperdey thus suggests that Bismarck had a different dynamic and could only proceed cautiously to fully satisfy Prussia's interests. It is important to note that Bismarck did not cling to a masterplan: the future was open, full of possibilities.¹⁸⁹

Early 1869, the North German parliament started to put increasing pressure on Bismarck to finish the unification. Bismarck was keen on achieving this, since success would mean that he was likely of achieving parliamentary approval for his military budget two years later. An opportunity arose after Queen Isabella of Spain's forced abdication in September 1868. Due to the abdication, the Spanish started searching for a successor. One of the persons they considered worthy of succeeding Isabella was Prince Leopold, a south-German member of the Hohenzollern dynasty. Although King William II was skeptical about the succession, Bismarck pressured Leopold to accept the offer. Eventually, he did.¹⁹⁰

The French became aware of the monarchical developments and furiously demanded that Leopold would stand down, since they considered Spain as belonging to their ambit.¹⁹¹ Leopold did eventually stand down, with which the French achieved a Prussia-humiliating success. The French foreign minister, however, misjudged the extent of his victory, and was determined to demand written guarantees from the Prussian king via his ambassador in Germany to prevent a renewal of Leopold's candidacy. William refused, and notified Bismarck via the infamous Ems-telegram about his encounter with the French ambassador. Bismarck

¹⁸⁸ Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 80.

¹⁸⁹ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866-1918*, 13-14.

¹⁹⁰ Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 81.

¹⁹¹ Ibidem, 81; Richard J. Evans, *The Pursuit of Power. Europe 1815-1914* (w.p. 2017) 260.

edited the telegram to give it a more aggressive tone, followed by a press release. The French court, parliament and cabinet were so infuriated about this that Napoleon on July 15 declared war on Prussia.¹⁹² The war thus came to be known as the Franco-Prussian War, but this does not do justice to the fervor it created in Germany: nearly everybody in the country supported Prussia, and it was thus much more a German war than a mere Prussian one. The Germans had one goal in mind: carrying through the German unification. At the war's start, it had become clear for everyone in Germany that a solution would be found to that end (although the precise form in which unification would occur was not yet clear).¹⁹³

Compared to their Prussian counterparts, the French troops suffered from poor leadership and a weak organization. As a result, the Prussians were able to cause huge defeats to the French. A well-known example is the Battle of Sedan at the start of September, where Napoleon was captured by the Prussian army. Later that month, Paris came under siege.¹⁹⁴ Victories such as the one in Sedan were accompanied by nationalistic fervor and a decline of the anti-Prussian voices in Germany. Furthermore, the wish for unification was accompanied by a wish for the incorporation of Alsace and Lorraine in Germany, the former parts of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.¹⁹⁵ In November, Bismarck successfully negotiated in Versailles with the southern states of Bavaria, Wurttemberg and Baden for their entry in the Confederation, although this essentially entailed a re-establishment of the Confederation. Bismarck, however, sought to go one step further. To conceal the Prussian hegemony and continuation of federal elements in the Confederation, he wanted to designate the new order as an empire. After the Prussian king hesitantly accepted the title of emperor, the new empire was formally founded on January 1, 1871 after the treaties to that end came into force on that date. Symbolically, however, the empire was founded on January 18 following the *Kaiserproklamation* in the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles.¹⁹⁶

In the meantime, however, the war lasted longer for Bismarck than he had aimed for. At the end of 1870, the prestige he had achieved after Sedan was diminishing. As such, there was also less hope of obtaining a peace as impressive as the one achieved on Austria in 1866. The moment the French gave up their defense of Paris in January 1871, Bismarck seized the opportunity to end the war. On January 25, 1871, an armistice was achieved, followed by a preliminary peace in February.¹⁹⁷ How did the Dutch liberal media view these events? Did they feel sympathy for the German people finally achieving their wish? Or were they concerned about their own position? And, if yes, what did these concerns imply for Dutch society? As will

¹⁹² Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 81.

¹⁹³ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866-1918*, 62-63 and 75.

¹⁹⁴ Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 83.

¹⁹⁵ Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866-1918*, 62-63, 70-71 and 75.

¹⁹⁶ Ibidem, 77-78 and 79-80.

¹⁹⁷ Williamson, *Germany since 1815*, 84.

be argued below, national consciousness become of strong concern for the liberal authors. Continuing the debate started in 1866 on the question what the Netherlands need to do against a German threat, the various media and writers present the development of national consciousness as an important measure in that regard. This chapter follows a similar structure to the previous one: it firstly discusses Prussia's expansionism and the annexationistic ambitions of the German population combined as the major theme, followed by an account of the aforementioned debate.

4.2 A German Quest for Dominance and Conquest

In July and August, *AH* and *AC* present two very different considerations of Germany. In the context of the Franco-Prussian tensions regarding the appointment of Prince Leopold to the Spanish throne, *AH* does not exhibit concerns about Prussia's expansionism. Whilst discussing a speech by the French minister of Foreign Affairs in the French parliament on Leopold's succession to the Spanish throne, the newspaper states that the minister asserted that Prussia aims to rebuild the Holy Roman Empire as it was once governed by Charles V. *AH* does not agree. Although it acknowledges that one might say such things in a moment of agitation, it does not understand how 'wise, calm-thinking people' are able to attain any value to such words. Subsequently, the newspaper asserts that when one puts such 'chimera's' out of one's mind, and realizes that the Spanish have appointed a person to whom the largest part of the Spanish nation cannot have any serious objection, it is inconceivable that one can see 'a casus belli against Prussia in such an event'. Concluding the discussion of the minister's speech, *AH* argues that French could do no better for fostering Prussia's cause than making a declaration of war out of the Spanish succession. A French attack, the newspaper asserts, would namely give the impression of being an act of resistance against the German unification, and would lead the whole of Germany to rise as 'one man' to thwart the attack.¹⁹⁸ As described in the introduction of this chapter, Prussia aimed to use the German unification as a means to satisfy its own power interests. By describing the consequence of a French attack, namely the rise of Germany as 'one man', as a means to further Prussia's cause, *AH* seems to suggest that Prussia could potentially use a war merely as a cover for its own particular interests.

In an editorial commentary of August 28, *AH* discusses the discourse of French politicians on the question whether the French soldiers know what they are fighting for. One politician presumably stated that the French soldiers do know and asserted that it is the holy cause of France, "stained" by a stranger. Reacting to this statement, *AH* posits that there is indeed a stranger in France (the Germans), but that that stranger came to defend its soil against the very same disaster France is currently facing (referring to the French declaration

¹⁹⁸ Author unknown, 'Amsterdam, Vrijdag 8 Juli.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 09-07-1870. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098213:mpeg21:a0009> (19-05-2019).

of war against Prussia). Thus, the German actions are depicted as righteous. Shortly later, the newspaper asserts that the Germans know what they themselves are fighting for (thus indicating that *AH* thinks that the French do not know what they are fighting for). *AH* states that the Germans do not want to retreat, ‘even if the fighting is extremely bloody’, since they have had to ‘shudder’ France for centuries. Asserting that that what Germany has longed for for such a long time – German unity – is at the verge of being achieved, *AH* remarks that it is strange that there are persons asking why Germany does not give up its battle, despite the amount of countrymen that are killed in combat. By talking appraisingly about the German combat mentality and noting how Germany has had to suffer French conquests for centuries, the newspaper suggests that Germany’s goal of realizing the unification is a noble cause.¹⁹⁹ Combined with the suggestion that Germany’s entering of France is legitimate, the country is depicted positively by *AH* during July and August (although Prussia as opportunistic).

AC depicts Germany in more explicit, condemning terms. Early August, *AC* discusses a draft treaty of Prussia and France. According to *AC*, the draft was conferred between the two to ‘jointly conquer and rob their neighbors’, whom (as becomes clear shortly later) concern Belgium and the Netherlands. Although the newspaper states that it does not matter who came up with the draft, it argues that the person to whom the plan is proposed is of a ‘similar level of morality’ as the one who proposes it. Although it still mentions that Napoleon probably conceived the draft and acknowledges that Bismarck dismissed it, *AC* disapproves of the latter as well by arguing that Bismarck himself was not surprised at all of Napoleon’s proposal due to his ‘calm and logical’ consideration of it. After discussing the draft’s substance, the newspaper states that it contains a valuable lesson for smaller states such as the Netherlands: that one cannot trust on the ‘sense of justice, honesty and generosity of their powerful neighbors’.²⁰⁰ Hence, both France and Prussia are conceived as immoral, dangerous entities.

At the end of August, after assuring that progress in general makes one not only rich and powerful, but also deemed and honored, *AC* states that it is thus natural that those who make progress demand the homage they are entitled to and claim the respect and subservience that their progress is indebted to. To illustrate how these ‘laws’ are visible in reality, the newspaper presents the discourse of Prussian newspapers as an example, who in the wake of the Prussian conquests in France stated that the German nation is the “supreme nation” and “standing on the summit of civilization”. Although *AC* states that such a state of mind is understandable, it notes that it is remarkable given how quickly the situation in Germany has changed in only a matter of weeks. At this point, the language employed by *AC* is not yet

¹⁹⁹ Author unknown, ‘Amsterdam, Zaterdag 27 Augustus.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 28-08-1870. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098263:mpeg21:a0007> (20-05-2019).

²⁰⁰ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 1 Augustus.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 02-08-1870. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089186:mpeg21:a0002> (20-05-2019).

explicitly condemning the country, but note the following section of the article. Whereas the tone of the German newspapers was ‘calm, moderate and dignified’ only four weeks ago, *AC* asserts, the war and the progress of the German armies have created a totally different mentality. After stating that the ‘elevation’ of the German people is synchronous to the humiliation of the French people, the newspaper notes that against all customs of diplomacy and war, Alsace and Lorraine are already being governed according to German law, and that the ‘organs’ of German public opinion are already insisting on their annexation. Additionally, the newspaper suggests that Germany is adhering to double standards, since it indicates that German newspapers heavily criticized earlier French ideas about having the Rhine as France’s natural border, whereas those very same newspapers are now arguing that the Vosges should be Germany’s natural border. After arguing that Prussia’s warfare belongs to antiquity, the article is concluded by asserting that the question whom will be ruler and the “summit of civilization” has become a question of ‘canons, rifles and bayonets’. The latter comment seems a reference to Germany’s lack of adherence to customs of diplomacy and war indicated earlier in the article. Combined with the discourse on Germany’s double-standards in relation to Prussia’s occupation of the mentioned French regions, Germany is presented as immoral.²⁰¹

Whereas *AC* clearly expresses worries about Prussia due to the aforementioned draft treaty discussed between Prussia and France, *De Gids* is less worried. This becomes clear out of an article using the anxiety among the populations of small European states about the treaty as an inducement for an analysis of the North-German Confederation’s constitution.²⁰² Acknowledging that the draft treaty has led to feelings of anxiety among the Dutch population, the writer of the article, R.G. Philipson, states that those worries are not sufficiently justified by their cause.²⁰³ Philipson namely asserts that the Dutch have a habit to compare their situation with those of other smaller states that had a reason to be afraid, whilst there are many substantial differences between them. Furthermore, Philipson states that the Dutch do not imagine themselves sufficiently in the position of those accused of having ‘imperious plans’. After noting that the realization of the German unification is Prussia’s ‘first and

²⁰¹ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 24 Augustus.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 25-08-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089206:mpeg21:a0002> (20-05-2019).

The depiction of Germany, or, more specifically, Prussia as an immoral entity continues on September 1. Discussing potential conditions Prussia might demand in the context of peace negotiations between Prussia and France, *AC* argues on the basis of an analysis of German newspapers that the demands will be excessive. This is illustrated by a discussion of the German ideas for annexing Alsace and Lorraine. There, it is noted that Prussia’s king is likely of demanding this during the negotiations, either by his own will or by pressure of public opinion. Although *AC* is not sure that an annexation will eventually occur, the word ‘likely’ suggests that it would be strange if Prussia would not proceed with such a step. By dubbing such an action as excessive, Germany is again depicted as an immoral entity. See: author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 31 Augustus.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 01-09-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089214:mpeg21:a0002> (21-05-2019).

²⁰² R.G. Philipson, ‘De Staatsregeling van den Noord-Duitschen Bond. (I.)’, in: author unknown, *De Gids. Vier en dertigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1870), binding III, September, 417.

²⁰³ Unfortunately, biographical information about Philipson could not be retrieved.

foremost goal', the maintenance of the Napoleonic dynasty France's, and as long the internal political situation in both countries is unfinished and the two do not exhibit any 'evil intentions' towards the Netherlands, the newspaper asserts that the recent events in Germany do not give the Dutch a serious reason for anxiety.²⁰⁴ Although these comments do not necessarily indicate a positive conception of Prussia, they do convey that Philipson does not conceive that state as threatening as AC does.

During the rest of the year, AC is one of the foremost mediums thematizing the expansionistic tendencies visible in Germany. Shortly after the Prussian victory over the French army at Sedan, AC states on September 3 that it does not understand the demands of German public opinion for an annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, the occupation of Paris and the French indemnification of its fleet to Germany, since it doubts whether such measures compensate ordinary German citizens for the losses and damages they experienced during the war. Especially the annexation demands are highlighted: after noting how German public opinion is demanding the annexation, the newspaper states that the 'germ' will be planted for a renewed war by France against Prussia. Afterwards, AC argues that it is only when Prussia renounces its conquests after its victory upon France, that that risk might be avoided (although it does not rule out the possibility that that might also occur in such a situation). The article concludes by stating that the chances of the Prussian king and especially the German people willing to do so are low, and that the 'short-sightedness' of the German people will pave the way for a dark future for their children.²⁰⁵ Roughly a week later, AC notes how German citizens organize public meetings for the purpose of declaring that foreign interventions during peace negotiations between France and Prussia are undesirable, and that Alsace and Lorraine are needed for Germany as a guarantee against France's 'desire for conquest'. Subsequently, AC argues that such actions are a 'rape' of the principles of international law and an expression of the 'medieval law of the fist' that has left state and civil law already for a long time.²⁰⁶ Similarly, early October AC argues how only three months earlier the 'impenetrable armored and harnessed principle' of international law has become a hollow shell following Prussia's victories upon France and its ambition to appropriate French territories.²⁰⁷ Combined with

²⁰⁴ Philipson, 'De Staatsregeling van den Noord-Duitschen Bond. (I.)', 396-397.

²⁰⁵ Author unknown, 'Arnhem 2 September.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 03-09-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089218:mpeg21:a0001> (21-05-2019).

²⁰⁶ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 10 September.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 10-09-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089226:mpeg21:a0001> (21-05-1870).

Although AC conceives negatively of the behavior of the German citizens, it does not consider both as pursuing the same goals. In a commentary of September 13, AC namely states that Prussia's goals should not be identified with the goals of Germany as such. AC aims to prove its statement by means of a historical reflection on the German political history since the Second Schleswig War, during which it e.g. argues that Prussia has always opposed the German Confederation at those moments where Prussia's interests were not involved. See:

author unknown, 'Arnhem, 12 September.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 13-09-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089229:mpeg21:a0001> (21-05-2019).

²⁰⁷ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 7 October.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 08-10-1870.

the discourse of September 3 and 10, *AC* suggests that the German people in general and Prussia specifically pose a threat for both the future stability of Europe and the contemporary international political regime.

Germany's annexationist ambitions are not merely considered by *AC* in relation to French regions: it also connects it to Europe in general and the Netherlands specifically. Shortly after the articles on France discussed, it argues that in the 'dissolution of Germany in Prussia' lays the true danger of an almighty Prussia for Europe. Although it argues that such a danger would not exist for Europe in general and the small states specifically in the situation of a centralized or a federalized Germany, it notes that Prussia is a state still developing and growing beyond its borders. Subsequently, after acknowledging that Prussia would not annex a state as long as it does not consider this beneficial to its interests, the newspaper asserts that such a state would lose its independency even without annexation due to the loss of a counterbalance.²⁰⁸ A month later, in an editorial commentary on an article of the Dutch periodical *Nederlandsche Spectator* discussing a brochure written by the German economist Adolf Wagner, *AC* indicates again that Prussia is a threat to multiple European countries (such as the Netherlands). After citing multiple passages of *Nederlandsche Spectator*, *AC* states that the brochure by Wagner is meant to pit German public opinion against the Dutch, Swiss, Flemish and Scandinavian nations that 'sprouted' from the Germanic tribe, and to spread the idea that they have no right to exist and belong to Germany. Afterwards, *AC* states that 'chauvinists' such as Wagner is one among many in Germany, and that they exploit their ideas at every opportunity presented to them. By stating that their habit to stir up public opinion poses the actual threat to 'us', the newspaper explicates that it conceives Germany as a dangerous country that starts to threaten the sovereignty of the Netherlands.²⁰⁹ Something similar can be discerned in an *AC*-discussion of *Kölnische Zeitung's* idea to annex the duchy of Luxemburg in Germany. Although *AC* notes that its German colleague makes use of arguments instead of the more reprehensible means of the 'needle rifles and Krupp-cannons' of Prussia, it does not approve of its language, economic and security arguments, since they do not have a legal basis. Afterwards, it doubts which guarantee remains for smaller states when legality is no longer recognized and maintained.²¹⁰ By doing so, *AC's* suggestion is that the future will be determined by states (such as Prussia) violating the rights of smaller states. Accordingly, *AC* conceives negatively of Prussia.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089277:mpeg21:a0002> (21-05-2019).

²⁰⁸ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 14 September.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 15-09-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089232:mpeg21:a0002> (21-05-2019).

²⁰⁹ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 12 October.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 13-10-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089283:mpeg21:a0001> (22-05-2019).

²¹⁰ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 19 October.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 20-10-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089293:mpeg21:a0002> (22-05-2019).

AC's negative appraisal of Germany's desire for conquest and domination is also visible during November and December. After noting how the war between France and Prussia has become a war for determining who of the two will rule over the other party and Europe in general, AC argues in its commentary of November 17 that the war is no longer about the respective stages of Germany's self-defense against France's attack and Germany's 'war of conquest'. After noting that the second stage was already 'unlawful', the newspaper suggests that the third is even more reprehensible by arguing that it revolves merely around a desire to 'break' the French nation and build Germany's absolute power over Europe on the ruins of France.²¹¹ Roughly a month later, AC presents a similar argument. Reacting to the accusation that the newspaper has become sympathetic to the French cause, AC deduces that it once must have been sympathetic to the Prussian cause. Denying the accusation by stating that it disapproved of the French attack on Germany, it subsequently argues that the tide has turned by stating that the current 'conqueror', who was previously named France, has now become Germany. Noting that it cannot side with a country willing to appropriate Alsace and Lorraine, AC states that a conqueror remains a conqueror, regardless of the question whether he is the Emperor of France or the King of Prussia. Observing how after the Battle of Sedan the German soldiers havocked France (although it keeps the army command responsible for the soldiers' behavior), AC afterwards argues on the basis of the presented phenomena that it is impossible to side with Prussia. Although the newspaper initially confuses 'Prussia' and 'Germany', it is fair to say that AC clearly conceives negatively of Prussia and its quest for dominance.²¹² However, Germany as such in the context of Prussia's expansionism is also of concern for AC. Later in December, after noting that the German state leaders came together to take note of the treaties drafted in Versailles for the unification of Germany, and reflecting on the struggle of the German people with 'unity and freedom' (which, AC suggests, entailed two diverging paths), the newspaper namely argues that the German people is shedding its blood and destroying France for the sake of their 'lust for honor and desire for conquest'. Although AC acknowledges that Bismarck stimulated the 'lust for honor' of the German citizens as well, AC conveys that it considers the German people in general also responsible for the expansionistic tendencies visible in Germany.²¹³ Such general remarks are shortly later again visible: noting in a commentary of December 26 how once upon a time being the 'great intellectual power of Europe' was Germany's ideal, AC asserts that the country became seduced by the idea that Germany would become the first and foremost military power dominating its neighbors. As

²¹¹ Author unknown, 'Woorden en daden. I.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 17-11-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089321:mpeg21:a0001> (27-05-2019).

²¹² Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 10 December.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 12-12-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089360:mpeg21:a0001> (27-05-2019).

²¹³ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 21 December.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 22-12-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089371:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

such, AC observes, Germany became a proud and rash country, eager for conquest and neglecting the freedoms and rights of other people.²¹⁴ AC's depiction of Germany in November and December 1870 could not be summarized better.²¹⁵

AH has during these months a slightly different appraisal of Germany as indicated by a two-part article written by Louis Philippona using his pseudonym 'Multapator'.²¹⁶ The first part of the article opens with the remark that there are no more saddening events in world history than the downfall of a people. Philippona states that it is thus not surprising that France has gained a lot of attention during the last months. This is followed by the assurance that France's situation must especially have impressed the '*thoughtless part of the public*', since the '*unbiased observer*' knows that populations alternately win and lose. Subsequently, Philippona dives into history to prove his point.²¹⁷ Following this overview, he states to hope that it will lead some people to think that France's current situation is only an incident, as well as that the victories of the German army and the qualities of its commanders are not without precedent. As such, he wants to warn public opinion against prejudices and premature decisions, or, in the contemporary context, against taking a stance that is either primarily pro- or anti Prussian or French (noting that both have their good and bad qualities).²¹⁸ Hence, he concludes his plea by the following words:

Boven Duitschland, boven Frankrijk, boven alle landen der wereld heb ik mijn Nederland lief!
Trots al wat Duitschland en Frankrijk edels, groots en voortreffelijks ontegenzeggelijk in zich
bevatten, vond ik er noch die ware, gematigde en rationeele burgerlijke en politieke vrijheid,

²¹⁴ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 24 December.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 26-12-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089377:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

²¹⁵ Shortly preceding and during these months, AC also fiercely distances itself in its commentaries from the German warfare, such as the bombing of Paris and the violence behind the frontlines against the French citizens. See:

- Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 22 October', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 24-10-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089297:mpeg21:a0001> (22-05-2019).

- Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 31 October.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 01-11-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089304:mpeg21:a0001> (25-05-2019).

- Author unknown, 'Woorden en daden. II.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 19-11-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089325:mpeg21:a0001> (27-05-2019).

- Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 22 December.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 24-12-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089375:mpeg21:a0002> (28-05-2019).

²¹⁶ Philippona's life was not as stable as some of the persons described earlier. After his father died, Philippona was sent to a boarding school and monastery. Eventually, he ended up in a seminary. However, he was considered unsuitable for becoming a cleric. A study in medicine also proved unsuccessful. After various wanderings throughout the Netherlands, he became in 1868 a journalist for AH, for which he wrote using his pseudonym 'Multapator'. See: International Institute Social History Amsterdam, Archief Volksbond tegen Drankmisbruik 1875-1983, 1986-1987, 1875-1983 (finding aid International Institute Social History Amsterdam, 2019) 5.

²¹⁷ Louis Philippona, 'Frankrijk's tegenwoordige rampen. Door Multapator. I.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 30-11-1870. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:0100983578:mpeg21:a0044> (27-05-2019).

²¹⁸ Louis Philippona, 'Frankrijk's tegenwoordige rampen. Door Multapator. II.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 01-12-1870. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098358:mpeg21:a0038> (27-05-2019).

noch die practische verdraagzaamheid, noch die rust en dien vrede, waarin ik mij als Nederlander verheug, en die mij steeds doen denken: vrij en gelukkig zooals in *Nederland*!²¹⁹

As becomes clear, Philippona takes a relatively moderate approach towards Germany. Furthermore, as indicated by the citation, Philippona contrasts the Netherlands against both France and Germany. By appraisingly highlighting the presumed unique cultural qualities of the Dutch, he makes the reader aware that they are different from the French and Germans. Hence, the article can be considered as a means stimulating national consciousness.

Shortly after the New Year's celebrations, *AC* and *AH* reflect on the (future) consequences of the Franco-Prussian War. After observing how across Germany and France many families have celebrated Christmas and New Year whilst having the 'bitterest and saddest memories', *AC* accuses both France and Prussia of having offered 'hundreds of thousands of the best powers of the people' for their 'boundless lust for fame and domination'. With regards to Prussia, *AC* doubts whether Alsace and Lorraine, and the German emperor's vanity to dictate his peace conditions to France, are worth the large amount of German and French bloodletting. Subsequently, *AC* notes that Germany's hubris could 'dig the grave' for Germany's 'legitimate lust for honor'.²²⁰ *AH*, on the other hand, expects that Germany will remain decisive in the future. After having noted in a reflection on 1870 that the Prussian king was offered the title of emperor, *AH* states that it expects that the future of Europe will be 'dark and threatening' as long as that emperor keeps encouraging a 'military mentality' across Germany, favoring *Junckerdom* and destroying freedom. Afterwards, *AH* argues why Europe's future is 'dark and threatening': due to the indicated emperor's actions a battle between liberalism and imperialism will ensue compared to which the French revolution will look 'insignificant and meaningless'.²²¹ Despite the difference between the two newspapers, both depict the Prussian government as the culprit for Germany's entanglements, since *AH* notes how William I in his capacity as a Prussian king and German Emperor stimulates a military mentality across Germany, and *AC* by distinguishing the actions of the Prussian state and German society respectively (since it does not blame the latter for the bloodshed).

During the rest of January and February, *AC* continues its negative depiction of Prussia and its expansionistic tendencies. In a commentary of January 13, *AC* states that Prussia's warfare against France is increasingly degenerating following the continuation of the war, and that the interests of all other German states (who according to the newspaper want peace

²¹⁹ Louis Philippona, 'Frankrijk's tegenwoordige rampen. Door Multapator. II.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 01-12-1870. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098358:mpeg21:a0038> (27-05-2019).

²²⁰ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 2 Januarij.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 03-01-1871. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000088844:mpeg21:a0002> (28-05-2019).

²²¹ Author unknown, 'Het jaar 1870. (Slot.)', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 07-01-1871. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010099312:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

without annexations, bombardments of Paris and victory marches) need to succumb to Prussia's lust for domination. After establishing that the non-Prussian peoples offer their lives for Prussia's fame and the greatness of the Prussian king, AC doubts whether a future peace agreement will be accepted by France, followed by the statement that Prussia's hubris and the pride of the Prussian king obstruct the conclusion of such an agreement.²²² Nevertheless, negotiations for a peace agreement were eventually started. Following the eventual talks, AC does not conceive positively of the Prussian demands since it notes in its commentary of February 13 that the National Constituent Assembly of France is not summoned to constitute France, but to 'mutilate and crumble' the country after presumably only having been given that option or a 'total demise' of France. As such, AC suggests that Prussia asked excessive demands during the negotiations, which becomes explicit shortly later when it states that France has fought with all of its powers against Prussia's 'excessive demands and its domination-principle'. Subsequently, AC states that Prussia's 'Charlemagne-rule' is becoming just as threatening for England, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland.²²³ Combined with the other discourse of January, Prussia is depicted by AC as a violent, immoral and expansionistic state threatening the territorial integrity of France and other countries.

4.3 Maintaining Autonomy

The second major theme in discussions about Germany between July 1870 and February 1871 concerns the question what the Netherlands should be doing against a German threat. Now, *De Gids* and various brochures started debating this question as well.

In the period shortly before the outbreak of the war and the Battle of Sedan early September, AC and AH present slightly diverging visions. After discussing on July 12 the tensions between Prussia and France over Queen Isabella's successor to the Spanish throne, AC notes that according to some voices in France and the rest of Europe 'sooner or later' a war

²²² Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 12 Januari.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 13-01-1871.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000088853:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

Just like in October, November and December, AC disapproves during January and February of the German warfare as well: in a commentary of January 18, the newspaper notes that Prussia is bombarding buildings on which the Parisians are presumably very proud, such as the Hôtel des Invalides and the Observatory. Subsequently, the newspaper asserts that Moltke, one of Prussia's generals, is conducting the bombardments not to gain a material advantage, but to break the moral of the city's citizens. Although the actions were conducted under Prussia's lead, AC states that Germany is making itself therefore despicable after all of its spiritual achievements. See: Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 17 Januarij.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 18-01-1871.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000088857:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

Furthermore, the newspaper notes on January 19 how Prussia is not able to take care of its prisoners of war according to the standards prescribed by martial law. Hence, the newspaper states that Germany violates martial law just as equally as when the country violates that very same law when it kills soldiers who surrendered themselves. See: author unknown, 'Arnhem, 18 Januarij.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 19-01-1871.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000088858:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

²²³ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 11 Februarij.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 13-02-1871.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000088903:mpeg21:a0001> (29-05-2019).

will ensue. This is followed by the question how the Netherlands and Belgium can preserve their neutrality against France and Prussia. At this stage, *AC* refers to one of its ideas seen in the previous chapter. The newspaper answers its question by stating that the neutrality of both countries can only be preserved when Belgium and the Netherlands cooperate to overcome their weaknesses.²²⁴ On July 16, *AC* notes itself as well that tensions between Prussia and France might develop into a war by noting that higher chances of the preservation of peace have changed towards higher chances of war in only a matter of a day. Although the newspaper notes that persons such as Bismarck and Napoleon are playing a dangerous game, it indicates that especially Prussia is to blame. Whilst warning that peace is no longer guaranteed and war an every-day possibility, it argues that France's willingness to risk a war against Prussia is not surprising given the latter's expansion of its power and territory over the preceding years. Subsequently, the newspaper notes that its warning should especially be a warning for the Netherlands. This is followed by the assertion that the country is in need of various political-military measures, such as laws and regulations pertaining to militias, the army and fortifications.²²⁵ Shortly after the war had started, *AC* again emphasizes the need of maintaining neutrality, but dwells this time more upon the precise implications of that aspiration for Dutch society. After stating that the 'complete abstention and strictest neutrality' of the Dutch government do not need explanation, it notes that Dutch society should do the same by preventing untimely sympathies and antipathies for one or the other party. Now, the newspaper asserts, the Dutch public needs to remain as calm as possible.²²⁶ It is thus not surprising that *AC* early August also reminds its colleagues of the Dutch press that they should not pick sides i.e. give biased, one-sided depictions of the parties involved in the war, since this has the consequence of creating division in Dutch society.²²⁷ To summarize, *AC* indicates that maintaining neutrality on both a political and societal level is the best guarantee against a threat from both France and Prussia, although it argues that certain political-military measures need to be taken as well.

Whereas *AC* is clearly a proponent of joining forces with Belgium, *AH* argues that such a move would be unwise to conduct. A few days after the start of the Franco-Prussian War, it notes in one of its commentaries that multiple reassurances have been received from the French and Prussians that the Dutch neutrality will be respected. *AH*, however, suggests that this is not enough after its note is followed by the statement that 'everything needs to be

²²⁴ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 11 Julij.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 12-07-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089146:mpeg21:a0001> (19-05-2019).

²²⁵ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 15 Julij.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 16-07-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089160:mpeg21:a0001> (19-05-2019).

²²⁶ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 18 Julij.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 19-07-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089164:mpeg21:a0002> (19-05-2019).

²²⁷ Author unknown, 'De neutraliteit onzer pers.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 12-08-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089195:mpeg21:a0001> (19-05-2019).

engaged' to maintain the country's neutrality. Subsequently, the newspaper states that ideas such as a connection with Belgium and declarations of sympathizing with Prussia need to be discarded. Such actions, *AH* indicates, could become a self-violation of the neutrality the Netherlands so desperately wants to preserve.²²⁸ Although *AH* thus clearly knows what one should *not* do, this begs the question what the newspaper considers measures useful for maintaining the Dutch neutrality. In the following weeks, *AH* presents multiple answers. On July 23, after stating that it believes the Prussian and French reassurances that both countries will not violate the Dutch neutrality, it also indicates that there might be certain situations in the future in which the neutrality will be violated or that the Netherlands has to give it up by itself. To prepare for these 'eventualities', *AH* argues that the armament needs to be finished calmly. Hence, the newspaper asserts that a full-scale mobilization should be avoided. Similar to *AC*, it also wants Dutch society to avoid showing sympathies or antipathies for one side or the other.²²⁹

It should therefore not come as a surprise that a month later *AH* stresses the importance of maintaining national unity. Discussing the views of the antirevolutionary Groen van Prinsterer and liberal Samuel van Houten on the question whether the Netherlands will remain independent, the newspaper fully agrees with Van Houten's view that Germany will not pose a danger to the Netherlands (according to *AH*'s article Van Houten did not deny the chances of a violation of Dutch neutrality by Germany, but he considered the probability of such an event to be low). Nevertheless, *AH* deems it important to have a plan of action. To prevent the Germans from developing 'distrust and discontent' and entering Dutch soil, the newspaper argues that its citizens should remain united, 'progress on the road of development and inner power' (although *AH* does not argue what this precisely entails), and cling to a 'code of conduct'.²³⁰ In the commentary of *AH*'s next edition, it already provides a more concrete elaboration of these points. There, the newspaper argues that the mentioned code of conduct entails the prevention of concluding alliances with other countries due to a 'fear of Prussians', since this could lead to the necessity of military action that might result in precisely that what the Dutch seek to protect themselves from. Furthermore, *AH* states that the Dutch could pursue certain domestic steps. To a lesser degree, *AH* argues that the attachment of Dutch citizens to their 'fatherland' could be enlarged by means of improving the countries institutions, and the 'resiliency' of the nation enhanced by means of an army reform. However, *AH* especially points out that liberal economic reforms need to be pursued with which the

²²⁸ Author unknown, 'Amsterdam, Dinsdag 19 Juli.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 20-07-1870.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098224:mpeg21:a0008> (19-05-2019).

²²⁹ Author unknown, 'Vragen van den dag. Onze neutraliteit.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 23-07-1870.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098227:mpeg21:a0001> (19-05-2019).

²³⁰ Author unknown, 'Vrees en hoop.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 24-08-1870.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098259:mpeg21:a0001> (20-05-2019).

country can develop more connections with other countries. Such measures are necessary to supplement the power the Netherlands lacks quantitatively, despite the presence of domestic unity among the citizens.²³¹ *AH* also notes the presence of domestic unity early September: in an article discussing the ideas of Willem Wintgens (a former Second Chamber member at the time of writing) about the Dutch nation, the newspaper agreeingly cites Wintgens words that the Dutch are “not a branch of the German tree”, followed by its own statement that Dutch citizens unanimously agree with the idea that they do not belong to the German nationality. Preceding this observation, *AH* acknowledges that the citizens show affection for the ‘developed, liberal German people’, but also that that affection does not go as far that they want to give up any of their own independency. Later, after considering the idea of a German annexation of the Netherlands, the newspaper argues that the ‘sharply demarcated Dutch nationality’ provides the best guarantee for the preservation of ‘our independent national existence’.²³² All in all, *AH* presents in August and September somewhat paradoxical ideas about the question what the Netherlands should be doing against a German violation of the Dutch neutrality. In August, it argues that a liberal economic politics is the best solution to prevent such an event, whereas it suggests in September that the Dutch nationality is the best means to do so. The latter article, however, seems not to have been an explicit encouragement to stimulate the development of national consciousness, since it notes that the Dutch are well aware that they do not belong to the German nation.²³³

Later in 1870, the debate about the question what the Netherlands should do against a threat of countries like Prussia becomes visible in the other type of sources discussed in this thesis as well. Exemplary is a brochure by Bernardus Tellegen, who was a professor of law at the university (i.e. *hogeschool*) of Groningen from 1860 onwards.²³⁴ This brochure, which essentially is the text of a speech given at the university’s transfer of the headmastership in 1870, was published that same year and opens with a reflection on the German political

²³¹ Author unknown, ‘Nederland en Duitsland.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 25-08-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098260:mpeg21:a0001> (20-05-2019).

²³² Author unknown, ‘Vragen van den dag. De heer Wintgens en het nationaliteitsprincipe. I.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 01-09-1870. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098267:mpeg21:a0041> (21-05-2019). *AH* repeats these recommendations in a commentary of August 21, stressing their importance by noting how France and Prussia, despite their assurances of respecting the Dutch neutrality, are closely watching the country. Although the newspaper notes that both Dutch society and the government are fulfilling their tasks well regarding the preservation of the neutrality, it also argues that the government could have done better by avoiding the ‘mysterious dismissal’ of the Dutch ambassador to England, since the government did not give any clarification about the question why he was discharged. By pointing out that this could have led to anxiety domestically and distrust abroad, *AH* indicates that transparency in diplomatic affairs should be part of the Dutch neutrality policy as well. See: author unknown, ‘Onze neutraliteit.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 21-08-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098256:mpeg21:a0001> (20-05-2019).

²³³ The article’s impact might have been low because it was printed on an attachment (although on its cover).

²³⁴ H.A. Telgt, *Inventaris van het archief van prof. mr. B.D.H. Tellegen [levensjaren 1823-1886]*, (1796) 1838-1885 (18981); A.O.M. Tellegen, 1881-1939 (finding aid National Archive The Hague 1969) 7-8.

developments and events since 1866.²³⁵ After asserting that these events do not imply that Germany will impose the German nationality on the Dutch, Tellegen asks what the latter should do when the Germans aim to do so. He recommends that the Netherlands remains calm, arrange its means of defence and cling to liberal politics, but this is followed by the warning that the Germans could impose their nationality on the Netherlands without annexation of the Dutch territory.²³⁶ After establishing that the two countries are very different from each other, Tellegen asks whether the Netherlands will be seduced by Germany to follow its political direction of authority.²³⁷ He asserts that this would be a wrong move, since presumably only a free form of government suits the Netherlands from a historical point of view. Hence, Tellegen states that if the Dutch people want to keep existing as a nation, their only option to pursue is to continue their self-government.²³⁸ After asking whether the Dutch people remain capable of fulfilling that task, he concludes his plea with the following words:

Studenten der Groninger Hoogeschool! Het antwoord op die vraag moet door u en uwe tijdgenoten gegeven worden. Vroeger of later ontvalt ons ouderen van dagen de fakkel, die door u moet worden opgenomen. Zult gij in staat zijn, daarmede het Nederlandsche volk voor te gaan op de baan der volksoorlog? Ontwikkeling is daarvoor noodig, maar niet alleen, maar niet boven alles. Daarmede moet gepaard eene zelfstandigheid, die u bestand doet zijn tegen de verlokkingen van het eigenbelang, tegen het Sirenengezoep der gemakzucht. Leve de vrijheid! te roepen in de opgewondenheid uwer jeugd, is niets; maar, alle teleurstellingen ten spijt, door daden te toonen, dat gij *niet* u zelve zoekt, maar het algemeen welzijn beoogt, dat is de zaak! Ik zie u in mijne verbeelding, moge het gene illusie zijn! Ik zie u in de toekomst elkander verdringen rondom de banier, waarop geschreven staat: *geen autoriteit*, maar *vrij onderzoek*, *geen autoriteit* maar *zelfregeering*, niet *Duitsch* maar *Nederlandsch*!²³⁹

Tellegen contrasts the Netherlands against Germany after asking whether the Dutch are capable of continuing their self-government. He does so by equating the latter with authority, whereas the former with freedom and self-government. As such, he communicates that the Dutch are *essentially* different from Germans, not merely *politically*. By concluding his brochure with these words after having asked the mentioned question, he conveys that self-government as such is ultimately not sufficient to preserve the Dutch nation, but that that self-government is also dependent on a strong self-awareness (thus, Tellegen implies that Dutch independency is indirectly also dependent on the latter phenomenon). Therefore, he

²³⁵ B.D.H. Tellegen, *Duitschland en Nederland* (Groningen 1870) 5-25; Telgt, Inventaris van het archief van prof. Mr. B.D.H. Tellegen, 8.

²³⁶ Tellegen, *Duitschland en Nederland*, 25-26.

²³⁷ Ibidem, 32.

²³⁸ Ibidem, 36-38.

²³⁹ Ibidem, 39.

encourages the Dutch as well to become more aware of their national unity in order to maintain independency from Germany. The last sentence is thus not meant for Tellegen merely to point out the differences between the two countries, but also as an implicit encouragement. Since the sentence consists of explicit and implicit means to stimulate the development of national consciousness, Tellegen is likely of having truly done so.

Tellegen's words strongly appealed to the liberal AC: becoming aware of Tellegen's speech through a report in *Provinciale Drentsche en Asser Courant*, AC cites on November 25 multiple passages of the talk through *Provinciale Drentsche en Asser Courant's* account. Subsequently, after arguing that the Netherlands should perhaps bond together with other European states in a federation whilst maintaining national autonomy and particularity, the newspaper states that the country should avoid ending up under the 'guardianship' of Germany. The Dutch, the newspaper asserts, want to 'be and remain an individual people'. For them to be able to do this, the newspaper points out that they need to maintain self-governance and develop national consciousness by paraphrasing the last sentence of Tellegen's passage quoted above and using his contrasting: "Laten wij oppassen, niet te veel duitsch te worden. Zelfregering zij en blijve ons doel en ons beginsel; niet DUITSCH, maar NEDERLANDSCH!"²⁴⁰

Shortly later, in the November-edition of *De Gids*, a similar phenomenon is visible. Johan Buijs²⁴¹ observes that public opinion anxiously wants to know whether the Netherlands will have an own independent place in the 'new future' of a Europe that will look differently after the conclusion of a peace agreement between France and Prussia.²⁴² Buijs believes that Germany will experience more costs than benefits from an annexation of the Netherlands in its territory, but simultaneously does not rule out the occurrence of such an event: sooner or later, in changing circumstances, he asserts that the Netherlands might become desirable for countries such as Germany. Subsequently, Buijs argues that the chances of losing the Dutch nationality are smaller when that nationality strongly reveals itself. He experiences, however, that it costs a lot of effort to observe the 'pulse of national life' among the Dutch people.²⁴³

²⁴⁰ Author unknown, 'Arnhem, 24 October.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 25-10-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089298:mpeg21:a0001> (22-05-2019).

Although AC does in fact use quotation marks for its depiction of Tellegen's speech through *Provinciale Drentsche en Asser Courant's* account, the latter's depiction is not a literal rendition since it differs from the brochure's text. Hence, AC and *Provinciale Drentsche en Asser Courant* paraphrase rather than cite.

November 18, AC directly quotes several passages of the brochure, which it qualifies as an 'important speech'.

See: author unknown, 'Arnhem, 17 November.', *Arnhemsche Courant*, 18-11-1870.

(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000089323:mpeg21:a0001> (27-05-2019).

²⁴¹ Buijs became a co-editor for *De Gids* in 1865. Previously, in 1864, he was appointed as professor in law in Leiden. See: Van den Branden and Frederiks, *Biographisch woordenboek der Noord- en Zuidnederlandse letterkunde*, 133.

²⁴² J.T. Buijs, 'Stil leven', in: author unknown, *De Gids. Vier en dertigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1870), binding IV, November, 279-280.

²⁴³ Buijs, 'Stil leven', 282-283.

Although Buijs does not contrast the Netherlands as explicitly against Germany as Tellegen, he implicitly encourages citizens to develop a stronger national consciousness as well by pointing at the risk of becoming German when the Dutch nationality is not strongly adhered to by Dutch citizens, as well as by lamenting over the state of Dutch national life.

National consciousness is not of concern for *AH* during December. This is indicated by a commentary reacting to an essay written by H.P.G. Quack in *NRC*, who asserted that Dutch citizens have to show deeds to prevent the country from enduring a certain fate. Although it becomes not clear out of *AH*'s article what that precise fate entails, the title of the text, contemporary context and preceding discourse suggest that it has to do with a potential violation of the Dutch neutrality (i.e. invasion or annexation) by Germany. According to *AH*, Quack himself is rather vague about what kind of deeds the Netherlands needs to show. However, it agrees with Quack that the Dutch citizens need to do something, since it is convinced that a nation should 'sail' rather than 'float'. Wondering what the precise foundation of those actions should be, *AH* answers that question by analyzing France's actions over the preceding months. Firstly, it argues that the French declaration of war against Prussia was the result of 'whims, moods, impressions [and] opinions', and did not testify to an open mind about Germany's 'natural aspiration' to unify the country. Secondly, *AH* doubts whether France's decision to defend the country 'until every German was chased from French soil' justifies the 'endless sorrow' that it currently endures. On the basis of this negative assessment of France's actions, *AH* states that one cannot be indifferent to which deeds one shows. Subsequently, the newspaper states that if the Dutch nation would have followed Quack's 'lesson', it would have experienced the very same fate it wants to escape.²⁴⁴ In the second part of the article, *AH* observes increasingly louder sentiments in the Netherlands declaring Germany as an unrighteous entity. Highlighting Dutch public opinion on a German policy document i.e. note regarding a violation of Luxemburg's neutrality that was also discussed in Quack's aforementioned document, the newspaper questions whether the 'rhetoric' following the publication of this document had any foundation after noting that Germany refrained from immediate actions regarding Luxemburg. Afterwards, the newspaper states that especially those that *have* something to say should ask themselves whether they are not carried away by 'moods' and 'impressions' (thus presumably taking a 'shot' at Quack).²⁴⁵ Although *AH* argues on the basis of an historical analysis in a subsequent, associated series of articles that Germany itself also bears guilt for the Germany-critical sentiment observable in the Netherlands²⁴⁶, it

²⁴⁴ Author unknown, 'Nederland en Duitschland. I.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 24-12-1870.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098381:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

²⁴⁵ Author unknown, 'Nederland en Duitschland. II', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 25-12-1870.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098382:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

²⁴⁶ See:

- Author unknown, 'Duitschland en Nederland. I.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 28-12-1870.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098383:mpeg21:a0006> (28-05-2019);

argues in the second part of those articles as well that the Netherlands does not suspect Germany of ‘desire for conquest’.²⁴⁷ All in all, these articles by *AH* suggest that the Dutch should act cautiously, deliberately and moderately in the way they behave in general and in relation to Germany specifically (although it points out that the Netherlands does not have to be afraid of Germany).

AC and *De Gids*, on the other hand, still believe that Germany might become a threat for the Netherlands. In a commentary of January 26, *AC* discusses a potential peace agreement between France and Prussia that consists of stately reconfigurations. One of those concerns an incorporation of the Netherlands in the North-German Confederation. Although the newspaper does not know whether the plan truly exists, it considers the rumor important enough to ask what the Dutch should be doing to remain Dutch. Acknowledging that self-help is not always sufficient, the newspaper argues that the Netherlands should start a narrow cooperation with states in a similar position (although it does not explicate *how* this precisely should occur).²⁴⁸ Willem Jan Knoop, a liberal publicist, officer, politician and member of the Second Chamber between 1869 and 1870²⁴⁹, indicates in the February-edition of *De Gids* that Prussia might also become dangerous for the independency of the Netherlands. After assuming that Germany will become the first and foremost military European power after the war with France, Knoop namely states that due to the disintegration of the balance of power between France and Prussia the independency of the Netherlands is threatened more than ever before. Accordingly, he asks what the Dutch should do to preserve their independency.²⁵⁰ Knoop answers this question on the one hand by asserting that the Dutch should improve the amount of patriotism by perpetuating their constitutional institutions. On the other, however, he points out that especially military measures are important by noting that the former measure will not be capable of withstanding the ‘raping of the Prussian forces’ and that ‘an army near the IJssel’ is necessary.²⁵¹ Preceding his suggestions, Knoop also discusses the idea of other persons that the Dutch should drop their attachment to their nationality and join Germany.²⁵² He resolutely rejects this idea by stating:

- Author unknown, ‘Deutschland en Nederland. II.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 29-12-1870.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098384:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

²⁴⁷ Author unknown, ‘Deutschland en Nederland. II.’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 29-12-1870.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098384:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

²⁴⁸ Author unknown, ‘Arnhem, 26 Januarij.’, *Arnhemsche Courant*, 27-01-1871.
(version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB08:000088873:mpeg21:a0001> (28-05-2019).

²⁴⁹ Author unknown, ‘W.J. Knoop’, (version unknown), https://www.parlement.com/id/vgo9ll2atbtf/w_j_knoop (03-07-2019).

²⁵⁰ W.J. Knoop, ‘Een woord over den militairen toestand van Nederland.’, author unknown, *De Gids. Vijf en dertigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1871), binding I, February, 197 and 204.

²⁵¹ Knoop, ‘Een woord over den militairen toestand van Nederland.’, 211.

²⁵² Ibidem, 205.

Neen, wie eenige waarde aan de vrijheid hecht, moet geen Duitscher willen worden; - en misschien dat juist om *die* reden sommige menschen duitschgezind zijn. [...] Wie dus vorstelijk bloed in de aderen heeft, of wie tot de aristocratie behoort, of tot dát gedeelte der geestelijkheid, dat zoo gaarne zich aansluit bij koningschap en bij aristocratie, om mét beiden en dóór beiden te regeren, van dien is het niet te verwonderen, dat hij met Duitschland is ingenomen en er niet tegen opziet om Duitscher te worden. Maar geheel anders is dit voor den vrijen man, die niet wil onderdrukken, maar die ook niet onderdrukt wil worden; geheel anders is dit voor ons, Nederlanders; voor ons zou het afzien van onze nationaliteit, het toetreden tot het Duitsche rijk, eene daad zijn van verblinding; of erger, eene daad van verlaging en lafheid. Wij zijn een vrij volk en wij moeten een vrij volk blijven.²⁵³

As becomes clear, Knoop associates Germany similar to Tellegen with autocracy, and the Netherlands with freedom. He thus contrasts the two countries, and thus makes the reader aware of the differences between the two countries. However, Knoop seems to have used his contrasting not to consciously stimulate the development of national consciousness among his readers to prevent an annexation (since he mentions other measures to that end), but merely to warn them for what might happen to the Netherlands in the case of a German annexation.

4.4 Conclusion

As indicated by the discourse visible in both paragraphs of this chapter, Germany was generally conceived quite negatively between June 1870 and February 1871 in liberal Dutch newspapers.²⁵⁴ Although *AH* initially conceived Germany quite positively and did not envision the country as dangerous as suggested by the discourse of *AC*, the articles of *De Gids* and the brochure by Tellegen, it eventually also started seeing Germany as a threat to the future of Europe as testified by its commentary of January 1871. Despite some positive views on social and cultural phenomena²⁵⁵, Germany was generally depicted negatively.

²⁵³ Ibidem, 209.

²⁵⁴ As mentioned in the introduction, *AH* and *AC* were the only newspapers available for this period.

²⁵⁵ Philippona, for example, wrote in a June-edition of *AH* that the German clergy has been for centuries at the forefront of the theological science, and that Germany during the middle-ages has attracted lots of Italians and Romans wanting to study theology. See: Louis Philippona, 'De tegenwoordige agitatie in de katholieke kerk. Beschouwd in betrekking tot de moderne staatkunde, inzonderheid in Nederland. Door Multapator. De katholieke liberalen en de agitatie. III.' *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 14-06-1870. (version unknown) https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010098092:mpeg21:a00_42 (18-05-2019).

Such a positive depiction is also visible in another article by Philippona, in which he states that the Netherlands is lacking compared to countries such as Germany with regards to the vaccination of citizens. See: Louis Philippona, 'Geneeskundige staatspolitie. Door Multapator.', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 05-02-1871. (version unknown) <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010099348:mpeg21:a0001> (29-05-2019).

Earlier, in *De Gids* of August 1870, another appraisal of German cultural phenomena can be found in a review by D.E.W. Wolff of a book on German folk songs. In the first section of the review, Wolff praises German scholarship for its 'colossal diligence and work power.' See: D.E.W. Wolff, 'Duitsche geschiedzangen.', in: author unknown, *De Gids. Vier en dertigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1870), binding III, August, 185.

In 1871, C.J.P. Tiele does something similar in the January-edition of *De Gids*. In a review on two theological books, he also lauds German science by asking whether it will continue 'to illuminate the whole world with her light', or

During this period, the rhetorical device of contrasting the Netherlands against Germany was clearly visible in the discussions about Germany, especially in the context of the question what the Netherlands need to do against a German threat. *AC* and *AH* are initially the only parties discussing that question (although *AH* initially indicates multiple times that it does not believe that Germany will be dangerous for the Netherlands). Similar to the previous chapter, *AC* again mention the usefulness of military and diplomatic measures such as cooperating with other countries Belgium. This time, however, it also mentions that Dutch society should avoid expressing sympathy for one or the other party. *AH* argues that as well, but opposes *AC* by arguing that the country should form alliances. Over the subsequent months, *AH* starts to argue that the Dutch population should pursue certain domestic steps, such as their attachment to their own country. It indicates that measures such as the improvement of the country's institutions need to be implemented to that end. Early September, however, it argues that the Dutch nationality provides the best solution, preceded by the assurance that the Dutch people are well-aware that they do not belong to the German nation (hence, this article does not seem to have been an explicit encouragement to stimulate the development of national consciousness). Tellegen was of a similar opinion, since he also argued that the Dutch should take certain military and liberal political measures. To prevent an indirect annexation of the country, however, he argued that the Dutch should also continue their self-government. In that process, Tellegen contrasts the Netherlands against Germany and indicates that the latter as an authoritarian country is different from the free, self-governing Netherlands. As such, Tellegen sought to convey (as has been made clear) that it is also necessary for the Dutch to develop national consciousness to maintain their independency. Tellegen's words strongly appealed to *AC*, who paraphrased them in its own articles. In February 1871, something similar was visible in *De Gids* through Willem Jan Knoop's article. Just like *AH*, he considered military and institutional measures useful for preserving Dutch independency. Preceding these statements, he discarded the idea of the Dutch joining Germany, by indicating that the latter as an autocratic entity does not fit the former as a free people. However, Knoop seems to have used his contrasting not to consciously stimulate the development of national consciousness among his readers, but merely to warn them for what might happen to the Netherlands in the case of a German annexation.

As indicated by Johan Buijs' article in *De Gids*, the development of national consciousness could also be stimulated through other means. Buijs did not explicitly contrast the country against Germany, but pointed out that the Dutch could become German when they did not adhere sufficiently to their nationality. In combination with his laments over the

that it will stop doing so due to the belligerency visible at the time in the country. See: C.J.P. Tiele, 'Een probleem der godsdienstwetenschap.', author unknown, *De Gids. Vijf en dertigste jaargang* (Amsterdam 1871), binding I, January, 127-128.

condition of Dutch national life, he might well have encouraged citizens to develop a stronger national consciousness. Furthermore, as testified by Louis Philippona's *AH*'s article at the end of November and the start of December, the development of national consciousness could also be stimulated regardless of the question what the Netherlands needs to do against a German threat. In these articles, Philippona namely merely wanted to argue that the Dutch should avoid siding with either Prussia or France. In this process, Philippona not only expressed a nuanced view on both countries, but also contrasted the Netherlands against the two and made the reader aware of the unique aspects of their own country. To resume, the question what the Netherlands should be doing against a German threat was thus not merely answered with the help of the rhetorical device indicated by Pekelder, but also through other means.

Why did the liberal authors use these tools now, given that they did not yet do so in 1866? This probably has to do with the idea that Dutchmen now started to doubt the viability of the Dutch nation, contrary to the second half of the 1860s.²⁵⁶ Tamse does not explicitly state that Dutchmen started to doubt the viability of the Dutch nation during 1870-1871, but Te Velde notes that the discourse of prominent liberals on the Franco-German War and the founding of the German Empire reflected insecurity about the question whether the Netherlands still possessed a powerful identity, due to phenomena such as the confessional opposition indicated above and divisions that started to develop among the liberals themselves.²⁵⁷ Although Te Velde does not argue whether the insecurities i.e. the doubts about the viability of the Dutch nation were the cause for liberals to develop a stronger sense of national consciousness among the Dutch population, it is plausible that they acted from that motive. All in all, it is very likely that in the context of the German unification during 1870-1871 the development of Dutch national consciousness was stimulated. Similar to how the German nation was 'awakened' following the Franco-Prussian War, the Dutch nation was 'awakened' through the discourse on that exact same war.

²⁵⁶ Tamse, *Nederland en België in Europa*, 102.

²⁵⁷ Te Velde, *Gemeenschapszin en plichtsbeseft*, 31.

V. Conclusion

5.1 Summary and main conclusion

As described in the introduction, this thesis aims to answer the question how in the context of the German unification between 1864 and 1871 Dutch elites stimulated the development of national consciousness among the citizens of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. To that end, case studies have been made of three periods during which the unification of Germany became an explicit goal or manifestation. Each study revolved around the sub-question how Germany was conceived by liberal elitist publicists and newspaper editors, and how they used the concerned events to stimulate the development of national consciousness among Dutch citizens. To determine how that was conducted, the study aimed to establish how the rhetorical device of contrasting the Netherlands against Germany was employed in the discourse.

During the period of the Second Schleswig War Germany was discussed in relation to nationalism and the country's diplomatic and military behavior. The research shows that in the context of these themes Germany was conceived negatively due to the expansionist tendencies of the German population and the way in which especially Austria and Prussia conducted diplomacy and military action. The studied sources also indicate that Germany was still appreciated from a cultural point of view. However, it was also established that there were both explicitly and implicitly no stimulations of national consciousness to be found.

Things started changing, however, from the Austro-Prussian War onwards. The main themes of concern during this period were Prussia's expansionism and the question what the Netherlands should be doing against a German threat. In general, the discourse on Germany was fairly negative: although *AH* and *De Gids* exhibited a rather ambivalent view on the country, *NRC* and especially *AC* wrote condemningly about Germany. The rhetorical device of contrasting the Netherlands against Germany was, however, not yet employed during the Austro-Prussian War. At the same time, a context developed in which that device could be expected: namely the discussion on what the Netherlands should be doing against a German threat. Although only *AC* discussed this question, the diplomatic, political and military means that the newspaper presented to avert a German threat reveal that the country was becoming a point of concern for some.

During the period of the Franco-Prussian War and the founding of the German Empire, the question only *AC* was occupying itself with started to become an issue in all the types of sources studied in this thesis. The foremost theme, however, was the German quest for dominance and conquest. Germany was again conceived negatively. During this period, the rhetorical device of contrasting the Netherlands against Germany was frequently visible, especially in the context of the political, diplomatic, military and economic measures the Netherlands needed to take against a German threat. However, it was not always the case that

the use of this device was meant to consciously stimulate the development of national consciousness among Dutchmen to prevent an annexation, but also to indicate the precise implications of a German annexation for the Dutch people (such as Knoop seemed to do). Furthermore, the analysis of Buijs' article indicates that national consciousness could also be stimulated through other means. Combined, the sources by Tellegen, Buijs and AC indicate that there were actors who consciously, albeit implicitly, sought to stimulate the development of national consciousness as a means to prevent a German annexation.

All in all, these findings enable an answer to the main question. Although the development of national consciousness did not yet play a role in 1864 and 1866, it becomes clear from the concerned sources that Germany is increasingly seen as a threat to the Netherlands from 1866 onwards. In 1866 and 1870-1871, a debate ensues about the question what the Netherlands needs to do to avert a threat. It is precisely in this context that the liberal elite started contrasting the Netherlands against Germany. As described in the introduction, by pointing out the differences with other peoples, one logically becomes more aware of one's own identity. Accordingly, it is very likely that Tellegen and AC, who seemed rather determined to stimulate the development of national consciousness among their readers, were capable of achieving that. Something similar can be said of Buijs' article in *De Gids*, although he sought to do so via different means than contrasting. Nevertheless, his pointing out of the risk of becoming German when the Dutch nationality is not strongly adhered to, as well as his laments about the state of the Dutch nation, are likely of having had a stimulating effect on the reader to develop national consciousness. One should not forget the authoritative quality of *De Gids* and the newspapers discussed in this research: due to that quality, AC and *De Gids* might have been capable of changing the opinions and behavior of their readers. Hence, the answer to the main question of this thesis is that Dutch elites in the context of the German unification stimulated the development of national consciousness among the citizens of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, although it was only between 1870-1871 that the phenomenon became of importance due to the doubts about the viability of the Dutch nation.

The social scope of these attempts will not have reached the complete Dutch population (the following analyses are based on the information presented in the introduction about the scope of the utilized liberal media). The newspaper discourse will probably only have affected the Dutch upper class: although after 1869 newspapers became available for a larger audience due to the abolishment of the newspaper stamp, newspapers like AC were read during the nineteenth century primarily by the elite (as mentioned in subparagraph 1.2.2). Since oppositional newspapers such as AC were not read by people who did not affiliate with liberalism, the discourse of AC will have been limited to the liberal elite more specifically. *De Gids* and the brochures are likely of having reached a larger audience. Although the former was mostly only read by the upper class, persons with less financial means could read

magazines as well via libraries or through portfolios. Nevertheless, it is likely that the reached audience will still mostly have been part of the elite. In contrast, Tellegen's brochure probably did reach a larger audience: as argued in the introduction, brochures were bought by the Dutch middle-class as well.

The findings thus suggest that it is plausible that between 1815 and 1900 a larger number of citizens (among the upper and middle-classes) of the Kingdom of the Netherlands started to exhibit national consciousness not merely as a result of the phenomena indicated earlier by the historiography, but also as a result of the rhetorical devices utilized in the context of the German unification. Their importance, however, will have been relatively low. Within the discourse on Germany, they are only employed incidentally and nearly always in the context of the question of what the Netherlands should do against a German threat. Although that question clearly ignited an important debate between June 1870 and February 1871, it was only part of a much larger discourse about Germany. Therefore, its impact should not be exaggerated. Furthermore, structural factors such as education are likely of having had a stronger effect on the dissemination of national consciousness to a larger number of citizens. Nevertheless, the findings should not be neglected given the authoritative quality of media such as *De Gids* and *AC*.

5.2 Historiographic implications

As noted in paragraph 1.1, the historiography on Dutch national consciousness lacks a sufficient periodization, thus making it difficult to gain an indication of the question at which moment national consciousness was entrenched in each layer of Dutch society. The focus on the upper classes as the initiators and disseminators of national consciousness suggests, however, that that consciousness was embedded among them at a relatively early stage, and that they therefore did not have to bother anymore with their own ranks, and merely had to be concerned about the wider society. Hence, the literature suggests that the dissemination of national consciousness seems to have been a stable process up until the 1870s. It was only from these years onwards that the process became more dynamic due to the Catholic and Orthodox-Calvinist opposition, and the input of the lower classes. Although the research confirms that the process became more dynamic from 1870 onwards, it also suggests that national consciousness was not fully entrenched among the (liberal) Dutch upper class at a relatively late period in the nineteenth century (given how most of the studied sources were in the first instance produced by and for elites). As a consequence, the findings indicate that the historiographic depiction of the elites merely having to be concerned about the other layers of Dutch society after the early phases of the nineteenth century is wrong, and that the process of the dissemination of national consciousness between 1815 and 1900 should be seen as less stable than currently suggested by the historiography.

A further implication of the findings for the historiography on Dutch national consciousness is the necessity of conducting research to objects that do not have the primary goal of needing to develop national consciousness, such as newspapers and magazines. As suggested by the sources, incidental developments that posed a threat to the Netherlands could be used as a means to stimulate the development of national consciousness among Dutchmen, such as the German unification. It is possible that other moments during which the Netherlands was threatened by foreign developments were also used as a means to that end. Instead of focusing on phenomena that are explicitly related to the development of national consciousness (such as statues, commemorations, art etcetera), the historiography on that phenomenon needs to pay more attention to the impact of phenomena that might look relatively trivial at first glance, such as the newspapers and periodicals and their discourse on current affairs studied here.

The research also proves valuable for one of the questions of concern to the historiography on Dutch-German relations. As described above, Pekelder hypothesizes that the nineteenth century can be seen as the breeding ground of the modern Dutch relation to Germany. The findings show that it was only at the end of the German unification, between 1870 and 1871, that the Dutch started to contrast the Netherlands against Germany i.e. depict the latter as the opposite of the former. Given how the modern Dutch relation to Germany was characterized by a need to disassociate from Germany, the findings suggest that the nineteenth century can indeed be seen as the breeding ground of the modern Dutch relation to Germany (although it needs to be stressed that more research on the basis of sources pertaining to a broader whole of Dutch society would lead to a more firm conclusion). This implies that it was not merely structural factors that determined the Dutch relation to Germany, but incidental factors as well. Although the precise ratio to which structural and incidental factors related to each other is difficult to determine, one can safely argue that despite the likely larger impact of structural factors due to their long-term presence, incidental events triggering the development of powerful discursive tropes will have had an impact not to be neglected (given the authoritative quality of most of the media discussed here).

Furthermore, the findings imply that the historiography on Dutch-German relations during the nineteenth century as such needs to incorporate a broader perspective to determine elitist views on Germany than was often the case previously. As indicated by the findings, the newspaper editors were important contributors to the development of public opinion: explicitly and implicitly they communicated subtle, positive characterizations and negative, condemning ones about Germany. Given the relatively high frequency with which newspapers were published compared to periodicals and brochures, they are likely of having had a strong impact on the opinions of their readers. Again, the implication is that the historiography needs

to incorporate a wider perspective to gain a more representative picture about the Dutch elite's views on Germany.

5.3 Methodological reflection

As already argued above, one of the main benefits of the utilized methodology is the capacity to develop a more representative depiction of elite views on Germany due to the incorporation of a broader set of actors. However, the focus has only been on liberals. Although it has been possible - despite the lack of some newspaper editions - to sketch a representative depiction of their opinions about the German unification (given the diverging viewpoints), Dutch society also consisted of e.g. Catholic and Orthodox-Calvinist groups. Therefore, the analyses conducted offer broader but still limited insight in Dutch elitist views on Germany.

The strong focus on an analysis of the views on contemporary German affairs has the additional disadvantage that the perspectives are depicted as highly negative. Although the thesis aimed to overcome this pitfall by incorporating the views on German social and cultural phenomena (which generally were positive), the number of sources discussing those are relatively low.²⁵⁸ The reader might thus still have the impression that the elitist perceptions of Germany were predominantly negative. This problem is also reinforced by the focus on turning points related to the German unification. Although that focus is logical given how the thesis builds on Pekelder's argument, it does not do justice to the actual complexity of the views on Germany. Such a problem can perhaps be overcome by studying the periods in-between the unification-related events, but this would have been difficult to conduct here due to the scale of such research.

5.4 Further research

The first and foremost reason for the research conducted was to gain a fuller understanding of the dissemination of national consciousness to a larger public during the nineteenth century. Although it was shown that the German unification played a noteworthy role in that process, the role of that development has only been established on the basis of a small number of sources related to Dutch liberals. To determine the role of the German unification in the dissemination of national consciousness more precisely, it is imperative to utilize a broader perspective. This could, for example, be conducted by studying other liberal newspapers and periodicals, such as *Het Vaderland*. It would be more useful, however, to study the views on Germany of the Catholic, Orthodox-Calvinist and Liberal-Protestant groups. To that end,

²⁵⁸ One might have noted the absence of discussions on German economic phenomena. These were barely present in the discourse on Germany. An explanation for this might be the nature of economic phenomena: changes in this domain are often long-term processes, whereas political changes often occur in the short-term.

media as the periodical *De Tijdsspiegel* (Liberal-Protestant) and newspapers such as *De Maasbode* and *De Tijd* (Catholic) can be considered.²⁵⁹

Although it would be obvious to study the same moments studied in this thesis, it would also be interesting to analyze the period of 1848-1849. As described in the introduction, this period witnessed the rise and fall of the German parliament, which was known as a symbol of the political unity that had to be created in either the short or long-term. As such, it is plausible that Dutch citizens began seeing Germany already as a threat during this period. Although not directly related to the unification, it might be useful to study the aforementioned Luxemburg-question of 1867, due to the tensions that grew between the Netherlands and Prussia during this phase.²⁶⁰ By studying these events and the media mentioned above, the role of the German unification in the dissemination of national consciousness can be more thoroughly assessed. Hopefully this thesis has offered an inspiring means to that end.

²⁵⁹ Pekelder, 'Nederland en de Duitse kwestie', 78, De Coninck, *Een les uit Pruisen*, 9.

²⁶⁰ Pekelder, 'Nederland en de Duitse kwestie', 77-78.

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Note: sources of which the authors are known are firstly sorted in alphabetical order and subsequently structured periodically. Sources of whom the authors are unknown are sorted in periodical order and mentioned only after those of whom the name is known.

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