



# HOW THE PRESS BEGAN

## THE PRE-PERIODICAL PRINTED NEWS IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Henry Ettinghausen





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## Acknowledgements

In presenting the first substantial attempt at surveying the beginnings of the press – the news that came out of the printing shops from the late fifteenth to the early seventeenth century – on a European scale, I can hardly begin without acknowledging the fact that it would have been impossible to undertake such a task much before now. It is only very recently that scholars have had available the fruits of extremely ambitious collaborative research projects that are digitalising and putting online data regarding the products of the earliest presses. I have in mind, in particular, the ‘Universal Short Title Catalogue’ (USTC), being developed at the University of St Andrews, and the ‘Iberian Book Project’ (IB), at University College, Dublin, as well as the ‘Biblioteca Digital de Relaciones de Sucesos’ (BDRS), at the Universidade da Coruña. It is thanks to them, especially, that it is now possible to access masses of information on the early press that previously was not just unavailable, but the prospect of whose availability was a mere pipe-dream.

I also wish to acknowledge previous generations of bibliographers who, in far more restricted circumstances, pointed the way towards the study of early European printed news, working singly on the press in their respective countries in what was then a far less globalised world. I have in mind, in particular: Mercedes Agulló y Cobo, Tullio and Sandro Bulgarelli, Jean-Pierre Seguin, M.A. Shaaber and Emil Weller.

For the broadsides and pamphlets that illustrate this book, I am grateful to the libraries that hold the originals for permission to reproduce them and, in particular, to Montserrat Merino i Costa, of the library of the Universitat de Girona, for obtaining – with admirable enthusiasm, efficiency and good will – copies of the originals and permission to use them. Also to my good friend Mercedes Fernández Valladares for allowing me to use her photographs of items at the library of the Palau de Perelada.

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Finally, it goes very nearly without saying that the responsibility for the end product is mine alone.

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August, 2015



## Preface

In *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, the first version of which dates from 1983, Elizabeth L. Eisenstein repeatedly decries the failure of historians to give due weight to the revolutionary effects and implications of the invention of printing. In her book, however, she mentions printed news a mere three times, and then only remarkably briefly.<sup>1</sup> Asa Briggs and Peter Burke's substantial tome, *A Social History of the Media. From Gutenberg to the Internet*, first published in 2009, which deals at length with oral, visual, manuscript and printed communication in the early modern period, has nothing whatsoever to say about the way Gutenberg's invention revolutionised written communication for a century and a half prior to the appearance of the periodical press early in the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> And, in their classic study *The Coming of the Book. The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800*, first published half a century before, Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin scarcely mention printed news at all, except in their preface, in which they note that the invention of the cylinder steam press, at the very end of the eighteenth century, 'prepared the ground for the newspaper, the most recent newcomer yet to the world of print,' and then go on to exclaim: 'The newspaper! It characterises the grip printing had on readers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.'<sup>3</sup>

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1 My reference is to the second edition, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

2 See Asa Briggs and Peter Burke, *A Social History of the Media. From Gutenberg to the Internet*, 3rd ed., Cambridge, Polity, 2014.

3 Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book. The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800*, London/New York, Verso, 2010: 12. Although his meaning is far from clear, Marshall McLuhan appears to swallow this notion: 'As Febvre and Martin explain in *L'Apparition du livre*, the press had to rely on medieval manuscripts almost entirely for the first two centuries' (*The Gutenberg Galaxy. The Making of Typographical Man*, Toronto/Buffalo/London, University of Toronto Press, 2011).

Yet, three centuries before the twentieth century, news had already become the stuff of everyday life, and the dramatically expanding known world had already begun to feel small. In 1624, in his preface to the second edition of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Robert Burton tells us so, in so many words:

I heare new newes euery day, and those ordinary rumors of warre, plagues, fires, inundations, thefts, murders, massacres, meteors, Comets, spectrums, apparitions: of townes taken, cities besieged in *France, Germany, Turkey, Persia, Poland, &c.*, dayly musters and preparations, & such like, which these tempestuous times afford, battels fought, so many men slain, monomachies, shipwrackes, Piracies & Seafights, Peace, Leagues, Stratagemmes, & fresh alarums. A vast confusion of vowes, wishes, actions, edicts, petitions, law-sutes, pleas, lawes, proclamations, complaints, grieuances, are dayly brought to our eares, new bookes euery day, pamphlets, currantoes, stories, whole Catalogues of bookes of all sorts, new paradoxes, opinions, schismes, heresies, controuersies in Philosophy, Religion, &c. Now comes tidings of weddings, maskings, mummeries, entertainments, lubilies, Embassies, tilts & tournaments, trophies, triumphes, reuels, sports, playes, then againe, treasons, cheating, trickes, robberies, enormous villanies of all sorts, funerals, burials, death of Princes; new discoveries, expeditions, now Comical, then Tragical matters.<sup>4</sup>

Burton brilliantly sketches here the extraordinary range of topics that the word *news* already conjured up very nearly four hundred years ago.

But how did the news that Burton learned of every day reach him? He does not refer in any detail to his sources, although one of them, clearly, was word of mouth – ‘I heare new newes euery day.’ He also mentions a host of legal and administrative documents – ‘edicts, petitions, law-sutes, pleas, lawes, proclamations, complaints, grieuances’ – which ‘are dayly brought to our eares,’ although evidently the primary purpose of that kind of document, which was certainly informative, was not the purveyance of news. But he then goes on to list items – ‘new bookes [...] pamphlets’ – that end with the term *currantoes*. Currantoes (nowadays written *corantos*) were a type of newspaper that had only very recently been invented on the Continent, imported into England and then printed there, the novelty of which consisted in their each containing several different short items of news, in their being published usually in numbered series at roughly regular (normally weekly) intervals, and under recognisably similar titles, such as *Courante, or, newes from Italy and Germany, &c.* Indeed, so novel were corantos that the first edition of Burton’s *Anatomy*, published in 1621, had appeared in the very same year as the first such news periodicals were

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<sup>4</sup> Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1624: 3.

printed in England, which is doubtless why it did not yet include any reference to them.<sup>5</sup>

What, though, is Burton referring to when he mentions ‘pamphlets’ immediately before ‘currantoes’? It seems very likely that he is thinking of the non-periodical, mostly single subject, news pamphlets that had been born not long after the invention of the printing press, had flourished at the end of the fifteenth century and throughout the sixteenth, and would continue to be produced well beyond the 1620s alongside the new corantos, gazettes and other types of periodical news publications that were to become the ancestors of today’s newspapers and magazines.<sup>6</sup>

Whilst the evolution across Europe of the early periodical press is currently being studied intensively,<sup>7</sup> the attention paid to the pre-periodical press has been extremely patchy. In 1929, M.A. Shaaber referred to the period between the introduction of printing into England and the publication of the first periodical newspapers in the early 1620s as ‘a hundred and fifty years of which the histories of journalism tell us nothing.’<sup>8</sup> The situation has changed somewhat since then, with the single event pre-periodical press being studied extensively in some national contexts, most notably in Spain, where a great deal of work has been done on the *relaciones de sucesos*, stimulated in the course of the past couple of decades by the creation of the ‘Sociedad Internacional para el Estudio de las Relaciones de Sucesos’ (SIERS).<sup>9</sup> None the less, until very recently – with the publication of Andrew Pettegree’s *The*

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5 Joad Raymond notes that ‘the first English-language news periodical (though irregular) was published in Amsterdam in 1620, and the first London-printed news periodical the following year’ (*Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*, Cambridge University Press, 2003: 106). The *Daily Courant*, first published in 1702, was the first British daily paper.

6 As is commonly accepted, I shall use *coranto* only to refer to periodical news publications, despite Marcus Nevitt’s application of the term to ‘the first serial publications and their more occasional counterparts’ (‘Ben Jonson and the Serial Publication of News,’ in *News Networks in Seventeenth-Century Britain and Europe*, ed. Joad Raymond, London/New York, Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2006, 51-66: 51).

7 See, especially, the ‘News Network in Early Modern Europe’ project, directed by Joad Raymond, based at Queen Mary, University of London; and also, amongst a host of recent studies, Simon F. Davies and Puck Fletcher, eds., *News in Early Modern Europe - Currents and Connections*, Leiden, Brill, 2014.

8 See M.A. Shaaber, *Some Forerunners of the Newspaper in England, 1476-1622*, London, Frank Cass & Co., 1966: 3.

9 A very important part of the work done on the *relaciones de sucesos* in the past couple of decades may be found in the published proceedings of the seven conferences held, to date, by the the SIERS. The URL <http://www.bidiso.es/SIERS/> contains up-to-date information about this society, including its proceedings online, as well as invaluable primary and secondary bibliography on *relaciones de sucesos*. For a guide to material concerning the study of early Spanish news pamphlets, see R. Consuelo Gonzalo García, *La Biblioteca del relacionero: repertorios, catálogos y otras fuentes de información para la localización de las Relaciones de sucesos (BIRESU)*, La Coruña, SIELAE, 2010.

*Invention of News* – the pre-periodical press has not been properly recognised for what it was: namely, a pan-European phenomenon.<sup>10</sup> However, only three out of the seventeen chapters in Pettegree’s extremely wide-ranging book – it begins with the Romans and ends at the end of the eighteenth century – deal directly with the pre-periodical press.<sup>11</sup>

The present study concentrates entirely on the pre-periodical press, most especially on its content, and it aims especially to break down the geographical compartmentalisation that has hitherto prevented the earliest model of printed news being properly seen as an international phenomenon. Its purpose is to sketch out the remarkable variety and the conceptual cohesion of the earliest printed news publications and to indicate the extent to which, virtually from the outset, the news that came off the presses was the product of a Europe-wide industry, in terms of the kinds of events being understood as making the news, and the translation and publication of news virtually simultaneously in many different countries, so that, in the century and a half prior to the creation of the corantos and gazettes, similar – and even the same – news stories were often read from one end of Europe to the other.<sup>12</sup>

Until recently, the majority of public libraries and archives worldwide had either yet to catalogue their holdings of early prints and pamphlet literature, or else had catalogued them by methods that failed to make the information easily accessible outside those institutions. Thanks, however, to the work undertaken in the past decade or two to create online databases of extant early printed material, the situation has been transformed. When it is completed, the ‘Universal Short Title Catalogue’ (USTC)<sup>13</sup> will provide a unified digital bibliography of extant publications produced up

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<sup>10</sup> See Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News. How the World came to know about Itself*, New Haven / London, Yale University Press, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> I refer to chapters 3, 4 and 7.

<sup>12</sup> Carmen Espejo tackles this question as it applies to the beginning of the seventeenth century (‘El mercado de las noticias en España: *La Gazeta de Roma* (Valencia, 1619),’ in *Proto-giornalismo e letteratura. Avvisi a stampa, relaciones de sucesos*, ed. Gabriel Andrés, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2013, 25-53: 25). Half a century ago, Jean-Pierre Seguin had noted that “Au même moment [...] circulaient en Europe des occasionnels rédigés en diverses langues, tantôt copiés les uns sur les autres et tantôt donnant d’un même fait des interprétations diamétralement opposées,’ and had commented : ‘Il serait bien instructif de se livrer à des études comparatives, qui montreraient la nature et l’ampleur des réactions dans les différents camps, à l’occasion d’un événement déterminé’ (Jean-Pierre, Seguin, *L’information en France, de Louis XII à Henri II*, Geneva, 1961: 132). A first attempt to conceptualise this book was set out in Henry Ettinghausen, ‘International Relations: Spanish, Italian, French, English and German Printed Single Event Newsletters prior to Renaudot’s Gazette,’ in Raymond and Moxham, eds., in press.

<sup>13</sup> See <http://www.ustc.ac.uk/>

to the beginning of the seventeenth century, and eventually no doubt beyond. As such, it will include data for all extant pre-periodical news pamphlets.<sup>14</sup>

Not being primarily bibliographical, however, this book does not need to await the day when the USTC is judged to be complete. Nor, indeed, is its goal anything like completeness. Instead, on the basis of data currently available, it aims to map out how, from the start, the nature of news was understood in early modern Europe and the extent to which it crossed natural and national frontiers. Inevitably, given the immense mass of material available, it is highly selective in its choice of illustrative cases, and it concentrates especially on the products themselves. By deliberately and unfashionably adopting a thematic approach, it seeks to present a panoramic view of the kinds of events that were made into news. Its aim is to prepare the ground for detailed research on the themes and issues that underlay the dynamic of the earliest attempts at mass communication, including the multidirectional nature of news within and beyond Europe, the routes by which information travelled, the roles of particular authors, translators, illustrators, publishers and printers, and the political control and the consumption of the press by individual and collective audiences and readers. This very nearly first word on the subject is not, and cannot pretend to be, anything like the last.<sup>15</sup>

In his preface to the second edition of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Robert Burton offered the vision of a world that presented itself via a myriad of texts that enabled him to acquire the role of 'A meere spectator of other mens fortunes and adventures,' a role that he expanded in the fifth edition of his *Anatomy* by adding: 'and how they act their parts, which methinks are diversely presented unto me, as from a common theatre or scene.'<sup>16</sup> In this book, in which we shall be looking at the coverage of news in printed pamphlets across early modern Europe, we shall see that what addicts of the news in other countries read was comparable to what he read, and was sometimes even identical. Burton's depiction of himself as a spectator of the world's affairs offers a brilliant impression of the imaginative power exercised over

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14 I use the terms *Flugschrift/en*, *avviso/avvisi*, *relación/relaciones*, *newsletter/s*, to refer generically to German, Italian, Spanish and English pre-periodical news pamphlets, and *occasionnel* or *canard* to refer to French ones, the former indicating 'serious' news, the latter more sensational stories. For reasons set out in Appendix II, I use the term *relation* as a synonym for news pamphlet. In general, when quoting the titles of news pamphlets, I do not cite them in full and I do not indicate my shortening of titles with ellipses. In quoting or referring to secondary literature, I include the full titles of books and articles only the first time they are mentioned, thereafter giving only the surname(s) of the author(s) and the year of publication of the item. The full titles are repeated in the Bibliography.

15 In order to make the point as forcefully as possible, I have put the stress mainly on the sixteenth century, despite the fact that it appears to have been precisely at the beginning of the seventeenth century that the non-periodical press enjoyed its Golden Age.

16 Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 5th ed., Oxford, 1638: 3.

masses of readers of, and listeners to, the news by Europe's earliest printed press. At the same time, it anticipates our own relationships with other men's and women's fortunes and adventures, not just verbally via narrative texts, but heard directly on the radio or actually viewed live as televisual spectacle.

# 1

## The News. Letters, Posts, the earliest European Press

Throughout medieval and early modern Europe the diffusion of information via networks of official and private correspondence was crucial to people who exercised power and influence – rulers, administrators, soldiers, churchmen, bankers, merchants...<sup>1</sup> Such people required to communicate with their own kind, but many of them also needed to make contact with a wider public, and the press enabled them to do so on a scale hitherto impossible to envision. In early modern Europe the news came to stay in a numberless variety of forms. Many of those forms had developed from earlier media – rumour, gossip, town cries, pasquinades, balladry, travellers' tales, theatre, official edicts, and handwritten reports from all kinds of official and professional actors and agents, as well as correspondence sent by ordinary citizens to family and friends. One fact in particular, however, brought about a qualitative change in communication in the last third of the fifteenth century: the beginning of the mass diffusion of information and opinion via the printing press. Thanks to the press, news became, for the first time, the raw material for a mechanised, mass-producing industry, one that could satisfy the political and personal motives of those who provided the copy and could stimulate the curiosity and the needs of the unprecedentedly substantial public who consumed it, as well as offering the possibility of a livelihood to those who worked in the printing shops and to those who distributed and sold their wares.

To most of the populace at large, news may have been less than crucial, but its diffusion via the printing press made it ever more available, and its availability made

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<sup>1</sup> See Raymond, ed., 2006.

it ever more addictive. It was publication that turned news into the press, transforming the intended individual addressee of a private letter into an anonymous mass readership and audience of industrially produced media. Far more than private correspondence, or the handwritten copies of newsletters produced in specialist offices, the news that came off the presses helped to mould public opinion with unmatched speed, and on a scale previously unimaginable.<sup>2</sup>

## Letters

The transmission of news by way of written messages goes back at least as far as ancient Egypt. By the sixth century BC, the Persian Empire had organised a long-range relay system for transporting information, setting up staging posts for couriers to change horses. With the Roman Empire, heavy investment in international communication was made in the form of road building and in the postal service known as the *cursus publicus* that joined the various provinces and also catered for the movement of goods. The epistles of Cicero, Pliny and Seneca attest to the high status that the writing of letters acquired as a literary genre, alongside the no less highly valued art of rhetoric. Letter writing was taught as a specific skill in Classical, medieval and Renaissance times, and it has flourished nearly up to the present day.<sup>3</sup> Even nowadays news media are still fed by correspondents, individuals who send information to be received, edited, printed, broadcast or downloaded. And some well-established newspaper titles – *The Daily Mail*, *The Telegraph*, *The Washington Post*, to name but three – still stress the logistics involved in getting the news to their readers, even if the mechanisms that they refer to now sound somewhat dated.

Correspondence, national and international, flourished in the early years of the printing press. The phenomenon is epitomised by such compulsive letter writers as Erasmus, whose extant epistles fill a dozen volumes.<sup>4</sup> As he explained when he was close on sixty, 'These days more than half of my time is devoted to reading and writing

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2 On the concept of public opinion in early modern Europe, see the excellent consideration of the question in Alexander S. Wilkinson, *Mary Queen of Scots and French Public Opinion, 1542-1600*, Basingstoke/New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004: 2-5.

3 See Carol Poster and Linda C. Mitchell, eds., *Letter-Writing Manuals and Instruction from Antiquity to the Present: Historical and Bibliographic Studies*, Studies in Rhetoric/Communication, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, 2007; Armando Petrucci, *Scrivere lettere. Una storia plurimillennaria*, Roma/Bari, Laterza, 2008. Vicent Baydal Sala discusses municipal correspondence, going back to the 14th c. (see 'Les relacions epistolars de les ciutats de Barcelona, València i Palma entre els segles XVI i XVII (c. 1510 - c. 1630)', *SCRIPTA. Revista Internacional de Literatura i Cultura Medieval i Moderna*, 1, 2013: 105-136.

4 See P. S. Allen, ed., *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, 12 vols., Oxford University Press, 1906–1958.



letters.<sup>5</sup> Many, if not most, of the letters he sent and received contained news. And, in that sense, Erasmus was by no means unique. At the end of the fifteenth century, the Tuscan businessman Francesco Datini declared that he had spent the whole of his life corresponding with his agents in cities scattered across Europe. Nor did letter writing diminish in the sixteenth century: nearly 55,000 letters survive written from Medina del Campo by the Spanish merchant banker Simón Ruiz, who died in 1597; whilst, for his part, the Augsburg banker and businessman Hans Fugger, who died the following year, engaged in a massive commercial correspondence that covered Europe and reached America.<sup>6</sup> In the same period, the Fuggers' rivals, the banking and merchant family of the Welsers, likewise based in Augsburg, set up trading posts in Antwerp, Lisbon, Lyon, Madrid, Nuremberg, Rome, Seville, Venice and Santo Domingo. In the *Dialogues* written in 1557 by the minor Catalan nobleman Cristòfol Despuig, one of his characters comments, *à propos* merchants: 'Apart from the services they provide for their own gain, thanks to their business dealings a lot of news reaches people from all over the world which wouldn't do so otherwise.'<sup>7</sup> In the following century the Count of Gondomar, Spanish ambassador to London, sent out some 30,000 letters between 1613 and 1622, an average of more than eight a day.<sup>8</sup>

Like Erasmus, many German Reformers were active within extensive communication networks throughout Europe, and some of them, including Melancthon, incorporated news pamphlets into their publications.<sup>9</sup> Another Reformer, the Lutheran humanist Andreas Schoppius, included the news of the birth of a mis-shapen baby, together with his views on its Christian implications, in a report he published at Halberstadt in 1581: *Warhafftiger bericht von einer erschrecklichen und abscheulichen misgeburdt*.<sup>10</sup> As we shall see in chapter 7, his report was a typical example of one important variety of the early European press.

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5 Cited by Willis G. Regier in his review of vols. 13 and 14 of the *Collected Works of Erasmus*, *Modern Language Notes*, 126, 2011: 1152-4.

6 For a detailed analysis of Ruiz's use of the post, including his own postal system, see Fernando Alonso García, *El correo en el Renacimiento Europeo. Estudio postal del Archivo Simón Ruiz (1553-1630)*, Madrid, Fundación Albertino de Figueiredo, 2004; for Fugger, see Oswald Bauer, *Zeitungen vor der Zeitung. Die Fuggerzeitungen (1568-1605) und das frühmoderne Nachrichtensystem*, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 2011.

7 Cristòfol Despuig, *Dialogues. A Catalan Renaissance Colloquy Set in the City of Tortosa*, transl. Henry Ettinghausen, Barcelona/Woodbridge, Barcino/Tamesis. 2014: 48.

8 For this and other cases, see Antonio Castillo Gómez, "'Muchas cartas tengo escritas.'" Comunicació epistolar i correu a l'Espanya moderna,' in *Communicatio. Un itinerari històric*, ed. J. Antoni Iglesias-Fonseca, Barcelona, Nausicaä, 2013, 133-64: 134-5.

9 See R. Grasshoff, *Die briefliche Zeitung des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, C.W. Vollrath, 1877.

10 See USTC 705870.

Both before and after the introduction of printing, handwritten newsletters circulated amongst elite groups bearing secret or confidential news culled by ambassadors, spies and agents, sensitive commercial news (as, most famously, with the Fuggers), politically unpublishable news, and so on. Mario Infelise has amply documented the importance in Italy of the *avvisi a mano*, copied by professional scribes who in Venice were known as *reportisti*, in Rome as *menanti*, and in Genoa as *novellari*.<sup>11</sup> In Spain, José Pellicer and Jerónimo de Barrionuevo exemplify the continuation into the middle of the seventeenth century of a demand for news unfit to print – principally news involving political dissent, social conflict and military reverses – matters that would have been excluded from publication by censorship or self-censorship.<sup>12</sup> Depending upon the intended readership, the press could take up and spin elements derived from private or semi-private correspondence, from official or semi-official reports and from handwritten or printed pamphlets.<sup>13</sup>

Just occasionally, however, politically sensitive news could find its way into print and could sell like hot cakes. In Spain, at the end of the period we are concerned with, we encounter the perhaps unique case of Andrés de Almansa y Mendoza, to whom is attributed a series of numbered newsletters that cover the change of regime from Philip III to Philip IV in 1621. The first letter gives a graphic account of Philip III's death that includes the king's anguished contrition, communicated to his confessor, for the failings of his reign. Most of these letters ran to numerous editions, despite the fact that the anonymous author repeatedly makes a show of exhorting his equally anonymous correspondent to make sure his missives did not fall into the hands of printers.<sup>14</sup>

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11 See Mario Infelise, *Prima dei giornali. Alle origini della pubblica informazione (secoli XVI e XVII)*, Rome/Bari, Laterza, 2002; id., 'From Merchants' Letters to Handwritten Political *avvisi*. Notes on the Origins of Public Information,' in *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, III, 'Correspondence and Cultural Exchange in Europe,' ed. F. Bethencourt and F. Egmond, Cambridge University Press, 2007, 33-52. According to Infelise, whereas in Rome and Venice *avvisi* and *gazzette* were not printed in the seventeenth century, they were in Genoa, Milan and Bologna (see Infelise, 'Los orígenes de las gacetas. Sistemas y prácticas de la información entre los siglos XVI y XVII,' *Manuscripts, Revista d'Història Moderna*, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 23, 2005, 31-44: 40).

12 See Henry Ettinghausen, 'Pellicer y la prensa de su tiempo,' *Janus*, 1: 2012, 1-88, [www.janusdigital.es/admin/articulo/previsualizar.htm](http://www.janusdigital.es/admin/articulo/previsualizar.htm).

13 Filippo de Vivo provides an excellent portrayal of the information industry in Venice, one of early modern Europe's busiest news entrepôts ('Paolo Sarpi and the Uses of Information in Seventeenth-Century Venice,' in *News Networks in Seventeenth-Century Britain and Europe*, ed. Joad Raymond, London/New York, Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2006, 35-49).

14 See Andrés de Almansa y Mendoza, *Obra periodística*, ed. Henry Ettinghausen and Manuel Borrego, Nueva Biblioteca de Erudición y Crítica, 20, Madrid, Castalia, 2001. It is hard to tell whether these letters, which report the dramatic downfall of ministers in Philip III's government and their replacement by a new team, were inspired (or at least connived at) by the new regime.

## Postal Routes

The remarkable increase in the production of printed news pamphlets from the latter half of the sixteenth century, as well as the launching of periodical publications in northern Europe early in the seventeenth, responds in part to the fact that it became cheaper to manufacture printed matter.<sup>15</sup> These developments also clearly owe a great deal to the improvements in the postal and carrier services achieved at the time. As Paul Arblaster notes, 'Thanks to the developing system of interconnecting weekly posts, the merchants and statesmen of Europe were in a position to expect regular weekly reports from their agents.'<sup>16</sup> Wide-reaching international postal services had already been established by the end of the fifteenth century, with the Tassis family's communications network dominating the main European information highways. The improved postal and commercial routes were exploited, amongst many other things, in order to support an increasingly thriving international book trade which would also favour the export and import of news in oral, handwritten and, most especially, printed form.<sup>17</sup>

Many treatises written from the early seventeenth century onwards detail and describe the routes used in Europe, and even beyond, by carters and postmen. Some writings of this kind, however, were published as early as the middle of the previous century. Armando Serra gives as the earliest such work an anonymous book published in Paris in 1552: *Les voyages de plusieurs endroits de France et encores de la terre Saincte, d'Espagne, d'Italie, et d'autres pays*.<sup>18</sup> The same year saw Charles Estienne's *Guide des Chemins de France*, also published in Paris, and reprinted a couple of dozen times in the following fifteen years. The earliest Italian example, published in Brescia ten years later and concerned specifically with the post, is the anonymous *Le poste necessarie ai Corrieri per l'Italia, Francia, Spagna e Alemagna*. It includes fifty-six postal routes, together with the distances between the various stages at which

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15 As Tessa Watt puts it, in England, and no doubt elsewhere, 'Taking into account the general inflation, books were becoming more affordable during our period. Book prices remained steady from 1560 to 1635, when other commodities more than doubled in price and wages rose by half to two-thirds' (*Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640*, Cambridge University Press, 1991: 261).

16 'Posts, Newsletters, Newspapers: England in a European system of communications,' in Raymond, ed., 2006, 19-34: 20. The seminar 'Networks & Centres, Post, & Commerce,' held in Vienna on 13-14 September 2012, covered these topics in relation to the early periodical news.

17 As Andrew Pettegree points out, 'it was the centres of trade, rather than of learning, that would provide the best locations for production of printed books in the fifteenth century. [...] They were natural distribution points for a business that would rely on moving books into markets a long way from the point of production' (*The Book in the Renaissance*, New Haven/London, Yale University Press, 2010: 33).

18 See Armando Serra, "'Monopolio naturale" di autori postali nella produzione di guide italiane d'Europa, fonti storico-postali tra Cinque e Ottocento,' *Archivio per la storia postale. Comunicazioni e società*, 14/15, 2003, 19-80: 20, n. 2.

postmen could change horse.<sup>19</sup> One of the most important postal route guides of the period is Giovanni da l'Herba's *Itinerario delle poste per diuerse parti del mondo*, published in Rome in 1563. Written by the postmaster of the Republic of Genoa, the book was reprinted repeatedly. The road map below (Fig. 1.1), based by Joseph Rüksam on Da l'Herba's *Itinerario*, shows the concentration of routes along the eastern borders of France, the Netherlands and Germany, through central and southern France, and joining up with Switzerland, Austria and the roads that connected the whole of Italy, including Sicily, as well as with those that entered Spain, reaching as far as Valencia, Seville and Lisbon.<sup>20</sup>

Inevitably, the speed at which news travelled varied enormously according to such considerations as the terrain (and often seas) to be crossed, the detours required in order to avoid dangerous territory (not least in wartime), the weather, the quality of horses and riders, and the particular category of service used. Thus, official or royal or extraordinary posts could be expected to be far more efficient and speedier than ordinary posts, but they were also far more expensive. As of 1517, the operators reckoned that the time it took for the ordinary post to travel in summer from Brussels to the following destinations was: to Paris, 36 hours; to Innsbruck, 5 days; to Lyon 3½ days; to Rome, 10½ days; to Burgos, 7 days.<sup>21</sup> A *relación* printed in Valencia in 1576 states that a report written in Antwerp on 18 November had reached Madrid on 9 December, which – assuming that the entire journey was made over land – meant a speed of roughly fifty miles a day.<sup>22</sup>

Quite apart from the speed at which news travelled was the rapidity with which it could be written up and published. This is highlighted by Jean-Pierre Seguin, who notes an account of the taking of Tournehan, near Calais, dated 15 August 1542 that was printed at Rouen only a fortnight later. An even more impressive performance is also recorded by Seguin: an *occasionnel* written in Basel on 15 February 1511 that claims to have been translated from German into French and printed at Lyon only two days later. But a prize of some kind should surely go to Jean Lhomme, the Rouen printer who, in a relation published on 25 June 1544, includes news dated that very

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19 See Serra 2003: 24.

20 See Wolfgang Behringer, *Im Zeichen des Merkur. Reichspost und Kommunikationsrevolution in der frühen Neuzeit*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003.

21 See Cristina Borreguero Beltrán, 'Philip of Spain. The Spider's Web of News and Information,' in Brendan Dooley, ed., *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2010, 23-49: 27.

22 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 188. Briggs and Burke (2014: 21) claim that 'Special couriers, changing horses at frequent intervals, were able to travel up to 125 miles a day.' For the early modern Spanish post, see María Montáñez Matilla, *El correo en la España de los Austrias*, Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigación Científica, 1953.



Fig. 1.1. West European postal route map by Joseph Rübsam, based on Giovanni da l'Herba's mid-sixteenth-century *Itinerario* (in *L'Union postale, Revue de l'Union Postale Universelle*, Bern, 1900).

same day.<sup>23</sup> In 1554, a letter sent from England on 30 November was published in Milan on 24 December; and in 1559 one from Paris, dated 7 April, was printed in Rome seventeen days later.<sup>24</sup> A pamphlet justifying the sacking of Mechelen, on 2-4 October 1572, was written and dated on the 4th, Plantin's workshop in Antwerp received it at 9 a.m. on the 5th, and copies were delivered to the Duke of Alba's agent by 4 p.m. that very same day.<sup>25</sup> The funeral of Archduke Albert, held in Brussels on 12 March 1622, was commemorated in a sixteen-page report of the funeral that was on sale in Antwerp by the 18th.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See Seguin 1961: 48.

<sup>24</sup> See Bulgarelli 1967: 20.

<sup>25</sup> See Monica Stensland, *Habsburg communication in the Dutch Revolt*, Amsterdam University Press, 2012. I am most grateful to Alastair Duke for this and several other references to Dutch pamphlet publication. See also his 'A Legend in the Making. News of the 'Spanish Inquisition' in the Low Countries,' in *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries*, ed. J. Pollmann and A. Spicer, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2009, 119-35.

<sup>26</sup> See C. E. Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing and Political Culture in the Early Dutch Republic*, Dordrecht, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1987: 92-3.

News pamphlets very often state that they reprint reports previously published elsewhere, they frequently mention the fact that they have been translated from other languages, and they sometimes mention the date that the original accounts had been sent from the scene of the event and/or the date that they had arrived at the place of publication, but they very rarely make any mention of the process by which they were transported. One exception is a *relación* on the floods that hit Catalonia in November 1617. The report that was published in Seville mentions the fact that it was carried to Seville by Miguel de Valdeosero, ‘Correo de a cauallo de su Magested’ (i.e. his Majesty’s mounted postman).<sup>27</sup> As we shall see in chapter 6, that report provides one of many impressive instances of the international repercussions that natural disasters could achieve.<sup>28</sup>

## Printing Ephemera

Whilst travellers and postal services transported news with increasing efficiency, from an early date printers and booksellers produced and published not only books, but very many other kinds of printed matter, as Robert Burton noted, including news pamphlets. By 1500, printing presses had been set up in well over two hundred cities throughout the continent. The best financed and most ambitious presses were capable of producing costly and handsomely printed books, but they, and especially the very many lesser presses throughout Europe, also brought out products that involved far less investment in manpower, paper and ink.<sup>29</sup> The production of broadsides, almanachs, posters, calendars, prognostications, edicts, notices and other short, easily saleable items could guarantee a rapid turnover, and keep a printing shop busy and in pocket, in between and alongside larger undertakings that tied up greater amounts of capital and for longer periods.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 723; and also Enric Querol Coll, ‘Les riuades de l’Ebre a la literatura,’ *Recerca*, 10, 2006: 261-300.

<sup>28</sup> See below, chapter 6.

<sup>29</sup> In early modern England, ‘up to 75% of the cost [of printing] came from the paper, so the shortest works were the cheapest works: the one-page and the tiny octavo chapbooks’ (Watt 1991: 1). In England good ink and good paper were in short supply (see Marie-Hélène Davies, *Reflections of Renaissance England. Life, Thought and Religion Mirrored in Illustrated Pamphlets 1535-1640*, Eugene Or., Pickwick Publications, 1986: 14-15).

<sup>30</sup> The following instance is, no doubt, emblematic: ‘In Ulm, where printing had been established early, and initially flourished, four of the five printers active during the fifteenth century experienced financial difficulties, or bankruptcy. The man who survived was a printer who eschewed expensive projects in favour of a mundane production of single-sheet items for the city council’ (Pettegree 2010: 55).

To comprehend the scale of the production of this kind of ‘minor’ printed matter, nearly all of which has perished in its entirety, we need only take note of the fact that, between 1498 and 1500, the Benedictine monastery of Montserrat, near Barcelona, is said to have provided local printers with orders for over 200,000 indulgence certificates, or that the German printer Jacobo Cromberger produced 20,000 indulgences in Seville for the diocese of Jaén in 1514, and another 16,000 two years later.<sup>31</sup> As Tessa Watt points out, the twenty-seven extant examples of pre-Reformation English printed ‘images of piety’ ‘may represent thousands of paper images of Christ, Our Lady and various saints, which were available for sale at cathedrals and shrines.’<sup>32</sup> By the middle of the sixteenth century the printing shop run by the Mey family in Valencia relied for an important part of its business on the city’s General Hospital, providing for it, over several decades, very large batches of pious prints aimed at raising alms – prints that included posters, hagiographical verses, engravings of the crucifixion, woodcut portraits of saints and the Virgin, and letters addressed to her. Hardly a single example of that output survives, virtually the only evidence for its existence being the entries preserved in the printers’ account books.<sup>33</sup>

One instance of just how international the information business was, almost from the very start, emerges from the fact that as early as 1480 the monks of Montserrat had ordered from the printer Michael Greyff in Reutlingen, in southern Germany, 18,000 copies of a report on the miracles reputedly performed on the island of Rhodes during the recent Turkish siege, a commission whereby the monastery had sought to promote the sale of indulgences for the crusades.<sup>34</sup>

News publication constituted one very important variety of the short, easily saleable, material that kept the presses busy. Andrew Pettegree cites the case of the Lyon publisher, Benoist Rigaud, who, in the second half of the sixteenth century, was responsible for producing over a thousand editions of news pamphlets, many of which reported on the French Wars of Religion and on the attempts to contain the Turks in central Europe and the Mediterranean, as well as on natural disasters, such as floods and other catastrophes.<sup>35</sup>

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31 See Pettegree 2010: 94; Alexander Wilkinson, ‘The Printed Book on the Iberian Peninsula, 1500-1540,’ in Malcolm Walsby and Graeme Kemp, eds., *The Book Triumphant: Print in Transition in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Leiden, Brill, 2011, 78-96: 87.

32 Watt 1991: 131.

33 See Rosa M. Gregori Roig, *La impressora Jerònima Galés i els Mey (València, segle XVI)*, Valencia, Generalitat Valenciana, 2012: 88-9, 242-3.

34 See Eisenstein 1979: 375, n. 250.

35 See Pettegree 2010: 47-8, 149.

## The News Pamphlet Industry

In order to set the object of our study within the parameters of the printing revolution, it will be useful to have some idea of the dimensions of the total production of the pre-periodical press in early modern Europe. Andrew Pettegree calculates at around 350,000 the number of editions of all the books and pamphlets printed in Europe prior to 1600 of which copies survive.<sup>36</sup> And he puts at roughly 1.5 million the number of copies of those editions still in existence. That would imply that, on average, just over four copies of each edition have been preserved. The fact that an average print run, for books and for pamphlets, was somewhere between 1,000 and 1,500 copies makes it clear just how incredibly easy it was for the vast majority of editions to disappear in their entirety and without trace. What is more, the kinds of printed matter most dramatically destined to total extinction included, by their very nature, precisely those that we shall be dealing with, namely cheap, occasional, ephemeral prints, such as broadsides and news pamphlets. As Pettegree observes, 'Overall less than 1 per cent of the total copies of books printed in the sixteenth century have survived to the present day. For pamphlets the figure is even lower.'<sup>37</sup> Over half a century before, the point had been made by Folke Dahl, who estimated the survival rate of the earliest English periodical news pamphlets at a mere 0.013%.<sup>38</sup> And it becomes crystal clear if we consider the very large number of pre-1600 news pamphlets that are known today only in unique copies – as many as 64% of Spanish news items, according to Alexander S. Wilkinson.<sup>39</sup>

If we take account of the unknowable, but immense, quantity of printed matter for which not a single copy survives, the number of editions of books and pamphlets printed before 1600 would obviously have been far greater than the 350,000 that Pettegree reckons survive in at least one copy today. Assuming (doubtless generously) that the number of editions of which copies have survived represents as much as a tenth of the total number of editions produced, we should be thinking in

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36 Pettegree 2010: 354. Febvre and Martin (2010: 189) put at 25,000 and 15,000, respectively, the number of books published in the sixteenth century in Paris and in Lyon, estimating that at 'at least 35,000 editions' had been produced in Europe by the end of the fifteenth century – and they seem to be talking only about books, excluding pamphlets – a number of editions equivalent, 'at the lowest estimate, to 15 or 20 million copies' (Febvre and Martin 2010: 186). (It should be noted that the figure dates back to the first edition of that book, published in 1958.) Briggs and Burke (2014: 14) talk about '27,000 editions by the year 1500, which means – assuming an average print run of 500 copies per edition – that about 13 million books were circulating by that date in a Europe of 100 million people.'

37 Pettegree 2010: 334.

38 See Folke Dahl, *A Bibliography of English Corantos and Periodical Newsbooks, 1620-1642*, London, The Bibliographical Society, 1952: 22.

39 See Alexander S. Wilkinson, 'Bum Fodder & Kindling: Cheap Print in Renaissance Spain,' *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 90, 2013: 871-93.



terms of over three million, which would, incidentally, imply a total number of copies produced that would most likely lie somewhere around 3,000 million.<sup>40</sup> If only one percent of all items published were news publications, that would suggest a total of some thirty thousand different news pamphlets published in Europe prior to 1600, with a total number of copies amounting to some thirty million.

The scale of production of the early news industry is very hard to appreciate today, not least because news pamphlets were short items that were cheap to reset in type in order to produce new editions if particular publications turned out to be especially successful. Because new editions were generally word-for-word resettings, it often takes a considerable effort to differentiate one edition from another. What is certain is that newsletters often ran to several editions, with the same printer, and/or others in the same city and/or further afield, producing additional print runs, or providing updates of the events covered, if the market permitted.<sup>41</sup> To cite just one Spanish instance, the account of the death of Philip III of Spain in 1621 attributed to Andrés de Almansa y Mendoza survives in eighteen known copies which, when examined closely, turn out to belong to nine different editions. The probabilities are that well over twenty editions of that particular pamphlet were published, with a total of at least 20,000 copies printed. In which case, around 60% of the editions made of that letter were lost in their entirety, and less than one thousandth of all the copies produced have survived.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, news pamphlets and broadsides could reach huge readerships and audiences, their impact being greatly multiplied by the common practice of reading such material aloud, at times to sizeable groups of people. Furthermore, in some cases, notably reports of monsters, crimes and natural disasters – as we shall see in chapter 7 – the same story could be resuscitated and reoffered, years later, by canny printers as the very latest news.

Andrew Pettegree observes that ‘the news events of the late fifteenth century did not, on the whole, leave a substantial impact on the new medium of print.’<sup>43</sup> However, the fact is that the earliest surviving news pamphlets produced in nearly all of the countries we shall be looking at date from the 1470s, just twenty years after the invention

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<sup>40</sup> Seguin, who includes numerous editions of the French *occasionnels* that he catalogues, analyses some of the changes that were introduced from one edition to another (Seguin 1961: 25-8).

<sup>41</sup> See Seguin 1961: 25 ff.

<sup>42</sup> See Almansa y Mendoza 2001: 134-6, 158-60; Henry Ettinghausen, ‘Phenomenal Figures: The Best-Selling First Newsletter Attributed to Andrés de Almansa y Mendoza,’ *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 81, 2004: 1051-1070. Private collections doubtless include more than the 18 copies and the 9 editions known at present.

<sup>43</sup> Pettegree 2014: 59. Amongst the earliest examples is *Anschlag wider die Türken* (Augsburg, Günther Zainer, 1474 - USTC 739902).

of moveable type, and it seems likely that the earliest prints were the worst survivors. Thereafter, the extant material indicates a gradual increase in production in the first half of the sixteenth century, a growing impetus in the second half and then, for the most part, a much greater output from the final decade of the century onwards. The USTC contains details of newsletters that indicate the number of surviving editions in each language that have been catalogued.<sup>44</sup> As of August 2014, the results (starting with the largest numbers) are as follows, the first figure indicating those published up to 1550, the second those published between 1551 and 1600: German: 1,486, 3,327; French: 452, 1,246; Italian: 256, 1,002; Dutch: 168, 590; English: 29, 455; Spanish: 2, 23 – the Iberian Book project transforms these last two figures into a total of 622.<sup>45</sup>

One of the most remarkable features of the statistics supplied by the USTC is the fact that at least twice as many news pamphlets are known to have survived in at least one copy in the second half of the sixteenth century, compared to the period up to 1550, and in some cases – notably English – the proportion is immensely larger. To judge by the data provided by Tullio and Sandro Bulgarelli, the production of *avvisi a stampa* in Italy reached a peak between 1620 and 1640, a feature that coincides closely with what we know about the Spanish *relaciones de sucesos*.<sup>46</sup> Given the inevitably gross incompleteness of our knowledge of early printing, it may, however, be rash to claim that the development of the printed newsletter was ‘very much a phenomenon of northern Europe,’<sup>47</sup> although it is true that a larger number of sixteenth-century newsletters printed in Germany appears to have survived, compared with those printed elsewhere.

## The Early Study of Early European News Pamphlets

Roughly half a century ago – the simultaneity would appear to have been fortuitous – several important works, most of them bibliographies, were published on the earliest news pamphlets printed in England, France, Italy and Spain.<sup>48</sup> Whereas

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44 ‘News books’ is the name given in the USTC to the category of early news pamphlets and broadsides, as well as to longer chronicles of contemporary events.

45 The USTC also includes a total of 23 for Danish prior to 1600, and fewer than 2 each for Polish, Portuguese and Swedish.

46 For an attempt to trace the development in the production of the *relaciones de sucesos* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Henry Ettinghausen, ‘La prensa preperiódica española y el Barroco,’ in Catedra García and Díaz Tena, eds., 2013, 89-102.

47 Pettegree 2010: 9.

48 An earlier version of this section appears in Henry Ettinghausen, 2015b, ‘Relaciones internacionales: las relaciones de sucesos, un fenómeno paneuropeo,’ in García López, Jorge and Sònia Boadas, eds., *Las relaciones de sucesos en los cambios sociales y políticos de la Europa moderna*, Bellaterra, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 2015: 13-27.

in England and France a great deal of work has been done on pamphlets, popular prints, corantos and gazettes, a lot less has been published on pre-periodical printed newsletters. The major breakthrough in the study of the earliest English newsletters was made widely available in the 1960s, when M.A. Shaaber's PhD thesis *Some Forerunners of the Newspaper in England*, first published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 1929, was reissued in London.<sup>49</sup> Although it is a study, rather than a bibliography, the book is very fully documented, and no concerted attempt appears to have been made since to update it. In the case of France, too, we find that pioneering work was also published in the 1960s: notably, two books by Jean-Pierre Seguin. His *L'information en France, de Louis XII à Henri II* describes and catalogues a total of 365 *occasionnels* – i.e. non-periodical news pamphlets – published up to 1559.<sup>50</sup> His other fundamental book, a study and bibliography of over 500 *canards* – i.e. printed pamphlets reporting sensational or sensationalist news – covers the century from 1529 to 1631.<sup>51</sup> As for Italy, in 1967 Tullio Bulgarelli published *Gli avvisi a stampa in Roma nel cinquecento*, in which he lists 354 *avvisi*, or news pamphlets, printed in twenty-four Italian cities in the sixteenth century and held in libraries in Rome; and, for the seventeenth century, he and his son, Sandro Bulgarelli, catalogued over twice as many – 723 *avvisi* printed in fifty-five cities – in a book published in 1988.<sup>52</sup> However, the *avvisi a stampa* have been virtually ignored by later historians, the main reason doubtless being, as Tullio Bulgarelli himself surmised nearly fifty

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49 See M.A. Shaaber, *Some Forerunners of the Newspaper in England, 1476-1622*, London, Frank Cass & Co., 1966.

50 See Seguin 1961. Maurice Lever appears to conflate *canards* with broadsides when he describes the former as 'des feuilles de grand format, imprimées au recto seulement, et relatant les principaux événements politiques, militaires ou religieux de l'histoire contemporaine' (Maurice Lever, *Canards sanglants. Naissance du fait divers*, n.p., Fayard, 1993: 9). Eugène Hatin's classic nineteenth-century eight-volume *Histoire politique et littéraire de la presse en France* does not so much as mention a single news publication prior to Théophraste Renaudot's famous *Gazette*, founded in 1631 (See Eugène Hatin, *Histoire politique et littéraire de la presse en France: avec une introduction historique sur les origines du journal et la bibliographie générale des journaux*, 8 vols., Paris, 1859-61). Seventy years later, Georges Weill devotes just over four pages to the pre-periodical printed news (*Le Journal. Origines, évolution et rôle de la presse périodique*, Paris, La Renaissance du Livre, 1934: 14-18). As Dahl, Petibon and Boulet, argue, prior to Renaudot's famous *Gazette*, a periodical French *Courant d'Italie & d'Almaigne*, &c. had been printed in Amsterdam, translated from Dutch from at least as early as 1620 (see Folke Dahl, Fanny Petibon and Marguerite Boulet, *Les débuts de la presse française. Nouveaux aperçus*, Göteborg/Paris, Wettergren & Kerber/Librairie Raymann, 1951).

51 Jean-Pierre Seguin, *L'information en France avant le périodique: 517 canards imprimés entre 1529 et 1631*, Paris, G.-P. Maisonneuve & Larose, 1964. Far more recently, the texts of 63 *canards* have been published in Lever 1993.

52 See Tullio Bulgarelli, *Gli avvisi a stampa in Roma nel cinquecento. Bibliografia, antologia*, Rome, Istituto di Studi Romani Editore, 1967; Sandro and Tullio Bulgarelli, *Il giornalismo a Roma nel seicento. Avvisi a stampa e periodici italiani conservati nelle biblioteche romane*, Rome, Bulzoni Editore, 1988. Both of these bibliographies are based solely on the holdings of libraries in Rome.

years ago, the widespread assumption amongst Italian historians of journalism that it was manuscript *avvisi a mano*, rather than printed ones that lay at the origins of the modern newspaper.<sup>53</sup> Regarding Spain, in 1966 Mercedes Agulló y Cobo published a pioneering bibliography of nearly 800 Spanish *relaciones de sucesos* (i.e. accounts of events) printed between 1477 and 1619, to which she later added a supplement that took her work up to 1626.<sup>54</sup> As for Germany, Emil Weller's bibliography of over 800 German news pamphlets printed in the sixteenth century, as well as several other pioneering studies on the early German press, had appeared in the course of the previous hundred years.<sup>55</sup>

The authors of the books just mentioned gave no indication that they were aware of one another's existence. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that they did not all adhere to the same criteria. Thus, the Bulgarellis excluded news pamphlets written in verse;<sup>56</sup> Weller included only German items whose titles describe them as *Neue*

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53 'L'avviso a stampa è dunque il diretto e legittimo antesignano dei giornali e la sua storia costituisce il primo capitolo della storia del giornalismo' (Bulgarelli 1967: 14). Mario Infelise, who regards the *periodicity* of the manuscript *avvisi* as the defining feature of the press, dismisses the newsletters that were printed in Italy at least from early in the sixteenth century on the grounds that they did not establish contact with what he calls 'the authentic public,' which, according to him, only fixed periodicity was capable of promoting (see Infelise 2005: 40). Like the Bulgarellis and Seguin, Shaaber, too, was quite clear that 'news (plus the printing press) created the newspaper' (Shaaber 1966: 3). For a comparison of the *avvisi a stampa* with the *relaciones de sucesos*, see Henry Ettinghausen, 'Los *avvisi a stampa*: las relaciones de sucesos italianas, en relación con las españolas,' in Andrés, ed., 2013, 13-23. Referring to Germany, Schröder (2001: 130) makes the point about *Flugschriften*, which clearly applies no less to newsletters printed elsewhere, that, in the sense that they tested out various forms of news coverage and presentation, they 'can be described as the root of the modern press.'

54 Mercedes Agulló y Cobo, *Relaciones de sucesos I: Años 1477-1619*, Cuadernos Bibliográficos XX, Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigación Científica, 1966; id., 'Relaciones de sucesos (1620-1626),' in *Homenaje a Don Agustín Millares Carλό*, Gran Canaria, 1975, I: 349-80. Earlier pioneering works on *relaciones de sucesos* include Jenaro Alenda y Mira, *Relaciones de solemnidades y fiestas públicas de España*, Madrid, Establecimiento tipográfico 'Sucesores de Rivadeneyra,' 1903; A. Huarte, ed., *Relaciones de los reinados de Carlos V y Felipe II*, 2 vols., Madrid, Sociedad de Bibliófilos Españoles, 1941; and José Simón Díaz, 'Algunas relaciones de sucesos de los años 1540-1650,' *Biblioteca Hispana*, 15, 1957: 506-23.

55 See Emil Weller, *Die ersten deutschen Zeitungen herausgegeben mit einer Bibliographie (1505-1599)*, Tübingen, Literarischer Verein in Stuttgart, 1872; R.E. Prutz, *Geschichte des deutschen Journalismus, zum ersten Male vollständig aus den Quellen gearbeitet*, I, Hannover, Verlag von E.F. Kius, 1845; Paul Roth, *Die neuen Zeitungen in Deutschland im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig, 1914. We should also mention the Low Countries. The USTC catalogues 1,213 news pamphlets published in the Netherlands up to the year 1600. The vast majority of them were printed in Antwerp, the next most important centre of production being Amsterdam, followed by Delft. Of the total, over half came out in Dutch, over a quarter in French, and one tenth in Latin. As regards formats, roughly the same number were printed in octavo as in quarto. The earliest pamphlets listed were nearly all printed in Antwerp, almost all of them in Dutch, and they were predominantly in octavo. The majority cover military and political news.

56 See Bonner Mitchell, *1598. A Year of Pageantry in Late Renaissance Ferrara*, Binghamton, New York, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1990: 6; they also omit the equivalent of French *canards*.

*Zeitungen*, leaving out a huge number of pamphlets bearing a large variety of different titles; whilst Shaaber included amongst English news pamphlets what he called ‘official news’ – proclamations, documents and State Papers, as well as partisan and propagandistic tracts – categories that I have omitted, since their purpose was not principally to purvey news.<sup>57</sup>

What is surprising is the fact that the complementarity of the pioneering works just mentioned should have gone unnoticed. One of the main reasons why that is the case is, no doubt, the fact that the pre-periodical press in the different languages and countries goes by very different names.<sup>58</sup> Another reason is that research on the early press has operated very predominantly within national contexts. It is only very recently, with the ‘Early Modern News Networks’ project, that research has deliberately gone international, but so far it has focussed almost exclusively on the seventeenth-century periodical press.<sup>59</sup>

### Characteristics of Early News Pamphlets

Until the introduction, in or just before 1618, in Germany and the Netherlands, of the printed corantos and gazettes which periodically brought together in single publications short reports from several different sources, news pamphlets had typically covered single news stories at some length. These pamphlets are generally referred to as newsletters or news books in England, as *occasionnels* or *canards* in France, as *avvisi a stampa* in Italy, as *relaciones de sucesos* in Spain, and as *Flugschriften* or *Neue Zeitungen* in Germany. They were, almost in their entirety, one-off products that owed their existence to the initiative of a printer or a publisher who acquired access to actual or supposed eye-witness or official accounts of what he or she considered to be newsworthy events whose publication seemed likely to represent a money-making proposition.<sup>60</sup>

The earliest news pamphlets, like other kinds of printed matter, were set up in gothic type, otherwise known as black letter. However, as early as the 1470s, some books printed in Italy were already using roman type, inspired by the inscriptions of antiquity whose style had been adopted in the Renaissance for copying manuscripts

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57 Spanish proclamations and oficial papers printed in the city of Burgos are studied by Mercedes Fernández Valladares, ‘Difundir la información oficial: *literatura gris* y *menudencias* de la imprenta burgalesa al hilo de sucesos histórico-políticos del siglo XVI,’ in Paba, ed., 2003: 149-70.

58 See below, Appendix I.

59 See <http://newscom.english.qmul.ac.uk/>

60 There are many instances of widows taking control of printing shops after the death of their husbands.

for collectors of classical works. Roman type began to become common from early in the sixteenth century, especially for printing books in Latin, but only slowly for works in the vernaculars, including ballads and news pamphlets. Gothic type was still predominant in France and Spain up to the late sixteenth century, and in England up to the beginning of the seventeenth, when it was still used for the first corantos in the 1620s.<sup>61</sup> And gothic continued to be the standard font in Germany until the middle of the twentieth century.

The format of newsletters varied considerably from one country to another. German *Flugschriften* were nearly always printed in quarto, Spanish *relaciones* in quarto or folio, Italian *avvisi*, English newsletters and Dutch news pamphlets in quarto or octavo,<sup>62</sup> and French *occasionnels* and *canards*, at first in small quarto, but then, in the sixteenth century, in small octavo.<sup>63</sup> Often larger formats were used for official news, smaller formats for more popular or sensational news, especially if written in verse. As for length, Italian *avvisi* and Spanish *relaciones* were usually either four or eight pages long, whilst the French *occasionnels* mostly ran to either eight or sixteen pages, especially when printed in octavo. In Germany *Flugschriften* varied normally between four and sixteen pages, the commonest length being eight. As for England, newsletters generally ran from eight to twenty-four pages or more.<sup>64</sup>

As regards their layout, the first pages of the earliest newsletters normally started with a short title, in the form of a brief summary of the event being presented, sometimes followed by a woodcut illustration (Fig. 1.2), but front pages increasingly included the place of printing, the name of the printer and the date of publication.<sup>65</sup> By early in the sixteenth century they were making use of various different sizes of type, especially at the beginning of their titles, exploiting large fonts and upper cases in order to catch the eye of the potential buyer. In between the title at the top of the page and the place, printer and date of publication usually at the bottom, first pages very often used woodcuts to fill the middle of the page. The images displayed vary

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61 For France, see Seguin 1961: 10. Albert Flocon notes: 'à partir de la deuxième moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle en France, de la fin du XVI<sup>e</sup> en Espagne, du XVII<sup>e</sup> en Angleterre, les caractères romains sont définitivement adoptés' (*L'Univers des livres. Étude historique des origines à la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, Hermann, 1961: 271).

62 See Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*, Cambridge University Press, 2003: 5; for the Netherlands, see USTC.

63 See Seguin 1961: 9.

64 See Shaaber 1966: 294. Mercedes Agulló (Agulló y Cobo 1966: 3) implicitly defines *relaciones de sucesos*, not just by their being printed newsletters, but also by their length, limiting them to pamphlets of up to roughly twenty folios.

65 Seguin analyses the development of titles in the French *occasionnels* (Seguin 1961: 21-2).

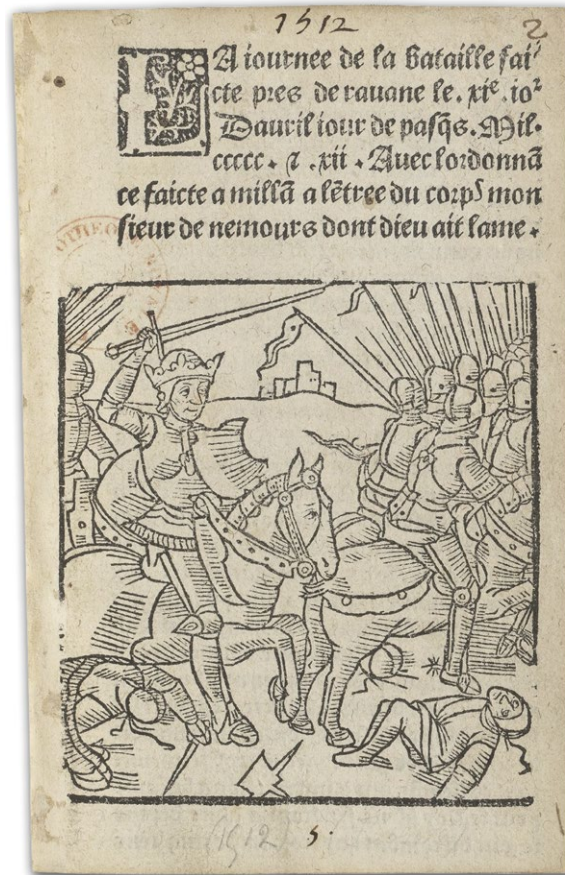


Fig. 1.2. Front page of a French *occasionnel* reporting the brilliant French victory over Papal and Spanish troops at Ravenna in 1512 and the death of the French commander, Gaston de Foix-Nemours. The woodcut, whose border is badly worn, was an emblematic representation of a battle which had been used on previous occasions, at least as early as 1493 (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris).<sup>66</sup>

from coats of arms – especially in Spain, where they conveyed a seal of authority, often accompanying reports that claimed some kind of official status (Fig. 1.3) – to printers' marks, human figures or monstrous animals.<sup>67</sup> The human figures generally appear in pamphlets that concern individual actors in the news. Scenes of action

<sup>66</sup> See Seguin 1961: 70.

<sup>67</sup> James Lyell comments on the royal coat of arms used on the first page of an account of the preparations made for the Invincible Armada published in Madrid in 1588, expressing surprise that the illustration used was not, for instance, of a galley, but that is to underestimate the importance of the coat of arms in Spain to signify an official publication (see James P.R. Lyell, *La ilustración del libro antiguo en España*, ed. Julián Martín Abad, Madrid, Ollero y Ramos, 2012: 346-7).



Fig. 1.3. First page of a Spanish news pamphlet (Valencia, 1531) bearing the text of a letter from the commander of the Spanish galleys to the viceroy of Valencia. The use of the royal coat of arms to indicate an official Spanish document was to continue well into the following century. The woodcut frame and the decorated capital C are reminiscent of illuminated manuscripts (Biblioteca del Palau, Peralada).

or destruction are usually associated with battles, sieges or natural disasters. For the most part, news pamphlets used readymade woodcut blocks recycled from the printer's stock.<sup>68</sup> As such, far from being what we would understand by illustrations, they constitute at best roughly emblematic representations of the type of news stories involved, enabling potential customers to visualise the kind of news on offer

<sup>68</sup> Seguin (1961: 10-20) offers a very full account of the use of wood blocks in French *occasionnels*, illustrating how the same blocks were reused, or else re-engraved, in numerous publications. A typical example of the recycling of woodcuts in Spain is noted by Lyell (2012: 187-8): the depiction of an army encamped outside a city, used by Carlos Amorós to illustrate a *relación* on the taking of Oran that he published in Barcelona in 1509 and which he also used to portray the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in AD 70. Referring to England, Marie-Hélène Davies notes that 'On the whole, the woodcuts we find illustrating pamphlets are fairly rough' (Davies 1986: 16).



before actually purchasing the product. In many cases, however, the connection between the woodcut image and the message in the text is less than obvious, the disjuncture no doubt usually implying a relatively limited range of blocks in the printer's shop.<sup>69</sup> The only kinds of news pamphlet that commonly merited engravings specially cut for the occasion were those concerning monsters and freaks.<sup>70</sup>

News did not come off the presses only in the form of pamphlets. It also appeared printed on one side of single sheets. As M.A. Shaaber put it: 'News was printed in the form of either a book, usually so small that nowadays we should rather call it a pamphlet (as it was sometimes called at that time too), or a single sheet or broadside.'<sup>71</sup> Broad-sides (or broadsheets) were also used for material other than news, such as posters, proclamations, calendars, almanachs and folk tales, and they were often stuck up on walls for public or family consumption. They generally employed engravings, sometimes made especially to illustrate their content, with German printers, in particular, manufacturing products that dramatically highlighted their visual impact with sophisticated figures or scenes that usually filled the top third or half of the page, the bottom being occupied by a text in prose or in verse (Fig. 1.4).<sup>72</sup> German broadsides offering news stories are known today as *Flugblätter*, not to be confused with *Flugschriften*, which are pamphlets running to at least four pages. Their subject matter is often similar to that of the pamphlets – especially battles, monsters and natural disasters.<sup>73</sup> In addition, from the early years of the Reformation, *Flugblätter* were exploited for satirical anti-papist propaganda, as well as for anti-Lutheran satire in the states that remained obedient to Rome.<sup>74</sup> Some idea of the spectacular saleability of

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69 For a useful account of the varying relationship between texts and images in the French *occasionnels*, which is transferable to Spain, see Seguin 1961: 10-13.

70 See below, chapter 7. Questions of layout and illustration are discussed in more detail in the captions attached to the reproductions of broadsides and news pamphlets throughout this book and in Appendix III. Jean-Pierre Seguin comments on woodcuts in French news pamphlets in 'L'illustration des feuilles d'actualité non périodiques en France aux XV<sup>e</sup> et XVI<sup>e</sup> siècles,' *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 1958: 35-50.

71 Shaaber 1966: 11.

72 Several German broadsides are reproduced below, especially in chapter 7 and Appendix III. See also Thomas Schröder, 'The origins of the German press,' in *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe*, ed. B. Dooley and S. A. Baron, London/New York, Routledge, 2001, 123-50: 128-9.; Hermann Wäscher, *Das deutsche illustrierte Flugblatt*, vol. I, Dresden, VEB Verlag der Kunst, 1955: 7, 11; Walter L. Strauss, *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut, 1550-1600*, 3 vols., New York, Abaris, 1975.

73 Seguin notes, when it comes to French *canards*, 'une prédilection évidente pour l'aspect intemporel et symbolique des événements, vrais ou inventés et pour des 'histoires' travesties en faits d'actualité' (Jean-Pierre Seguin, 'Les Occasionnels au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle et en particulier après l'apparition de la *Gazette*. Une source d'information pour l'histoire des mentalités et de la littérature "populaires,"' in J. Adhémar et al., eds., *L'informazione in Francia nel Seicento*, Bari/Paris, 1983, 33-59: 36).

74 See Wäscher 1955: 12-13; William A. Coupe, *The German Illustrated Broadsheet in the Seventeenth Century. Historical and Iconographical Studies*, II: 'Bibliographical Index', *Bibliotheca Bibliographica Aureliana* XX, Baden-Baden, Verlag Librairie Heitz GMBH, 1967: 12.

broadsides can be derived from the fact that as early as 1480 Johannes Bämle, one of Augsburg's many news printers, supplied 12,000 broadsides to a single customer.<sup>75</sup>

The superb collection of illustrated German single sheet prints, largely concerning extraordinary happenings and beings, put together in the sixteenth century by Johann Jakob Wick and now held at the Zurich Central Library, attests to the scale of production and to the popularity of such material.<sup>76</sup> It also shows how – whether done before their sale, or later – the water-colouring of their engraved illustrations could make them extremely attractive acquisitions.<sup>77</sup> The woodcuts used to illustrate news pamphlets and broadsides vary considerably, with some being relatively crude, whilst others – most especially those produced for German *Flugblätter* – are remarkably sophisticated.<sup>78</sup> Many French broadsides also went in for engravings made especially for the news story in question. Thus, Seguin reproduces broadsides on a two-headed sheep (Paris, 1569), on two monstrous humans (Chambéry, 1578), on conjoined twins (Paris, 1605), and on the appearance of a comet (Paris, 1618), and their engravings are not greatly inferior in quality to many *Flugblätter*.<sup>79</sup>

Most especially in Germany, England and Spain, news was often published in the form of ballads, as pamphlets or as broadsides meant to be recited or sung in public.<sup>80</sup> In Germany a very large proportion of the *Flugschriften* or *Neue Zeitungen* indicate in their titles the tune, usually that of a hymn, recommended for the purpose. The first volume of Emil Weller's bibliography of early German ballads begins with a substantial section that catalogues songs and poems on current events printed between 1500 and 1699, overwhelmingly on victories, including 482 pamphlets printed in the sixteenth century, and 432 in the seventeenth.<sup>81</sup> In Germany, as in England, news pamphlets composed in verse were closely related to single-sheet ballads which could be displayed in public places and sung or recited, and they contained formulae

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75 See Pettegree 2010: 38.

76 See Franz Mauelshagen, *Wunderkammer auf Papier. Die 'Wickliana' zwischen Reformation und Volksglaube*, Zurich, Bibliotheca Academica, 2011.

77 In 1491, in his edition of the *Schatzbehalter*, the great Nuremberg printer Anton Koberger advised prospective purchasers that, if they wished to colour in the animals depicted in one of the engravings, they should paint the cow red (see Flocon 1961: 268).

78 Many of the sixteenth-century English cheap prints discussed by Tessa Watt also display considerable skill on the part of their engravers (see, for example, the broadside of *The true discription of this marueilous straunge fishe*, published in 1569 [Watt 1991: 166]).

79 See Seguin 1964: Plates XXIII, XXIV, XXV, VIII, III.

80 Tessa Watt (1991: 11) reckons that roughly 3,000 different ballads were published in England in the second half of the sixteenth century, in perhaps as many as three or four million copies.

81 See Emil Weller, *Annalen der poetischen National-Litteratur der Deutschen im 16 und 17 Jahrhundert*, 2 vols., Freiburg, Herder, 1862-4, vol. I.



Fig. 1.4. A German broadside, or *Flugblatt*, printed at Augsburg in 1565, with a lengthy account and a woodcut evidently made to order to illustrate the news given here of conjoined twins with two heads and three arms (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

that directly addressed their listeners. The impact of broadsides was, first and foremost, visual. As Tessa Watt puts it, referring to England, 'the broadside was not only a text to be read. It was also, in fact primarily, a song to be sung, or an image to be pasted on the wall.'<sup>82</sup> The diffusion of the news was, then, by no means limited to those who could read. Indeed, in the 1960s, in the flea market in Madrid, peddlers of

<sup>82</sup> Watt 1991: 6-7.

pamphlets could still be found on a Sunday morning reciting their wares with a view to attracting purchasers.<sup>83</sup>

Regarding ballads, M.A. Shaaber notes that hundreds of English news ballad broadsides were registered with the Stationers' Company in the sixteenth century, but that very few have survived, and Alexander S. Wilkinson makes the same point about the low survival rate of printed ballads in France.<sup>84</sup> Shaaber also observes that a publisher would often have a ballad printed on a news story that he had issued previously in a prose newsletter.<sup>85</sup> News could thus be purveyed in two significantly different modes: prose, lending itself in general to more informative approaches, concentrating on detailed narrative and description; verse, to editorial comment, expressing and inviting emotive or moralising responses on the part of the reader or listener. But there was also, for the most part, a difference in content, with newsletters (mainly in prose) including a very wide range of topics, and broadsides (very often in verse) concentrating on the whole on sensational news. As Henry Peacham was to put it in 1641, 'For a peny you may have all the Newes in England, of Murders, Flouds, Witches, Fires, Tempests, and what not, in one of Martin Parkers Ballads.'<sup>86</sup>

Early Spanish news broadsides, of which very few are known today, include reports of successful military campaigns, illustrated with plans of the town or fortress taken, with the strategic points often marked by a number or a letter of the alphabet and then identified in a key, together with a brief account of the action, one example being the broadside with a dedication to Philip IV that describes the retaking from the Dutch of San Salvador, on the Brazilian coast, by Fadrique de Toledo in 1625. Illustrated with a large woodcut by Alardo de Popma, it provides details of the artillery pieces captured and of the most significant dead and wounded.<sup>87</sup> Other news topics that merited broadsides in Spain include the appearance of monsters.<sup>88</sup>

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83 Antonio Castillo Gómez discusses the oral proclamation of ordinances and the news in early modern Spain, as well as the public displaying of proclamations, commenting on their influence on public opinion (*Entre la pluma y la pared. Una historia social de la escritura en los Siglos de Oro*, Madrid, Akal, 2006: 203-250).

84 See Shaaber 1966: 191; Wilkinson 2004: 11-121. For the early history of the Stationers' Company, see Peter W.M. Blayney, *The Stationers' Company and the Printers of London, 1501-1557*, Cambridge University Press, 2013.

85 See Shaaber 1966: 196-8.

86 Quoted by Watt 1991: 11.

87 See Juan Carrete Parrondo, Fernando Checa Cremades and Valeriano Bozal, *El grabado en España (siglos XV al XVIII)*, *Summa Artis. Historia General del Arte*, XXIII, Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, 1987: 310-11.

88 See below, chapter 7. For the whole array of pamphlet verse in early modern Spain, see María Cruz García de Enterría, *Sociedad y poesía de cordel en el Barroco*, Madrid, Taurus Ediciones, 1973.

## What News?

Whilst it would be splendid to be able to track precisely how the concept of news fit to be printed came to be established at the start of the printing revolution, we are greatly hampered by not even beginning to be able to estimate to what extent the rare early news pamphlets still extant reflect anything like the entire picture. At the beginning of 2015 the USTC listed 135 extant incunable news pamphlets for the whole of Europe.<sup>89</sup> They correspond to items published in Alost, Antwerp, Augsburg, Basel, Brescia, Bruges, Cologne, Delft, Deventer, Erfurt, Freiburg im Breisgau, Ghent, Ingolstadt, Leipzig, London, Louvain, Lyon, Mainz, Memmingen, Mondovi, Nuremberg, Odense, Oudenaarde, Padua, Paris, Passau, Reutlingen, Rome, Rouen, Speyer, Strasbourg, Toulouse, Troyes, Ulm, Urach, Valenciennes, Venice and Würzburg. However, they do not include all of the incunable pamphlets that are known to have survived – for a start, no pamphlets printed in Spain are mentioned. None the less, it is certainly worth taking note of what the principal news stories are that those first news pamphlets carry.

The main topics – and this was to continue to be the case – are war and the public activities of rulers. As Margaret Meserve has shown, amongst the earliest news pamphlets to be published in Italy, just as the printing revolution began to get under way there, were more than a dozen known texts that, within months of the capture of Negroponte by the Turks in July 1470, commented on, analysed or lamented the disaster that had befallen that Venetian colony. Whilst those texts – which include works in prose and in verse, in Latin and in Italian – were not so much concerned with giving the news as with reacting to it, they imply none the less an evident assumption of awareness of the news on the part of their readers, and many of them allude to details of the siege, so that, in Meserve's words:

The fall of Negroponte was thus one of the first events in Renaissance history to be recorded in print more-or-less immediately after the fact. The cluster of publications that appeared in the wake of the city's fall suggests that, in Italy at least, the practice of using the press to disseminate news and commentary on recent events was adopted practically instantaneously, at the very moment the new technology was put to use.<sup>90</sup>

Meserve states that at least two popular vernacular ballads describing the fall of Negroponte appeared in print in the aftermath of the disaster and ran to at least five editions, a fact which seems clearly to denote the event's publication as news,

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<sup>89</sup> They are listed under the category 'News Books.'

<sup>90</sup> Margaret Meserve, 'News from Negroponte. Politics, Popular Opinion and Information Exchange in the first Decade of the Italian Press,' *Renaissance Quarterly*, 59, 2006, 440-80: 443.

since (as we have mentioned) verse, scarcely less than prose, was commonly used throughout Europe as the vehicle for public information, and a large proportion of news pamphlets and news broadsides included texts in verse well into the seventeenth century and later.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, as Meserve points out,

These poems represent a literary tradition far older than the invention of printing. For decades such ballads had been recited or sung to live audiences in Italian city squares, sometimes by the poet himself, sometimes by a professional crier (*cantastorie*, *canterrino*, *cantambanco*), sometimes by a peddler (*cerretano*, *ciurmatore*) who might also sell paper copies of the text alongside his usual stock of devotional images, patent medicines, and charms.<sup>92</sup>

In comparison with later news stories, however, the fall of Negroponte was atypical inasmuch as it concerned a defeat.

The first extant item that the USTC claims is a news pamphlet is one that was printed in Augsburg by Günther Zainer in 1474.<sup>93</sup> Both in the USTC and elsewhere, it is often referred to as *Anschlag wider die Türken*. However, it is not so much the account of a battle as an appeal to the conscience of good Christian rulers to support the onslaught on the Turks (Fig. 1.5).<sup>94</sup> Amongst the earliest events to be reported in print on an international scale is the relief of the Turkish siege of Rhodes in 1480.<sup>95</sup> A large number of contemporary accounts of that resounding Christian victory – published in Germany, Italy and the Low Countries – came out in Latin, and in the following year reports on the event were being printed in French and in English.<sup>96</sup> That fact raises the question whether Latin and vernacular news reports were perceived as belonging to separate communicative categories. The news in Latin largely followed the practice of news communication in the pre-printing age, when, apart from oral ballad-type kinds of popularising information intended for a general public, hard news was primarily aimed at an elite of educated readers who used Latin to communicate internationally. However, vernacular printed news pamphlets were to become the

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<sup>91</sup> See Meserve 2006: 454. Meserve (id.) lists five known editions published in the 1470s in Venice(?), Milan, Naples and Florence.

<sup>92</sup> Meserve 2006: 454. For the impact of peddled pamphlets on Venetian culture in our period, see Rosa Salzberg, *Ephemeral City. Cheap Print and Urban Culture in Renaissance Venice*, Manchester University Press, 2014.

<sup>93</sup> See USTC 739902.

<sup>94</sup> The title reads: *Vermerckt den anslag des gemeinen zugs wider die Türken* (i.e. 'Mark the onslaught of the combined campaign against the Turks.')

<sup>95</sup> See USTC 739902; and Jacobus de Curte, *De urbis Rhodiae obsidione a. 1480 a Turcis tentata* (Venice, after August 1480) (USTC 995524).

<sup>96</sup> See below, chapter 3.

norm within a very short time, and indeed they doubtless contributed to the spread and the status of the vernaculars as the accepted languages of communication.

The doings of rulers are prominent in the printed news virtually from the beginning, including their signing of peace treaties, such as the one agreed by Louis XI and the Archduke of Austria in 1483, and so too are reports of geographical discovery. In 1493 a spate of editions of Columbus's letter narrating his first transatlantic voyage came out across Europe, in Latin and in several vernaculars. And quirks of nature began to form part of the published news repertoire from at least as early as 1492, with Sebastian Brant's account of the Ensisheim meteorite, followed in 1495 by his articles on conjoined twins and deformed animals.

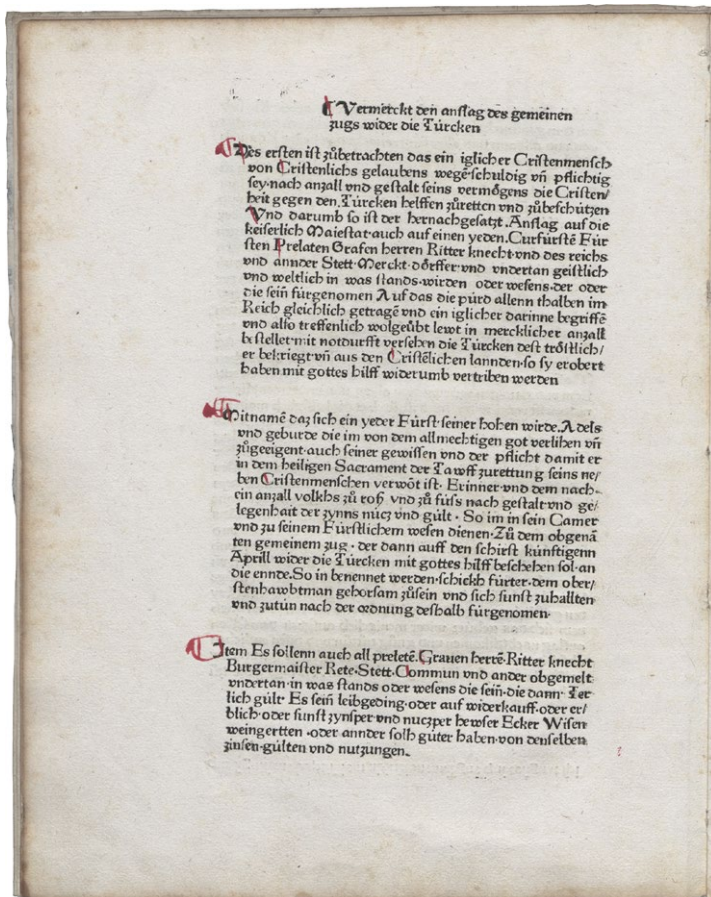


Fig. 1.5. An elegant page from the so-called *Anschlag wider die Türcken* (Augsburg, 1474), with handwritten decorations in red ink added to the initial letters of each paragraph in order to make this printed text resemble a medieval manuscript (Universitätsbibliothek, Leipzig).

However, the news treated by the earliest European press – at least as far as we know it – is thematically quite restricted when compared with the coverage achieved by pre-periodical pamphlets by the beginning of the seventeenth century. As Robert Burton made clear, a century and a half after the first known printed news appeared, it had become comparable to what we understand by news today: information about a very broad range of current events that were thought to be, or were made to appear, significant. The events that became news, then as now, can be described as happenings that are either half expected or fall within an accepted repertoire of newsworthy occurrences, or else can be presented, on the contrary, as breaking the established order by virtue of being either marvellously or horrifically unexpected. They can also be described as favouring the powers that be, or else, at least at first sight, as challenging the established order. Within the former category, we could include news about royalty or reports of battles (which are, almost without exception, accounts of victories); within the latter, plots, murder, witchcraft and heresy. By the time Burton is writing, news stories in the non-periodical press concern everything from war to sport, from miracles to martyrdoms, from royal weddings to natural disasters, from crime to entertainment.

News was, as always, inevitably determined by the circumstances of the time. Thus, it was powerfully coloured by ideological conflict – predominantly, between Catholics and Protestants, Christians and Muslims – and by the competing interests of rival political powers. Dominated by the reporting of war and by events that involved church and state, news was inevitably propagandistic, and it had its media heroes – headed by princes, churchmen and generals – and its media villains, including enemies, traitors, infidels, heretics, sinners and common criminals.<sup>97</sup> It flourished on sensationalism, including stunning victories, spectacular celebrations, amazing miracles, ghastly atrocities, terrifying catastrophes, mysterious apparitions, deformed infants, horrific monsters and the demonical work of the devil. What is more, in the age of discovery, the press opened up new worlds for its European consumers, as well as carrying news from Europe and beyond to the colonies. The opinions expressed in the news pamphlets represented the Establishment. The press did not just pretend to provide information, but structured reality, with a view to astonishing, sermonising or shocking its readers and listeners. And, although scarcely a single history of literature so much as mentions them, news pamphlets and broadsides were doubtless amongst the most widely read kinds of printed matter, much as newspapers are today.

The extent to which the news printed across Europe was, in broad terms, of a kind becomes clear if we compare the results expressed in works that deal with the press

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<sup>97</sup> Seguin (1961: 41-6) deals at some length with the question of propaganda in French *occasionnels*.



in national contexts. As regards England, in M.A. Shaaber's words, the early English printed news is 'a record of affairs of state, of war and battle at sea and on land, of the conduct of the great magnates, the heroes, and the personalities of the age, of murders, deeds of violence, and acts of God.'<sup>98</sup> More specifically, he also documents news of royal births, visits, festivities, marriages and deaths; foreign embassies; and the trial and execution of noblemen and women accused of treason or rebellion, and of heretics and common criminals. As he remarks, news of war predominates and is 'one of the first kinds to appear at the beginning of the sixteenth century.'<sup>99</sup> In England – more so, no doubt, than in Spain, Italy or even France – a great deal of the news in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was inextricably intertwined with political and religious propaganda.<sup>100</sup>

As Shaaber observed, foreign news predominated in the sixteenth-century English press, practically all of it translated from news pamphlets published abroad,<sup>101</sup> although a good deal of local or national news is also to be found amongst the English newsletters, for example: William Elderton's *Newes from Northumberland*, printed in London by Thomas Colwell in 1570.<sup>102</sup> Whereas Shaaber reckons that, as regards England, 'after the middle of the sixteenth century, we can be quite certain that some publishers specialized in the publication of news,'<sup>103</sup> Joad Raymond holds that printed news was scarce prior to the 1580s, when England intervened in the wars between the Netherlands, France and Spain, and that domestic news increased from 1600 onwards, thanks to 'for the most part "wonder" pamphlets and other items with indirect political import.'<sup>104</sup> For the two decades 1590 to 1610, D.C. Collins catalogued a total of 271 newsletters, in whose production (almost entirely in London) over a hundred printers and booksellers were involved.<sup>105</sup>

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98 Shaaber 1966: 8.

99 Shaaber 1966: 121.

100 See Shaaber 1966: 65-105. 'After the accession of Queen Elizabeth in 1558, we find much more printed news than during the first half of the century and still more every new year' (Shaaber 1966, 320). See also Joop W. Koopmans, *News and Politics in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)*, Louvain, Peeters, 2005.

101 See Shaaber 1966: 168.

102 See USTC 515641. Over 500 extant English news pamphlets published before the Civil War are translations, with roughly 200 dealing with war and with peace negotiations, about 100 with the affairs of sovereigns and around 60 with sensational news (see S. K. Barker, 'Strange News: Translations of European Sensational News Pamphlets and their Place in Early Modern English News Culture,' in *The Book Trade in Early Modern England: Practices, Perceptions, Connections*, ed. John Hinks and Victoria Gardner, Oak Knoll Press and The British Library, 2013: 161-86, 171-3).

103 Shaaber 1966: 285.

104 Raymond 2003: 100 (see also 99, 103).

105 See D.C. Collins, *A Handlist of News Pamphlets, 1590-1610*, London, South-West Essex Technical College, 1943.

Shaaber stresses the unspoken requirement that in England – as, in general, elsewhere – ‘as far as matters touching the credit of the state were concerned, the only kind of news fit to print was good news.’<sup>106</sup> Observing, in addition, that news had to be ‘extraordinary, sensational, prodigious,’ he gives the following summary of what he calls popular news: ‘murders and other crimes; miracles, prodigies, and wonders; monstrous births and strange beasts; witchcraft; the plague; acts of God, such as flood and fire, and the weather; and sporting events.’<sup>107</sup> The coincidence of these topics with those of the French *canards*, and their equivalents in Germany, Spain and Italy, is striking indeed.<sup>108</sup>

As for France, Jean-Pierre Seguin notes that roughly a third of the *occasionnels* that he catalogues deal with the doings of the monarchy and the aristocracy, particularly royal births, journeys, festivities, marriages and deaths.<sup>109</sup> However, like their equivalents elsewhere, the majority of *occasionnels* cover military affairs, with some victories giving rise to numerous reports, often published in several different towns. Thus, Seguin lists eight different extant *occasionnels* on the French conquest of Genoa in 1507, ten on battles against the Venetians in 1509, eleven on military operations in Italy in 1544, eleven more on the capture of Thionville in 1558, and ten on the taking of Calais from the English that same year.<sup>110</sup> He also points to the frequent reprinting of *occasionnels* by different printers, a common feature of newsletters elsewhere, notably in Germany, Italy and Spain.<sup>111</sup>

Although Seguin’s bibliography of French *occasionnels* ends in 1559, French single subject newsletters did not stop publication then or, indeed, with the launching of the ground-breaking government-backed periodical *Gazette* in 1631, each number of which brought together and summarised news stories of varied provenance.<sup>112</sup> The founder of the *Gazette*, Théophraste Renaudot, actually supplemented his gazettes with weekly, or twice-weekly, single subject pamphlets, which he entitled *Extraordinaires* or *Relations*, and which covered specific news stories (most often battles) in detail, very much in the style of the pre-periodical single subject newsletters. For their part, French *canards* correspond to one variety of English newsletters,

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106 See Shaaber 1966: 123.

107 Shaaber 1966: 9, 138.

108 Collins (1943) lists over thirty extant printed newsletters on murders just for the two decades 1590–1610.

109 See Seguin 1961: 29.

110 See Seguin 1961: 30.

111 See Seguin 1961: 25.

112 See Stéphane Haffemayer, *L’information dans la France du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle: La Gazette de Renaudot de 1647 à 1663*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 2002.

German *Flugschriften* and *Flugblätter*, Spanish *relaciones de sucesos* and Italian *avvisi a stampa* that includes accounts of such items as murder, adultery, incest, rape, the birth of conjoined twins, natural disasters, monsters, comets, miracles, wizards, ghosts, and evils inflicted by the devil. Like such pamphlets printed elsewhere in Europe, the *canards* insist explicitly and almost unanimously on the notion that disasters and portents are providential warnings and/or divine punishments for men's sins and that they signify the need for mass penitence.<sup>113</sup>

Turning now to Italy, Tullio Bulgarelli knew of very few *avvisi a stampa* published before the 1520s.<sup>114</sup> The fact that the first six that he catalogues, all of them printed in 1526, concern events involving Charles V and Spain might suggest that the beginnings of news publication in Italy were stimulated by the early Spanish press, but earlier *avvisi* exist that were not catalogued by Bulgarelli. As regards the content of the printed *avvisi*, he makes it clear that in the sixteenth century they provided news from the entire known world, the topics that he highlights being: battles, conspiracies, festivities, royal weddings, treaties, trials, geographical discovery, natural events and miracles.<sup>115</sup> In addition to these, however, the items that he catalogues include coronations, royal journeyings and triumphal entries; the deaths of kings, princes, popes and cardinals; the reception of ambassadors; and tournaments, martyrdoms and murders. War looms very large in the *avvisi a stampa*, in particular the Turkish threat to Christendom, the struggle between Spain and France for supremacy in Europe, and the wars between Catholics and Protestants. One particularly active publisher of *avvisi* in Rome in the last decade of the sixteenth century, Bernardino Beccari, produced a spate of newsletters on the wars against the Turks in Transylvania, many of which were translated and published elsewhere.<sup>116</sup>

Andrew Pettegree notes that Spain appears to have produced less than three percent of the books published in Europe in the fifteenth century and was a major net book importer.<sup>117</sup> However, possessing as it did the greatest empire in the early modern period, Spain had global news interests, received news from across the

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113 See Seguin 1964: 53-64.

114 See Bulgarelli 1967: 18. In addition to the poems published on Negroponte referred to earlier, poems in Italian were also published in 1492-3 on the conquest of Granada, as documented by Júlía Benavent, 'Las relaciones italianas sobre la Conquista de Granada en el siglo XV,' in García López and Boadas, eds., 2015: 104-108.

115 See Bulgarelli 1967: 18, 19, 21. To be sure, very few *relaciones de sucesos* deal with conspiracies or lawsuits, and most of the Spanish accounts of voyages of discovery – like most of those published elsewhere – are book-length, rather than newsletters.

116 See Tullio Bulgarelli, 'Bernardino Beccari da Sacile antesignano dei giornalisti italiani,' *Accademie e Biblioteche*, 34, 1966: 123-35.

117 See Pettegree 2010: 114.

entire known world, and had a flourishing news industry. Mercedes Agulló y Cobo claimed – with, admittedly, more than a little exaggeration – that the early *relaciones de sucesos* cover all the topics to be found in a modern newspaper. The topics she specifies are: international politics, war, social affairs (such as royal weddings, royal births and official celebrations), fires, miracles, bloody crimes and the weather (by which, no doubt, she meant foul weather, such as hurricanes and floods).<sup>118</sup> She could, however, have added that they also include other kinds of court news (such as royal journeys, royal deaths and triumphal entries) and church news (such as conversions to Catholicism, beatifications, canonisations, martyrdoms and autos de fe), other types of natural disaster (such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions), other kinds of sensational news (such as the birth of conjoined twins and other malformed humans, the appearance of monsters, or dire doings of the devil), as well as sports (such as tournaments, quintain and bullfights).

As for Germany, Thomas Schröder sums up the content of German *Flugschriften* as ‘religion and confessional disputes, and politics, as well as news about miracles, catastrophes, and crimes.’<sup>119</sup> Paul Roth, whose brief study of *Flugschriften* includes a score of extant items published before 1500, names the main topics covered as: battles, embassies, treaties, coronations, triumphal entries and significant funerals, as well as accidents, storms, portents, murders, executions, freaks, ghosts and witches.<sup>120</sup>

## Writing and Translating the News

The majority of news pamphlets, especially those written in prose, are anonymous, and many of those that mention their authors do so by referring to their office or profession or their relationship to the presumed correspondent – an officer, a priest, a friend, etc. – rather than by name. Few of the authors whose names are given are known to be the authors of more than one or two items. In fact, for the most part, it seems clear that news pamphlets were written by people who did not regard themselves principally as purveyors of news. Many of them were persons in positions of authority, often in the army or the church, or else more ordinary individuals who, once or twice in their lives, discovered that they had a news story to tell that they happened to have witnessed.

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118 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 3.

119 Schröder 2001: 129.

120 See Roth 1914: 13-17. Andrew Pettegree (2014: 72) observes that the *Neue Zeitungen* are ‘comparatively rare until at least the 1530s,’ but Emil Weller’s catalogue of the genre, published in 1872, includes fifty-two pre-1530 items.

Very occasionally we know that a printer could try his hand at journalism. Such, for instance, is the case of Juan Serrano de Vargas, a native of Salamanca and one of the most prolific printers in Seville of news pamphlets between 1618 and 1624. At least on occasion, he claims to be the author of a *relación* that he published. His account of the disastrous flooding of the Guadalquivir in 1618 that affected both Seville and Cordova, specifies that the *relación* had been 'Hecha y ordenada' (i.e. written and set out) by himself.<sup>121</sup> Serrano de Vargas's *relación* was published in Italian translation that same year in Viterbo.<sup>122</sup>

Virtually from the beginning, news was translated repeatedly as it travelled from one country to another. Rome and Venice marked the commonest starting points in Europe for the spread of news from the east, and Italian was the language in which such reports usually first appeared, with translations into German, French, Spanish, English, etc. following.<sup>123</sup> A typical example is to be seen in a pamphlet printed in French at Lyon in 1561, the title of which states, in so many words, that the news it contained from the Levant had reached the printer in the form of letters sent from Rome.<sup>124</sup> Another is a newsletter registered at the Stationers' Company in 1595 that, by virtue of its bringing together reports from various capitals, anticipates the corantos and gazettes.<sup>125</sup> But not all news from the east was translated directly out of Italian. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, some news from China was published in England translated from Spanish.<sup>126</sup> For her part, Lisa Ferraro Parmelee discusses the very large number of English translations of writings that had been produced in France by the anti-League Politiques in the last two decades of Elizabeth's reign.<sup>127</sup>

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121 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 726.

122 See Franca Petrucci Nardelli, 'Calamità e paure nella stampa popolare romana e laziale (1585-1721)', *Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria*, 105, 1982, 261-294: 278. Serrano also claims the authorship of the *Copiosa relación* that he published the following year on the laying of the foundation stone for a new side chapel in Seville cathedral (see Agulló y Cobo 1966: 770).

123 See Eric R. Dursteler, 2009, 'Power and Information: The Venetian Postal System in the Early Modern Eastern Mediterranean,' in *From Florence to the Mediterranean: Studies in Honor of Anthony Molho*, Florence, Olschki, 601-23.

124 *Lettres envoyees de Romme esquelles sont contenues les nouvelles advenues au pays de Levant* (see USTC 31076).

125 *Newes from Constantinople Vienna and diuerse other places concerning the affayres and warres of the Christians and Turkes translated out of Italian into Englishe* (see Collins 1943: 109).

126 See, for example, *The strange and marueilous newes lately come from the great kingdome of Chyna which adioyneth to the East Indya. Translated out of the Castlyn tongue, by T.N* (London, 1577?)

127 See Lisa Ferraro Parmelee, *Good Newes from Fraunce. French Anti-League Propaganda in Late Elizabethan England*, University of Rochester Press, 1996: 2.

Curiously, not all news was published in the language of the country where it was printed. In England, French news pamphlets were sometimes simply republished in the original, evidently with an educated readership, and/or export, in mind, and the opposite also occurred.<sup>128</sup> There are also instances of *relaciones* in Spanish published in Italy. One such reports the canonisation of a Spanish saint and was published in Rome in 1588, no doubt intended for sale to Spaniards who attended the ceremonies at the Vatican and perhaps also for export to Spain.<sup>129</sup> One instance of the reverse process – a pamphlet published in Italian in Spain – is a report written by the Neapolitan *alfiere*, or lieutenant, Zaccaria Guelfi, on the capture of a Turkish craft off the Catalan coast near Tossa in 1626 by galleys belonging to Sicily and to the Duke of Tuscany.<sup>130</sup> Presumably, the printer of this *relación* – Esteve Liberós, of Barcelona, who is known to have printed at least two hundred *relaciones* in all – obtained the news quickly, as the events reported occurred not far up the coast from Barcelona, and meant to export his product to Italy.

### Censoring, Selling and Reading the News

The fact that, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, news pamphlets were generally subject to a greater or lesser degree of governmental or ecclesiastical control made it possible for their readers, and for those who listened to them read or recited, to regard those texts that were published with official approval as authoritative, or at least not contrary to the interests of the powers that approved them. In 1501 Pope Alexander VI published the bull *Inter multiplices*, which laid down the requirement for works to be censored prior to publication. His lead was followed in Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella the following year for all kinds of texts, whether long or short, and the Inquisition was thereafter to control censorship with increasing eagerness and efficiency.<sup>131</sup> In Catholic Germany, four years after Luther's writings were banned in 1521, the Diet of Speyer decreed pre-publication censorship, and the inclusion of the printer's name and the place of printing on printed matter was made

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<sup>128</sup> E.g. *A true relation brought by the Lord of Buisson, and sent by the French King concerning the defeat of the Lord Soubizes army, his Maiestie being there in person [...]*, supposedly published in Paris in 1622.

<sup>129</sup> *Relacion de la canonizacion del Sancto Fray Diego de Alcalá de Henares* (see BUS, No. 1).

<sup>130</sup> *Relazione della presa fatta dale Galere del Serenissimo gran Duca di Toscana vnite con cinque Galere di Sicilia, di vn Vassello Quadro Turchescho di Corso quale andaua per la Costa di Catalogna rubando* (reproduced in Henry Ettinghausen, *Notícies del segle XVII: La Premsa a Barcelona entre 1612 i 1628*, Barcelona, Arxiu Municipal, 2000: 104).

<sup>131</sup> See Fermín de los Reyes Gómez, *El libro en España y América. Legislación y censura (siglos XV-XVIII)*, I, Madrid, Arco Libros, 2000: 325-7.

compulsory.<sup>132</sup> In France, from early in the sixteenth century, some *occasionnels* claim to have obtained a privilege or authorisation granted by a variety of bodies, perhaps more as a form of copyright than of censorship.<sup>133</sup> In Italy, *avvisi a stampa* published from the 1570s onwards commonly bear on their front pages the statement: ‘Con licentia delli Superiori.’ The case of England, however, is particularly complex, but in 1586 Star Chamber issued a decree that required all books to be licensed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London.<sup>134</sup>

The earliest papers did not generally sell themselves by purporting to carry the latest news, but mainly by claiming that what they told was true. It is, therefore, instructive to examine just how the pre-periodical press advertised itself. Starting with the *Flugschriften*, and thanks to Emil Weller’s bibliography of *Neue Zeitungen*, we can follow the development of the titles of a large number of early German pamphlets. Weller describes 154 of those published between 1505 and 1543 that include the term *Neue Zeitung* in their titles, most of which went into several editions. The vast majority use the term *Neue Zeitung* without adding any kind of qualifier. Whereas it could be thought that *Neue Zeitung* implies *the latest* news, it seems more likely that it was taken to mean simply *new* (i.e. yet another piece of) news, or, as Pettegree suggests, ‘new tidings.’<sup>135</sup> In the Netherlands many news pamphlets are, similarly, entitled *Nyeuwe tydinge*, whilst others are simply headed *Tydynghe van* (i.e. Tidings from).<sup>136</sup>

However, from very early on, Weller records a large number of titles that stress credibility, with sixteenth-century forms of modern German *wahrhaftig* (i.e. true) predominant. Thus, in 1515, the Nuremberg printer Jobst Gutknecht was putting out a *Flugschrift* entitled, in one edition, *Neue warhaffte gezeitung*, and, in another, *Ein neue warhafftige gezeyttung*.<sup>137</sup> By 1523 the commonest form of this very common title formula had become crystallised into *Warhafftige Neue zeytung*, which, in numerous variant spellings, amounts to eleven percent of the *Neue Zeitung* titles catalogued by Weller up to 1544.<sup>138</sup> However, to this basic formula, we need to add several

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132 See Jürgen Wilke, ‘Censorship and Freedom of the Press,’ in *EGO. European History Online*, published 2013-05-08, 1-52, <http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-media/censorship-and-freedom-of-the-press>

133 See Seguin 1961: 49.

134 See Raymond 2003: 47. For a review of the conflicting views on the implications of censorship in England, see Jason McElligott, ‘“A Couple of Hundred Squabbling Small Tradesmen”? Censorship, the Stationers’ Company, and the State in early modern England,’ in Raymond 2006: 85-102.

135 Pettegree 2014: 72.

136 See, for example, *Tydinghe van Roome*, printed at Kampen in 1536 (USTC 410525, 421120).

137 See Weller 1872: 6.

138 See Weller 1872: 17, 19, 21, 36, 40, 45, 52, 63, 85, 88, 94, 96, 105, 125-127, 138, 134.

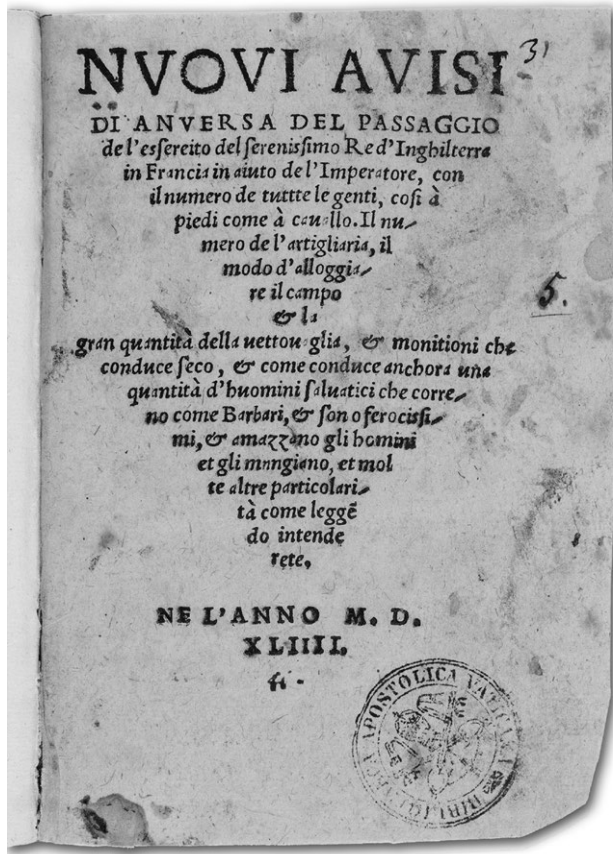


Fig. 1.6. First page of an account, received from Antwerp, of English participation in Italy in the course of the Italian War of 1542-6. The opening words, 'NVOVI AVISI,' are highlighted by being set in large capitals, and the lengthy title is elegantly laid out in italic in the shape of two triangles placed vertically (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome).

variations and elaborations.<sup>139</sup> If we count all of these as, at least in part, denoting claims to truthfulness, we reach an impressive total of nearly nineteen percent.

For the most part, those *Neue Zeitungen* listed by Weller up to 1544 that do not introduce into their titles the notion of truthfulness, or stick with the bare expression

<sup>139</sup> Amongst these variations, we can name the following: *Gewise* [i.e. certain] *neue zeitung* (1535), *Erschröckliche* [i.e. shocking] *Warhafftige Neue Zeittung* (1536), *Ernstliche* [i.e. serious] *Neue zeytung* (1537), *Warhafftige, auch gantz glaubwürdige* [i.e. as well as entirely trustworthy] *Neue zeytung* (1540), *Glaubhafftige* [i.e. credible] *zeytung* (1540), *Warhafftige und gewisse Neue zeytung* (1541), *Warhafftige und erschrockliche Neue Zeytung* (1542), *Ware* [i.e. true] *New' zeitung* (1542), *Warhafftige Zeitung* (1542), *Gewisse zeitung* (1542?), and *Ein warhafftige und gewisse Neue zeytung* (1543) (see Weller 1872: 78, 92, 103, 106, 130, 128, 136, 139, 143, 145, 151).



*Neue Zeitung*, stress amazement or horror: a total of nearly six percent.<sup>140</sup> Broadside *Flugblätter* tended to put more emphasis on shock and horror than the *Neue Zeitung* pamphlets, especially those that covered crime, disasters, portents and monsters. As for the Netherlands, whilst titles beginning *Nyeuwe tydinge* are common from at least 1527 onwards, that same year we also find the claim to truth being included, as in *Warachtige nieuwe tiding* and in *Gherechtighe copie van der nieuwer tidinghe*, both printed in Antwerp.<sup>141</sup>

The practice of French publishers and printers stands in sharp contrast to that in Germany. To judge by Seguin's bibliography of *occasionnels*, the use in their titles of terms to indicate the genre to which they belong does not become common before the middle of the sixteenth century, pamphlets normally being introduced by headlines that go straight in to explaining the event being reported, a typical example being: *Le triumphant tournoy, fait aux Nopces du Prince d'Espagne, et de linfante de Portugal, en Vailledoly* (Paris, 1543).<sup>142</sup> An early lone exception is *Lettres nouvelles de Milan* (Paris, 1500), the next comparable examples appearing more than twenty years later.<sup>143</sup> In these cases, the term *Lettres nouvelles* would seem to suggest that what is being offered is the latest news.

Almost simultaneously, it appears, we find *Nouvelles* standing in titles as a substantive. Pre-1544 *occasionnels* that qualify *Nouvelles* are: *Nouvelles bonnes [...] venues d'orient* (Rouen, 1516), *Les tristes nouvelles de Rome* (Lyon, 1530), *Nouvelles certaines des Isles du Peru* (Lyon, 1534) and *Espovantable nouvelle* (Paris, 1542).<sup>144</sup> Apart from the last item cited, only two other pre-1544 *occasionnels* listed by Seguin stress the horror of the stories they tell, and without using a generic term: *La terrible et merveilleuse bataille* (? , 1516) and *La terrible et espovantable comete* (? , 1528).<sup>145</sup> In complete contrast with practice in Germany, only one of the pre-1544 *occasionnels* catalogued by Seguin insists on the truthfulness of its report: *La vraye et Briefve declaration* (? , 1527).<sup>146</sup>

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140 Weller includes the following: *New erbarmlich* [i.e. pitiful] *Tzydung* (1526), *Wunderbarliche* [i.e. marvellous] *Neue zeitung* (1535, 1538), *Wunderbarliche und erschrockliche neue zeitung* (1536), *Ein erschregliche Neue zeitung* (1537), *Wunderzeitung* (1539), *Wunder/Wunderbarliche neue zeytung* (1539), *Ein erschrockenliche Neue Zeyttung* (1542) and *Garwunderbarliche* [i.e. quite amazing] *Neue Zeytung* (1543) (see Weller 1872: 28, 90, 119, 117, 112, 118, 123, 141, 149).

141 See USTC 441709, 415552.

142 See Seguin 1961: 196.

143 See, for example, *Coppie des lettres nouvelles du camp du Roy* (Rouen, 1522) and *Lettres Nouvelles envoyez a Lempereur* (? , 1527) (Seguin 1961: 10, 39, 58).

144 See Seguin 1961: 19, 100, 124, 163a.

145 See Seguin 1961: 21, 69.

146 See Seguin 1961: 51.

In Italy the title *Nuovi avvisi*, employed occasionally – as in *Nuovi avvisi di Anversa del passaggio de l'essercito del serenissimo Re d'Inghilterra* in 1544 (Fig. 1.6) – clearly stresses the novelty of the news on offer, even though it does not, as in France, use a noun for the purpose.<sup>147</sup> In early Italian *avvisi*, however, it vies with references to truthfulness, as in: *Li veri Particulari de la felice Vittoria*, printed in 1526.<sup>148</sup> Nonetheless, Tullio Bulgarelli lists no more such items between 1554 and 1571, and the following year both notions are combined: *Ultimo et vero raguaglio*.<sup>149</sup> Until the end of the century, in Italy the claim to novelty appears in fact to win out over the claim to truth. From around 1610, the chief claims are to truth or to brevity, but the majority of titles use no adjective.

Regarding Spain, the eighty pre-1544 *relaciones* listed by Mercedes Agulló include only a few instances of a practice that becomes very common indeed in the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century: the insistence in titles that what is on offer is true.<sup>150</sup> Instead of emphasising truthfulness, however, a few *relaciones* stress the marvellous nature of the news story in question,<sup>151</sup> or else its horror.<sup>152</sup> None the less, by the second and third decades of the seventeenth century, truthfulness is the dominant concept. In a collection of 126 *relaciones* published in Barcelona between 1612 and 1628, as many as fifty-six percent of the items include *verdadero/a* in their titles.<sup>153</sup>

As for English newsletters, whilst the two dozen pre-1544 items included in the USTC contain only two that qualify the news as true,<sup>154</sup> Shaaber mentions over eighty pre-1620 items variously entitled *True copie...*, *True Declaration...*, *True description...*, *True Discourse...*, *True history...*, *True Narration...*, *True news...*, *True Relation...*, *True report...*,

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147 See Bulgarelli 1967: 45. The next comparable items listed by Bulgarelli are *Nuovo avviso del piu horrendo et miserabil Diluvio* (1557), *Aviso nuovamente venuto di Costantinopoli* (1559), *Novi avvisi venuti da Messina* (1565) and *Ultimi avvisi Venuti da da Messina* (1565) (see Bulgarelli 1967: 78, 88, 97, 98).

148 See Bulgarelli 1967: 8. Other examples: *Il vero progresso della festa d'Agone* (1545), *Il vero successo de tutto che sino a hoggi è Occorso in Inghelterra* (1554) or *La vera capitulatione e Articoli* (1554) (see Bulgarelli 1967: 48, 60-1).

149 See Bulgarelli 1967: 128, 141.

150 For instance: *Verdadera relacion* (Seville, 1534), *Relacion muy verdadera* (? , 1538?), *Relacion cierta y verdadera* (? , 1542?), *Relacion verdadera* (Medina del Campo, 1543), *Carta y relacion cierta y verdadera* (? , 1543) (see Agulló y Cobo 1966: 46, 61, 74, 75, 76).

151 See, for example, *Copia de una maravillosa carta* (Valencia, 1534), *Nuevas marauillosas* (? , 1536) (Agulló y Cobo 1966: 45, 59).

152 See, for example, *Relacion de las Horrendas y espantosas señales* (? , 1536), *Coplas lamentables* (¿ , 1539), *Relacion del espantable terremoto* (? , 1541) (Agulló y Cobo 1966: 58, 63, 73).

153 See Ettinghausen 2000a.

154 *The trewe encountre or batayle* (London, 1513 - USTC 501239); *A treuue nyeuu tydnges of the wonderfull worckes* (Antwerp, 1535 - USTC 437732).

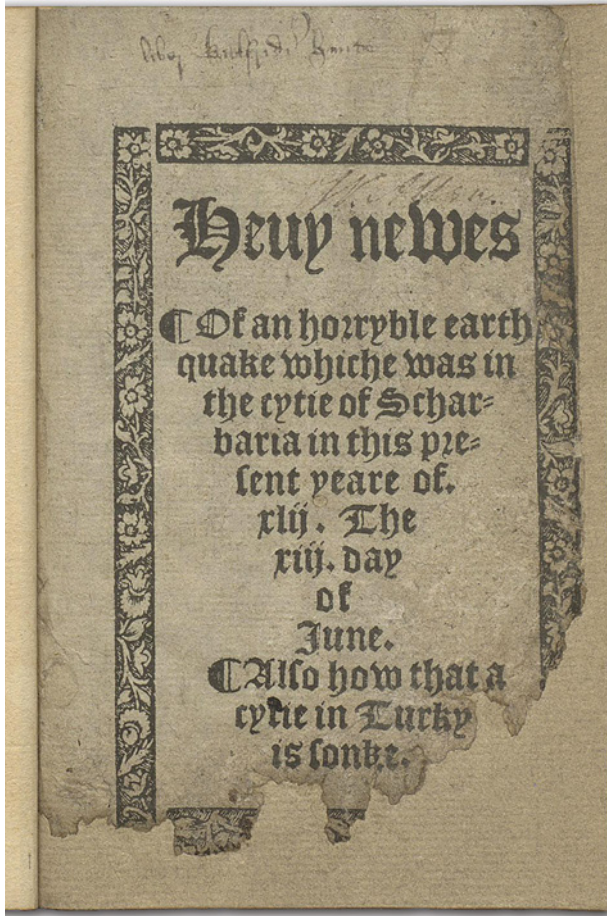


Fig. 1.7. First page of an 8-page newsletter printed in London in 1542, showing decorative use of woodcuts around the title, whose first two (key) words – ‘Heuy [i.e. Heavy] newes’ – are highlighted by the larger font used (© The British Library Board, C.40a.19).

etc.<sup>155</sup> Two more highlight the news as good: *The noble triumphaunt coronacyon of quene Anne* (London, 1533) and *A joyfull new tidynges of the goodly victory* (London, 1543), whilst three mark it as bad: *A lamentable and piteous treatise* (London, 1542), *Heuy [i.e. heavy] newes of an horryble earth quake* (London, 1542) (Fig. 1.7) and *This*

<sup>155</sup> See Shaaber 1966: 364-6. Frances E. Dolan investigates in great detail how the question of truth is presented in English relations (see *True Relations. Reading, Literature and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century England*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). As Dolan (2013: 4) puts it, at least in England ‘the [seventeenth] century seems to be particularly concerned with the contested nature of truth claims.’

*horyble monster is cast of a sowe*, printed as a broadside in Germany in 1531.<sup>156</sup> On occasion, however, latestness could be promoted as a selling point, as in the phrase ‘with new additions by later letters,’ to be found in the title of the newsletter printed by John Wolfe in 1592: *A discourse of that which is past, since the kings departure from Gouy, to pursue the prince of Parma*.<sup>157</sup>

As for readers, contemporary correspondences and chronicles make it clear that the news was not just widely available, but that it formed an important part of people’s awareness of the world in which they lived.<sup>158</sup> To take one example, the diary of Girolamo da Sommaia, an Italian student at Salamanca, shows how internationally connected an educated, well-heeled young man could be at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Sommaia traded news with a profusion of correspondents across Europe and received handwritten gazettes, and manuscript and printed relations, from Italy and elsewhere, including news of the Gunpowder Plot and the troubles in Ireland.<sup>159</sup> On 12 March 1605 he notes in his diary that he had asked a friend for ‘la relatione di Inghilterra,’<sup>160</sup> and what he records on 11 April is typical of dozens of his entries. He had gone to visit some German noblemen in Salamanca to ask for ‘la Gazzetta’ that he had lent them, and they had allowed him to copy out another ‘Gazzetta,’ whilst a person named Arralde had copied the ‘Relatione’ on the death of the pope that one Juan García Rodríguez had lent him.<sup>161</sup> The picture Sommaia paints is of University students and teachers, and other members of the intellectual cream of Salamanca society, enthusiastically exchanging the latest information from abroad, lending each other foreign news pamphlets and having copies made of them.

Whilst the chief markets for relations and broadsides were obviously urban – with the products sold at printers’ shops and bookshops, in markets, fairs and via hawkers<sup>162</sup> – from an early date they could also find their way into the houses

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156 USTC 502510, 513440, 515319, 503284, 502334.

157 USTC 517259.

158 For the use of *occasionnels* as historical source material by contemporary chroniclers, see Seguin 1961: 32-4; for the use of *relaciones* by Catalan chroniclers, see Ricard Expósito i Amagat, *Informació i persuasió: en els orígens de la premsa catalana (c. 1500-1720)*, doctoral thesis presented at the Universitat de Girona, 2014: 452-505.

159 See George Haley, *Diario de un estudiante de Salamanca. La crónica inédita de Girolamo da Sommaia (1603-1607)*, Universidad de Málaga, 2012: 98.

160 Haley 2012: 290.

161 Haley 2012: 302.

162 See Laurence Fontaine, *Histoire du colportage en Europe, XVe-XIXe siècle*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1993; Pedro M. Cátedra, *Invención, difusión y recepción de la literatura popular impresa (siglo XVI)*, Mérida, Editorial Regional de Extremadura, 2002; Jeroen Salman, *Pedlars and the Popular Press. Itinerant Distribution Networks in England and the Netherlands, 1600-1850*, Leiden, Brill, 2014.

of country gentry. Tessa Watt cites examples of itinerant book peddlars who sold ballads in remote parts of the English countryside.<sup>163</sup> And, as Ricard Expósito has shown by exploring the libraries of nearly a dozen ancient farmhouses, the peasantry in northern Catalonia was by no means unaware of what was going on beyond its immediate vicinity. Family papers that have lain in important farmhouses gathering dust for centuries attest to their owners' awareness of the news and, in many cases, to their purchase of news publications and of works of political propaganda as they came out.<sup>164</sup>

Other than in England, where printing was virtually confined to London, the availability of the printed news was greatly increased, not only by translation and publication, but also by virtue of the frequent reprinting of pamphlets in numerous towns within the same country. Amongst the very many early German examples there is a *Flugschrift* on Louis XII's entry into Genoa, printed in 1507 in Augsburg, Leipzig and Nuremberg,<sup>165</sup> whilst typical instances in France include the account of the flooding of the Rhône in 1570, of which editions are extant that were published in Lyon, Paris and Rouen.<sup>166</sup>

Whereas most copies of relations and broadsides were evidently recycled for a variety of eminently practical purposes, some of their content was on occasion incorporated into contemporary chronicles and memoirs or even inspired works of literature. Besides, some library holdings suggest that there were contemporaries who made a habit of collecting them. One obsessive collector was Columbus's son Ferdinand, who built up a fabulous library in Seville. As for specific instances, a unique collection of sixteen Valencian *relaciones* dating from the 1520s and 1530s, now in the library of Peralada Castle, near Figueres, can hardly have been put together much later than the time that they were published, and the same goes for a collection of over a hundred *relaciones* printed in Barcelona nearly a century later and housed at the Biblioteca Nacional in Lisbon.<sup>167</sup> To say nothing of the collecting mania of the splendid Johann Jacob Wick.

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163 See Watt 1991: 267.

164 See Ricard Expósito Amagat, '“Successos d'Europa” a la Catalunya rural de l'època moderna,' *Pedralbes*, 28, 2008, 611-22.

165 See USTC 627246-8.

166 See Seguin 1964: 133-7.

167 See Mercedes Fernández Valladares, 'La Colección de relaciones góticas valencianas del Castillo de Peralada: aportaciones para la revisión tipobibliográfica del repertorio de relaciones de sucesos del siglo XVI,' in Patrick Bégrand, ed., *Representaciones de la alteridad, ideológica, religiosa, humana y espacial en las relaciones de sucesos (siglos XVI-XVIII)*. V Congreso Internacional SIERS, LHPLE, UFC, Besançon, 6, 7, 8 de septiembre de 2007, Besançon, Presses Universitaires de Franche-Comté, 2009: 19-38; Ettinghausen, 2000.

Having outlined the chief characteristics of pre-periodical news pamphlets, in the following chapters we shall approach them thematically with a view to examining the range of news that was read and listened to in early modern Europe, a range that extended from reports of the public doings of rulers, to discovery and war, to sectarian conflict, to the work of the devil, to crime and punishment, to natural disasters and supernatural wonders, and to monsters, human, animal and fantastical. In particular, we shall highlight the kinds of news stories that reached readers and listeners in several different countries and, most especially, the prevalence of virtually identical information provided by the publication of translations.

## Royalty. Births, Journeys, Marriages, Festivities, Deaths

Throughout early modern Europe festivals and ceremonies accompanied city life throughout the year. In Catholic countries, every town and village, every profession and occupation, celebrated the day of its patron saint. Most festivities were fixed events, part of the church calendar, but others occurred on special or unplanned occasions, such as births, marriages, visits and the deaths of monarchs and, in Catholic countries, beatifications, canonisations and the acquisition of relics.<sup>1</sup> If, on the basis of the surviving evidence, news about war inspired the earliest printed news pamphlets, the public acts of rulers did not lag far behind. Church and state discovered very early on that the press provided possibilities for disseminating suitably chosen and presented information on a scale previously inconceivable, and they were not slow to exploit the new technology. News that featured rulers represents most clearly the crucial role of the press in promoting the public image of secular power.

By the opening years of the sixteenth century Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the king of France, François I, found themselves locked in printing wars that mirrored their military confrontations in Italy. Charles was also to be prominent in the propaganda exercises promoted by the Wars of Religion as a response to the Reformers' extensive anti-papal campaigns, which included suitably chosen news stories, as well as fierce, and often scatological, tracts and ballads. The emperor's

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<sup>1</sup> For a survey of extant relations of festivities held in Barcelona in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Henry Ettinghausen, 'Barcelona, centre mediàtic del segle XVII, i les seves relacions de festes,' in *Festes i celebracions. Barcelona 1700*, ed. Albert García Espuche, Museu d'Història de Barcelona, 2010, 199-275.

triumphal progresses around Europe were reported in detail – one of the first known English newsletters on a royal visit covers his reception in London in 1522 – and so were his military successes, as we shall see in the next chapter.<sup>2</sup>

By rapidly joining the information revolution, monarchs ensured that the chief life-changing moments in their own and their families' biographies were made into signal public events that called for printed reports in order to stress their importance and extend their reverberations in both time and space. Thus the press became a crucial adjunct to the prestige of power, turning Renaissance and Baroque ceremonial into widely diffused news, eternalising the ephemeral details of decorations, dress, church services, processions, triumphal arches, elaborate carriages, illuminations, firework displays and tournaments.

Some aspects of courtly and even religious ceremonial were often covered in their own right, such as tourneys and jousts. A tournament put on by Charles V in Augsburg in 1530 that began on Corpus Christi, is described at length in a French *Relation de la tournée excellente tenuee par la maieste de lempereur: en la cite imperialle. Dauspourg*, a pamphlet that has a woodcut of the Crucifixion under the title on its first page, whose appropriateness is not immediately apparent.<sup>3</sup> The tourney held in Paris in June 1549 was reported in an Italian news pamphlet whose title stresses its stupendousness and the enormous crowds of onlookers that it drew.<sup>4</sup>

As Roy Strong put it nearly thirty years ago, 'The importance attached to tournaments, ballets, state entries, firework displays, water spectacles, alfresco fêtes, intermezzi, masques and masquerades is reflected in the vast corpus of literature printed to commemorate these events.'<sup>5</sup> Bonner Mitchell notes that 'Of the 254 *avvisi* in Bulgarelli's bibliography, 100 deal with *feste*, a fact that shows the prevailing interest in such matters,' and he points out that nearly thirty percent of them covered festivities held outside Italy.<sup>6</sup> The glorification of lavish festivities came out rapidly in

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<sup>2</sup> See Shaaber 1966: 27; and also Katrin Hirt, *Die italienischen Kriege zwischen Karl V. und Franz I. in den Jahren 1521-1530: Medienereignisse in zeitgenössischen deutschen, italienischen und französischen Flugschriften*, Ph.D. thesis, Justus-Liebig-Universität, Giessen.

<sup>3</sup> See Seguin 1961: 89.

<sup>4</sup> *Il successo della gran giostra et torniamento fatto in Parigi, città capitale del regno di Franza, con decchiaratione di tutte le forte d'armi, così a cavallo, come a piedi. Proposte per gli mantenitori, con tutto l'ordine di essa giostra, cosa stupenda da udire, tanto per le grandissime ricchezze, quanto per l'infinito popolo ivi radunato* (USTC 803375).

<sup>5</sup> Roy Strong, *Art and Power. Renaissance Festivals, 1450-1650*, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 1986: 21. The literature on Renaissance and Baroque festivals is huge, but Strong encapsulates the essential points.

<sup>6</sup> Bonner Mitchell, *1598. A Year of Pageantry in Late Renaissance Ferrara*, Binghamton, New York, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1990: 6. Mitchell's reference to Bulgarelli is to Bulgarelli 1967.



the form of news pamphlets, in many cases celebrating individual events separately, as they happened, with commemorative tomes compiled at greater leisure often chronicling the entire programme of particularly significant celebrations.<sup>7</sup>

## Births and Baptisms

Royal live births and baptisms were invariably occasions for widespread organised public rejoicing. In 1492 an *occasionnel* was published in Paris on the birth of Charles Orlando, the son of Charles VIII and his spouse, Anne of Brittany.<sup>8</sup> A *relación*, printed in 1496, is made up of couplets on the marriage of Joanna of Castile to Philip, the son of Emperor Maximilian who was to become Philip I of Spain.<sup>9</sup> The birth in 1500 of their son, Charles, elected Holy Roman Emperor in 1519 as Charles V, is reported in an *occasionnel* printed at Valenciennes.<sup>10</sup> Many of the royal children scarcely survived birth, whilst others died in childhood or in their teens, such as Philip II's son Fernando, whose birth was celebrated in 1571, whose formal naming as Prince of Asturias occurred two years later<sup>11</sup> and who died at the age of seventeen. The birth to Philip II's third wife, Elisabeth of Valois, of her first surviving child, Isabel Clara Eugenia, was celebrated in ballads by the Valencian poets Juan de Pineda and Juan Timoneda in 1566.<sup>12</sup>

The fiestas held in Valladolid (at the time, Spain's capital city) on the occasion of the baptism of the future Philip IV and the signing of the Treaty of London are reported together in a *relación* printed in Cordova, and the celebrations held in Toledo were chronicled in a book-length work printed in Madrid.<sup>13</sup> The festivities put on in Valladolid were later celebrated in a relation and in a book, both of them printed

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7 For festival books published in Valencia in the seventeenth century, see Gabriel Andrés, *Relaciones de fiestas barrocas: Valencia. Textos y estudios*, Saarbrücken, Editorial Académica Española, 2011. For an account of *relaciones* on festivities held in one Castilian city, see Sagrario López Poza, 'Relaciones festivas segovianas en el reinado de los Austrias,' in *Las relaciones de sucesos en España (1500-1750)*. *Actas del Primer Coloquio Internacional (Alcalá de Henares, 8, 9 y 10 de junio de 1995)*, Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne/ Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alcalá, 1996: 239-52.

8 See USTC 70996.

9 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 3.

10 See USTC 71390.

11 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 178, 180-1. *Copia de vna letra venida de la Corte Donde cuenta toda la cerimonia que ha passado en el Baptismo del Principe nuestro S.* (Barcelona, 1572).

12 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 137, 362.

13 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 421. The book-length account of the festivities put on to celebrate the birth was: *Relacion de las fiestas que la imperial ciudad de Toledo hizo al nacimiento del principe N.S. Felipe IIII deste nombre*, 96 fols (Madrid, n.d.) (BDRS).

in Milan.<sup>14</sup> The ceremony of swearing the oath of allegiance to heirs to the Spanish throne also inspired the publication of *relaciones*, as for instance in the case of Prince Philip (later to become Philip IV), to whom the Spanish nobility swore loyalty in 1608, an event that was also the subject of a *relatione* published in Rome.<sup>15</sup> The baptism of Henry, later to become Prince of Wales, in 1594 had been fêted in a pamphlet registered at the Stationers' Company by Thomas Millington: *The Tryumphant and princlie newe ballad Declaringe the royaltie and magnificence performed at the Baptisinge of the prince of Scotland*.<sup>16</sup>

## Marriages

Royal marriages were not just major public events, but also distinctly political affairs which very often marked the ending of hostilities, reinforced existing international alliances, or created new ones. Emperor Maximilian's second marriage, in 1494, to Bianca Maria Sforza, daughter of the Duke of Milan, was celebrated in Latin by Pierre Bonhomme in a pamphlet published in Louvain.<sup>17</sup> A newsletter printed in London by Richard Pynson in 1500 – *The traduction and mariage of the princesse* – recounts the wedding of Catherine of Aragon to Prince Arthur, the eldest son of Henry VII.<sup>18</sup> Louis XII's marriage to Mary Tudor, the third daughter of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, celebrated at Abbeville in 1514, and their entry into Paris, were recorded in several *occasionnels*, as was Louis's death the following year.<sup>19</sup>

Philip II of Spain's marriages were reported internationally – as with all the events we shall be looking at, undoubtedly far more so than the extant material shows. His first marriage (before he succeeded Charles V as king of Spain), to Maria Manuela of Portugal in 1543 in Salamanca, was recorded in a twenty-four-page *relación* and in an *occasionnel* printed in Paris which also covered the couple's subsequent journey to Valladolid.<sup>20</sup> Philip's second marriage, to Mary I, the daughter of Henry VIII and

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<sup>14</sup> *Relatione di quanto è successo nella città di Vagliadolid, dopò il felicissimo nascimento del principe di spagna don Filippo Dominico Vittorio*. The baptism also inspired a 230-page book published in Milan in 1607 on the festivities held there: *Feste di Milano Nel felicissimo nascimento del Serenissimo principe di Spagna Don Filippo Dominico Vittorio*.

<sup>15</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 453, 457-61; Bulgarelli 1988: 37.

<sup>16</sup> See Collins 1943: 107.

<sup>17</sup> See USTC 436278.

<sup>18</sup> See USTC 500615.

<sup>19</sup> See Seguin 1961: 73-5.

<sup>20</sup> *Entrada en España de la infanta doña María, hija del Rey de Portugal don Juan, y su casamiento con el Principe don Felipe en Salamanca* (n.p., 1543? - Agulló y Cobo 1966: 79). For the *occasionnel* – *Le triumphant tournoy, faict aux Nopces du Prince d'Espagne, et de linfante de Portugal, en Vailledoly* – see Seguin 1961: 196.



Fig. 2.1. First page of a Dutch relation on the arrival in 1554 of Prince Philip (two years later to become Philip II of Spain) and on his marriage to Mary I of England in Winchester cathedral. The page is dominated by the woodcut of the Spanish royal coat of arms, very much in the style of official Spanish *relaciones* of the period (cp. Figs. 1.3 and 7.4) (Centrale Bibliotheek van de Universiteit, Ghent).

Catherine of Aragon, at Winchester Cathedral in 1554, was reported in at least six known *relaciones*,<sup>21</sup> as well as in at least three *avvisi*,<sup>22</sup> and in an Italian pamphlet published in Padua,<sup>23</sup> whilst a ninety-six-page commemorative book on the marriage

21 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 101, 104-106, and the following items in BDRS: *La coronación de la inclita y serenissima reyna doña Maria de Inglaterra que oy reyna bienauenturadamente en aquel reyno* (n.p., 1553); *Svmaria y verdadera relacion del bven viaje que el inuictissimo Principe de las Españas don Felipe hizo a Inglaterra, y recebimiento en Vincestre* (Saragossa, 1554); *Traslado de vna carta embiada de Inglaterra a esta ciudad d' Sevilla, en que se da relacion del sucesso del viaje del principe don Philipe nuestro señor: desde que se embarco en la Coruña puerto de España, hasta q. se caso con la serenissima reyna de Inglaterra* (n.p., 1554). See also Alexander Samson, 'Images of Co-Monarchy in the London Entry of Philip and Mary (1554),' in Marie-Claude Canova-Green, Jean Andrews and Marie-France Wagner, eds., *Writing Royal Entries in Early Modern Europe*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2013, 113-27.

22 See Bulgarelli 1967: 61, 62, 67.

23 See *Il trionfo delle superbe nozze fatte nello sposalitio del principe di Spagna et la regina d'Inghilterra* (USTC 803682).

and on England's submission to the Church of Rome appeared in London the following year.<sup>24</sup> Philip and Mary's official entry into the capital was recorded in an Italian news pamphlet printed in London, a fact which seems to suggest that it was published with a view to export, and in a Dutch one published in Antwerp (Fig. 2.1).<sup>25</sup> Mary's coronation the previous year had been reported in two Spanish *relaciones* and in an Italian *avviso*,<sup>26</sup> and her restoration of Roman Catholicism and her persecution of Protestants had been admiringly recounted in both Spain and Italy.<sup>27</sup> Philip II's third marriage, to Elisabeth of Valois at Toledo in 1559, was likewise widely reported, for example in a book-length *relación*<sup>28</sup> and in Italian pamphlets published the following year.<sup>29</sup>

Early in the seventeenth century, the Treaty of Fontainebleau, signed in April 1611, arranged for the union of Louis XIII of France to Anna of Austria, daughter of Philip III of Spain, and for that of her brother, the future Philip IV, to Louis XIII's sister, Elisabeth. Both couples were under age at the time, but the marriage contracts were signed amidst public rejoicing in 1612, giving rise to profuse *relaciones* describing the costly and colourful ceremonies performed in Madrid and in Paris and the celebrations held in Naples and Messina.<sup>30</sup> The double royal weddings, celebrated in Burgos in 1615, occupied numerous *relaciones*, including two written by Diego de Basurto, published in Barcelona and in Burgos, and several others printed in Barcelona, Seville, Malaga and Salamanca.<sup>31</sup> One of the most interesting is one published in Barcelona in 1615, for it claims to be the truest eyewitness *relación* to have been printed, the publisher thereby implying that he was aware that his potential customers would probably

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24 *The copie of a letter sent in to Scotlande of the arivall and landyng, and most noble marryage of [...] Philippe, prynce of Spaine to the [...] Princes Marye quene of England solemnised in the cite of Winchester* (copy at Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery).

25 *La entrada solennissima fatta in Londra, citta principale dil regno d'Inghilterra, da lo serenissimo re Philippo d'Austria, & de la serenissima regina Maria d'Inghilterra* (USTC 518485); and *Sekere nieuwe tijdinge hoe dat de prince van Spaengien triumphelick aengecomen is in Enghelandt, midtsgaders de bruyloft te Winchestre ghehouden* (USTC 408865).

26 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 96-7; Bulgarelli 1967: 59.

27 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 364, 109; Bulgarelli 1967: 60, 64, 66, 71.

28 Álvaro Gómez de Castro, *Recebimiento que la imperial Ciudad de Toledo hizo a la Magestad de la Reyna nuestra señora doña Ysabel, hija del Rey Henrrico II de Francia*, 54 fols (Toledo, n.d.). See also *Relacion verdadera de algunas cosas que han acontecido en las bodas de nuestro muy alto y muy poderoso señor don Felipe rey de España* (Seville, 1560) (IB16 15660).

29 *Copia d'una lettera venuta novamente di Spagna, quale narra tutte le pompe fatte in Spagna per causa dil regale matrimonio della m. del re Filippo, e della regina* (USTC 804061); *La regale et trionfante entrata in Spagna nella nobil città di Toledo della ser.ma regina Isabella* (USTC 818474). Philip III's marriage to Margarita of Austria in 1599 is dealt with below, as her journey to Spain was covered in numerous relations published in several countries.

30 See, for Madrid, Agulló y Cobo 1966: 514, 522, 528, 531; for Paris, Agulló y Cobo 1966: 515-6, 520, 523; for Naples and Messina, Agulló y Cobo 1966: 519, 534.

31 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 584-5, 592, 595, 601-2, 604, 608-11, 633.

have read or heard the news before.<sup>32</sup> Another account, also published that year in Barcelona, written by Juan López Maldonado, claims to share with the public the fatherly advice offered to his daughter by Philip III, as well as their discrete and fond conversation, in which the new queen of France bade Philip farewell, suitably wittily and prudently, before leaving for St Jean de Luz.<sup>33</sup> The ceremonies held in Burgos were also reported in *avvisi* published in Milan, Bologna and Viterbo,<sup>34</sup> and a 268-page book on the marriages and the wedding ceremonies by Pedro Mantuano came out in 1615 in Madrid, a work that was slated by Andrés de Almansa y Mendoza (who was to write over a dozen *relaciones* on Spanish court celebrations in the 1620s) for not paying enough attention to the splendid clothes worn for the occasion by the Spanish nobility.<sup>35</sup>

In 1613, festivities had been staged in England in honour of the marriage of the Count Palatine and King James's daughter Elizabeth. Amongst the news pamphlets published that year in London in honour of the marriage were at least three, whose elegantly wordy titles described the entertainments put on for the royal couple, as well as a mock sea battle and firework displays and the brilliant reception offered to them on landing on the Continent, the first of them written by the poet and composer Thomas Campion.<sup>36</sup>

One of the most spectacular news stories in early seventeenth-century Europe, right at the end of the period we are concerned with – the Spanish match, or the royal marriage that never was – was provoked by the Prince of Wales's surprise arrival in Madrid in March 1623, after travelling through France incognito, in his bid to marry Philip IV's sister Maria. Charles stayed in the Spanish capital for six months,

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32 'Esta es la mas verdadera Relacion de las que va[n] Impresas que se ha escrito de vista.' The title begins: *Los desposorios y casamientos del Principe de las Españas, nuestro Señor Don Felipe, Quarto deste nombre, con la serenissima Madama Ysabel de Bourbon* (BDRS 4417).

33 Juan López Maldonado, *Relacion verdadera y digna de eterna memoria del razonamiento que hizo la Magestad del Rey don Phelipe nuestro Señor a la Serenissima Reyna de Francia su hija, de las discretas, y amorosas razones que entre los dos passaro[n]* (Barcelona, 1615).

34 See Bulgarelli 1988: 70-1, 75.

35 See Henry Ettinghausen, 'Fashion Reporting in Early Seventeenth-Century Spain: Andrés de Almansa y Mendoza and Prince Charles's Spanish Trip,' in *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe*, ed. José Luis Colomer and Amalia Descalzo, Madrid, CEEH, 2014, I, 419-45: 421-2.

36 See *A relation of the late royall entertainment giuen by the Right Honorable the Lord Knowvles, at Cawsome-House neere Redding: to our most gracious queene, Queene Anne, in her progresse toward the Bathe, vpon the seuen and eight and twentie dayes of Aprill. 1613 VVhereunto is annexed the description, speeches, and songs of the Lords maske, presented in the Banqueting-house on the mariage night of the high and mightie, Count Palatine, and the royally descended the Ladie Elizabeth. Written by Thomas Campion* (copy at British Library, C.33.e.7.(8)). The other two pamphlets are: John Taylor, *Heauens blessing, and earths ioy*, and *The magnificent, princely, and most royall entertainments giuen to the high and mightie Prince, and Princesse*, both of them listed in the British Library catalogue.

obliging Philip and his chief minister, the Count-Duke of Olivares, to lay on a non-stop series of entertainments to honour their English visitors and to dazzle the world with a demonstration of Spain's enterprise, power and *savoir faire*. Ironically, the month before the surprise visit took place, Philip had imposed on his court a regime of strict austerity, a crisis measure that he was immediately obliged to revoke in order to allow the court to dress and ride in style in the prince's honour.

The princely visit to Madrid inspired over two dozen news pamphlets printed in Spain, at least five in England, three in France, two in Italy<sup>37</sup> and the Netherlands, and one in Ireland, as well as a German print of Charles's official entry into the Spanish capital.<sup>38</sup> The newsletters published in England in 1623 included accounts of Charles's arrival in Madrid, of the entertainments put on for him and his retinue, of his departure from Santander in September and of his landing at Portsmouth, most of them faithfully translated from suitably eulogistic *relaciones* published in Spain. One of them – which describes a *máscara*, or mounted parade, held on Easter Sunday and a bullfight put on at the end of May – simply combines translations of two of the *relaciones* on Charles's visit written by Andrés de Almansa y Mendoza.<sup>39</sup> Another was a translation of the account of the *juego de cañas* (explained by the translator as 'a turnament of darting with reedes after the manner of Spaine'), held in August.<sup>40</sup> And the last was, for the most part, again a translation of a *relación* by Andrés de Almansa, enlarged by an account of the prince's voyage from Santander to Portsmouth.<sup>41</sup> In addition to being covered in the last two newsletters, the first stage of Charles's return journey – from Madrid to Santander – was also reported as an item in a coranto (numbered 49) produced on 24 September 1623 by the syndicate of London news publishers under the title *More newes for this present weeke*, on the first page of which it figured as the fifth out of a total of seven news items.<sup>42</sup> The

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37 In Italy a *Vera relatione* of Charles and Buckingham's journey to Spain was published in Naples and Milan, as was a *Verissima Relatione* on Charles's official entry into Madrid, and of James I's letter to Philip IV (Bulgarelli 1988: 146, 142).

38 See Henry Ettinghausen, *Prince Charles and the King of Spain's Sister – What the Papers Said*, University of Southampton, 1985. One item not mentioned there is: *A Relation of the Departure of the [...] Prince of Wales, from Madrid, the ninth of September [...] 1623* (London?, 1623).

39 *Two royall Entertainments, lately given to the most illustrious Prince Charles, Prince of Great Brittain, by the High and Mighty Philip the fourth King of Spaine, &c. At the Feasts of Easter and Pentecost* (copy at British Library, SFX Isidyv345b0c1e).

40 *A relation of the royall festiuities: and juego de cañas [...] made by the King of Spaine at Madrid, the 21 of August this present yeere, 1623.*

41 *The ioyfull returne, of the most illustrious prince, Charles, Prince of great Brittain, from the court of Spaine: Together, with a relation of his magnificent entertainment in Madrid, and on his way to St. Anderas [i.e. Santander], by the King of Spaine* (copy at British Library, C.33.g.13).

42 Reproduced in Raymond 2003: 133.

anonymous contemporaneous French painting *Le Colporteur* ('The Peddler') shows a book- and pamphlet-peddler with copies of reports in French on the Spanish match tucked into his hatband, though it is hard to tell whether they are meant to represent printed or handwritten pamphlets (Fig. 2.2).

In England the possibility that Charles might marry the infanta was the subject of heated controversy, and the successive accounts of his splendid reception at the Spanish court that crossed the Channel ran alongside unofficial news and rumour concerning the difficulties that stood in the way of the match, given that the pope and the Spanish Crown insisted that Charles would have to convert to Catholicism. Thus, as well as panegyrics in prose and in verse that looked eagerly on the prospect of the marriage, there were also far more negative reactions, including those put out by the Hispanophobic author of the pamphlet *Considerations upon the treaty of Marriage between England and Spain*, who roared: 'They erre who thinke there is any thinge to be had from a Papist for love rather than for feare, or that Spaine will ever dessist from aspiring to the universal Monarchy of Christondome.' Charles's



Fig. 2.2. Anon., 'Le Colporteur,' c. 1623, with reports in French on Prince Charles's trip to Spain tucked into the chapman's hatband (Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires, Paris).

return, with the match apparently still in the balance, was met by Ben Jonson's court masque, *Neptune's Triumph for the Returne of Albion*, and by Thomas Middleton's hugely successful *A Game at Chess*, which exploited anti-Spanish sentiment, as well as by a ballad broadside by William Hickham, entitled *Prince Charles his welcome to the court, or a true subjects love for his happy returne from Spaine*, one of many verse pamphlets on the match printed in London in 1623.<sup>43</sup> In the Protestant Netherlands, at war again with Spain after the expiry of their twelve-year truce, a summary of Buckingham's speech in Parliament on the final breakdown of the negotiations over the marriage, and a pamphlet apparently written before Charles went to Spain, were published in 1624.<sup>44</sup>

News of Spain in England during the negotiations over the match was, for the most part, almost uniquely restrained, one example being the printing in London of a seemingly diplomatic newsletter, translated from Spanish, that reported on a storm in 1623 that had damaged the Spanish treasure fleet.<sup>45</sup> However, exactly three weeks after Charles landed at Portsmouth, and whilst the outcome of his trip still hung in the balance, an event occurred at Blackfriars that was reported in a newsletter published in London which was doubtless read by many as a bad omen for the match:

*The fatall vesper, or A true and punctuall relation of that lamentable and fearefull accident, hapning on Sunday in the afternoone being the 26. of October last, by the fall of a roome in the Black-Friers, in which were assembled many people at a sermon, which was to be preached by Father Drurie a lesuite: Together with the names and number of such persons as therin vnhappily perished, or were miraculously preserued.*<sup>46</sup>

Ironically, and because Spain had adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1582, a Spanish *relación* on that same fatal accident, which went into at least two editions, gave the date of the incident that resulted in the death and injury of more than ninety Catholics as 5 November.<sup>47</sup> Less than two years later, in 1625, the news was of Charles's marriage to the sister not of Philip IV, but of Louis XIII: *A relation of the glorious triumphs and order of the ceremonies, obserued in the marriage of the high*

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43 Copy at Bodleian Library, Firth c.23(21).

44 See Ettinghausen 1985: 13-14.

45 *A true relation of that vvchich lately hapned to the great Spanish fleet, and galeons of Terra Firma in America: With many strange deliueries of captaines, and souldiers in the tempest, and other remarkable accidents, worthy the obseruation.* A facsimile edition was published in Boston by the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1923.

46 Copy at British Library, G.19571(3).

47 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 90-1. Raymond (2003: 111) notes that the accident also prompted the circulation of ballads and poetic exercises among students.



*and mighty Charles, King of Great Brittain, and the Ladie Henretta Maria, sister to the most Christian King of France.*<sup>48</sup>

## Coronations and Royal Entries

Marriages, coronations and journeys undertaken by royalty, not least their ceremonial reception at the major cities that they passed through, involved careful and expensive preparations by the civic and ecclesiastical authorities, marking as they did events that would go down in the cities' and, indeed, the kingdoms' annals. They also kept the presses busy with posters, popular ballads, learned verses, sermons, plays turned out especially for such occasions, and with news pamphlets on the civil and religious ceremonies performed, both in order to flatter the citizens' pride in their civic achievement and to spread the fame of their right royal welcomes far and wide.

The accession of new sovereigns and their ceremonial reception by the people provided, by definition, news of national and international interest. As Roy Strong observed, by the end of the fifteenth century royal entries into the monarchs' chief cities set before their subjects,

in microcosm, the whole of society as they knew it: the king beneath a canopy attended by his principal officers of state, the nobility, gentry and knights at arms, the clergy in the form of bishops, priests and religious orders, the third estate made up of officials and representatives of the guilds and confraternities.<sup>49</sup>

In the course of the fifteenth century, processions through the streets were embellished and enhanced with tableaux and, in the sixteenth century, with ephemeral structures in the shape of classically-inspired triumphal arches and fountains decorated with allegorical figures, epigrams, motes and emblems.<sup>50</sup>

As for the typical structure of the relations of official visits, Bonner Mitchell assesses it as: a summary of the circumstances leading up to the visit, the preparations for the event, descriptions of the processions that went out to meet the honoured guests at the city gates and accompanied them through the streets to the cathedral or to the palace where they would be accommodated, generally including descriptions of the costumes worn, and an account of the subsequent ceremonies and entertainments put on for the visit.<sup>51</sup> Typically, the reports stressed the ecstatic acclamation of the

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<sup>48</sup> Copy at British Library, 605.b.17.

<sup>49</sup> Strong 1986: 7.

<sup>50</sup> See Canova-Green, Andrews and Wagner 2013.

<sup>51</sup> See Mitchell 1990: 7-8.

visitors by the assembled crowds, as well as the visitors' appreciation of their welcome and of the ingenuity and lavishness of the decorations and the entertainments devised for the occasion.<sup>52</sup>

One of the earliest surviving Spanish *relaciones*, produced by Jacobo Cromberger in Seville, treats of the reception accorded to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella in that city in 1477 and includes descriptions of the messages of welcome displayed and the arches and other *invenciones* constructed for the occasion.<sup>53</sup> Twenty years later a *relación* by Hernando Vázquez de Tapia recorded the fiestas held on the arrival in Santander of Margaret of Austria, the daughter of Maximilian I, and her journey thence to Burgos to marry John, Prince of Asturias.<sup>54</sup>

In 1484 Charles VIII's entry into Rheims and his coronation there inspired several *occasionnels* printed in Paris, as did his triumphal entry into the capital.<sup>55</sup> The following year, his entry into Rouen 'opened with a tableau on the *speculum principis* tradition entitled "Repos Pacifique," in which the king sat enthroned with Justice and Strength behind him, Prudence and Temperance at his side and Peace at his feet,<sup>56</sup> and a *Prologue de l'entrée de Charles VIII à Rouen* was printed in that city.<sup>57</sup> In 1486 a report on the election of the Emperor Maximilian as King of the Romans appeared in Latin in Mainz, and in Dutch in Antwerp (Fig. 2.3).<sup>58</sup> In 1492 an *occasionnel* on the coronation of Charles VIII's spouse, Anne of Brittany, and her ceremonial entry into Paris was published in that city.<sup>59</sup> The coronation of Louis XII in Rheims six years later provides one of the earliest *occasionnels* catalogued by Seguin, a pamphlet that went into five different extant editions.<sup>60</sup> His official entry into Paris and the tournaments held to celebrate the event in July of the same year inspired another four *occasionnels*, and his entry into Milan in 1499 was commemorated with a report in Latin.<sup>61</sup> François I's coronation and entry into Paris in 1515 were likewise recorded

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52 See Mitchell 1990: 9; for Spain, see Giuseppina Ledda, 'Representación de representaciones: la dimensión visual de fastos y aparatos festivos en las relaciones de sucesos,' in Sagrario López Poza, ed., *Las noticias en los siglos de la imprenta manual*, A Coruña, SIELAE/Sociedad de Cultura Valle Inclán, 2006: 107-17.

53 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 1.

54 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 8.

55 See Seguin 1961: 7-8.

56 Strong 1986: 9.

57 See USTC 70994.

58 See USTC 746995, 435824.

59 See USTC 70828.

60 See Seguin 1961: 56-7.

61 See Seguin 1961: 58-9; USTC 993448.

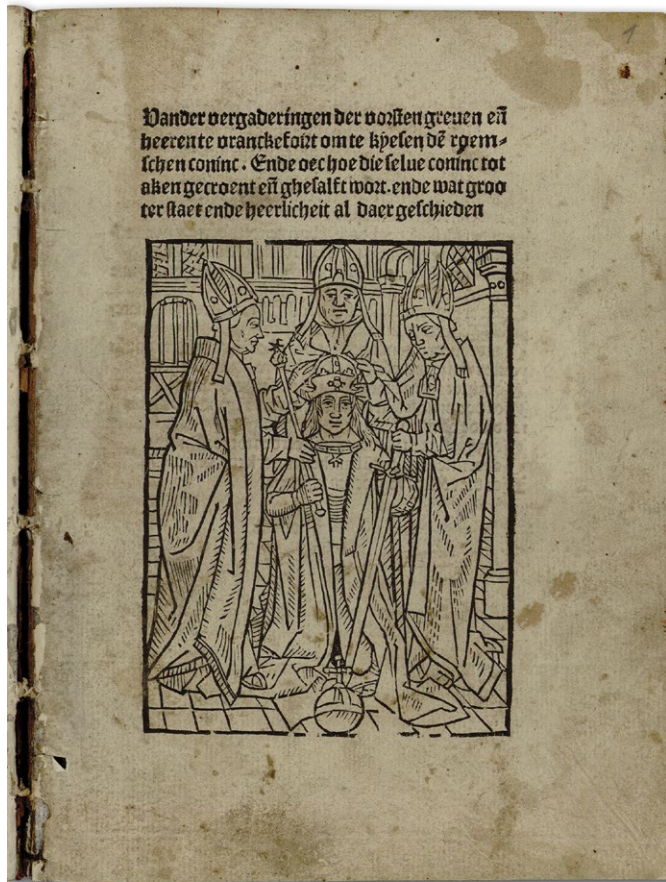


Fig. 2.3. First page of a relation printed in Dutch at Antwerp in 1486, whose title can be translated as: *About the assemblies of princes, counts and lords in Frankfurt to elect the King of the Romans. And how the king was crowned and anointed at Aachen and what great state and magnificence took place there.* This is a fine example of an impressive official souvenir report, dominated by the elegant woodcut showing the emperor (Niedersächsische Staats- and Universitätsbibliothek, Göttingen).

in *occasionnels*, as were those of Henri II in 1549.<sup>62</sup> Charles IX's coronation in Rheims was also marked by the publication of numerous pamphlets, such as one printed at Paris in 1561: *L'entree, sacre et couronnement du roy Charles neufiesme faicte en la ville de Reims*.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> See Seguin 1961: 76-7, 119-20. For Henri II's entries, see H  l  ne Visentin, 'The Material Form and the Function of Printed Accounts of Henri II's Triumphal Entries (1547-51),' in Canova-Green, Andrews and Wagner, eds., 2013, 1-30.

<sup>63</sup> See USTC 31085.

The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V became an inveterate traveller, visiting Flanders, Spain, Italy, Germany, England and France, and being received with unheard-of pomp. As Roy Strong stresses, Charles indulged in fêtes that set the pattern for his contemporaries and successors of ‘great compilations of imperial mythology on a scale unknown since the Roman Empire: globes of the world, images of the cosmos, gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, subject continents, rivers and peoples, all held together by Latin tags from authors celebrating Augustan grandeur.’<sup>64</sup> At Charles’s entry into Bruges in 1515, ‘a vast series of street pageants appealed to the young prince to restore the prosperity of the city as it sank in the face of the rivalry of Antwerp.’<sup>65</sup> His coronation as emperor at Aachen cathedral in 1519 was celebrated in a Dutch pamphlet printed in Antwerp the following year, as well as in a German *Flugschrift* printed in Landshut.<sup>66</sup> His entry into Aachen is reported in a German pamphlet printed in Leipzig in 1520 that described him as an almighty prince who outshone all others.<sup>67</sup> And his coronation, reported in a similar vein, was published in Leipzig the same year, his entry and coronation being covered together in a pamphlet printed in Augsburg.<sup>68</sup> Charles’s visit to England, three years after being elected Holy Roman Emperor, was recorded in a newsletter printed in London by Richard Pynson in 1522: *Of the tryumphe and the uses that Charles themperour, et the most myghty redouted kyng of England, Henry the VIII were saluted with.*<sup>69</sup> His triumphal entry into Seville with his bride, Isabella of Portugal, in 1526 was to be reported in two *avvisi*, and his ceremonial entry into Bologna in 1529 was covered in another, as well as in a *relación* published in Valencia and in a German pamphlet printed in Augsburg.<sup>70</sup>

Charles’s victorious return in 1535 after recovering Tunis from Barbarossa was marked by grand entries in Messina and Naples which evoked international coverage – *Flugschriften*, more *avvisi* and *relaciones* – as did his splendid official receptions in Rome, Siena and Florence in 1536.<sup>71</sup> A *Neue Zeitung* on his return journey from Tunis

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64 Strong 1986: 76.

65 Strong 1986: 10.

66 See USTC 437087, 636905.

67 See USTC 656942.

68 See USTC 670273, 689655.

69 See USTC 501698; José Solís de los Santos, ‘Relaciones de Sucesos de Inglaterra en el Reinado de Carlos V,’ in *Testigo del Tiempo, Memoria del Universo. Cultura Escrita y Sociedad en el Mundo Ibérico (Siglos XV-XVIII)*, ed. Carlos Alberto González, Manuel F. Fernández and Natalia Maillard, Barcelona, Ediciones Rubeo, I, 2009, 640-98.

70 See Bulgarelli 1967: 5-6, 9; IB16 2667; USTC 689609; José Solís de los Santos, ‘Peripecia germana de la relación hispalense sobre la boda de Carlos V,’ in *Geh Hin und Lerne. Homenaje al Profesor Klaus Wagner*, ed. Piedad Bolaños Donoso, Aurora Dominguez Guzman and Mercedes de los Reyes Peña, Universidad de Sevilla, 2007, 443-58.

71 See Weller 1872: 91; Bulgarelli 1967: 26-8; IB16 2673; Bulgarelli 1967: 33, 35-6.

and his joyous entry into Naples was described on the title page as ‘auss Welsch zu Latein, vn jetz zu teütsch gebracht’ (i.e. translated from French into Latin, and now into German),<sup>72</sup> and it is perfectly possible that the original report had been penned in either Italian or Spanish. Charles’s ceremonial entry into Paris in 1540 was celebrated in Italian, as well as in pamphlets in Spanish published in France and in Spain, as was his arrival in Milan in 1541 and in Majorca the same year.<sup>73</sup> As Roy Strong puts it, referring to these imperial public events, ‘Nothing on such a scale [...] had ever been seen before, and its impact at the time is measured by the printed pamphlets, relatively early instances of this new genre, dedicated to describing in detail the contents of each entry.’<sup>74</sup>

One of the royal journeys on which most printed news is extant occurred at the end of the century. The six months’ long ceremonial itinerary through Italy of Margaret of Austria on her way to marry Philip III of Spain in Valencia in April 1599, beginning in Graz at the end of the previous September, is recorded in numerous relations that mark her magnificent stop-offs. A large number of *avvisi* on the journey appeared in Rome and Ferrara.<sup>75</sup> Accounts of her entries into Mantua, Cremona, Lodi, Milan and Bologna were published in Rome.<sup>76</sup> Two more on her entry into Mantua were printed there and in Ferrara.<sup>77</sup> Her journey through Verona was recorded in an *avviso* published there, and her travels from Ferrara to Milan were covered in one printed in Cremona.<sup>78</sup> The preparations made in Milan, then under Spanish rule, to receive her were recorded in *avvisi* published both there and in Cremona.<sup>79</sup> *Avvisi* covered her departure for Spain from Genoa and her arrival in Valencia at the end of March, and the end of her journey was recounted in a lengthy *relatione* by Giovanni Battista Confalonieri that was published in Rome.<sup>80</sup>

Margaret’s travels were also closely followed in Spain. Accounts of her reception in Milan and in Ferrara came out in Spanish in Rome, as well as in Seville, Valladolid,

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72 See Weller 1872: 104.

73 See Bulgarelli 1967: 44; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 66, 68-9, 72; IB16 14045. Bonner Mitchell notes that the earliest *livret* (i.e. news pamphlet) of which he is aware that illustrates triumphal arches is that published in Milan in 1541 on Charles’s entry there (Mitchell 1990: 5).

74 Strong 1986: 84.

75 See Bulgarelli 1967: 316-9. Bonner Mitchell (1990) provides an account of the festivities in Ferrara, together with facsimiles of some of the relevant news pamphlets.

76 See Bulgarelli 1967: 320-2, 341.

77 *Relatione dei riceuimenti fatti in Mantova alla maestà della reina di Spagna dal serenissimo sig. duca, l'anno MDXCVIII Del mese di noviembre* (USTC 847627-8).

78 See Bulgarelli 1967: 337; USTC 864330.

79 See USTC 841645-6.

80 See Bulgarelli 1967: 344; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 312.

Valencia and Alcalá de Henares.<sup>81</sup> Her grand entry into Valencia, where Philip III was waiting to receive her, was recorded in a *relación* by Diego de la Torre, and their reception at Valencia, and then at Denia, was the subject of *relaciones* printed in Barcelona and Seville.<sup>82</sup>

The new Spanish queen's triumphal progress was news not just in Italy and Spain, but elsewhere, too. Dutch relations on her entry into Ferrara were published in Delft and in Amsterdam, as well as in Antwerp.<sup>83</sup> *Occasionnels* also enabled readers of French to follow her progress. One, published in Brussels in 1599, summarised her travels through Italy.<sup>84</sup> Another, also printed in Brussels, took the story on to her arrival in Spain and her reception in Valencia.<sup>85</sup> Nor did her travels go unnoticed in England. In 1599 John Wolfe printed *The happy entraunce of the high borne Queene of Spaine, the Lady Margarit of Austria in the renowned Citty of Ferrara*, noting that his newsletter had been 'First translated out of Italian after the Coppy printed at Ferrara.'<sup>86</sup> Probably the same year, Wolfe published a full account of Margaret's travels through Italy, translated from one of the *occasionnels* that had been printed in Brussels (Fig. 2.4).<sup>87</sup>

The wedding itself, celebrated in Valencia, for which Lope de Vega was to compile the official book-length record, was reported in several *relaciones* published there, and in Barcelona, Seville and Granada,<sup>88</sup> as well as in an *occasionnel* printed at Lyon which covered not only Margaret and Philip's marriage, but also that of Philip's sister, Isabella Clara Eugenia, to Archduke Albert of Austria,<sup>89</sup> whilst the Augsburg printer

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81 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 297, 301, 307, 317, 328-330, 332, 342; IB16 15697.

82 See IB16 18545, 15673-4.

83 See USTC 429907, 424022; 413493.

84 See USTC 4220.

85 *Brief discours ou relation touchant l'arrivement en Espagne de la serenissime royne Marguerite d'Austrice* (USTC 4227).

86 See Collins 1943: 38.

87 See *A briefe discourse of the voyage and entrance of the Queene of Spaine into Italy: With the Triumphes and pomps shewed as well in the Cittyes of Ostia, Ferrara, Mantua, Cremona, Milane, as in other boroughes and townes of Italy. Also the report of the voyage of the Archduke Albert into Almaine* (USTC 513996). On the documentation of the journey, see Maria Ines Aliverti, 'Travelling with a Queen: The Journey of Margaret of Austria (1598-99) between Evidence and Reconstruction,' in Canova-Green, Andrews and Wagner, eds., 2013: 71-92.

88 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 311-2, 314, 323-5, 334-5, 338-9. For Lope de Vega's book, see Henry Ettinghausen, '¿Lope reportero?: su *Relación de las fiestas de San Isidro*,' *Anuario Lope de Vega*, 6, 2000: 93-105. *Relaciones* in verse on and connected with the marriage were published in Alcalá de Henares and Valencia in 1599 (see Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 198-204).

89 *Discours de ce qui c'est passé en la celebration du mariage d'entre le roy d'Espagne et Marguerite d'Austriche et de la serenissime Isabel d'Espagne avec l'archiduc Albert* (USTC 11479).

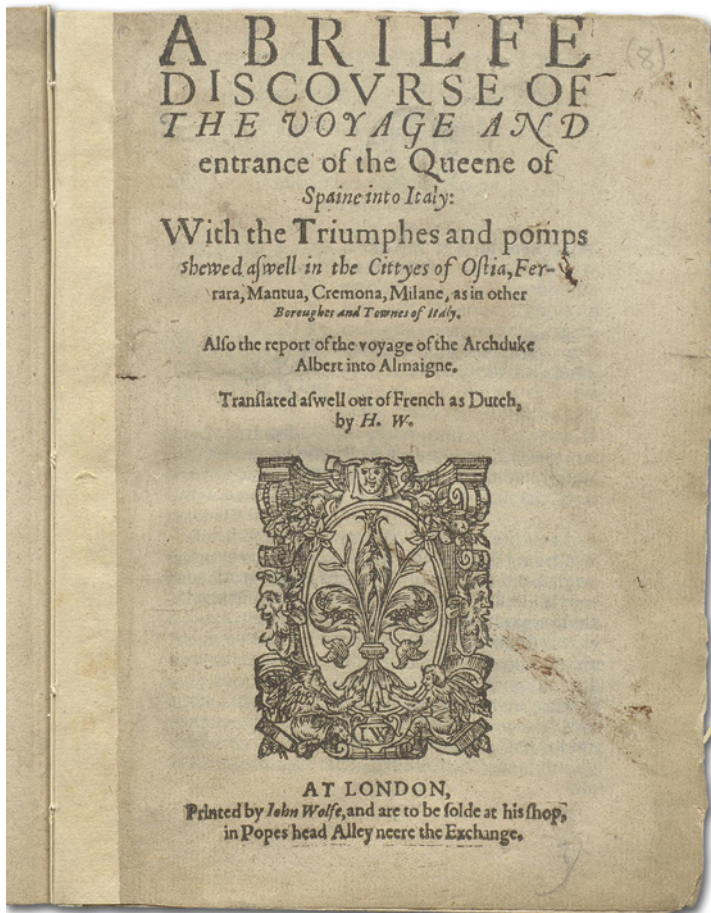


Fig. 2.4. First page of a 16-page newsletter, translated from French and Dutch, on Margaret of Austria's journey through Italy to Valencia, printed in London by John Wolfe in 1599, the title laid out using a large variety of fonts, and the printer's mark as the only visual ornament (© The British Library Board, C.114.d.5.(8)).

Samuel Dilbaum published an account of Isabella's journey from Spain to Brussels.<sup>90</sup> However, the official grand account of Queen Margaret's progress through Italy was not published until three years later, by which time it had taken on the dimensions of a chronicle.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> *Relation oder Erzehlung welcher gestalt Ihre Hoch Fürs Dur Ertzhertzog Albertus sampt dero Gemahel der Infanta di Spania, den fünffter Monats tag Septembris, im Jar nach Christi Geburt 1599 auss Hispania komende zu Brüssel in Braband Jhren Einrit gehalten.*

<sup>91</sup> Giovanni Battista Grillo, *Breve trattato di quanto successe alla Maestà della Regina D. Margherita, N.S., dall citta di Trento, fine d'Alemagna e principio d'Italia, sino alla città di Genova* (Naples, 1604).

In Spain, Philip's journey to his wedding in Valencia was, likewise, marked by his grand receptions en route, as was his and Margaret's subsequent journey to Madrid, their arrival in the capital being delayed by plague in Aragon until October – over a year after Margaret's departure from Austria.<sup>92</sup> Once installed in Castile, amongst their early engagements was their official visit to the English College in Valladolid, on which Antonio Ortiz composed a 120-page book-length *relación*, published in Madrid in 1600, which included an account of the ceremonial installation of an image of the Virgin that had been damaged by heretics.<sup>93</sup> Ortiz's book was translated into English by Francis Rivers and published in 1601 under the title *A Relation of the solemnetie wherewith the Catholike Princes K. Phillip the III. and Quene Margaret were receyued in the English Colledge of Valladolid the 22. of August. 1600*. Dedicated to the Lord Chamberlain, the translation ran to 128 pages and gave as its place of publication: 'Printed at N.' (i.e. Antwerp). Evidently intended for surreptitious importation to England, this is a fine example of a news report that is explicitly propagandistic, with the translator explaining in his dedication how the work puts forward 'the trewe causes, why the Spaniards fauor so much our Inglish Catholique fugetiues, and what hartes they cary to their country, even these which for Religion, leaue it, to lyue in Seminaries abrode.'

Nearly two decades later, Philip III's journey to Lisbon in 1619 to present his heir to his Portuguese subjects is reported in numerous *relaciones* published in Seville, Barcelona, Lisbon and Braga, several of which compete in their descriptions of the monumental structures put up in their honour by the Flemings, the Germans and the English.<sup>94</sup> A *relación* by Pedro de Herrera emphasises the grandeur of the king's and the prince's landing at Lisbon, of their ceremonial entry into the city, of the notable *invenciones* put on for the occasion, including some staged at sea, of the more than thirty triumphal arches erected in their honour, of the uniforms and liveries worn, and of the masques and the firework displays created for the visit.<sup>95</sup> Another *relación*, by the Portuguese Vasco Mausinho de Quevedo, highlights the triumph achieved by the king, thanks to his visit.<sup>96</sup> Finally, one claiming to be a new, true and very different *relación* of the events, and which does not just cover the visit to Lisbon, but includes

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92 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 311, 313, 320, 322, 325, 337, 366. For the royal marriage, and the leading role adopted in the proceedings by the king's favourite, the Duke of Lerma, see Patrick Williams, *The Great Favourite. The Duke of Lerma and the Court and Government of Philip III of Spain, 1598-1621*, Manchester University Press, 2006: 58-63.

93 Reproduced in: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k853661z/f1.image>

94 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 730-6, 739-40, 742, 747-8, 750, 752, 761, 771, 773, 776-7.

95 See *Relacion de la desembarcacion y grandiosa entrada con que se ha recibido a la Magestad Catalica del Rey Don Felipe nuestro señor, y a sus Altezas en la insigne ciudad de Lisboa: con invenciones que se han hecho notables en el mar, aparatos de arcos triunfales en la ciudad, que passaron de mas de treynta: varias libreas, encamisadas, y invenciones de fuegos* (Valencia, 1619).

96 See *Triumpho del monarca Philippo tercero en la felicissima entrada de Lisboa* (Lisbon, 1619).



the beginning of the return journey to Spain, was published in Barcelona.<sup>97</sup> Here, again, we have an instance of a publisher implying that he expects his readers already to have read, or at least heard, of the events he recounts, offering them the latest news. The prayers offered up in Seville for Philip's health after he fell ill on the return journey are reported in a *relación* published in that city.<sup>98</sup>

Moving on to England, we find equivalent examples of the coverage of royal occasions. Elizabeth I's arrival in London for her coronation in 1559 had been described in a newsletter printed by Richard Tottell: *The passage of the queen. The queenes maiesties passage through the citie of London to Westminster the daye before her coronacion*.<sup>99</sup> Thereafter, newsletters testified to her concern to visit her subjects. A royal progress performed by her nearly twenty years later is recorded in two newsletters printed in 1578.<sup>100</sup> A queenly journey thirteen years later is reported in another newsletter,<sup>101</sup> and a minor journey undertaken in 1592 that involved stops at several country houses inspired a pamphlet that brought together material composed for the occasion: *Speeches deliuered to her Maiestie this last Progresse, at the Right Honourable the Lady Russels, at Bissam, the Right Honourable the Lorde Chandos at Sudley, at the Right Honourable the Lord Norris, at Ricote*.<sup>102</sup>

A Spanish *relación* published in Seville in 1603 reported James VI's proclamation in London as Elizabeth's heir.<sup>103</sup> His journey from Edinburgh to London for the coronation produced several English newsletters that put the emphasis on the entertainments laid on to honour him.<sup>104</sup> His entertainment at Theobalds House and his arrival

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97 See *Relacion nveva, verdadera, y muy diferente de las que hasta agora se han impresso, donde se trata por estenso de los solenes recebimientos, fiestas, y autos, que a Su Catolica Magestad del Rey don Felipe nuestro Señor, y Principes han hecho en la entrada del reyno de Portugal las ciudades de Eluas, Estremos, y Euora* (IB17 235472).

98 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 759.

99 See USTC 515520.

100 See *The joyfull receyving of the Queenes most excellent Majestie into hir Highnesse citie of Norwich the things done in the time of hir abode there: and the dolor of the citie at hir departure* (USTC 508519); *A discourse of the Queenes Majesties entertainment in Suffolk and Norffolk with a description of many things then presently seene* (USTC 508527).

101 See *The honorable entertainment given to the Queenes Majestie in progresse, at Cowdrey in Sussex, by the right Honorable the Lord Muntecute. 1591* (USTC 517232).

102 See Collins 1943: 26.

103 *La declaracion que hizo el Consejo de Estado dela Reyna Isabela de Inglaterra difunta. En favor de Iacobo quinto Rey de Escocia, por heredero y sucessor de aquella corona* (Agulló y Cobo 1966: 397).

104 They include one registered by William White at the Stationers' Company entitled: *The Kinges entertaynmente by the Maior of Yorke*, as well as *The True Narration of the Entertainment of his Royal Maiestie, from [...] his departure from Edenbrough; till his receiuing at London*, and also *King Iames his Welcome to London*, and *A triumphant song of the Kinges coronation* (see Collins 1943: 114). See also Shaaber 1966: 282-4. Ben Jonson's *The Entertainment at Althorp* was performed for James, Queen Anne and Prince Henry at the Northamptonshire estate of Sir Robert Spencer in June 1603.



Fig. 2.5. Detailed depiction of features and clothes in the superb handsomely coloured engraving in a *Flugblatt* on the embassy from Moscow that was received by the Holy Roman Emperor in Regensburg in 1576, with a commentary in verse below (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

in London occupied one of them, as did his coronation, whilst his visit to Oxford in 1605 inspired *Oxford's Triumph: In the Royall Entertainment of his moste Excellent Maieſtie, the Queene, and the Prince*.<sup>105</sup> The King of Denmark's visit to England in 1606 is reported in several enthusiastic news pamphlets which, likewise, foreground the entertainments put on in his honour,<sup>106</sup> and his departure was covered in a similarly enthusiastic newsletter.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>105</sup> See Collins 1943: 61, 65-6, 69, 72.

<sup>106</sup> See *The most royall and honourable entertainment, of the famous and renowned king, Christian the fourth, King of Denmarke, &c. who with a fleete of gallant ships, arriued on Thursday the 16. day of Iuly 1606. in Tylbery-Hope, neere Grauesend* (Collins 1943: 78-9).

<sup>107</sup> *Englands farevell to Christian the fourth, famous king of Denmarke: With a relation of such shewes & seuerall pastimes presented to his Maieſtie, as well at court the fift day of August last past, as in other places since his honorable passage thorow the cite of London* (cited in British Library catalogue).

Receptions accorded to significant ambassadors were sometimes also celebrated in news pamphlets, as in *A briefe declaration of the shews [...] performed before the Queens Maiestie, & the French Ambassadors*, printed in 1581, or in *A relation of the late entertainment of the right honorable the Lord Roos his Maiesties ambassador extraordinarie to the King of Spaine*, published in 1617.<sup>108</sup> In chapter 4, we shall see how a Japanese delegation was received, in Italy and in Spain, in the 1580s. The Muscovite embassy to the Holy Roman Emperor in 1576 was commemorated in a spectacularly illustrated *Flugblatt* which portrays the features and the attire of the seven ambassadors in convincing detail and briefly tells the story of the event in verse (Fig. 2.5). Henri IV's accession to the throne of France in 1589 was greeted in at least forty English pamphlets, although, unsurprisingly, his conversion to Catholicism went unreported,<sup>109</sup> and his coronation at Chartres in 1594 was recorded in an English newsletter translated from a French pamphlet published in Rouen.<sup>110</sup>

## Deaths

Royal deaths were occasions for grand funerals and for church services performed throughout the monarch's realms that required to be recorded in commemorative news pamphlets, as well as, often, in book-length accounts that frequently included the sermons preached. An early instance is the death in 1497 of John, Prince of Asturias, the son of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, at the age of nineteen, who is mourned in a *relación* composed in verse by the poet Juan del Encina.<sup>111</sup> As for international commemorations, the funeral rites for François I of France in 1547 occupy *avvisi* (Fig. 2.6) and a *relación*; Edward VI's premature death in 1553 is recorded in a German pamphlet, translated from Latin, and published in Leipzig in 1554; and the death of Henri II of France in a tournament accident in 1559 is reported in an *avviso*, as is the accession of his son, François II.<sup>112</sup>

Charles V's death in 1558 at the monastery of Yuste and the accompanying funeral services held throughout his realms were recorded in numerous pamphlets. An Italian report published in Bologna spoke of the funeral service held in Brussels, as did one published in Cremona in 1559, and one printed in Milan reported on the ceremonies

108 For the first item, see Shaaber 1966: 244. A copy of the second, at British Library, 1103.e.30.

109 See Pettegree 2010: 343.

110 See Collins 1943: 28.

111 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 6. A *relación* on the honours paid in Flanders to Ferdinand himself was published in 1516; and Isabella of Portugal, the wife of Charles V, was commemorated in 1539 in *relaciones* in verse (see Agulló y Cobo 1966: 21, 62-3).

112 See Bulgarelli 1967: 51-2; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 85; USTC 703989; Bulgarelli 1967: 86-7.

held in the Duomo there to mark the deaths, in September and November 1558, respectively, of Charles and of Mary I of England.<sup>113</sup> In 1559, Christopher Plantin catered for what he knew to be a multilingual public, publishing in Antwerp – in French, Italian, German and Dutch versions – a full account, written by Hieronymus Cock, of the grand and solemn services for the Emperor held in Brussels.<sup>114</sup> As Roy Strong comments: ‘Like so many aspects of the festivals of Charles V even these obsequies were destined to make a lasting impact.’<sup>115</sup>

The media exploitation of the Emperor’s death was, however, matched when his son, Philip II, died forty years later. The funeral services held in his honour were recorded in pamphlets that came off the presses in many languages: in Spanish *relaciones* published in 1598,<sup>116</sup> in a Portuguese *relação* that came out in 1599,<sup>117</sup> as well as in a French translation of the account written by the king’s confessor, Fr. Diego de Yepes, printed by Plantin and Mourentorf in Antwerp in 1599,<sup>118</sup> and in a Dutch translation of the same account, printed at Rotterdam.<sup>119</sup> Italian *relatione* on Philip’s pious death appeared in Rome and Ferrara, and a description of the superb catafalque erected in his honour by the Grand Duke of Tuscany came out in Rome, whilst in Milan there appeared, translated from Spanish, an account of his last illness.<sup>120</sup> The ceremonies held in Naples in Philip’s honour were reported in a pamphlet printed in that city, and those held at Chieti appeared in one published there which described the catafalque, the emblematic decorations and the poems and prayers composed

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113 *Le solemne esequie, fatte nella morte dello invittissimo Carlo V imperatore, con il numero della cavalleria, prencipi, & duchi, & re, quali furono a honorare il suo esequio & pompe funerali in Bruselles* (USTC 803960); *Relatione dell'essequie fatte in Brusselles alla morte dell'invitt. imp. Carlo V* (USTC 804036); *Essequie celebrate con solenne pompa nella chiesa del Domo di Milano per la cesarea maestà di Carlo quinto imperatore romano, et per la serenissima regina Maria d'Inghilterra* (USTC 803996).

114 See USTC 41636, 409114, 409137, 409325.

115 Strong 1986: 96. See also María José Bertomeu Masia, ‘Aproximación a los textos italianos del siglo XVI en torno al funeral de Carlos V,’ *e-Spania* [online], 17 February 2014. URL: <http://e-spania.revues.org/23060>; DOI: 10.4000/e-spania.23060. A news pamphlet published in Seville in 1562 reports the public prayers offered when Philip II’s mentally unstable eldest son, Don Carlos, sustained serious injuries on falling down a flight of stairs at Alcalá (see Agulló y Cobo 1966: 128). When he died in 1568, at the age of thirteen, Carlos’s death was reported in Venice in 1569 in the Italian translation of a *relación* written in Spanish by Cervantes’s schoolmaster, Juan López de Hoyos (see USTC 838599; IB16, 11531).

116 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 296, 303; Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 195-7.

117 The BDRS notes: *Relação das exeqvias d’el rey dom Philippe nosso senhor, primeiro d’este nome, que Deos tem, celebradas no mosteiro de Bellem a 22. de Dezembro 1599* (Lisboa, 1599).

118 See Paris-Sorbonne BIU Centrale, Sig. HJR 4 = 69 Salle de reserve; USTC 4225.

119 *Warachtich verhael van de doot ende sterven des koninx van Spaignien. Mitsgaders d’overeveringhe syns rijcx* (USTC 424095).

120 See Bulgarelli 1967: 305-6, 340, 331; USTC 807377.



Fig. 2.6. First page of an *avviso*, printed in Venice in 1547, on the funeral rites of François I of France. The title is elegantly laid out, entirely in roman capitals, with the opening words highlighted in larger italic, and accompanied by an engraving of a crowned eagle (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome).

especially for the occasion.<sup>121</sup> The city of Ferrara did likewise.<sup>122</sup> As for France, Philip's final illness and death are recorded in *occasionnels* printed in French at Leiden, Rouen, Lyon and Paris,<sup>123</sup> and funeral services held in Ferrara and in Brussels were

<sup>121</sup> *La pompa funerale fatta in Napoli nell'essequie del catholico re Filippo II di Austria scritta da Ottavio Caputi* (USTC 818650); *Essequie del catholico Filippo secondo re di Spagna. Celebrate nella città di Chieti, l'anno MDXCVIII sotto li 15. di dicembre. Con il disegno del catafalco, e con la descrizione delle historie, pitture, imprese, emblemi, motti, inscrittioni, poemi, & orationi che vi si fecero* (USTC 846513).

<sup>122</sup> See USTC 849031.

<sup>123</sup> See USTC 4255, 53014, 11485, 66882.

reported in an *occasionnel* printed in Brussels.<sup>124</sup> A Dutch pamphlet published in Antwerp likewise recorded the Spanish monarch's death,<sup>125</sup> whilst in England it was covered in *A briefe and true Declaration of the Sicknesse, last wordes, and Death of the King of Spaine [...] Written from Madrill, in a Spanish Letter; and translated into English according to the true Copie*.<sup>126</sup>

The death of Philip III's first wife, Margaret of Austria, at the Escorial in October 1611, and of the son who had died at birth just a few days before, is recorded in three ballads published together in a *relación* in Coimbra, and the queen's funeral is described in a lengthy *relación* written by the young court architect Juan Gómez de Mora, and in others published in Toledo and Cordova, as well as in Mexico and Manila.<sup>127</sup> For his part, the brilliant Baroque poet Luis de Góngora wrote a burlesque sonnet, not published at the time, on what he regarded as the grotesque cenotaph erected in Margaret's honour in the Andalusian town of Écija, expressing the wish 'ni alimentos gacetas en Europa' (i.e. that it should not provide fodder for gazettes in Europe) – implying an awareness on his part of the unfortunate international media impact that such poor taste in marking the death of a royal consort might have.<sup>128</sup>

Philip III's death, in 1621, sparked off the replacement of a brilliantly flamboyant, but corrupt, regime by a reforming administration headed by his son, Philip IV, and his chief minister, the Count-Duke of Olivares, that sought to restore Spain's political prestige and military dominance in the face of financial crisis and the challenge from France represented by Louis XIII and Richelieu. Uniquely, this dramatic change of government was covered in detail, up to November 1624, in the series of numbered letters attributed to Andrés de Almansa y Mendoza, the first item in the series being the remarkable account of Philip III's death and of Philip IV's accession, whilst the next few numbers in the series detail the wholesale changes made in the top echelons of the administration.<sup>129</sup> In addition, *relationi*, translated from Spanish, were printed in

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124 *Certaine relation des obseques faicts a Philippe II de ce nom, roy d'Espagnes, nostre sire, nagueres en la cité de Ferrare, y assistant nostre saint pere le pape Clement VIII et en la ville de Bruxelles au Pays Bas* (USTC 4221).

125 *Cort warachtich verhael vande siecte, leste woorden ende doot van Phillips de tweede geschreven in Spaensch ende overgeset in Duyts, door een liefhabber des selven taels* (USTC 407033).

126 See Collins 1943: 43. In addition, Shaaber (1966: 185) mentions a pamphlet entitled *The secret Last Instructions that king Philip the Second [...] Left to his son Kinge Philip the Third [...] conteining howe to governe him self after his fathers Death*.

127 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 497, 500-1, 513, 523-4.

128 The sonnet begins: 'Ícaro de bayeta, si de pino.'

129 Many *relaciones*, apart from Almansa's, were published on Philip III's death (see e.g. Agulló y Cobo 1975: 4, 6, 15, 18, 21) and on Philip IV's accession (Agulló y Cobo 1975: 22, 30).

Milan and Rome setting out the dismissal and, in some cases, the imprisonment of several of Philip III's ministers.<sup>130</sup>

The publicity given to the deaths of monarchs was by no means confined to Spain. In 1589 Gabriel Guasp published in Majorca a *relación* in verse on what its author, Juan Valladares de Valdelomar, described as the strange and sudden death near Paris of Henri III (i.e. his assassination by a Dominican friar),<sup>131</sup> and Shaaber refers to thirty-four laments, most of them written by well-known poets, either actually published or else at least entered at the Stationers' register, in 1612-13, on the death of young Henry, Prince of Wales.<sup>132</sup> Moreover, it was not only monarchs who merited relations on their deaths. In Catholic countries, popes' deaths were marked by solemn ceremonies and were duly recorded in the press, as in the case of a *Flugschrift*, published in Munich in 1591, translated from French.<sup>133</sup> The deaths of important nobles could sometimes also make the news, a case in point being the uncle of the Count Palatine, whose demise provided the copy for a relation translated from German and published in London in 1612.<sup>134</sup>

Very occasionally, royal deaths could be a cause for celebration. Such was the case of Selim II, who died in November 1574, an event recorded and illustrated in a *Flugblatt* published the following year in Strasbourg which claims that the Turkish sultan had been poisoned, together with his five sons (Fig. 2.7). In 1618, Francisco de Lira printed a *relación* in Seville on the death of the Great Turk Acomates and on the discord that had ensued over his succession.<sup>135</sup>

Finally, it is worth noting that, in many cities throughout Europe, it was possible to become king or pope for just one day in the year. Whilst nearly all festivities were organised by the ecclesiastical and civil administrations, carnival typically implied tension between popular celebration of pre-Lenten license – feasting and drinking, the wearing of masks, role reversal, social rule-breaking, etc. – and attempts by the authorities to keep control. A virtually annual event was the publication of *avvisi* in Rome giving accounts of the carnival feasts of Agone and Testazzo, held in February, the earliest examples catalogued by Tullio Bulgarelli dating from 1536.<sup>136</sup> The carnival celebrated in Bologna in 1549 is reported in *avvisi* published there, and a relation,

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130 See Bulgarelli 1988: 112-3, 141.

131 See IB16 18975.

132 See Shaaber 1966: 24-5.

133 See *Relation oder Bericht von dem Absterben Babst Vrbani diss Namens der VII* (VD16 R3161).

134 See *A true relation of the right Christianly departure, or death, of the most Noble Earle Philippus Lodouicus: Earle of Hanaw and Rieneck, Lord of Mutzenbergk, &c. Vncle to the Count Palatine.*

135 See BDRS 515.

136 See Bulgarelli 1967: 32, 42-3, 47-8, etc.



Fig. 2.7. The death of the Turkish Sultan Selim II and also, supposedly, of his five sons, illustrated in a dramatic *Flugblatt*, printed at Strasbourg in 1757, which highlights, in the background, the Cathedral of St Sophia and the gate to the seraglio (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

printed in Turin, of the carnival held at the court of the Duke of Savoy in 1621 is just one of doubtless innumerable similar accounts, most of which have disappeared without trace.<sup>137</sup> Several *relaciones* report Spanish carnival festivities, such as one published in Madrid in 1607 that describes the celebrations organised by the Jesuits in Seville.<sup>138</sup>

137 See *Li advisi delli solenni et superbi triumphi & honorate feste celebrate questo carnevale drento alla citta di Bologna* (USTC 803312); Bulgarelli 1988: 125.

138 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 440.



Throughout Europe ceremonies and festivities constituted essential elements in the development of Renaissance and Baroque society, reinforcing public pride in the order established and maintained by church and state. As Roy Strong affirms, by 1640 extremely elaborate spectacles, including 'ballets, tournaments and courtly banquets to celebrate birthdays, marriages, saints' days and carnival time' were 'part of the repertory of entertainment at every European court.'<sup>139</sup> The brilliance of public ceremony and celebration was fostered by intercity and international rivalry, and was spread far and wide by the publication of relations and books whose descriptions sought to outdo each other in their accounts of splendour and magnificence.

Whilst the Spanish match was, in the end, a non-event, it was emblematic of public celebration. The extravagant spending by the Spanish crown on six months' worth of entertainment left Spaniards with a memory of scintillating ceremonies, feasts, church services, bullfights, jousting, firework displays and theatrical performances, kept alive and exported in the news pamphlets that covered Prince Charles's stay in Madrid, published in Spain, England, France, the Netherlands and Italy. In a world in which nations' reputations depended so greatly on show, any self-respecting court had to be seen to be attempting to outdo in terms of splendour all previous ceremonies and celebrations, and to invest in carefully prepared, detailed news reports and festival books in order to stake its claims to unprecedented success.

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139 Strong 1986: 3-4.



## Discovery, Conquest and War

As we have noted, war provided the matter for the majority of surviving news pamphlets produced in early modern Europe. To the extent that discovery generally led to conquest, and that conquest usually involved war, it is convenient to survey the treatment of these topics together.

### Discovery and Conquest

The opening years of the printing revolution coincided with the early decades of the age of discovery – the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope in 1488, the crossing of the Atlantic in 1492, the opening of the sea route to India in 1498, the recognition of the Americas as a separate continent in 1513, the circumnavigation of South America in 1520. In fact, one of the first news stories to be spread by the press right across Europe was Columbus's report on his first transatlantic voyage. Printed in Spanish in Barcelona by Pere Posa in 1493 as a four-page relation in folio (Fig. 3.1), his letter was rapidly translated and republished in over a score of editions and revised versions in half a dozen countries – in Rome, Florence, Pavia, Antwerp, Paris, Basel, Leipzig, Nuremberg and Seville.<sup>1</sup> Ten years later, the letter attributed to Amerigo Vespucci describing the Portuguese reconnaissance of the coast of Brazil also travelled far and wide. First published in Paris in 1503, three years later it had gone into no less

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<sup>1</sup> In addition, the letter was published in Latin in Rome, Antwerp, Basel and Paris. See Barry Ife, 'Las cartas de Colón: transmisión y público,' *Edad de Oro*, 12, 1993, 131-40; Matthew H. Edney, 'The Columbus Letter: The Diffusion of Columbus's Letter through Europe, 1493-1497,' 2009 (<http://usm.maine.edu/maps/web-document/1/home/sub->). As of February 2014, the USTC includes only Columbus's letter in Latin in three editions published in Rome in 1493 (USTC 995639-41) and one in Paris (USTC 760268).

than thirty-one editions in France, Italy, the German-speaking countries and the Netherlands. Thanks especially to the printers, news regarding the discovery of the New World swept rapidly across the Old.

The first *Neue Zeitung* listed by Weller, published in 1505, is a German translation of Vespucci's report: *Copia der Newen Zeytung auss Presilg Landt* (i.e. Brazil).<sup>2</sup> The first word in its title – 'Copia' – is a distinctly pan-European, non-Germanic, term which was presumably taken from a French, Italian, Portuguese or Spanish original and whose meaning was evidently expected to be understood by early sixteenth-century German readers. Another account in German of the main lands and islands newly discovered by the Portuguese, but whose title makes use of no generic term, is: *Van den nygē Insulen vnd landen so ytzundt kortliken befunden sindt dorch den Koningk van Portugal*, printed by Jacob Winter in Magdeburg in 1506 (Fig. 3.2).<sup>3</sup> The reports of their subsequent voyages put out by Columbus and Vespucci, like Pizarro's and Cortés's later narratives of the conquest of Peru and Mexico, followed a similar pattern, coming off the European presses in many thousands of copies, one of very many instances being a *Flugschrift*, published in 1522, that begins with a report on the Spaniards' discovery of Yucatán.<sup>4</sup> Behind the purely informative nature of the news, powerful political interests were at stake: in particular, the conflicting transatlantic aspirations of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain and those of the Portuguese crown.<sup>5</sup>

News of the discovery of islands, towns, peoples and animals in Cuba appeared in an Italian *avviso* published in Venice in 1520, and three *relaciones* published in Seville in 1534 tell of the conquest of Peru, as do an *avviso* printed in Rome and an *occasionnel* published in Lyon.<sup>6</sup> News from the New World, and in particular from Brazil, appeared in an *avviso* printed in Rome in 1553, and a *relación* published in Seville in 1559 recorded the fortunes and travails of an expedition to the River Plate.<sup>7</sup> A letter

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2 See Weller 1872: 1. Weller lists three editions of this relation, all published in 1505.

3 It had also been printed at Strasbourg by Matthias Hupfuff in 1505 (see USTC 700108).

4 See Weller 1872: 14. Motsch (2011: 211) cites Cortés's *Carta segunda de relación* as the earliest printed travel book to use *relation* in its title. For *relaciones* on Pizarro's conquest of Peru in 1534, one published in Medina del Campo and two in Seville, see Agulló y Cobo 1966: 44, 46, 48.

5 See Renate Pieper, *Die Vermittlung einer neuen Welt. Amerika im Nachrichtennetz des Habsburgischen Imperium, 1493-1598*, Mainz, Phillip von Zabern, 2009; id., 'El Nuevo Mundo en los impresos flamencos del siglo XVI,' in *Un mundo sobre papel. Libros y grabados flamencos en el imperio hispano-portugués (siglos XVI-XVIII)*, ed. Werner Thomas and Eddy Stols, Louvain/The Hague, Acco, 2009: 305-316, esp. 308-310.

6 See *Littera mandata della insula de Cuba de India in laquale se contiene de le insule citta gente et animali novamente trovate de l'anno MDXIX per li spagnoli* (USTC 802254); Agulló y Cobo 1966: 44, 46, 48; Bulgarelli 1967: 15; Seguin 1961: 100.

7 See USTC 801027; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 118.

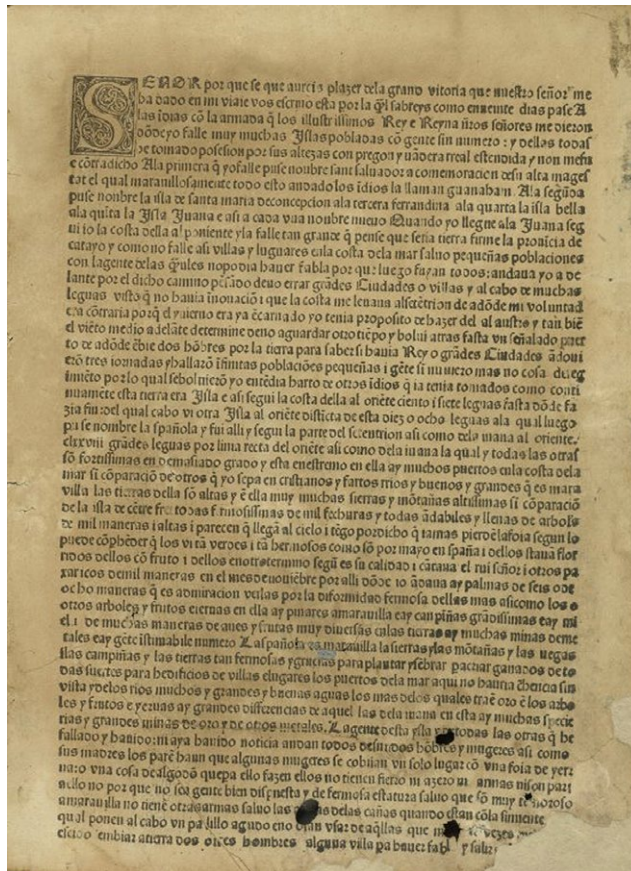


Fig. 3.1: First page of Columbus's report on his first transatlantic voyage, thought to have been addressed to the court official, Luís de Santángel, printed in Spanish in Barcelona by Pere Posa in 1493. It is unusual for a *relación* in not opening with any kind of title. The only typographical gesture towards decoration on the page is the woodcut block initial capital letter, still in the style of medieval manuscripts, and the following four capitals that complete the first word (New York Public Library).

sent from Seville recounting an expedition carried out in Mexico was published in Barcelona in 1566, whilst the discovery of New Mexico by Antonio de Espejo in 1583 was proclaimed in a *relación* published in Madrid and in Paris in 1586,<sup>8</sup> and then in London, probably in 1587, in a thirty-two-page newsletter entitled:

*New Mexico. Otherwise, The voiage of Anthony of Espejo who in the year 1583. with his company, discovered a lande of 15. prouinces, replenished with townes and*

<sup>8</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 136, 226.

*villages, with houses of 4. or 5. stories height [...] Translated out of the Spanish copie printed first at Madreal, 1586, and afterward at Paris, in the same year.*<sup>9</sup>

Just as triumphant, for their part, were Spanish accounts of their victories over the Dutch, English and French in the Atlantic and the Pacific. English incursions into the American colonies made the news in London in the last two decades of the sixteenth century, containing reports of successes in cashing in on the Atlantic trade, a typical example being *Lancaster his Allarums, honourable Assaultes, and supprising of the Block-houses and Store-houses belonging to Fernand Bucke in Brasill*, printed in London in 1595, which claimed that Captain James Lancaster had brought back with him fifteen ships full of 'Sinemon, Sugar, Pepper, Cloues, Mace, Calloco-cloth and Brassel-wood with other commodities.'<sup>10</sup> Sir Francis Drake's exploits in 1586 in Santo Domingo and in Cartagena, in present-day Colombia, as well as his successful action against the Spanish fleet in the port of Cadiz in 1587, the year before the Armada, and his raids along the Spanish and Portuguese coasts, known in England as 'Singeing the King of Spain's Beard,' had been recorded in a versified twenty-four-page newsletter published in London, probably the following year: *The true and perfecte newes of the woorthy and valiaunt exploytes, performed and doone by that valiant knight Syr Frauncis Drake not onely at Sancto Domingo, and Carthagena, but also nowe at Cales, and vppon the coast of Spayne*. His successes at Cadiz and along the Spanish coast are also told in a fourteen-page newsletter,<sup>11</sup> and Walter Bigges's account of Drake's West Indian voyage appeared in 1589 in English, as well as in German.<sup>12</sup> Two years later, Sir Walter Raleigh's *A report of the truth of the fight about the iles of Açores, this last summer. Betwixt the Reuenge, one of her Maiesties Shippes, and an armada of the King of Spaine* was printed in London.<sup>13</sup>

Spanish reaction to foreign interference made the news in Spain and in Italy. A Spanish *relación* printed in Turin, in or just after 1594, reports the capture of Richard

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9 See USTC 510786.

10 See Collins 1943: 31-2.

11 *Nevves out of the coast of Spaine The true report of the honourable seruice for England, performed by Sir Frauncis Drake in the moneths of Aprill and May last past, 1587. Vpon Cales, and also since that in the Cape S. Vincent and Cape Saker* (copy at British Library, G.6512.(1)).

12 For the English newsletter, see Shaaber 1966, 122, n. 29. The German newsletter is: *Relation Oder Be[s]chreibüß der Ehe[s] [sic] vnd Schiffahrt au[s] Engellandt in die (gegen dem vndergang der Sonne gelegnen) Jndien gethan Durch Einen Engli[s]chen Ritter Franci[s]cum Drack genant* (copy at New York Public Library).

13 See Collins 1943: 20. Another German relation on Drake was printed at Munich in 1590: *Relation was der Capitan Drackh vnnnd Colonel Noriz, welche anno 1589, an stat der Künigin in Engelland, den Don Antonio in [...] Portugal einsetzen, vnd die Spannier darauss vertrieben sollen [...] aussgericht. In hochteutsche Spraach transferirt* (Munich, 1589?).

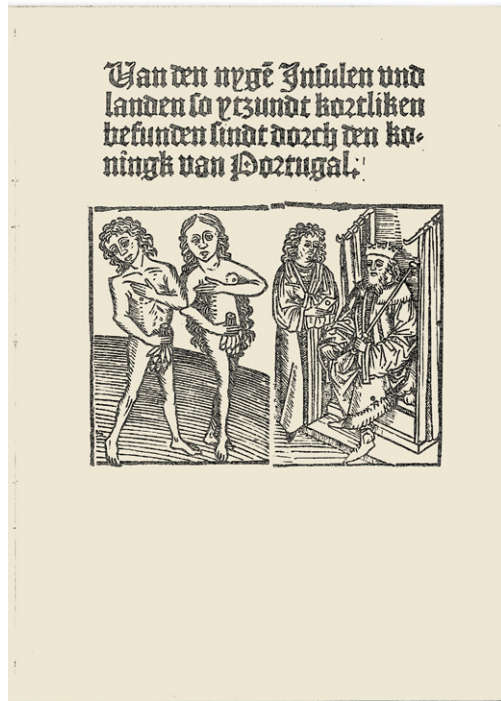


Fig. 3.2. The striking first page of a German translation of Amerigo Vespucci's report of the discovery by the Portuguese of new islands and lands in the Americas (Magdeburg, 1506). The woodcut illustration is made up from two separate blocks: on the left, one supposedly showing a native man and woman, but perhaps originally intended to depict Adam and Eve; on the right, one showing a be enthroned king, on this occasion representing the king of Portugal (Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin).

Hawkins by the Spaniards in what today is Ecuador, as does one published in Lima, and a letter from the captive to his father, John Hawkins, came out in Spanish translation.<sup>14</sup> In 1595 John Hawkins accompanied Drake, who was his second cousin, on a treasure-hunting voyage to the West Indies which involved unsuccessful attacks on Puerto Rico, shortly after which both men fell ill and died. Two Italian *avvisi* on the expedition were printed in Rome in 1596.<sup>15</sup> The same year John Windet published in London a small book that combined news and counter-propaganda by Captain Henry Savile, supposedly based on papers found when the Earl of Essex raided Cadiz in 1596, entitled:

14 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 255, 257; IB16 18827.

15 See Bulgarelli 1967: 260, 262. The first of these is: *Relatione del successo dell'armata d'Inghilterra, condotta da Francesco Drac, e Giovanni Achines Generali, a S. Giovanni di Porto Ricco nella nuova Spagna il di 23 di Novembre 1595.*

*A libell of Spanish lies: found at the sacke of Cales, discoursing the fight in the West Indies, twixt the English Nauie being foureene ships and pinasses, and a fletee of twentie saile of the King of Spaines, and of the death of Sir Francis Drake. With an answere briefly confuting the Spanish lies, and a short relation of the fight according to truth.*<sup>16</sup>

As for Richard Hawkins, in 1622 he published *The Observations of Sir Richard Hawkins, Knt in His Voyage Into the South Sea in the Year 1593*, in which he quipped, very much in the spirit of the time, à propos of news in general: 'It is an itch in our natures to delight in newnes and varietie, be the subject never so grievous.'<sup>17</sup> An account of heroic and unequal combat in the Caribbean had been printed in London by Edward Allde in 1621 in a twenty-two-page newsletter: *A true relation of a wonderfull sea fight: betweene two great and well appointed Spanish ships or men of warre. And a small and not very well provided English ship.*<sup>18</sup>

Newness and variety in plenty were provided by reports of discovery, conquest and skirmishes in far-off climes. However, doubtless due, in part, to the restrictions imposed on their publication from the middle of the sixteenth century,<sup>19</sup> only a score of Spanish *relaciones* on the Americas printed in Spain in the course of the sixteenth century are still extant – a trickle, when compared with more than four times as many on the Turkish threat, or (as we saw in chapter 2) at least twenty just on the travels and marriage of Philip III and Margaret of Austria at the end of the century.<sup>20</sup>

However, Spanish readers of the printed news were treated not just to stories of discovery and conquest in the west, but also to news from the east, which mostly arrived in Venice and was then retransmitted from there. By the mid-sixteenth-century relations sent from India by the Jesuits were being published in Spain, such as a letter written to the Jesuit College in Coimbra and published in 1550.<sup>21</sup> A *relación* by Bernardino de Escalante, printed in Seville in 1577, told of the Portuguese voyages of

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16 See USTC 513258.

17 The South Sea was the Pacific Ocean south of Panama.

18 Copy at British Library, 1093.b.83.

19 See Fermín de los Reyes Gómez, *El libro en España y América. Legislación y censura (siglos XV-XVIII)*, I, Madrid, Arco Libros, 2000.

20 See Aurora Domínguez Guzmán, 'La proyección de América a través de las *relaciones* españolas del siglo XVI,' in *El libro antiguo español. Actas del Segundo Coloquio Internacional (Madrid)*, ed. María López-Vidriero and Pedro M. Cátedra, Salamanca/Madrid, 1992, 193-202.

21 See IB16 10732, and J. Correia-Afonso, *Jesuit Letters and Indian History. A Study of the Nature and Development of the Jesuit Letters from India (1542-1773) and of their Value for Indian Historiography*, Bombay, 1955.



discovery in the orient and offered news of the marvels to be found in the kingdom of China; it was almost certainly the direct or indirect source of *The strange and marueilous Newes lately come from the great kingdom of Chyna [...] Translated out of the Castlyn tongue, by T.N.*, published that same year in London.<sup>22</sup> Apart from the numerous relations of discovery and conquest, some Spanish news pamphlets also report revolts by the natives. An uprising by the Chinese Sangley inhabitants of the Philippines in 1605 and its suppression was recounted in *relaciones* published the following year in Seville,<sup>23</sup> a revolt in Chile occupied several *relaciones* in 1607, and one in Mexico in 1624 was reported in a *relación* published in Madrid.

As for other news from the Philippines published in Spain, in 1610 a *relación* records the defeat of four Dutch corsair ships there, whilst another, published the following year, reports the 'maravillosa vitoria' won in Manila over a powerful fleet of Dutch pirates.<sup>24</sup> Another, printed in 1614, gives an account of the wars fought in the Portuguese Indies between the King of Pegú and three other native rulers, claiming that one Captain Felipe Brito de Nicote had managed to take hold of the treasure that the latter had won; and one, published in Lisbon in 1616, told how, in the East Indies, the Spaniards had put down a revolt led by the King of Mogor.<sup>25</sup> The naval Battle of Playa Honda, in 1617, was the first of three minor conflicts during the Eighty Years' War between the United Provinces and Spain that took place in the Philippines. A *relación* published the following year in Seville gives news of the victory, referring to the Spanish forces as 'el armada española de la China' (i.e. the Spanish navy in China).<sup>26</sup> In 1599, 'at the signe of the Tygers head in Paules Church-yard,' could be found for sale *A True Report of the gainefull, prosperous and speedy voiage to lava in the East Indies, performed by a fleete of eight ships of Amsterdam*.<sup>27</sup>

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22 For Escalante's *relación*, see BDRS 2995. The first page of the English newsletter is reproduced in Chris R. Kyle and Jason Peacey, *Breaking News. Renaissance Journalism and the Birth of the Newspaper*, Washington, DC, The Folger Shakespeare Library, 2008: 45. For news of China in early modern Spain, see Nieves Pena Sueiro, 'La difusión y recepción de la literatura informativa sobre China en la España del Siglo de Oro,' in Bégrand, ed., 2009: 287-302.

23 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 446, 448; Agulló y Cobo 1975: 145; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 434-5.

24 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 508. A German relation on what appears to be the same Dutch incursion into the Philippines was published c. 1610 in Augsburg: *Neue vnd gründtliche Relation von dermercklichen Victori oder Sig, welchen Herr Joannes de Sylua, Gubernator vnd General Obrister der Philippinischen Insulen, den 24. Aprill des 1610. Jars wider etliche hollendische Raubschiff, so in dieselben Inselne ingefallen, vnd jhren General Obristen, Frantz Witt Henricson erhalten hat.*

25 See BDRS 5863, 4051.

26 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 701; and Pena Sueiro 2009: 287-301.

27 See Collins 1943: 41. More news from the East Indies was published in London at the beginning of the seventeenth century, such as an eight-page newsletter printed in 1603: *A True and perfect relation of the nevves sent from Amsterdam, the 21. of February, 1603. concerning the fight of five Dutche shippes in the East Indies, against the Portugall fleete* (copy at British Library, C.55.b.25).

The astonishing international media impact of the discovery of Australia by Pedro Fernández de Quirós in 1606 was researched by Carlos Sanz in the 1960s. Quirós wrote some fifty petitions to Philip III, claiming that the newly discovered land in the southern hemisphere – which he named ‘Austrialia,’ in honour of the House of Austria – represented a quarter of the world’s land mass and merited as much attention as had Columbus’s discoveries in the west. The eighth of his petitions was published in Madrid in 1609. It was then reprinted in Pamplona and Seville in 1610, and in Valencia in 1611. That same year it was published in German in Augsburg. In 1612

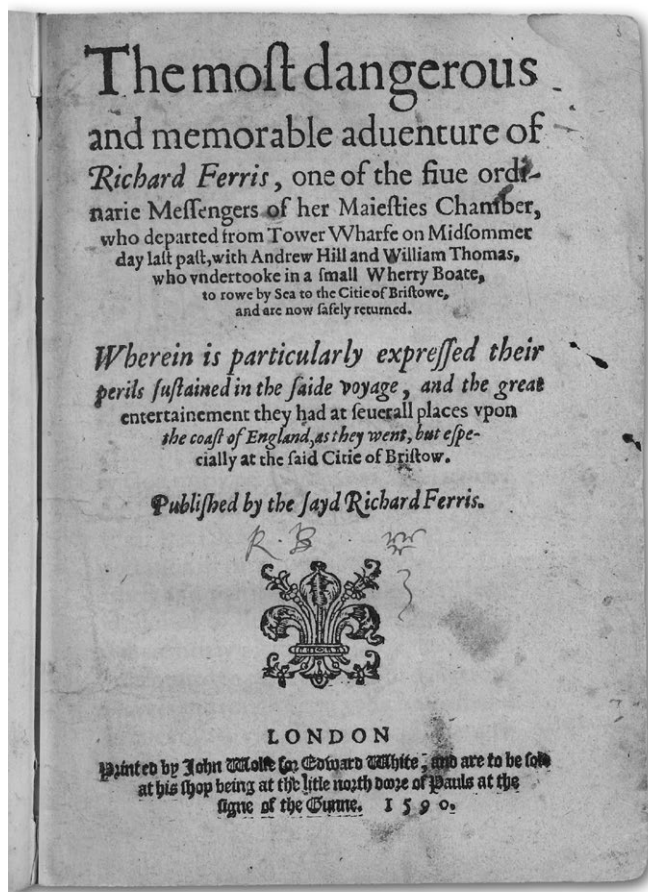


Fig. 3.3. First page of a newsletter, published in 1590, that sets out what it advertises as a most dangerous and memorable adventure, in which five men rowed from London to Bristol, and back. Both the main title and the subtitle use diminishing sizes of type and lengths of line, with only the names of the printer and the bookseller, and the latter’s address, set in gothic type. The printer, John Wolfe, includes his usual printer’s device (Bodleian Library, Oxford).

it appeared in Dutch and Latin editions in Amsterdam, as well as in Geneva. In 1613 it was printed in Latin in Frankfurt and Amsterdam, and in German in Frankfurt and in Leipzig. In 1614 it was published in German in Oppenheim, and in 1617 in French in Paris, and in English in London, and it went on being published internationally for decades thereafter.<sup>28</sup> An expedition led by Jacques Le Maire and Willem Corneliszoon Schouten in 1615–17 succeeded in finding a new route to the Pacific and the Spice Islands, as well as to the Southern Continent (*Terra Australis*). Schouten's journal of the voyage was published in Amsterdam in 1618, and an unusually lengthy, fifty-two-page, *relación* was published in Seville the following year.<sup>29</sup>

The spirit of enterprise that put heroic geographical discovery in motion in early modern Europe could sometimes make the news, even if no actual discovery was intended or indeed effected, and the feat was simply one of adventure for its own sake. One instance of how an intrinsically insignificant act of derring-do could get into print is the newsletter written by James Sargent and printed in London in 1590 under a title that begins: *The most dangerous and memorable adventure of Richard Ferris*, a pamphlet published by Richard Ferris himself (Fig. 3.3).<sup>30</sup>

## War

The editor of a *Briefe Relation* printed in London in 1649 points to a fact that held good throughout Europe from very early on in the printing revolution: 'The subject of Newes which is most enquired for, is for the most part of Wars, Commotions, and Troubles, or the Composing of them.'<sup>31</sup> Unsurprisingly, from the beginning, truth was the first casualty. With a mere handful of exceptions, news of war meant news of victories, with the defeated party simply keeping mum, at least in print. Generally speaking, no news was bad news. As a result, then as now, the press of opposing nations, parties or coalitions tended to be complementary: you would have to have read your opponents' press in order to discover the down side of your own nation's upbeat news, or else learn the bad news unofficially from unprintable sources in the know. News of war that came off the presses was, then, nearly always good news, and occasionally it is actually presented precisely as such, for instance in a pamphlet printed in London in 1592 entitled: *Good newes from Fraunce. A true discourse of the winning of sundry cheefe townes, castles, and holdes in Fraunce*, which tells of

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28 The front pages of these various editions are reproduced below, Appendix III, Figs. A3.16-22.

29 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 764.

30 See USTC 511535.

31 Quoted in Arblaster 2006: 27.

several victories won by Henri IV in Brittany and elsewhere.<sup>32</sup> The almost universal absence in print of news about military disasters amounted, of course, to international political censorship or self-censorship on a vast scale.

War, then, occupies the majority of extant news pamphlets across Europe, virtually from the outset. As Shaaber points out, military news was also amongst the first to appear in print in England, with the first English printed newsletter that he documents being an account of the English victory over the Scots at the Battle of Flodden Field in 1513.<sup>33</sup> However, the English translation of an account in Latin of the siege of Rhodes in 1480 was an even earlier one.<sup>34</sup> Especially from the last forty years of the sixteenth century until the middle of the seventeenth, prolonged and overlapping conflicts throughout most of Western Europe, the majority of them involving sectarian rivalry, dominated the press, most notably the Eighty Years' War against Spain in the Low Countries; the French Wars of Religion and the continued repression of the Huguenots in France well into the seventeenth century; the Anglo–Spanish War that began before the Armada and ended with the Treaty of London in 1604; and the Thirty Years' War.

### *War in Europe*

In 1483 several editions in French were printed in Ghent, Paris and Rouen of the treaty signed between Louis XI and the Archduke of Austria.<sup>35</sup> Andrew Pettegree, who gives 1488 as the date for the first surviving French examples of printed news, points to the importance of Charles VIII's successful campaign in Italy in 1494-95 in establishing the reporting of news in France.<sup>36</sup> Charles's invasion of Italy did indeed inspire a host of *occasionnels* that celebrated the triumphal progress of his army.<sup>37</sup> They include an account of the proposals made by the king to the pope and an *avviso* in Italian, published in Brescia in or shortly after 1495, entitled *La venuta del re di*

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32 See USTC 512020.

33 *Hereafter ensue the trewe encountre or [...] Batayle lately don betwene Englāde and Scotlande In whiche batayle the Scottsshe Kynge was slayne* (London, 1513?) (USTC 501239; Shaaber 1966: 121). For English newsletters on war, see David Randall, ed., *English Military News Pamphlets, 1513-1637*, Tempe, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2011.

34 The USTC records only two English news pamphlets published before 1501, the first being a translation of Guillaume Caoursin's account in Latin of the siege of Rhodes, *The siege of Rhodes* (London, 1482) (USTC 500055).

35 See USTC 70711-15.

36 See Pettegree 2010: 136. However, the USTC lists eight undated French news pamphlets which it ascribes to the period prior to 1488, and one, printed at Gent by Arend de Keyser, which bears the date 1483: *Traité de paix entre Louis XI et le duc d'Autriche* (USTC 70711).

37 For Charles VIII's entry into Florence, see USTC 79292, 70970; into Naples, USTC 76477, 70983, 70995, 76475, 76478-9, 76480, 70486, 70528-30; and into Rome, USTC 88422, 88825, 70965-6, 76473, 76475.



Fig. 3.4. First page of the official account in Spanish of news from Italy (particularly the Spanish victory in the Battle of Pavia in 1525), ending with a statement by the humanist Alfonso de Valdés, secretary to Charles V, that he had been ordered to have the *relación* printed. The top two-thirds of the page are dominated by the delicately engraved imperial coat of arms, typical of officially inspired Spanish news pamphlets of the time and, no doubt, part of the printer's stock. The relation includes a three-page list of the principal French prisoners and one page with the names of the principal French casualties (Real Biblioteca del Monasterio, El Escorial).

*Francia in Italia*.<sup>38</sup> His is the first military campaign for which a very substantial body of news reporting survives.

An *occasionnel* published in 1501 records the combined French-Aragonese conquest of Naples, whilst a *relación* dating from 1505 reports the reconquest of Naples from the French by Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, known to Spaniards as the Gran Capitán.<sup>39</sup> Louis XII's Italian campaigns in 1507 and 1509 produced a

<sup>38</sup> See USTC 76481, 994994.

<sup>39</sup> See Seguin 1961: 60; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 11.

further flurry of celebratory publications, including at least one German translation of an *occasionnel*.<sup>40</sup> Louis's Italian campaign merged into the War of the League of Cambrai, also known as the War of the Holy League, fought in 1511-14. The attempt to expel Louis from Italy was achieved in 1512, but François I went on to lead the Franco-Venetian victory at Marignano in 1515. Reports of the war inspired several early *Neue Zeitungen*.<sup>41</sup>

War in Italy in the 1520s between Charles V and François I of France was covered in the French, Italian, Spanish and German press.<sup>42</sup> In 1525, when the French king was defeated at Pavia, captured by Charles's army and taken prisoner to Madrid, celebrations in verse by several Spanish poets were published, as well as at least one *relación* in prose.<sup>43</sup> The publication of a very full fifteen-page account in prose of the victory at Pavia, which does not specify the place of printing, was authorised by Charles's secretary, the outstanding Spanish humanist Alfonso de Valdés, and contains nearly five pages listing the names of significant French soldiers killed or taken prisoner (Fig. 3. 4).<sup>44</sup> The Imperial victory was also fêted in Venice in at least two news pamphlets,<sup>45</sup> whilst, in the Low Countries, a 'wave of triumphant pamphleteering' greeted Charles's victory, amongst the items published there being one by the Antwerp printer Willem Vorsterman, who produced his newsletter within three weeks of the event.<sup>46</sup>

Emil Weller catalogues four editions of *Neue Zeitungen* on Pavia which do not specify the place of printing, as well as six German ballads on the battle, mostly printed in Augsburg and Nuremberg.<sup>47</sup> He also cites three editions of a *Neue Zeitung* on the Treaty of Madrid, whereby the French king was allowed to return to France, that treaty being also the subject of a *relación* printed in Toledo and Valencia, and of the earliest *avvisi a stampa* catalogued by Tullio Bulgarelli.<sup>48</sup> In contrast, and

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40 See Seguin 1961: 131.

41 See Weller 1872: 4, 5. Other early relations include an account by Sebastian Brant of the battle of Salins-les-Bains, won by Emperor Maximilian, printed as a *Flugblatt* in Basel in 1493 under the title *Von der Schlacht bei Salins* (USTC 743684), and an *occasionnel* on the battle between German dukes and princes and the army of the Emperor, printed at Lyon in 1501 (USTC 62879).

42 See Hirt.

43 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 26-7, 30, 349.

44 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 31.

45 See USTC 802371, 837340.

46 See *Den strijdt gheschiet over tgeberchte voer de stad van Pavye* (USTC 402898); Pettegree 2010: 138-9.

47 See Weller 1872: 23-4; Weller 1862-4: 92-5.

48 See Weller 1872: 29; Bulgarelli 1967: 1-4. The *relación* printed in Toledo is: *Sumario de la capitulación assentada e firmada entre la cesarea catholica y real magestad del Emperador y Rey nuestro señor y el xristianissimo rey de Francia* (Toledo, 1526). For the Valencia edition, see Mercedes Fernández Valladares 2009: 19-38: 25, 34.

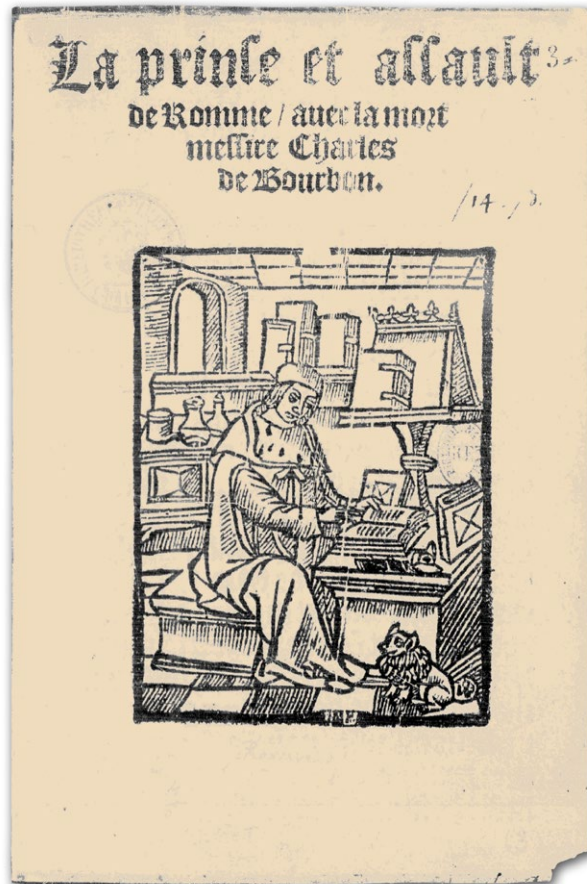


Fig. 3.5. First page of an *occasionnel* on the Sack of Rome and the death of Charles III, Duke of Bourbon, published in 1527. The stock woodcut of a nobleman reading could have been used for the title page of any number of different pamphlets or books – Seguin (1961: 84) notes that it had been used at least seventeen years before. Its appropriateness for this particular pamphlet is less than obvious (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris).

unsurprisingly, François I's defeat at Pavia, which had left French Italian policy in tatters and the king a prisoner in Imperial hands, 'was met with deafening silence from the Parisian publishers.'<sup>49</sup> Equally unsurprisingly, the French attempt to retake Pavia in 1527 is covered in an *occasionnel*, and at least two French *occasionnels* were published on the Sack of Rome, perpetrated in 1527 by the mutinous troops of Charles V (Fig. 3.5), whilst Weller lists nine *Neue Zeitungen* on the event.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Pettegree 2010: 138.

<sup>50</sup> See Seguin 1961: 86; 84-5; Weller 1872: 31-6.

The resumption of the Italian wars was marked by the publication of several *Flugschriften* in 1536.<sup>51</sup> The Treaty of Nice, signed two years later, is celebrated in an eight-page *Neue Zeitung*, and Charles's ceremonial entry into Paris in 1540 is reported in several editions of a *Warhafftige auch gantz glaubwürdige Newe zeytung*.<sup>52</sup> The battle of Ceresole in 1542, in which François defeated a Spanish army commanded by the Marquis of Vasto, was celebrated in France in numerous *occasionnels*, as well as in England, for instance in 1543 in *A joyfull new tidynge of the goodly victory that was sent to the emperor, from the noble Capitayne Marcquis Delgasto*.<sup>53</sup> The resurgence of the wars was reflected, too, in several more *Flugschriften* published in 1543 and 1544.<sup>54</sup> Numerous *Neue Zeitungen*, many of them running into several editions, were also published on the Battle of Mühlberg (1547), in which, together with Elector Maurice of Saxony, Charles V defeated the Protestant forces of the Schmalkaldic League, his victory being immortalised in Titian's grand equestrian portrait, which censored the fact that the gout-ridden emperor had in fact been carried onto the battlefield in a litter.<sup>55</sup> Many engagements between the Imperial and the French armies were also covered in *Neue Zeitungen* in the 1550s. At least half a dozen were published in Catholic Germany and in Vienna, celebrating the Imperial defeat of the French at Saint-Quentin, in Picardy, in 1557, and the news was also reported in Italy.<sup>56</sup>

In January 1558, the French retook Calais from the English, an event reported in an Italian news pamphlet translated from French and printed in Venice, Turin and Lyon.<sup>57</sup> The French conquest in 1558 of Thionville, held by Spanish forces, occupied several *occasionnels*, as well as an *avviso* published in Rome.<sup>58</sup> The Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, signed in 1559 by Henri II of France and Philip II of Spain, and the subsequent rejoicings in France and Italy, are recorded in numerous *occasionnels* published in Paris, Tours, Lyon, Poitiers and Rouen, as well as in *avvisi* published in Naples and Rome.<sup>59</sup>

The wars that divided France in the second half of the sixteenth century, sparked off by the Huguenot Conspiracy of Amboise in 1560, produced a huge wave of news

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51 See Weller 1872: 92-7.

52 See Weller 1872: 115, 130.

53 See Seguin 1961: 115-16; USTC 503440. Another early English war report is *The maner of the tryumphe at Caley and Bulleyn* (London, 1532) (USTC 502431).

54 See Weller 1872: 154-7.

55 See Weller 1872: 185-6.

56 See Weller 1872: 211-18; Bulgarelli 1967: 75.

57 *Discorso sopra la presa di Cales e altre fortezze circonvecine a detto luogo, tradotto di lingua franzese* (USTC 803912, 803914, 116037).

58 See Seguin 1961: 124-7; Bulgarelli 1967: 80.

59 See Seguin 1961: 128-9; Bulgarelli 1967: 82-4.



pamphlets and polemical tracts exchanged between Protestants and Catholics and had major and prolonged international repercussions. A *relación* published in Alcalá de Henares celebrates the defeat of the Huguenot army led by Louis I, Prince of Condé, at Dreux in December 1562, and many other *relaciones* on Catholic victories against the Huguenots were published thereafter.<sup>60</sup> From 1563 onwards, numerous *Neue Zeitungen* report on the wars in France, notably the battles led by the Catholic Duke of Guise and by the Huguenot Prince of Condé. As for England, Shaaber lists nearly forty pamphlets published, or entered at the Stationers' Company, touching on Henri IV's successes against the Catholic League in 1590, including his (unsuccessful) siege of Paris, celebrated none the less in pamphlets such as *The miserable estate of Paris with strange visions lately seen in the ayre vpon the coasts of Brittainye*, or *A treatise concerning the extreme famine of the citie of Paris*.<sup>61</sup> It was doubtless largely due to the considerable involvement of English soldiers that the French wars in the years 1589-93 were so extensively covered in the English press.<sup>62</sup>

Henri IV's declaration of war against Spain in 1595 turned the French Wars of Religion into a European-wide conflict which would be closely covered in the press. The Spanish conquest of Calais in 1596 was publicised in newsletters printed in Spanish, Italian, French, Dutch and English.<sup>63</sup> The Spanish conquest of Amiens was celebrated the following year in *relaciones* published in Seville and in Valencia, as well as in an *avviso* printed in Milan.<sup>64</sup> In May 1598 the Peace of Vervins brought the Franco-Spanish war to an end. *Relaciones* on the signing of the treaty were published in Seville, whilst its terms were printed in Ferrara, Rome and Verona; in Bologna, in a text that had previously appeared in Brussels, Lyon and Turin; and also, in a version translated from a French original printed in Paris and in Vicenza, Ferrara, Turin, Rome and Orvieto.<sup>65</sup> It is hard to imagine anyone in Europe at the time who was at all interested in the news being unaware of the Franco-Spanish war and its conclusion.

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60 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 133, 139, 141-2, etc.

61 See Shaaber 1966: 170-2. Collins (1943) provides synopses of these pamphlets.

62 See Paul J. Voss, *Elizabethan News Pamphlets. Shakespeare, Spenser, Marlowe, and the Birth of Journalism*, Pittsburgh NJ, Duquesne University Press, 2001.

63 The Spanish siege was reported in an *avviso* published in Milan and was celebrated in a *relación* published in Cuenca as a *Tercera carta*, implying that two dispatches had been printed previously (see Bulgarelli 1967: 265; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 278). It also figures in a French pamphlet printed at Arras, as well as in another, also in French, published in Antwerp by Plantin, and in a Dutch pamphlet, also printed at Antwerp (see USTC 19313, 13642, 413309).

64 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 282, 285; IB16 15616; Bulgarelli 1967: 283.

65 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 294-5, 297; Bulgarelli 1967: 295-6, 301, 298, 292; USTC 830819-20, 830822-4; and also B.W. Lambert, *Pamphleteering in France during the Wars of Religion. Aspects of Ephemeral and Occasional Publications, 1562-1598*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1975.

The Revolt of the Netherlands against Spanish rule occupied the press from the outset. The third Duke of Alba's battles with the forces of William the Silent are covered in several *Neue Zeitungen* published in 1568 and thereafter, notably in 1572.<sup>66</sup> The destruction wrought by Alba's troops upon the town of Mechelen was reported in a pamphlet printed in Dutch, whereas a defence in French of the sacking of the town was published by Plantin in Antwerp.<sup>67</sup> Naturally, Spanish successes in Flanders were celebrated in Spanish *relaciones*. Equally naturally, Spanish victories – notably the Sack of Antwerp in 1576, also known as the Spanish Fury, which left ten thousand dead – were reported as atrocities in *Flugschriften* published in Protestant German cities, and also in a newsletter by George Gascoigne published in London under the title: *The spoyle of Antwerpe. Faithfully reported, by a true Englishman, who was present at the same*, whilst a Spanish *relación* printed in Valencia presented the events in a somewhat apologetical tone as 'cosas de muy grande lastima y tristeza' (i.e. matters of great pity and distress).<sup>68</sup>

Don John of Austria's victory over the States-General at Gembloux in 1578, by which Spain recovered a large part of the southern Netherlands, is reported in a *Warhafftige Zeitung* published in the Catholic city of Cologne.<sup>69</sup> The outcome of the three-month siege that enabled Alexander Farnese to take Maastricht in 1579 is celebrated in a *Neue Zeitung* published in at least six editions, also in Cologne, and the capture of Breda by Spanish troops in 1581 is reported in a *Dreyerley* [i.e. triple] *Neue Zeittung* published in Frankfurt.<sup>70</sup> Yet another Spanish victory, the taking of Antwerp by the Duke of Parma in 1585, was celebrated in *Neue Zeitungen* printed in Catholic German cities, as well as in a *Flugblatt*.<sup>71</sup> It was also reported in a newsletter printed in English in Amsterdam, as well as in a pamphlet published in French and in an Italian *avviso* printed in Milan.<sup>72</sup>

In the Battle of Turnhout, on 24 January 1597, Dutch cavalry under the command of Maurice of Nassau defeated a detachment of Spanish cavalry, after which the

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66 See Weller 1872: 338-40, 345, 347-8, 400-1, 403-11.

67 *Verclaringe der rechtverdighe saecken vande plunderinge geschiet der stadt van Mechelen* (USTC 411789); *Declaration des justes causes du saccaigement de la ville de Malines. 1572* (USTC 4059).

68 See Weller 1872: 454-7, 463-5; USTC 508187; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 188; and also Linda Bradley Salamon, 'Gascoigne's Globe: *The Spoyle of Antwerpe* and the Black Legend of Spain,' *Early Modern Literary Studies* 14, 2008, 1-38. Another typical atrocity story is: *A true discours of the most horrible and barbarous murthers and massacres committed by the troupes of the Duke of Sauoye [...] without respect or exception of person, sexe or age, as wel of men and women, as of poore infants and children, printed in London in 1590* (see Collins 1943: 10).

69 See Weller 1872: 493.

70 See Weller 1872: 504-6, 539.

71 See Weller 1872: 617-18.

72 See USTC 426484, 62312, 806036.

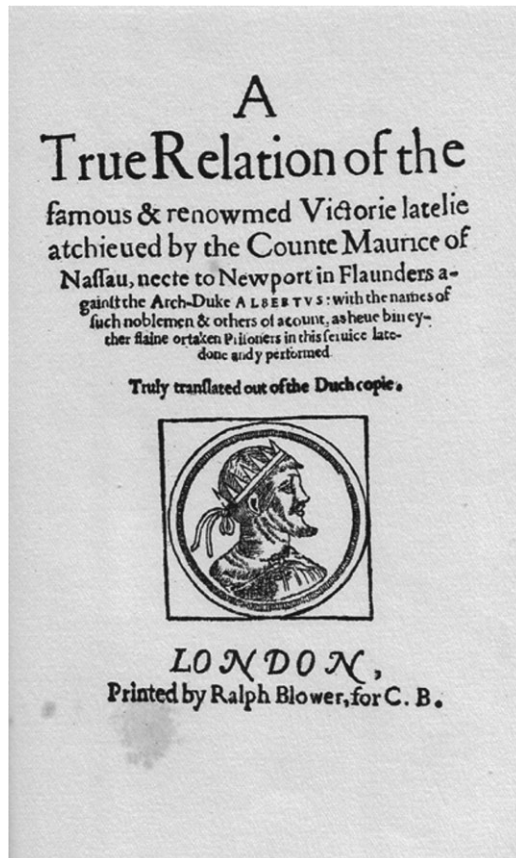


Fig. 3.6. First page of a relation celebrating the battle of Nieuwpoort in 1600, illustrated with a woodcut of a crowned king or emperor, doubtless taken from the printer's stock and here evidently used to signify victory. Various different sizes of type have been used imaginatively in order to draw potential customers' attention to the title, with the words 'True Relation' amongst those that make the most impact (reproduced in Collins 1935).

Dutch troops burnt down parts of the local castle, the Protestant victory being celebrated in England.<sup>73</sup> Two extant newsletters on the event were printed in London, as was also, in 1600, an account of the battle at Nieuwpoort – especially because of the involvement of British (particularly Scots) troops – for which both sides claimed victory (Fig. 3.6).<sup>74</sup> This was only one out of a very large batch of English news pamphlets published in London in the 1590s on the hostilities on the continent told from the

<sup>73</sup> See Collins 1943: 34-5.

<sup>74</sup> *A true relation of the famous & renowned victorie lately atchieued by the counte Maurice of Nassau, neere to Newport in Flaunders against the arch-duke Albertus [...]. Truly translated out of the Dutch copie* (cited in British Library catalogue).

perspective of Protestant allies in the war against Spain. However, the Eighty Years' War was not confined to the continent, one instance being the repulse of the Dutch attempt on the Canaries in 1599, which occupies a *relación* published in Seville by Rodrigo de Cabrera, as well as a *Segunda relacion* by the same printer.<sup>75</sup>

The three-year siege of Ostend, one of the longest in history, was also the bloodiest battle of the war and culminated in a Spanish victory. Partly because the defending force included English soldiers, the course of the siege inspired many English news pamphlets.<sup>76</sup> From 1603, under Spinola, the Spanish army tore Ostend's outer defenses from the Dutch, leaving some thirty-five thousand men in the trenches surrounding the city. The signing of the Twelve Years Truce in 1609 between Spain and the Dutch Republic prompted several London printers to enter items at the Stationers' Company.<sup>77</sup>

One of the first major engagements after the expiry of the twelve-year Spanish-Dutch truce signed in 1609, the siege of Breda in 1624/25 by Ambrogio Spinola which ended with the surrender of the keys of the city immortalised by Velazquez, is reported in numerous *relaciones* published in Seville and Barcelona in 1625, in Cordova the following year, and also in several Italian *avvisi*.<sup>78</sup> It was also the subject of a relation published in Lisbon, translated into Portuguese from a pamphlet printed in French in Antwerp, and in an *Extract. Und Relation* printed in Augsburg.<sup>79</sup> English readers were provided with an account of the Spanish besiegers' lack of provisions and resources and with a day-by-day report on the siege 'Translated out of the Low-Dutch copie, printed at Breda, and at the Hage.'<sup>80</sup>

### *The Turkish Peril*

The long and spectacular reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, from 1520 to 1566, coinciding with and outstripping the rule of Charles V, marked nearly half a century of conflict between Islam and Christianity, alongside the Habsburg-Valois

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75 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 333, 336.

76 See Collins 1943: xi, 50-1, 54-5, 68.

77 See Collins 1943: 91, 120.

78 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 173, 178, 180-1, 191-2, 202-4, 236; Bulgarelli 1988: 162-6; and also Simon A. Vosters, *La rendición de Bredá en la literatura y el arte de España*, London, Tâmesis Books, 1974.

79 *Relaçam da tomada de Breda cidade de Brabancia, do principe d'Orange* (Lisbon, 1625); *Extract. Und Relation der Gewaltigen Statt und Vestung Breda im Niderlandt auch umbligender gelegenheit wie dieselbe Marquis Ambrosius Spinola als General Veldobristen im Namen der Königl. Mayest. in Hispannia belägert mit Accordo eingenommen* (Augsburg, 1625).

80 *A continuation of all the principall occurrences which hath happened to the Leaguers lying before Breda* (London, 1625); *A iournall or, historicall relation of all the principall matters which haue passed in the present siege of Breda from day to day* (London, 1625).

struggle that occupied the Holy Roman Empire for forty years up to the the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559, and then for decades beyond. The military operations mounted during the period we are concerned with, and later, with a view to countering the expansion of the Ottoman Empire into both continental Europe and the Mediterranean occupy hundreds of news pamphlets throughout the continent, representing perhaps the largest number of surviving editions on a single issue in the early German press.<sup>81</sup> As we have already seen, the earliest extant printed news texts – *Flugschriften* published in the 1470s – already reflect the obsession with the Turkish threat. And the flash points were not confined to Europe. A *Glaubhafftige zeyttung vnd bericht* (i.e. true dispatch and report) on the war between the Portuguese and the Turks in India appeared in Augsburg in 1540, translated out of Latin.<sup>82</sup>

In Central Europe, the defeat of Louis II of Hungary and Bohemia at the hands of Suleiman at the Battle of Mohács, in 1526, had led to the partition of Hungary between the Ottoman Empire, the Habsburg monarchy and the Principality of Transylvania, and at least four *Neue Zeitungen* report the Hungarian defeat.<sup>83</sup> At the height of the Ottoman Empire, a pamphlet printed in Zurich in 1529 reported the beginning of Suleiman's siege of Vienna, and a relation in verse on the siege by Hans Sachs was published in Nuremberg in 1530.<sup>84</sup> One of the earliest known *Flugschriften* to describe itself as a *Relation* dealt with the Turk and was printed at Augsburg in 1566: *Relation vnd Extrack von aussagen vnd besonderen Kundtschafften des Türckens*.<sup>85</sup> In 1579 Thomas Dawson printed a newsletter in London on a military setback for Sultan Selim II, Suleiman's successor, specifying the numbers of enemy casualties and the amount of booty captured.<sup>86</sup>

The Turkish threat is almost entirely responsible for the immensely frequent appearance of Hungary and Transylvania in the news across Europe during their long war with the Turks between 1593 and 1606. Most of this news first arrived in Italy. Tullio Bulgarelli catalogues over fifty Italian *avvisi* on the war published between 1593

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81 For writings on Turkish affairs in sixteenth-century Europe, see Carl Göllner, *Turcica. Die europäischen Türkendrucke des XVI Jahrhunderts*, 3 vols., Bucharest, Academie, 1961-78. For the image of the Turks in Renaissance Europe, see Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent. The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453-1517)*, Nieuwkoop, De Graaf, 1967. For very early printed news of military actions against the Turks, see Meserve 2006.

82 See Weller 1872: 128.

83 See Weller 1872: 25-8.

84 See USTC 636494, 752932.

85 See USTC 690555.

86 *A discourse of the bloody and cruell battaile, of late loste by the great Turke Sultan Selim And also of the taking of the strong towne of Seruan, with the number there slaine and taken, and the great store of artillery and munitions of warre lost in the taking of the saide towne* (USTC 508692).

and 1600.<sup>87</sup> In England, a typical example was the newsletter printed in 1601: *A True relation of taking of Alba-Regalis, in the German tongue, called Sfullweissenburgh* [i.e. Stuhlweissenburg, now Székesfehérvár], *the chiefe cittie in Nether-Hungarie, which was taken by the Christian armie.*<sup>88</sup>

The Seville printer Rodrigo de Cabrera – who in the last few years of the sixteenth century also published *relaciones* on current events in the Netherlands, France and England, and on Philip III's marriage in Valencia – brought out, with his coverage of the Hungaro-Transylvanian war against the Turk, one of the first serially-produced news services to be attempted in Spain: *relaciones*, at least eight of which were numbered. In all, Cabrera is known to have printed at least fifteen pamphlets on the war between 1596 and 1599.<sup>89</sup> For the flow of news from the eastern front, he relied on the Jesuit Juan de Mosquera, in Rome, who translated Italian *avvisi* for his benefit. Some of Cabrera's *relaciones* were then reprinted in Granada and Valencia.<sup>90</sup> In 1595 a victory won by Prince Sigismund Báthory of Transylvania is reported in a *relación* that was also published in Majorca.<sup>91</sup> News of the Turks occupied a very substantial part of the European news market up to the end of the seventeenth century, because it was in the interest of the authorities to stress the seriousness of the external threat. It consisted mainly of reports of Turkish defeats,<sup>92</sup> but also of ceremonies and processions held at the Turkish court, and the appearance in Turkey of such ill omens as untimely deaths, comets, signs and monsters.

### *War at Sea*

One of the first events to get into print on a large scale internationally was the Turkish siege of Rhodes in 1480. Guillaume Caoursin's *Obsidionis Rhodiae descriptio* was published in Bruges and, under a slightly different title, in Louvain, Passau and Odense.<sup>93</sup> Other works in Latin were Jacobus de Curte's *De urbis obsidione a 1480 a Turcis tentata*, which appeared the same year in Venice (Fig. 3.7), and a *Miracula obsidionis Rhodi*, printed at Reutlingen.<sup>94</sup> Pierre d'Aubusson's *De obsidione urbis*

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<sup>87</sup> See Bulgarelli 1967.

<sup>88</sup> Cited in British Library catalogue.

<sup>89</sup> A *relación* in verse published c. 1595 on victories won by the Transylvanians, claiming over 8,000 Turkish casualties, may also have been printed by Cabrera (see Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 150-1).

<sup>90</sup> See González Cuerva 2006, 277-99: 298-9. For Germany, see Roth 1914: 36.

<sup>91</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 259.

<sup>92</sup> For Spanish *relaciones* on the Turkish-Hungarian war in the seventeenth century, see Erzsébet Hanny, 'Las noticias de la guerra contra turcos en Hungría y en Buda en las relaciones españolas del siglo XVII,' in Cátedra and Díaz Tena, eds., 2013, 211-29.

<sup>93</sup> See USTC 438547-8, 743795, 302800.

<sup>94</sup> See USTC 95524, 741185.

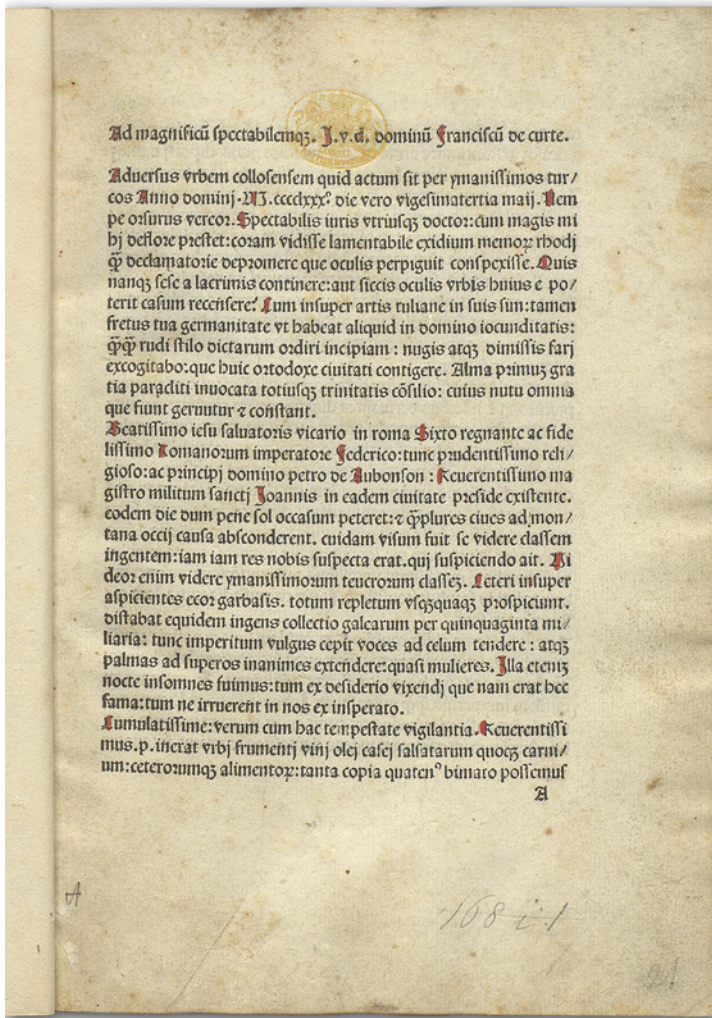


Fig. 3.7. First page of Jacobus de Curte's *De Urbis Rhodiae obsidione*, published in Venice in 1480, comparable with the *Flugschrift* on an attack on the Turk published in Augsburg in 1474 (see above, Fig. 1.5) in its closeness to a manuscript, including the hand-written decoration in red ink of the printed upper case letters (© The British Library Board, C.5.a.22).

*Rhodiae*, addressed to Emperor Frederick III, came out the same year in Mainz, Nuremberg, Cologne and Strasbourg.<sup>95</sup> However, it is not until the following year that we find accounts of the siege in the vernacular: one, by Mary du Puys, entitled *Discours du siege mis par le Turc devant la ville de Rhodes*, probably in 1481, with

<sup>95</sup> See USTC 743078-81.

another edition, printed at Audenaarde, probably in 1482; and, also in 1482, an English translation by John Kay of Caoursin's account, printed in London by John Lettou and William de Machlinia.<sup>96</sup> A *Nachricht von den Türken*, written by Joerg von Nüremberg, was published in Memmingen that same year and was reprinted there in 1496.<sup>97</sup> The fall of Rhodes to Suleiman the Magnificent in December 1522 – a major setback for Christendom – was, unusually for a defeat, reported in the Christian press. It is the subject of an Italian pamphlet published in Venice, of a *Warhafftige Newe zeytung* and *Ain sendbrief* printed in Augsburg, and of a pamphlet printed at Erfurt.<sup>98</sup>

The danger posed by Muslim nations was not confined to Turkey, but extended to its North African allies, who posed immediate threats to the northern Mediterranean coast and to the Mediterranean islands. News of action on the North African coast, and of battles fought at sea, abounded in the press, most especially in Spain and Italy. The letter sent by Cardinal Cisneros on the Spanish victory won at Oran was published in Toledo in 1509,<sup>99</sup> and probably the same year in Barcelona, together with three poems on the event,<sup>100</sup> and news of the victory was also printed in Italian in Rome in two news pamphlets that found their way into Ferdinand Columbus's library in Seville. The author of the Spanish translation was Baltasar del Río, a priest who started out as an early *relacionero*, or journalist, when he wrote these texts, and who continued doing so decades later in Seville, when he was bishop of Scala on the Amalfi coast.<sup>101</sup> In 1510 the city of Béjaïa, on the Algerian coast, was taken by Spain. A copy of an Italian relation of the successful Spanish campaign was purchased in Rome for Ferdinand Columbus in December 1515, and a copy of a different relation of the same events was bought for him at the same time in Viterbo.<sup>102</sup>

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96 See USTC 38198, 71056, 500055.

97 See USTC 746202, 746204. For the change from news in Latin to news in the vernaculars, see above, chapter 1.

98 See USTC 802323; Weller 1872: 17; USTC 610224, 691257.

99 María Isabel Hernández González (*El taller historiográfico: 'Cartas de relación' de la conquista de Orán (1509) y textos afines*, Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar 8, London, Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary and Westfield College, 1997), studies some of the manuscript relations of the conquest of Orán. The Barcelona printer Carles Amorós also published a report in 1509 on the Spaniards' capture of Oran: *Carta de la gran Victoria y presa de Orán* (Agulló y Cobo 1966: 15).

100 See María Sánchez Pérez, *Las relaciones de sucesos en pliegos sueltos poéticos del siglo XVI. Estudio cultural y literario*, Doctoral thesis presented at the University of Salamanca, 2006a: 91-2.

101 See R. Consuelo Gonzalo García and Mercedes Fernández Valladares, 'La carta de Cisneros sobre la toma de Orán (1509) y la difusión de la victoria en Italia por Baltasar del Río: más relaciones post-incunables recuperadas,' in García López and Boadas, eds., 2015: 427-45.

102 See Henry HARRISSE, *Excerpta Colombiniana. Bibliographie de quatre cents pièces gothiques françaises, italiennes et latines*, Geneva, Slatkine Reprints, 1971, Nos. 289, 326. For Spanish accounts of battles in the Mediterranean, see Pierre CIVIL, 'Las relaciones de batallas navales en el Mediterráneo (siglos XVI y XVII): estrategias narrativas,' in Paba, ed., 2003: 105-16.



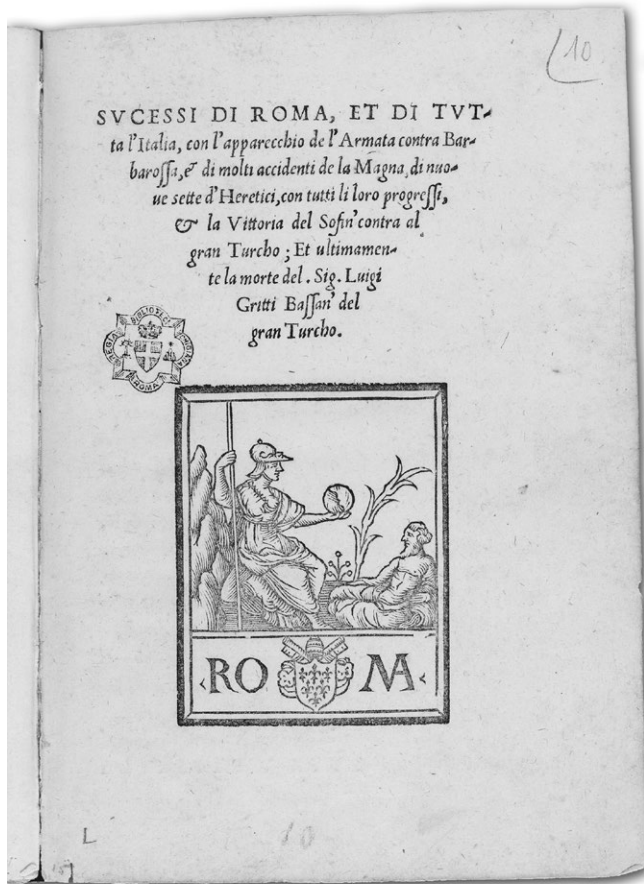


Fig. 3.8. First page of a multiple subject *avviso* on events in Italy, the principal item of news recounted being the preparations being made for the fleet to recover Tunis from Barbarossa, the title laid out in triangular form, with stylish use of italic font, and decorated with a large woodcut that includes the word 'ROMA' (Rome, 1535) (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome).

Emil Weller catalogues a dual-report *Flugschrift* of 1534, the second item of which recounts the taking of Tunis that year by Barbarossa, the commander of Suleiman's fleet in the Mediterranean, a news item also reported in an *avviso* published in Rome.<sup>103</sup> Seeking to counter Turkish conquests in mainland Europe, the Ottoman empire's alliances with the Muslim pirates of the Barbary coast and the latter's raids on Christian shipping, the following summer Charles V led an expedition against Barbarossa, setting out from Spain with some four hundred ships, the *casus belli*

<sup>103</sup> See Weller 1872: 75; Bulgarelli 1967: 14.

being Barbarossa's deposing of Charles's vassal, the king of Tunis. The preparations for the campaign to recover Tunis made news in Italy, Germany, France and Spain. They are reported in an *avviso* published in Rome (Fig. 3.8), and the expedition itself is covered in numerous further *avvisi*, in half a dozen *Neue Zeitungen*, and in several *occasionnels* and *relaciones*.<sup>104</sup> News of a later defeat of Barbarossa reached Germany in a *Gute zeyttung*, translated from Latin in 1539, whilst Charles's failed Algiers expedition of 1541 was covered in Germany by a *Warhafftige vnd gewise zeytung* and in England by *A lamentable and piteous treatise*, printed in London in 1542.<sup>105</sup>

In the second half of the sixteenth century, two great actions in the Mediterranean in the space of six years were to provide brief respite for Europe from the incessant Turkish threat and to fill Christian eyes and ears with welcome news: the Great Siege of Malta in 1565 and the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. The relief of Malta after a four-month-long Turkish siege was related in newsletters in Spanish, Italian, French, German and Dutch. It was reported in several *Neue Zeitungen*, as well as in other German pamphlets not so entitled, such as the translation of a letter sent from Malta by the Spaniard Francisco de Guevara, who was wounded in the fighting, printed at Augsburg.<sup>106</sup> It was also celebrated in numerous *avvisi*, including one printed in Bologna that had also been sent from Malta and described the lifting of the siege as miraculous.<sup>107</sup> But not all the news reached the printers by the same route. One *avviso*, published in Naples, had arrived via Syracuse, in Sicily; another had reached the printer in Bologna via Rome; and two more, which do not specify where they were printed, had originated in Messina, the title of one of them, *Novi avisi*, suggesting that the printer expected his readers to have had access to previous news of the siege.<sup>108</sup>

Several of the dozens of French *occasionnels* on the siege make a point of indicating that they contain the latest news, such as one printed in Lyon entitled: *Dernieres nouvelles de Malte contenant l'arrivée de l'armée chrestienne en icelle isle*, or one

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104 See Bulgarelli 1967: 16, 18-25, 31; Weller 1872: 84-7; Seguin 1961: 101-2; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 50, 54-5.

105 See Weller 1872: 121, 136; USTC 515319.

106 See Weller 1872: 280-1; USTC 608303.

107 *Copia de una lettera venuta ultimamente da la citta di Malta, nella quale si narra, come quella isola sia miracolosamente liberata dal potentissimo assedio del Turco* (USTC 801168).

108 See USTC 804373, 804380, 804419, 804438. See also Augustin Redondo, 'El mundo turco a través de las relaciones de sucesos de finales del s. XVI y de las primeras décadas del s. XVII: la percepción de la alteridad y su puesta en obra narrativa,' in *Encuentro de civilizaciones (1500-1750). Informar, narrar, celebrar. Actas del Tercer Coloquio Internacional sobre Relaciones de Sucesos. Cagliari, 5-8 de septiembre de 2001*, ed. Antonina Paba and Gabriel Andrés Renales, Alcalá de Henares/Cagliari, Universidad de Alcalá/Università degli Studi di Cagliari, 2003, 235-53; Emilio Sola, 'Avisos de la muerte de los hijos de Solimán I (1553-1563), la muerte de Mustafa y del Corcovado (1553-1554),' in Bégrand, ed., 2009: 335-52.

printed in Paris: *Copie d'une lettre fraichement arrivee de Malte*.<sup>109</sup> In other cases we find early examples of numbered reports, such as one published in Paris entitled: *Copie du troiesime advertisement nouvellement venu de Malte*.<sup>110</sup> The news from Malta also appeared in a Dutch pamphlet printed at Antwerp which was almost certainly the text translated into English and printed at Ghent, entitled: *Certayn and tru good nues, from the syege of the isle Malta wyth the goodly vyctorie, wyche the christenmen, by the favour of God, have ther latlye obtayned, agaynst the Turks*.<sup>111</sup> As also happened with other particularly significant events – such as beatifications, canonisations and outstanding royal occasions – some especially resounding victories, which were first reported in news pamphlets, were thereafter eternalised in substantial volumes. Such was the case with the siege of Malta. Francesco Balbi da Correggio's 260-page history, entitled *La verdadera relacion*, was published in Alcalá de Henares in 1567, and in Barcelona the following year.<sup>112</sup> And the siege was illustrated in dozens of commemorative maps.<sup>113</sup>

Six years later, the momentous victory over the Ottoman fleet at Lepanto on 7 October 1571 inspired as many as three hundred celebratory pamphlets, beginning in Italy and rapidly spreading all over Europe.<sup>114</sup> The dozens of Italian *avvisi* that hailed the triumph include one, published in Milan, that claims to have been sent from Venice on 19 October; another, published in Verona, said to have been sent from Venice on the 20th; a third, printed in Naples, that gives an account of the action that begins on 30 September, as well as including the statements made by one of the most significant Turkish prisoners; and a fourth, printed in Brescia, that claims to add detail derived from various other reports.<sup>115</sup> The triumphal welcome accorded in Rome to the principal Italian general in the battle, Marcantonio Colonna, is reported in two *avvisi*.<sup>116</sup>

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109 See USTC 10709, 34858.

110 See USTC 10710.

111 Another English newsletter on the relief, this one translated from Italian, was *A copie of the last advertisement that came from Malta of the miraculous deliverie of the isle from the longe siege of the Turke, both by sea and land* (USTC 401215). See also USTC 506303, 409606.

112 *La verdadera relacion de todo lo que el anno de M.D.LXV ha svccedido en la isla de Malta* (Barcelona, 1568 – see IB16 1570-1). A later attempt by the Turks to take Malta was reported in a *relación* printed in Seville in 1614: *Relacion de lo que svccedio en la isla de Malta, auiedo llegado de improuisso alli la armada Turquesca, y echado gente en la dicha isla* (BUS 40).

113 See Albert Ganado and Maurice Agius-Vadalà, *A Study in depth of 143 Maps representing the Great Siege of Malta of 1565*, 2 vols., Valetta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1994/5.

114 See Pettegree 2010: 145.

115 See USTC 804940, 804868, 804932, 804942.

116 See Bulgarelli 1967: 120-1.

As for accounts printed in German, the Austrian National Library alone houses as many as ninety-two.<sup>117</sup> Amongst the *Flugschriften* and *Flugblätter* that reported the victory, many were published in Augsburg, Basel, Nuremberg, Leipzig and Dresden.<sup>118</sup> The very numerous French reports included at least three *occasionnels* published in Paris and Lyon,<sup>119</sup> and plenty of reports came out in Dutch. Naturally, there was a spate of Spanish *relaciones* on Lepanto, as the combined Christian forces had been commanded by Don John of Austria, the illegitimate son of Charles V.<sup>120</sup> At least nine pamphlets on the victory survive printed in Barcelona alone before the end of 1571.<sup>121</sup> A *relación* in Spanish was also published in Rome in 1571, written by the Spanish general Lope de Figueroa and dedicated to the Spanish ambassador there.<sup>122</sup> And, in London, Henry Bynneman printed *Letters sent from Venice. Anno. 1571 Containing the certaine and true newes of the most noble victorie of the Christians over the armie of the great Turke: and the names of the lordes & gentlemen of the Christians slaine in the same battell.*<sup>123</sup> Just for once, Catholics and Protestants recognised a triumph that the whole of Christian Europe could celebrate.

The victory at Lepanto was, however, only a momentary reverse for the Turks. Whilst the Christian reconquest of Tunis in 1573 is recorded in several *occasionnels*, such as *La conquete de Tunis* and *La prinse de Biserte et nouveaux advertissemens du succes des affaires de Tunes*, both printed at Lyon, the Turkish conquest of Cyprus, in the same year as Lepanto, is reported in a *Neue Zeitung* published in the Protestant cities of Basel and Strasbourg, and the recovery of Tunis and La Goleta by an Ottoman fleet of over 250 ships in 1574 is reported in a *Neue Zeitung* printed in Protestant Nuremberg.<sup>124</sup>

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117 See Zsuzsa Barbarics and Renate Pieper, 'Handwritten newsletters as a means of communication in early modern Europe,' in *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, III, 'Correspondence and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700', ed. Francisco Bethencourt and Florike Egmond, Cambridge University Press, 2007, 53-79: 71.

118 See Weller 1872: 378-81, 383.

119 See *Lettre de Venize du 19 octobre 1571 touchant la tres-heureuse victoire des chrestiens à l'encontre de l'armée du grand Turc*, published in Lyon and in Paris; a *Vray discours de la bataille des armées chrestienne et turquesque*, printed at Lyon; and an *Advis de la glorieuse victoire obtenue par l'armée chrestienne contre l'armée turquesque au golphe de Lepantho*, printed in Paris (USTC 5151, 21202, 11243, 30017).

120 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 150-4, 158, 160, 163-5, 167. Surprisingly, Barbarics and Pieper (2007: 77) claim that only one news pamphlet on Lepanto was published in Spain.

121 See Pep Valsalobre, 'La batalla de Lepant i Catalunya: aspectes religiosos, patriòtics i literaris,' in *Les altres guerres de religió. Catalunya, Espanya, Europa (segles XVI-XIX)*, ed. Xavier Torres i Sans, Girona, Documenta Universitaria, 2012, 133-57: 138-9.

122 See Bulgarelli 1967: 110.

123 See USTC 507369.

124 See USTC 27208, 27989; Weller 1872: 385, 429.

Amongst the numerous *relaciones* on events in North Africa one, written by the prolific Spanish writer of news pamphlets in verse, Benito Carrasco, and published in Valencia in 1590, tells of a janissary who set fire to a Moorish fortress and freed eighty Christian prisoners, with whom he escaped to Rome.<sup>125</sup> That same year the story of how four hundred Christian prisoners mutined and reached freedom in two galleys belonging to the Turkish admiral Hazan Baxa was published in Spanish in a *Verdadera relacion* in Perpignan; and another, printed in Barcelona in 1624, reports how some Christian prisoners in Algiers used grenades to set fire to part of the Sultan of Turkey's lieutenant's palace.<sup>126</sup>

### *Piracy*

Piracy, especially in the Mediterranean and the Americas, was rampant throughout our period, and beyond. Encounters with Turkish and Barbary shipping in the Mediterranean – as well as with English and Dutch pirates – occupy many Spanish *relaciones*, notably in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Several *relaciones* celebrate Spanish successes against English and Dutch pirates, as for instance one printed in Salamanca in 1609.<sup>127</sup> In 1611, a *relación*, published in Granada, reported a defeat inflicted upon Turkish and Dutch pirates near Malaga, and a *Relacion verdadera* on the victory won by Fadrique de Toledo over thirty-one Dutch vessels in the Straits of Gibraltar in August 1621 that was printed in Madrid was republished as a *Relatione Vera* in Rome that same year.<sup>128</sup> But pirates also operated beyond the Mediterranean. The defeat of Dutch pirates near Lima, thanks to the miraculous intervention of St Rose of Lima, is celebrated in a *relación* published in 1615.<sup>129</sup>

Occasionally, *relaciones* highlight the defeat of a particular pirate or corsair, as in the case of one known as 'Blanquillo,' a Moorish renegade from Arcos de la Frontera, who is the subject of a *relación* published first in Malaga and then in Jerez in 1623.<sup>130</sup> The opposite case – the conversion of a Moorish corsair, an officer of the sultan of Turkey, who came over with his entire fleet – also merited a *relación*, this one published the following year in Cadiz, Baeza and Granada.<sup>131</sup> Whilst most Spanish

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125 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 241. A large number of *relaciones* in verse on actions against the Turks and Moors at sea were published in Spain in the last two decades of the sixteenth century (see Sánchez Pérez, María, 2006a: 131, 134, 138-41

126 See BDRS 4400; Agulló y Cobo 1975: 154.

127 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 476.

128 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 506; Agulló y Cobo 1975: 31; Bulgarelli 1988: 117.

129 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 495, 508, 597.

130 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 115.

131 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 130.

*relaciones* concentrate on victories achieved by Spanish, Italian and Maltese ships, occasionally those by other nationalities are also reported, as in one, printed in Granada in 1611, that tells how a Greek named Orsato, with the help of the great Duke of Osuna, won a signal victory over the Turk, or one, published in Seville in 1621, that tells how ten English galleons defeated seventeen Turkish ships near Tarifa.<sup>132</sup>

Piratical action in the Mediterranean by English privateers was, of course, always seen in a favourable light in the English press. Some newsletters reported English action against enemy shipping, especially against the Spaniards and the Turks, from around 1585, when hostilities broke out against Spain.<sup>133</sup> One example is the pamphlet, printed in London in 1591, entitled: *The Honourable Actions of that most famous and valiant Englishman, Edward Glenham Esquire, latelie obtained against the Spaniards, and the Holy Leauge, in foure sundrie fights*.<sup>134</sup> In 1594 the intrepid Glenham appears in another newsletter, which likewise lauds his bravery,<sup>135</sup> whilst one forty-eight-page pamphlet, printed in London in 1609, is entitled *Newes from Sea, of two notorious Pyrats Ward the Englishman and Danseker the Dutchman*,<sup>136</sup> and two others, containing ballads, bear the title *The Seamans song* and indicate that they were to be sung to the tune of 'The Kings going to Buleoign.'<sup>137</sup> Occasionally, especially when England and Spain were not at war, English newsletters reported Spanish triumphs against Moorish objectives, such as the taking of La Mamora (present-day Mehdia, in Morocco) in 1614.<sup>138</sup> In 1616, an English newsletter related the plucky fight put up by a small British contingent against a far stronger Tunisian

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132 See BDRS 5612; Agulló y Cobo 1975: 37.

133 See Shaaber 1966: 132-3.

134 See Collins 1943: 14-15. Another example is the account of a naval victory, also in 1591: *The Valiant and most laudable fight performed in the straights, by the Centurion of London, against five Spanish Gallies* (see Collins 1943: 16).

135 *Newes from the Leuane Seas. Discribing the many perrilous euent of the most woorthy deseruing Gentleman, Edward Glenham Esquire. His hardy attempts in honourable fights, in great peril [...] Also the cause of his imprisonment, and hys challenge of combat, against a Stranger: maintaining his Countries honour* (Collins 1943: 29).

136 Davies (1986: 377) reproduces the woodcut from this pamphlet, showing two warships firing at each other, with two men hanging from the yardarm of one of them. Another edition published in London the same year and running to 32 pages, bears the title *Ward and Danseker tvvo notorious pyrates, Ward an Englishman, and Danseker a Dutchman. VVith a true relation of all or the mo[st] piraces by them committed vnto the first of Aprill. 1609*.

137 See Collins 1943: 93.

138 *Newes from Mamora, or, A summary relation sent to the king of Spaine of the good successe of a voyage: which it hath pleased God to giue in taking, and suprising, of Mamora, a port in Barbary* (cited in British Library catalogue).

force, and in 1622 another newsletter told a story of English valour pitted against Turkish pirates.<sup>139</sup>

### *The Spanish and the English Armadas*

The undeclared Anglo–Spanish War that began with an English military expedition to the Netherlands in 1585 brought English victories at Cadiz in 1587 and over the Invincible Armada in 1588, but later went in Spain’s favour in engagements in the Caribbean, the Low Countries and France. The Armada, although primarily an Anglo-Spanish affair, was transformed by the press into an event that became hot news throughout Europe. It is perhaps surprising that so much information regarding the preparations being made for the immense enterprise was published in Spain and in Portugal. An account of the fitting-out and provisioning of the fleet in Lisbon – the Portuguese throne had been claimed by Philip II in 1580 – was published in that city and in Burgos in spring 1588 in the form of five poems by Juan de Mesa;<sup>140</sup> a rundown of the galleons and other ships taking part in the ‘felicissima armada’ was published in Lisbon; a *relación* on the preparations being made in Lisbon came out in Madrid; and another, which gave news of the sailing of the fleet at the end of May, was also printed there.<sup>141</sup> Soon afterwards, the Spanish ambassador to France, Bernardino de Mendoza, had a translation of that *relación* printed in Paris,<sup>142</sup> and it was he who arranged at the end of July for an account of the Spaniards’ imagined or wrongly predicted victory in the Channel to be published, based on over-optimistic information that he had supposedly received from a merchant in Dieppe, on the basis of which he asked for a *Te Deum* to be sung in Notre-Dame cathedral (Fig. 3.9).<sup>143</sup> Mendoza’s dispatch telling of the Spanish victory reached Philip II on 8 August, and his report of Drake’s supposed capture arrived the following week. The news that the Spaniards had entered the Channel and had reached Dunkirk on 12–13 August came out in Seville, as did the movements of the ‘felice armada’ up to 5 September.<sup>144</sup>

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139 [1] *A true relation of a most worthy and notable fight, performed the nineteenth day of Iune now last past, by two small shippes of the cite of London, the Vineyard of a hundred and twentie tunnes, and the Vnicorne of a hundred and fourtie tunnes, against sixe great gallies of Tunes*; [2] *A relation strange and true, of a ship of Bristol named the Iacob of 120. tunnes, which was about the end of Octob. last 1621. taken by the Turkish pirats of Argier. And how within five dayes after, foure English youths did valiantly ouercome 13. of the said Turks* (for both of these relations, see Shaaber 1966: 134).

140 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 233; Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 142–3.

141 See IB16 15626, 15628; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 238.

142 See USTC 19534. This *occasionnel* is illustrated in Bertrand T. Whitehead, *Brags and Boasts. Propaganda in the Year of the Armada*, Stroud, Alan Sutton, 1994: 103.

143 See USTC 8949; Whitehead 1994: 104–5.

144 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 237; IB16 15625.

By then, what was presumed to have been a stunning Spanish victory was being celebrated throughout Catholic Europe.<sup>145</sup> However, news in Spain of the Armada's progress came to a very sudden halt once its disastrous failure had become apparent, although a report in Spanish, bearing the date 1589 but not giving the place of printing, purported to tell of the troubles that had befallen the English fleet.<sup>146</sup>

An Italian *avviso*, translated from Spanish and published in Rome, reported the preparations for the Armada, and a *Terzo avviso*, likewise published in Rome, gave the imagined, wishful good news of Spanish success in the Channel.<sup>147</sup> A French report on the preparations for the invasion was published in 1588<sup>148</sup> and was followed by a 'true' account of the engagement of the English fleet in an *occasionnel* entitled: *Discours veritable de ce qui s'est passe entre les deux armees de mer d'Angleterre et d'Espagne*, which was printed in several editions that do not give the place of printing and in at least one published in the Huguenot stronghold of La Rochelle.<sup>149</sup>

Similarly, at least one German *Flugschrift*, translated from Italian, reported the preparations for the operation, and one, translated from Spanish and printed at Nuremberg, did likewise.<sup>150</sup> Another, published at Cologne with an engraved portrait of Sir Francis Drake on its front page, gave an account that began in Lisbon and ended by telling of the Spaniards' defeat.<sup>151</sup> Yet another *Flugschrift*, translated from English and printed in Nieder-Weisel, told how the Armada had been shot to pieces between Plymouth, Dover and Dunkirk and gave the eye-witness report recounted by the Spanish prisoner 'Oberst' Jacob de Medrago, and a broadsheet with a woodcut and a ballad in German was printed at Giessen.<sup>152</sup> In addition, the USTC includes around a dozen Dutch pamphlets on the Armada published in 1588, amongst them several

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145 See Whitehead 1994: 109-11. See also De Lamar Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism. Bernardino de Mendoza and the French Catholic League*, Harvard University Press, 1964. Brendan Dooley discusses the communications problems encountered during the Armada by Giovanni de' Medici, who was supposed to liaise with the Spanish fleet with a view to ferrying the Army of Flanders across the Channel to take part in the invasion of England (see Brendan Dooley, 'Making it Present,' in Dooley, *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2010, 95-114: 97-103).

146 See IB16 15629.

147 See Bulgarelli 1967: 193, 195.

148 *Bref et simple discours des grans appareils de Philippe roy d'Espagne contre la roine et le royaume d'Angleterre* (USTC 19533).

149 See USTC 35660.

150 See Weller 1872: 672; and *Warhaffte Relation, vberschlag, vnd Inhalt der Kriegsrüstung, oder Armada, so Philippus der König von Hispanien, auff dem Meer, bey Lisbona [...] zusammen hat lassen bringen [ ]* (copy in New York Public Library).

151 See Weller 1872: 673.

152 See Weller 1872: 674; Weller 1862-4: 404.



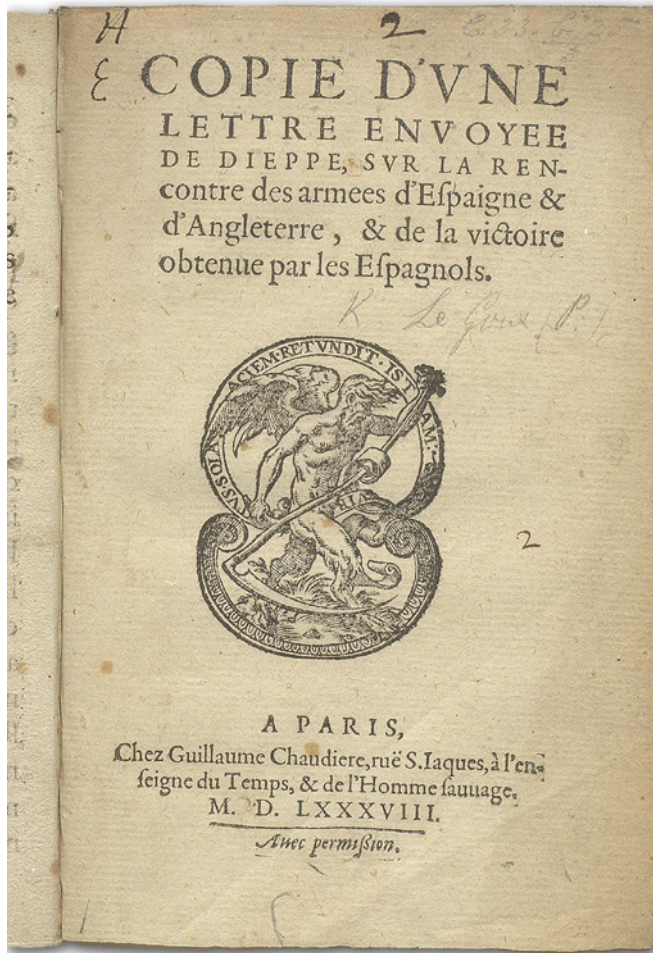


Fig. 3.9. First page of a 6-page *occasionnel*, inspired by the Spanish ambassador and printed in Paris in 1588, that reports the Armada's supposed victory over the English. The page is decorated with the French printer's mark (© The British Library Board, C.33.b.25.(3)).

that tell of the preparations being made to fit it out and several more on its defeat, including one printed at Utrecht and one in Amsterdam.<sup>153</sup>

As for England, Shaaber notes thirty-five English news pamphlets on the preparations made to meet the Armada, and he comments on the surprisingly small number of English accounts of the victory.<sup>154</sup> He also lists the large number of rabidly

<sup>153</sup> See USTC 413911, 422589, 422596, 422639.

<sup>154</sup> See Shaaber 1966: 126-30, 231, 251.

anti-Catholic narratives of battles fought against the Irish.<sup>155</sup> For his part, Bertrand T. Whitehead analyses in detail the extensive Spanish and English propaganda campaigns that were put out in print, sometimes in the guise of news, before, during and after the Armada.<sup>156</sup>

As for the English Armada, the expedition led by Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Norrey to the north-west coast of Spain in 1589, which ended in their failure to take Lisbon and their fleet's costly defeat, it was reported in a German pamphlet, translated from Spanish and printed at Catholic Munich that same year.<sup>157</sup> The successful raid on the port of Cadiz in 1596 by Anglo-Dutch forces commanded by the Earl of Essex was justified in a pamphlet, in Spanish, published in London and presumably intended to be distributed in Spain.<sup>158</sup> Essex's raid also inspired numerous *Neue Zeitungen* published in Protestant German cities, and it was reported in the French press.<sup>159</sup>

The peace embassy of the Count of Villamediana to England in 1603 was reported in a *relación*, as was its sequel the following year – the signing of the Treaty of London, which put an end to nearly twenty years of Anglo-Spanish hostilities.<sup>160</sup> The journey to Spain undertaken in 1605 by the Earl of Nottingham, as James's ambassador to Philip III, and his reception in Madrid, also inspired newsletters, as did the terms of the treaty.<sup>161</sup> However, peace did not last long. After the collapse of the Spanish Match in 1623, the disastrous Anglo-Dutch expedition in 1625, inspired by the Duke of Buckingham, which ended with the English soldiers getting fatally drunk on Cadiz wine, was reported in Spanish *relaciones* and Italian *avvisi*.<sup>162</sup> In 1626, perhaps with

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155 See Shaaber 1966: 130-2.

156 See Whitehead 1994.

157 *Relation was der capitan Drackh unnd colonel Noriz welche anno 1589. an stat der Koenigin in Engelland den don Antonio in das Koenigreich Portugal einsetzen und die Spannier daraus vertreiben sollen mit irer mechtigen Armada von der zeit an als sie abgefahrn bis sie wider haim kommen ausgericht* (USTC 690551).

158 *Declaracion de las causas que han movido la magestad de la reyna d'Yngalaterra a embiar un armada real, para defensa de sus reynos y señorios contra las fuerças del rey d'Espana, lo qual se ha de publicar por los generales de la dicha armada* (IB16 6802).

159 For instance, *Nouveaux advis envoyez de Madrid et Seville en Espagne*, printed in Lyon, and a *Copie d'une missive écrite de Seville*, printed in Paris (see Weller 1872: 827-30; USTC 11918, 49266).

160 See BDRS 2821, 0811; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 415.

161 See Collins 1943: 74, 70-1, 75. Collins (1943: 71) includes the following relation, published in 1605: *A relation of such things as were obserued to happen in the iourney of the right Honourable Charles Earle of Nottingham, L. High Admirall of England, his highnesse ambassadour to the King of Spaine being sent thither to take the oath of the sayd King for the maintenance of peace betweene the two famous kings of Great Brittain and Spaine*.

162 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 172, 190; Bulgarelli 1988: 169, 184.

a view to countering the national shame over the failed Cadiz raid, a newsletter was published on the plucky assault made on an unnamed port in Galicia by thirty-five valiant Englishmen.<sup>163</sup>

### *Media Heroes*

Reports of victories inevitably lent themselves to the creation of media heroes, with rulers, or their chief military commanders, occupying the limelight, although, as we have just seen, even anonymous heroes could make the news if their exploits could be made to sound dauntless enough. At the other extreme, one story that swept through Europe was the news of twenty-four-year-old King Sebastian of Portugal's death, or at least disappearance, in 1578 at the battle of Ksar El Kebir, also known as the battle of Three Kings. It is reported in a *Flugschrift* entitled *Portugalesische Schlacht*, published in the Protestant cities of Leipzig and Nuremberg, in a *Neue Zeitung*, to be sung to the tune of 'Est ist auff erd kein schwerer leiden,' in Cologne, and in a *Flugblatt* in Augsburg entitled *Wahrhaffte Contrafactur der laidigen Schlacht*.<sup>164</sup> The news was also given in pamphlets printed in both Dutch and French at Antwerp the same year, in an *occasionnel* printed in Paris, as well as in an *avviso* published in Mantua and in Padua which states that the account is the translation of a letter sent from Spain.<sup>165</sup>

King Sebastian became the subject of myths and legends. A play by George Peele was printed in London in 1594 under the title *The battell of Alcazar fought in Barbarie, betweene Sebastian king of Portugall, and Abdelmelec king of Marocco. With the death of Captaine Stukeley. As it was sundrie times plaid by the Lord high Admirall his servants*,<sup>166</sup> and a Dutch pamphlet, printed at The Hague in 1599, retold the story of his disappearance.<sup>167</sup> A pamphlet printed in London in 1601, entitled *The Strangest Aduenture that ever happened*, recounted the disappearance of the Portuguese king and claimed that he had been set free 'the XV of December last,' informing readers that the story had been 'All first done in Spanish, then in French, and now lastly translated into English.'<sup>168</sup> Also in 1601, John Busby registered at the

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163 *A true relation of a brave English strategem practised lately vpon a sea-towne in Galizia, (one of the Kingdomes in Spaine) and most valiantly and succesfully performed by one English ship alone of 30. tonne, with no more than 35. men in her* (cited in the British Library catalogue).

164 See Weller 1872: 497; USTC 676009, 750267.

165 See USTC 414948, 79791, 805409, 1930; Bulgarelli 1967: 152.

166 See USTC 512662.

167 *Seer vreemde tydinge vant wederom verrysen van don Sebastiaen coninck van Portugael, die verloren is gheweest xxi. jaren, als hy in Barbaryen den slach verloor, tegen Muley Muluco* (USTC 424283).

168 See Collins 1943: 48.

Stationers' Company a pamphlet entitled *The wonder of the world of Don Sebastian the King of Portugall that lost himself in the battell of Affrick Ann 1578, &c.*, whilst, for its part, a newsletter published the following year claimed that Sebastian had returned to Spain and was living in Sanlúcar de Barrameda, in Andalusia.<sup>169</sup>

Amongst the pamphlets that convey news of battles, many of course highlight acts of bravery. Individual soldiers could merit a newsletter, especially if sufficiently well connected. One such was the son of the Earl of Dorset, whose death was memorialised in a newsletter registered by John Wolfe in 1592: *A Commemoration of the most valiant and worthie Knight Sir William Sackuill slayne in the Warres of Ffraunce*.<sup>170</sup> Another was Sir Martin Frobisher, who was fatally wounded during the relief of Brest in 1594: Edward White registered with the Stationers' Company *A sorrowfull songe made vpon ye Valiant Souldier Sir Martin Ffrobisher*.<sup>171</sup> Several Spanish commanders achieved media fame, thanks to the *relaciones* published on their achievements, one the most successful in this sense being the Duke of Osuna, viceroy of Sicily (1611–1616) and of Naples (1616–1620), who also appeared in Italian *avvisi*.<sup>172</sup> However, a few Spanish *relaciones* focus on heroes who were neither officers nor well born. One such is the *relación* in verse written by Hernando de la Cárcel, published in Majorca in 1591, that tells how one Juan Luca, from Ragusa, in Sicily, managed to sail a vessel singlehanded to Palma after it had been sacked by an English ship.<sup>173</sup>

In early modern Europe, most readers of, and listeners to, printed news pamphlets heard more about foreign climes than about local news. They could follow the European discoveries of lands in the Americas, Asia, Africa and Australia, the attempts to Christianise their inhabitants, and the latter's acceptance of or resistance to their European discoverers and colonisers. Above all, they heard about war, on land and at sea. What they learned was, at the very least, that the world beyond their national frontiers was largely made up of threatening heretics and infidels, and that the enemies of their nation and their faith could be overcome if the courage and the devotion that had ensured victories in the past continued in the present and into the future. The massive quantities of printed war reporting brought about a pervasive flow of information selected and designed to reassure and encourage

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169 See Collins 1943: 112, 58.

170 See Collins 1943: 105.

171 See Collins 1943: 108.

172 See Bulgarelli 1988: 77. On Osuna, see Sagrario López Poza, 'El gran duque de Osuna y las relaciones sobre su actuación en el Mediterráneo como virrey de Sicilia y Napolés,' in *Con gracia y agudeza. Studi offerti a Giuseppina Ledda*, ed. Antonina Paba, Roma, Aracne, 2007, 407-40.

173 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 245; Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 144.

its consumers regarding the providential causes pursued by their sovereigns that put hated foes to flight or, at the worst, produced treaties that left national pride intact. Written, almost without exception, from the point of view of the victors, very frequently by military commanders, reports of battles were infused with patriotism, frequently praising 'our' heroism and condemning 'their' cowardice or cruelty. As much celebrations of success as mere information, they went out of their way to show how victory was brought about by superior soldiership, by the wisdom of rulers and by divine intervention.



## Catholics, Protestants, Heretics, Infidels and Jews

The remarkably strong growth of the German press early in the sixteenth century owes a very great deal to the rise of Protestantism and its polemics with Rome. A huge amount of effort was devoted to propaganda by both sides, including – as we have already seen when it came to war reporting – the diffusion of appropriately selected and slanted news. Luther and his fellow reformers rapidly became prolific exploiters of the power of the press to spread their theses across the continent and to purvey news that put them in a good light and the Catholic Church in a bad one. In 1518 Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses*, first written in Latin, were translated into German and then copied and printed throughout Germany, reaching Italy, France and England by the following year. When, after being excommunicated in 1521, he was summoned to appear before an assembly of the Holy Roman Empire at Worms and there refused to recant, he was declared an outlaw by the newly elected emperor Charles V and continued to pen polemics against the papacy, as well as against the Jews and the Anabaptists. Altogether, by the time of his death in 1546, his multifarious writings are reckoned to have gone into over three thousand editions.<sup>1</sup> Thanks to Luther, Wittenberg rapidly became a thriving publishing centre, printing his works and also cheap pamphlets and polemical tracts in hundreds of thousands of copies. However, Rome was not slow to answer back. As early as 1520, Catholic anti-Lutheran pamphlets were being published, occasionally in the guise of *Neue Zeitungen*, such as the lengthy poem entitled *Neue zeyttung Allen guten*

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<sup>1</sup> See Mark U. Edwards Jr., *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther*, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2005.

*Lutterischen*.<sup>2</sup> With the Counter-Reformation, Catholic cities in northern Europe, such as Antwerp and Cologne, countered with news and propaganda of their own. Thus was born the first major ideological propaganda war conducted via the press.<sup>3</sup> Pens and printing presses were kept busy at the same time as Catholics and Protestants killed one another by the tens of thousands on the battlefield, in sieges and in massacres and, in smaller numbers but more dramatically, in show trials and executions.

## The Church of Rome

Throughout our period, and throughout Catholic Europe, nearly every day was marked by public religious activity: by the daily rituals of church services, by the annual round of saints' days, feasts and festivals, and by the celebration of special occasions, such as the visit of royalty or of church dignitaries, beatifications, canonisations or the acquisition of relics, as well as the trial and punishment of infidels and heretics. Secular and ecclesiastical events of particular significance were greeted, not just by the prescribed ceremonial and the attendance of the populace, but also by pamphlets and books whose purpose was to publicise and commemorate them and preserve a record of the collective endorsement involved. Apart from associated oral and printed paraphernalia, such as edicts, decrees, notices, ballads and hymns, the result was hundreds of relations of such activities which, in especially important cases, could include accounts of processions, illuminations, decorations, church services, sermons, celebratory verses, etc., and could vary from brief news pamphlets to tomes composed to memorialise the particular occasion and which could take a year or more to compile and print.<sup>4</sup>

The visits undertaken by popes were generally recorded in *avvisi*. Typical of the media impact such visits could have was Clement VIII's journey that involved his taking the holy sacrament to various Italian cities in 1598. A summary of the itinerary was published in Rome, Bologna, Ferrara and Padua, and his entry into Macerata was celebrated in an account published there that included descriptions of the triumphal arches specially erected for the occasion.<sup>5</sup> His visit to Ferrara was recorded in *avvisi*

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<sup>2</sup> Weller (1872: 9) describes this pamphlet as having been printed in Wittenberg, though it appears to have been published in Nuremberg (see USTC 677639).

<sup>3</sup> See Luc Racault, *Hatred in Print. Catholic Propaganda and Protestant Identity during the French Wars of Religion*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> For an account of *relaciones* on festivities, religious and civil, put on in the period in Barcelona, see Ettinghausen 2010. As Michelson (2013) shows, in Reformation Italy many preachers extended the reach of their sermons by remaking them for publication.

<sup>5</sup> See Bulgarelli 1967: 334, 299.



published there and in Rome, as were his reception in Urbino, his departure for Ancona and his return to the Vatican.<sup>6</sup>

### *Celebrations*

In early modern Catholic Europe the processes of beatification and canonisation required publicity in order to ensure popular acclamation and devotion, not least through the promotion of the miracles performed by the candidates or the incorruptibility of their corpses. One case among hundreds was the publication of a *relación* in verse on the celebrations held in Barcelona to mark the revelation in 1617 that the body of Archbishop Oleguer of Tarragona had remained uncorrupted after 482 years.<sup>7</sup> The arrival of prestigious relics was the occasion for important special celebrations. One such was the reception given in Valencia in 1600 to a relic of St Vincent Ferrer. A *relación* published there in the form of two poems included descriptions of the street illuminations and the fiestas, the clothes worn by the most prominent citizens and the solemn procession arranged for the event.<sup>8</sup>

Post-canonisation miracles could also make the news, such as the aid provided by Raymond of Penyafort to local seamen to help them capture a Turkish ship near Tossa in 1614.<sup>9</sup> A profusion of pamphlets published in Barcelona had accompanied Raymond's canonisation in 1601, including at least eleven reporting events organised in Catalonia to celebrate it.<sup>10</sup> The festivities mounted for the beatification of Ignatius of Loyola in 1610 occupied *relaciones* published in Valladolid, Seville, Salamanca and Lima.<sup>11</sup> Those put on for the beatification of Teresa of Avila in 1614 inspired *relaciones* printed in Cordova and Seville, as well as a book-length account of the ceremonies held in Barcelona and in other cities in Catalonia, together with sermons composed for the occasion.<sup>12</sup> The canonisation in 1622 of the Italian Philip Neri and of four Spaniards – Teresa, Ignatius, Francis Xavier and Isidore the Labourer – provoked

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6 See Bulgarelli 1967: 328-30, 333, 336; 332, 335.

7 See Ettinghausen 2000a: 30.

8 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 368. On the celebration of beatifications and canonisations in early seventeenth-century Madrid, see Ignacio Arellano, 'Fiestas hagiográficas madrileñas en el Siglo de Oro,' in *Literatura, política y fiesta en el Madrid de los Siglos de Oro*, José M<sup>a</sup> Díez Borque, Esther Borrego Gutiérrez and Catalina Buezo Canalejo eds., Madrid, Visor Libros, 2009, 195-225.

9 See Ettinghausen 2000a: 13. Relations on miracles are considered at greater length in chapter 6, below.

10 See Henry Ettinghausen, 'De la noticia a la prensa (San Raimundo de Peñafort, Barcelona, 1601),' in *Actas del V Congreso de la Asociación Internacional Siglo de Oro, Münster 1999*, ed. Christoph Strosetzki, Madrid/Frankfurt am Main, Iberoamericana/Vervuert, 2001, 490-502.

11 See BUS, 27; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 490, 488; BDRS 1301.

12 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 598-9; BDRS 2739.

a glut of rejoicing throughout Spain and a mass of *relaciones* of the events.<sup>13</sup> The Jesuits' celebrations of their new saints were held world-wide: a *relación* survives of the festivities held in Lima.<sup>14</sup> Accounts of the ceremonies put on in Rome were, of course, published in Italy, amongst them a *Relatione Sommaria* and a *Saggio delle feste*.<sup>15</sup>

The big religious news stories of the early seventeenth century included the pope's acquiescence in 1617 to Philip III's request that public denial of the Immaculate Conception be forbidden, a decision that was greeted in Spain with prolonged rejoicing that found its echo in dozens of *relaciones*, with possibly half of all the works printed in Seville between 1615 and 1619 having to do with the Marian frenzy.<sup>16</sup> Fiestas held in the Virgin's honour in 1615 were reported in *relaciones* published in Seville and Toledo, and innumerable other *relaciones* were published thereafter, including accounts of the bullfight, mock battle, masquerades and tournaments arranged in Seville in 1617 in the Virgin's honour and of the tourney and celebrations mounted by such guilds as the cap makers and the silk traders of the city.<sup>17</sup> The festivities celebrated in Paris in 1618 to mark the day that news arrived of the pope's support for the dogma were likewise recounted in a *relación* printed in Seville, whilst an account of the University of Baeza's celebrations was published in Baeza in 1618.<sup>18</sup>

### *Missions, Embassies, Conversions*

The propagation of the faith across the globe provided news throughout the sixteenth century that was politically and emotionally highly charged, especially in the context of the Wars of Religion, one implied message being that, at the same time as Roman Catholics were being martyred from England to Japan, infidels were being converted to the Church of Rome in colonies and trading nations from Asia to the Americas. From the beginning of the sixteenth century the Portuguese were doing business in the Far East and by the middle of the century had occupied Manila, whilst they and the Spaniards opened up trade routes across the Pacific. The press in Italy and Spain reproduced news from missionaries in far-flung lands, such as the Jesuit

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13 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 40, 48, 60-1, 64.

14 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 92.

15 Bulgarelli 1988: 127, 134.

16 See Pierre Civil, 'Iconografía y relaciones en pliegos: la exaltación de la Inmaculada en la Sevilla de principios del siglo XVII,' in *Las relaciones de sucesos en España (1500-1750). Actas del Primer Coloquio Internacional (Alcalá de Henares, 8, 9 y 10 de junio de 1995)*, ed. María Cruz García de Enterría et al., Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne/Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alcalá, 1996, 65-77.

17 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 589, 591, 600; 655, 658-61, 666-7; BDRS 4032.

18 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 710; BDRS 766.

Enrique Enríquez's report from India, published by his order in Coimbra in 1551, only eleven years after the Jesuits' official recognition by the pope, and a Spanish *relación* published in 1556 brought together official letters sent by the Jesuits from India, Japan, Brazil and China.<sup>19</sup>

One of the most remarkable media successes achieved by Rome later in the century was the Japanese diplomatic mission known as the Tenshō Embassy (1582-90), which was publicised across Catholic Europe.<sup>20</sup> The journey undertaken by four young Japanese noblemen who had been converted by the Jesuits took them to Macau, Kochi, Goa and Lisbon, where they arrived in 1584, before going on to Rome. Italian accounts of the reception accorded by the pope to the four young Japanese ambassadors were printed in 1585 in Venice, Reggio Emilia, Brescia, Milan and elsewhere.<sup>21</sup> In Lyon in 1585 Benoît Rigaud printed *Le discours de la venue des princes japponois en Europe*, and another pamphlet published the same year claimed to portray *Le vray pourtraict prins du naturel des quatre grands princes Japponoys venus dernièrement à Rome*.<sup>22</sup> Their arrival in Milan was recorded in an illustrated German *Flugblatt* printed at Augsburg in 1586 (Fig. 4.1), and their reception in Spain by Philip II was reported in a *relación* published the same year in Barcelona, whilst their stopover in India on their journey home was reported in an *avviso* published in Bologna in 1589.<sup>23</sup>

Coinciding with the European tour of the Japanese ambassadors, we find the news story of the conversion, also in Rome, of the Queen of Algiers, celebrated in an *occasionnel* published in 1587 in Paris, Lyon and Antwerp.<sup>24</sup> The same report, written by Francesco Nogit, was translated into German and printed at Augsburg in 1588.<sup>25</sup> Other foreign missions to Rome – such as the arrival of Persian ambassadors in 1601,

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19 See IB16 6862; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 110; and also *Copia de vnas cartas de algunos padres y hermanos de la compañía de Iesus que escriuieron de la India, Iapon, y Brasil a los padres y hermanos de la misma compañía, en Portugal trasladadas de portugues en castellano* (Coimbra, 1554); and Correia-Afonso 1955.

20 See *En busca del sol naciente. Las embajadas Tenshō (1582 -1588) y Keichō (1613 -1617). Catálogo de la exposición*, Simancas, Archivo General, Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2013; Adriana Boscaro, *Sixteenth Century European Printed Works on the First Japanese Mission to Europe. A Descriptive Bibliography*, Leiden, Brill, 1973; Michael Cooper, *The Japanese Mission to Europe, 1582-1590: The Journey of Four Samurai Boys Through Portugal, Spain and Italy*, Folkstone, Global Oriental, 2005.

21 See USTC 806035, 806055, 833667, 834853; Bulgarelli 1967: 167, 170-1, 173.

22 See USTC 34951, 76544.

23 See USTC 752154 (and Weller 1872: 633-4); Agulló y Cobo 1966: 224; IB16 10633; Bulgarelli 1967: 199.

24 See USTC 12244, 12738, 62735.

25 See USTC 677202.



Fig. 4.1. A strikingly handsome *Flugblatt*, printed in Augsburg in 1586, depicting the four young Japanese ambassadors, with their Jesuit escort, on their arrival in Milan. The print bears the seal of the Jesuits (University Library, Kyoto).

reported in a *relación* printed in Saragossa – similarly provided exotic and positive news stories, as did the report of the rich gift sent by Philip III to the king of Persia, who had fought against the Sultan of Turkey.<sup>26</sup> The visit to Florence by the emir of Sidon in 1614 was likewise reported in *relaciones* published in Seville and Barcelona.<sup>27</sup>

A second Japanese delegation to Europe, known as the Keichō Embassy, which also included Central America, was undertaken some twenty years after the first. The Franciscan Fray Luis Sotelo's *relación* of the baptism of Idate Masamune, king of Boju,

<sup>26</sup> The ambassadors' arrival in Portugal is reported in a *Relação do caminho que fez da Persia o Embaixador do Grão. Sofi* (Lisbon, 1602 – see Agulló y Cobo 1966: 381). For the report of Philip III's gift, see Agulló y Cobo 1966: 745, 755.

<sup>27</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 572-3.

was delivered in Seville by his ambassador, Hasekura Rokuemon Tsunenaga, and published in that city in 1614.<sup>28</sup> Further news of the embassy, including the conversion of the ambassador (baptised Francisco Felipe Faxicura), is contained in other Spanish *relaciones*, and a copy of the edict issued by the Japanese king, in which he sought to impose Christianity on all his subjects, was published in Seville that same year.<sup>29</sup>

Spanish *relaciones* frequently tell stories of the conversion of infidels. One, published in 1580, reports how the Christian galley slaves in a Turkish ship mutinied and how eighty Turks who had been enslaved with them begged to be baptised when the vessel landed in Palermo.<sup>30</sup> Another *relación*, sent to the Vatican by the bishop of Segovia, in the Philippines, and published in Valencia in 1601, told of mass conversions achieved by the Dominicans, whilst one sent from the East Indies and published in Barcelona in 1606 reported on the conversion there of more than three thousand infidels by the Augustinians.<sup>31</sup>

Other than their conversion to Christianity, however, good news of non-believers could, of course, consist of disasters befalling them. An exotic assassination – that of the Turkish Sultan Mehemet Bassa in 1579 – had been illustrated in a *Warhafftige Contrafactur* (i.e. a true depiction) in a *Flugblatt* published in Nuremberg the following year, with the execution of the murderer shown, as well as his crime. Another piece of good news regarding Turkey appeared in a pamphlet printed in Seville in 1621 that told of the death of the sultan, of the fire that had burned down his seraglio, of the freedom gained by the Christian slaves in his palace and of the struggles between the rival pretenders to the throne.<sup>32</sup> And the same could apply to Protestants. Thus, an Italian *relazione* printed in Venice in 1588 tells of the terrifying comet-like apparition that hung over the Protestant town of Rupelmonde for five days and persuaded many heretics to recant (Fig. 4.2).<sup>33</sup>

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28 See BDRS 5862; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 557.

29 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 580-1, 565. An account in Spanish of the reception accorded to the ambassador by Pope Paul V, in the form of a letter by a witness to the event sent to a priest in Seville, was published in that city in 1616 (see Agulló y Cobo 1966: 644). The reception by the pope of the delegation from Japan had been published the previous year in Rome (see Bulgarelli, 1988: 73).

30 *Relación verdadera que trata como dozientos Christianos y Turcos, que andauan al remo se leuantaron con vna galera llamada la Capitana del Turco matando y quemando los demas Turcos q. venían de ella* (n. p., 1580) (BDRS 5801).

31 See BDRS 4574, 4407.

32 See BUS 76. For the literary treatment of Muslims in Spanish *relaciones*, see Giuseppina Ledda and Antonina Paba, 'Cómo se construye la otredad: procedimientos de enaltecimiento y denigración,' in Bégrand, ed., 2009: 253-72.

33 A brief *Discorso naturale* on prodigies by Paulo Larduccio occupies the last three pages of this 8-page pamphlet.

Like relations published elsewhere, some English newsletters tell of misfortunes that befell the Turks and the Moors, such as one, published in 1607, entitled: *Three miseries of Barbary plague, famine, civill warre, with a relation of the death of Mahamet, the late emperour, and a briefe report of the now present wars between three brothers*. Another, printed in 1618, reported the death of Sultan Ahmed I,<sup>34</sup> and the death of Ahmed's heir, three years later, inspired another newsletter, printed in London in 1622.<sup>35</sup>

### *Martyrdom*

As we have seen, the press coverage of war in early modern Europe very rarely gave accounts of anything but victories, sometimes including details of the numbers of enemy soldiers killed or taken prisoner and of booty captured. The news hardly ever includes any idea of the hardships and miseries of life as a soldier that Don Quixote eloquently sets out in his speech on Arms and Letters. However, in accounts of martyrdoms, the pain and suffering inflicted on the victims were frequently described in order to enhance the glory achieved thereby. Religious persecution, and in particular execution, provided an important current of news inspired by ideological fervour and political calculation. War and religion went hand in glove, with religion justifying war, and war promoting religion. To take just one example, Spanish news of the persecution of Catholics in England vied with English news of the persecution of Protestants in Spain and France.

Contemporary with the Tenshō Embassy to Europe was the 'felice morte' of five Jesuits in the East Indies in 1583, publicised in an *avviso* printed in Venice that same year and in Rome in 1584.<sup>36</sup> What, however, really shocked Catholic Europe was the savage persecution of Christian missionaries and converts in Japan in the decade following that Japanese embassy. A *relación* sent by the Spanish governor of the Philippines and published in 1598 in Seville tells of the martyrdom of six Spanish Franciscans who had been crucified in Japan, together with twenty Japanese converts. An Italian *relatione* printed in Rome states that it is a translation of the Spanish original published in Seville, whilst another, printed in Palermo, mentions the fact that the Franciscans were all Spanish, and yet another, published in Rome, Bologna and Milan in 1599, stresses the fact that it was the king of Japan who had ordered

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<sup>34</sup> *Nevves from Turkie. Or a true and perfect relation sent from Constantinople Touching the death of Achmet the last emperour of the Turkes. As also the miraculous deliuerances of Mustapha, (brother to the said Achmet then emperour) and his strang escapes from his purposed death* (cited in British Library catalogue).

<sup>35</sup> Copy at British Library, C.141.aa.2.

<sup>36</sup> See USTC 801448-9.

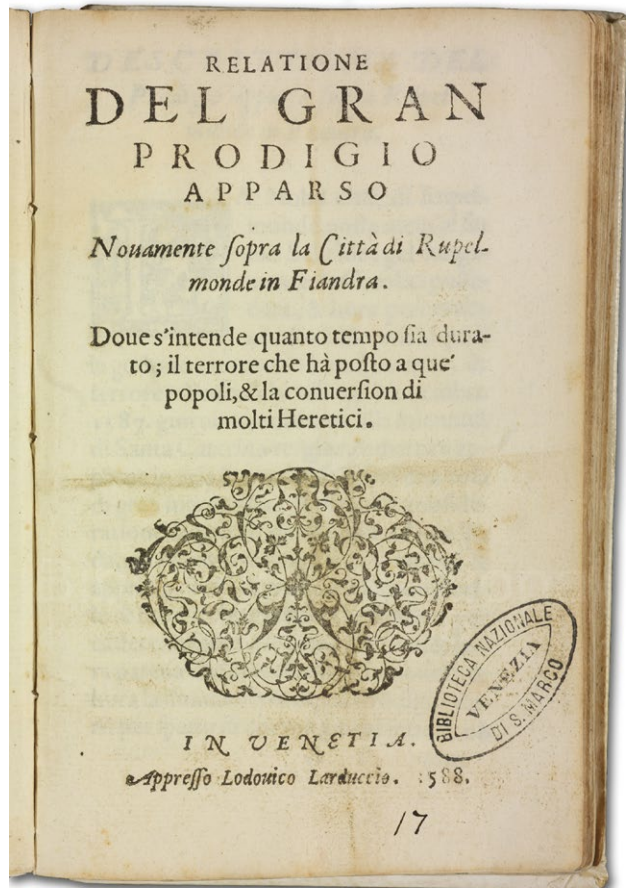


Fig. 4.2. First page of a *Relatione*, published in Venice in 1588, telling of the great prodigy that had recently appeared above the Protestant city of Rupelmonde, in Flanders. The elegantly laid out title, which puts the key words 'DEL GRAN PRODIGIO' in the largest capitals, stresses the grandiosity of the apparition, the terror it struck into the population and the fact that, as a result, many heretics were converted to Catholicism. The page is ornamented with a large stock woodcut (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice).

the Christians to be crucified.<sup>37</sup> A German relation of that same mass martyrdom was published in Munich in 1599.<sup>38</sup> The story was powerful enough for it still to be recounted in 1600. A version published that year in Naples, running to three chapters, is a far more detailed report than the previous news pamphlets, and in

<sup>37</sup> See Bulgarelli 1967: 285; USTC 858602, 831066-7, 831069.

<sup>38</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 304; and *Relation, ausz befelch Herrn Francisci Teglij, Gubernators, vnd general Obristens der Philippinischen Inseln, inn welcher kürztlich angezeigt wirdt, welcher Gestalt sechs geistliche Brüder ausz Hispania, desz Ordens s. Francisci von der obseruantz* (Munich, 1599).

1601 a book-length account of the martyrdom, written by Juan de Santa María, came out in Madrid.<sup>39</sup>

Other shocking instances of the mass execution of Christians in Japan made the news in successive years. One relation, published in English at the Jesuit College at Saint-Omer in 1619, whose press was financed by Philip III of Spain, derived from an account printed in Mexico.<sup>40</sup> Another, published at Saint-Omer five years later, translated from Spanish, reported the most spectacularly wholesale martyrdom – that of 118 Christians put to death in Japan – in *The theater Of Iaponia's Constancy* (Fig. 4.3).<sup>41</sup> In 1628 the Spanish poetess and playwright Ana Caro de Mallén published in Seville an account in verse of the ceremonies held there in honour of the Japanese martyrs.<sup>42</sup>

Innumerable accounts of the martyrdom of Christian prisoners in North Africa and Turkey also provided horrifying and inspiring copy for news pamphlets, not least in Spain and Italy. A *relación* published in 1532 describes the martyrdom in Fez of a Franciscan friar; another, in verse, printed in Seville in 1555, tells how five newly converted Moors were martyred in Algiers.<sup>43</sup> One published in Cordova in 1577 reports on the martyrdom in Constantinople of another Franciscan, a piece of news to which it appends a miracle performed by the Virgin of Montserrat for the benefit of an Andalusian priest who had been captured and sold as a slave when he went to try and ransom his brother in Oran.<sup>44</sup> A *relación* in verse printed in Valencia in 1581 tells how a devout Spanish woman was burned alive on Calvary, whilst the ‘dichosa muerte’ (i.e. blessed death) of another Franciscan, the Sardinian Francisco Zirano, who was flayed alive in Algiers, is told in a *relación* printed in Barcelona in 1605

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39 See USTC 836980; BDRS 2761.

40 *A briefe relation of the persecution lately made against the Catholike Christians, in the kingdome of Iaponia [...]. Written in Spanish, and printed first at Mexico in the West Indies.* The relation is reproduced in an edition published in Amsterdam/New York by Theatrum Orbis Terrarum/Da Capo Press, 1969. For the Jesuit press at St Omer, in the Artois, see Fernando Bouza, *Papeles y opinión. Políticas de publicación en el Siglo de Oro*, Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2008: 46ff.

41 The Spanish original of this newsletter had been printed in Seville in 1624 (see Agulló y Cobo 1975: 13).

42 See BUS, 159; and Francisco López Estrada, ‘La relación de las fiestas por los mártires del Japón, de Doña Ana Caro de Mallén (Sevilla), 1628,’ in *Libro-homenaje a Antonio Pérez Gómez*, ed. Edward M. Wilson, II, Cieza, La fonte que mana, 1978, 51-9. On Jesuit reports from Japan, see Augustin Redondo, ‘La “découverte” du Japon au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Expansionisme portugais et évangélisation à travers les lettres des jésuites traduites en castillan et publiées en 1575,’ in *Vents du large. Hommage à Georges Boisvert*, ed. Jacqueline Penjon and Anne-Marie Quint, Paris, Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2002.

43 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 38; Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 321.

44 See BDRS 5797. For other *relaciones* in verse on captives and renegades, see Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 298-300, 304-5, 308, 317-19.



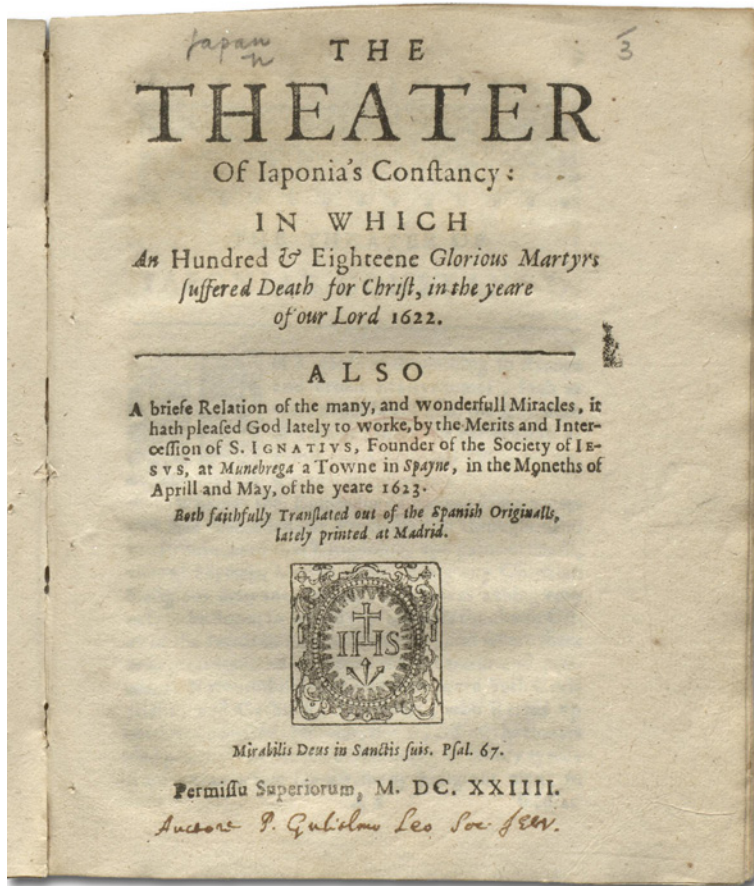


Fig. 4.3. First page of a newsletter in two parts: the first, on the martyrdom in Japan of 118 Catholics in 1622; the second, on the miracles worked by St Ignatius in the Spanish village of Munébrega in 1623. This unusually lengthy (48-page) newsletter was published by the Jesuits at St Omer in 1624, doubtless with a view to smuggling copies into England. The layout makes use of a large number of fonts and the badge of the Jesuit Order (© The British Library Board, C.26.k.1.(3)).

and, in the same year, in a *relatione* translated from Spanish and printed in Turin, Venice, Treviso, Florence and Viterbo, with the last two editions adding the story of several other Christians who were impaled or burned alive.<sup>45</sup> The profusion of verse *relaciones* on martyrdoms, from the 1570s onwards, reflects the urge to move the people in Catholic Europe by means of dramatically effective example, as promoted

<sup>45</sup> For these and numerous subsequent editions that appeared in Italian until well into the eighteenth century, see Gabriel Andrés, 'Periplo editorial, de traducciones y re-lecturas sobre una relación de martirio: Francisco Cirano sardo, 1605-2001,' in Catedra García and Díaz Tena, eds., 2013: 13-31.

by the Council of Trent.<sup>46</sup> However, some *relaciones* recorded martyrdoms closer to home, such as in France, where a Franciscan friar was executed by Huguenots in Macon, a piece of news that shared a *relación* written by the blind Spanish versifier Cristóbal Bravo, published in Toledo in 1572, and which also carried news of the providential punishment meted out to an evil man who had planned to elope with a nun (Fig. 4.4).<sup>47</sup>

After Henry VIII's break with Rome in 1534, England provided the scene for a considerable number of executions of prominent Roman Catholics that were very well publicised in Catholic Europe. The execution of Thomas More in 1535, and of other English Catholics, was reported in a German *Flugschrift*, translated from Latin and printed at Freiburg that same year, whilst another *Flugschrift* on More's death, translated from French, was published at Erfurt the following year.<sup>48</sup> However, the tables were turned under the reign of Henry's daughter, Mary I, with – to take one particularly newsworthy example – the Duke of Northumberland's confession on the scaffold in 1553, in which he proclaimed his conversion to Catholicism, thus providing a superb propaganda coup for Rome. His speech was published in Bloody Mary's London, entitled: *The saying of Iohn late Duke of Northumberlande vppon the scaffold, at the tyme of his execution*.<sup>49</sup> An *avviso* with his speech in Italian came out the same year, as did a pamphlet in German printed in Vienna, and one in Dutch in Louvain and in Antwerp (Fig. 4.5).<sup>50</sup> As in the case of Northumberland's last speech, religious persecution provided news that was often barely distinguishable from outright propaganda.

Hardly surprisingly, Mary's brutal repression of Protestantism was reported with enthusiasm in the Spanish press. In an exceptionally long (thirty-two-page) *relación*, which claims that she was obeyed by all her subjects, Northumberland's speech and execution are preceded by a lengthy account of the 'miserias y calamidades' suffered

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46 For verse *relaciones* on martyrdom in the Mediterranean area, see Belén Carro Carbajal, 'España y el mundo mediterráneo: advocaciones y milagros en las relaciones poéticas de martirios a finales del siglo XVI', in Pierre Civil, Françoise Crémoux and Jacobo Sanz, eds., *España y el mundo mediterráneo a través de las relaciones de sucesos (1500-1750)*. *Actas del IV Coloquio Internacional sobre Relaciones de Sucesos (París, 23-25 de septiembre de 2004)*, Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2008: 55-68. For *relaciones* on renegades and martyrs, see Patrick Bégrand, 'Las figures del renegado y del mártir, metáforas del infierno y del paraíso,' in Civil, Crémoux and Sanz, eds., 2008: 25-39.

47 Another edition was printed in Saragossa in 1573 (see BDRS 4395).

48 *Glaubwürdiger bericht von dem todt des edlen hochgelerten Herrn Thome Mori und anderer herlicher menner in Engellandt getoedt, durch ein Epistel eynem guten freuntt zugeschickt auß Latein in Teutsch vertholmetschet* (USTC 659908); *Von der vorurteilung und tode etwan des grossen Cantzlers von Engeland Herr Thome Mori darumb das er dem rathschlag und newem gesetz desselbigen Koenigreichs nicht hat zufallen odder anhangen woellen. Aus dem Welschen ins Deutsch gebracht* (USTC 703700).

49 See Shaaber 1966: 47; and also Solís de los Santos 2009.

50 See Bulgarelli 1967: 58; USTC 706288, 410940, 415879.

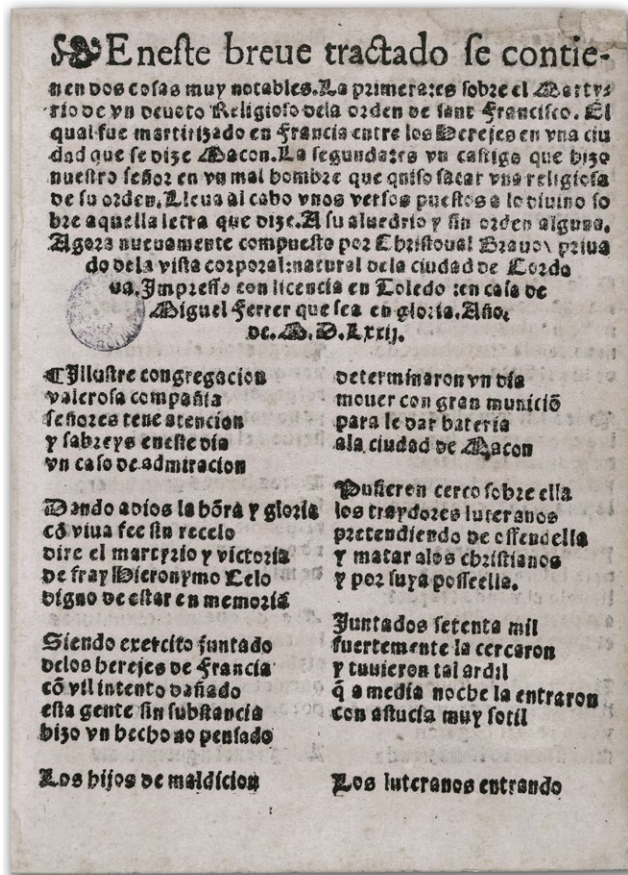


Fig. 4.4. First page of a two-subject *relación* in verse, published in Toledo in 1572, containing two pieces attributed to the blind poet Cristóbal Bravo, a native of Cordova. The first poem (on the martyrdom of a Franciscan in Macon) is addressed to an audience described as an 'illustrious congregation' and a 'valorous company'; the second recounts the divine punishment inflicted on a man who wanted to run off with a nun. The typographical effects are limited to merely using a larger case for the first line, which begins with a simple stock printer's decoration (Biblioteca Nacional de Catalunya, Barcelona).

by Catholics in England prior to Mary's accession.<sup>51</sup> Another *relación*, printed in Seville in 1554, told how a rebellion during Lent had been put down, and the following year a *relación* came out in Salamanca reporting 'la conversion de los ingleses luteranos,' whilst yet another was to describe how England had renewed its obedience to the Church of Rome and had begged the pope for national absolution.<sup>52</sup>

51 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 97.

52 See IB16 15652, 17237; BDRS 1417.

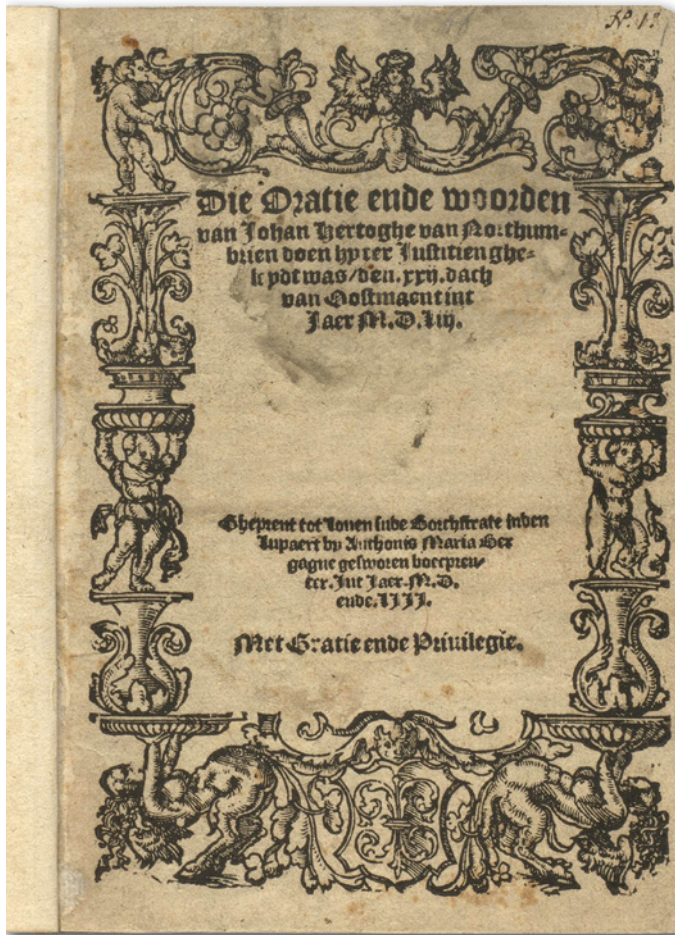


Fig. 4.5. First page of an 8-page Dutch relation containing the last words of the Duke of Northumberland uttered from the scaffold, with the title placed within an elaborate decorative woodcut border (© The British Library Board, C.33.b.24.(1)).

In Elizabethan England, of course, the situation was reversed, although persecuted Roman Catholics could occasionally find solace in instances of divine retribution. At what became known as the Black Assize, Roland Jenks, a bookbinder from Oxford, was convicted in 1577 of supporting the pope, whereupon he laid a curse upon those present in court, as a result of which several hundred men were said to have dropped dead, including two of the judges. A *relación* published in Valencia that same year reports the events as providential punishment inflicted upon what it calls Lutherans in Oxford; the story also appears in a French *occasionnel* published in 1589, which puts at twelve judges and two ministers the victims of the celestial fire that struck

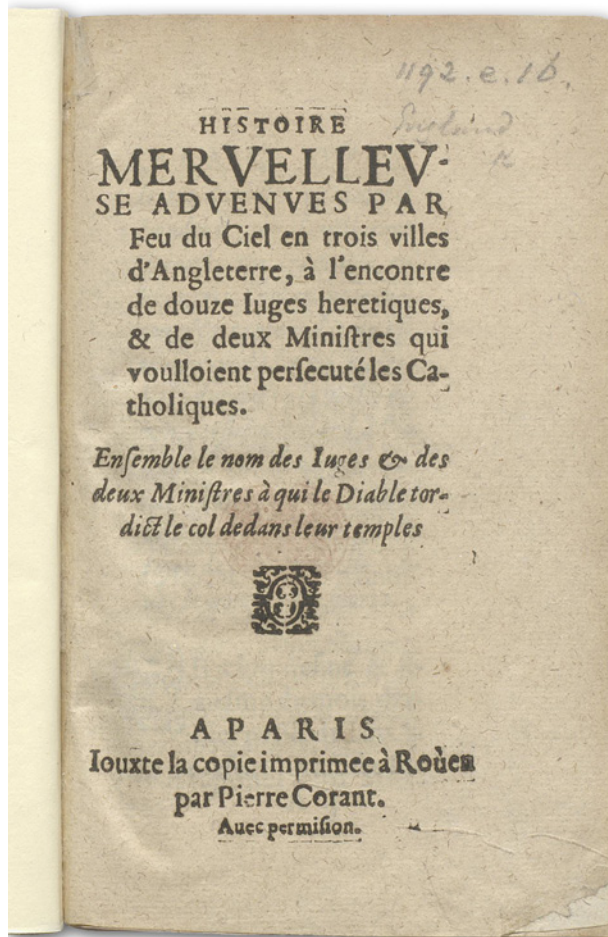


Fig. 4.6. First page of a 16-page *canard*, with the opening words highlighted with capitals in three different fonts. The story had been published in Rouen before appearing in Paris. The title does not mention the fact that pp. 8-16 contain a second story: the story, published in London in 1577, of what came to be known as 'The Black Dog of Bungay,' or 'Black Shuck,' which, during a violent thunder storm, had killed several worshippers in the local church. The Paris edition of the story refers to the 'temples babyloniques des villes de Bongay & Blybery, pres de Norwich' (© The British Library Board, 1192.e.16).

down the heretics in Oxford (Fig. 4.6).<sup>53</sup> The Jesuit Edmund Campion was arrested by priest hunters, convicted of high treason, and hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn in December 1581, an event that inspired a spate of anti-papist tracts.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 189; USTC 3586.

<sup>54</sup> See Shaaber 1966: 135-6.

However, Campion's execution also provoked the publication in 1582 of numerous news pamphlets in Italy, including one in Venice and in Turin, translated into Italian from English, via French, that treated the execution as martyrdom.<sup>55</sup>

Naturally, the execution of Mary Stuart in 1587 was reported with horror throughout Catholic Europe. As M.A. Shaaber points out, 'The news published about the Queen of Scots extends over a period of almost twenty years,' and he notes that most of the news was printed in languages other than English.<sup>56</sup> Whereas in England reports in verse and in prose on the execution expressed 'generall reioycinge for the cuttinge of the Scottishe queene,' as one pamphlet put it,<sup>57</sup> German pamphlets on the execution included one, printed in Catholic Munich, which stressed the pious end that the queen had made.<sup>58</sup> A *Neue Zeitung* published in Erfurt, and reprinted in 1588 in Magdeburg, began its title with the shocking English word 'EXECVTION' in large Roman capitals that stood out boldly from the Gothic type used in the rest of the pamphlet (Fig. 4.7).<sup>59</sup> An *occasionnel* in French stressed Mary's status as the widow of François II, and a *relación* on the event published in Barcelona was reprinted in Majorca.<sup>60</sup> An *avviso* was printed in Perugia, another was published in Vico Equense, near Naples, and yet another was printed at Vicenza: *Il Compassionevole et memorabil caso, della morte della regina di Scotia*.<sup>61</sup> Others were printed in Palermo, Florence and Viterbo,<sup>62</sup> and pamphlets in Dutch were printed in Antwerp and in Leiden.<sup>63</sup> Alexander S. Wilkinson has studied over four hundred pamphlets printed in France – including news reports, outright propaganda and sermons – that have to do with Mary, especially her status as a Catholic martyr, promoted by the Catholic League to rally popular opinion against Henri III.<sup>64</sup>

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55 *Martirio del rever. p. Emondo Campione della Compagnia di Giesu, patito in Inghilterra per la fede catholica rom [...]. Tradotto dall'inglese in lingua francese, et poi dal francese in italiano* (USTC 805755-6). Two more *avvisi* were printed in Brescia that include news of other acts of cruel persecution in England (see USTC 805750, 805767).

56 Shaaber 1966: 118.

57 Shaaber 1966: 120.

58 See USTC 669524.

59 See USTC 655200, 655199.

60 See USTC 344; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 231; and *Discvrso sobre la muerte de la muy alta y muy Illustre Princesa Madama Maria Stouuard, Reyna de Escocia, sacado d copia imbiada d Barcelona* (Majorca, 1587?).

61 See Bulgarelli 1967: 188; USTC 801538, 806190.

62 See USTC 806253, 806274, 806276.

63 See USTC 413725, 422552.

64 See Wilkinson 2004. A pamphlet in French was published in 1588 that stressed Mary's status as the widow of Francis II: *La mort de la reine d'Escosse douairiere de France* (USTC 344).

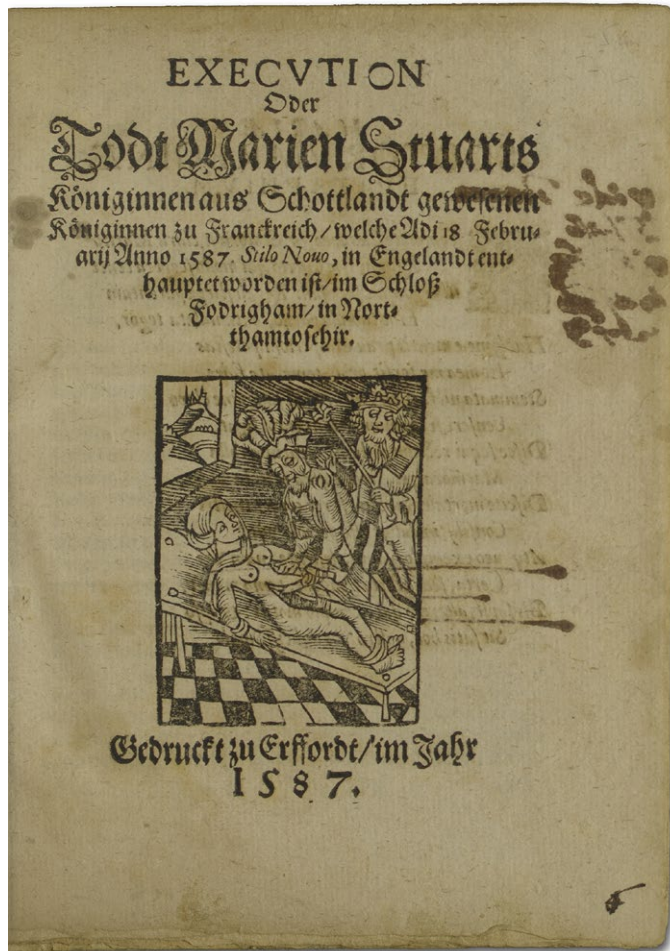


Fig. 4.7. First page of a *Flugschrift* on Mary II's execution, headed by the non-Germanic word 'EXECVTION' in roman capitals and the words 'Todt Marien Stuarths' in large gothic type. The woodcut, showing a woman, accompanied by a crowned figure, being disembowelled, or perhaps operated for a Caesarian birth, was presumably chosen by the printer as the nearest thing he had in his stock to the beheading of a queen (Universitätsbibliothek, Mannheim).

News of the execution of four Catholics in Oxford in 1589 was published the following year in Paris, translated from an Italian *avviso* printed in Rome.<sup>65</sup> A *relación* in verse, printed at Alcalá de Henares in 1596, tells two unrelated stories of executions, the first of which also occurred in England – that inflicted upon Spanish soldiers

<sup>65</sup> See USTC 19225.

taken prisoner by the forces of ‘la Reyna Inglesa,’ Queen Elizabeth – whilst the second involved the conversion to Christianity of six Jews, who were then impaled.<sup>66</sup> A *relación* in the form of a letter sent from Rouen by an English nun some two years later also tells of the persecution of Catholics in England, and another, published in Seville, records the execution in Lincoln in 1600 of two Catholic priests who had belonged to the English College at Douai.<sup>67</sup> Their names are given as Thomas Benested and N. Sprat. Thomas Spratt (or Sprott) was indeed executed at Lincoln, but his companion was Thomas Hunt. The reference to Thomas Benested could conceivably be due to confusion with Thomas Belson, who had been executed in Oxford in 1589. Whatever the case, the *relación* ends with the appropriately ‘desastrada muerte’ suffered a fortnight later by Sir John Glanville, the judge who had passed sentence on the two men. The news of Elizabeth’s death in 1603 was given in a *relación*, published in Seville, that put the cause down to a deep melancholy, noting that the queen had been attended by what it called the two false bishops of London and of Canterbury, whom it describes as ‘muy grandes herejes.’<sup>68</sup>

The Treaty of London, which brought to an end two decades of war between Englishmen and Spaniards in 1604, did little to improve England’s reputation in the Spanish press, as the persecution of Roman Catholics continued. The Popish Recusants Act of 1605, a measure intended to crack down on Catholics after the Gunpowder Plot, is reported in Spain in a *relación* published the following year.<sup>69</sup> At the beginning of 1614 Luisa de Carvajal y Mendoza died after being released from a second term in jail in London, where she had gone with the intention of seeking martyrdom, and news of her death was published in a *relación* in Seville, as well as in the form of a letter sent by the rector of the English College in Seville to the Jesuits in the viceroyalty of New Spain.<sup>70</sup> The plight of Catholics in England in 1615 is set out in *relaciones* published in Cuenca and Granada, in which the author – a Jesuit priest recently arrived from England – claims that sixteen thousand had been imprisoned, some of whom had undergone torture and martyrdom, and in 1616 a report sent to the Count of Luna by the head of the English Jesuit College in Seville was printed there, including a general account of the persecution of Catholics in England and the

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66 See BDRS 5819.

67 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 306; BDRS 5835.

68 Agulló y Cobo 1966: 397.

69 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 427. For a masterly analysis of the presentation of evidence in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot, see Dolan 2013: 29-51.

70 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 556, 563. According to the Gregorian calendar, Luisa died on 2 January 1614. Her story is told by Glyn Redworth, *The She-Apostle. The Extraordinary Life and Death of Luisa de Carvajal*, Oxford University Press, 2008.



martyrdom of two priests and a lay person.<sup>71</sup> Coinciding with the Prince of Wales's stay in Madrid in 1623, a letter was published there, in Spanish, purporting to have been written by an English lady, in which she exhorted her husband not to give up professing Catholicism, even if that meant losing his possessions and his children.<sup>72</sup> The persecution of Catholics in Europe was not, however, confined to England. An *avviso* published in Rome in 1572, whose title begins *L'inudite et monstruose crudelta*, gives an account of atrocities committed against Catholics in Flanders.<sup>73</sup>

Catholic Europe's attempts to win back territory lost to the Protestants also provided news. A number of approving *relaciones* were printed in Spain in the 1560s and 1570s on the persecution of the Huguenots by Charles IX, including one on a combined French-Spanish victory, published at Alcalá in 1563, and one on a victory won in 1569 by the Duke of Anjou near the château of Herbaux.<sup>74</sup> The siege of La Rochelle, a massive military assault by Catholic troops on the strategic Huguenot-held city in 1572/73, was reported in a German *Zeitung auss Franckreich*, translated from French.<sup>75</sup> Half a century later, Louis XIII's campaigns against the Huguenots in the 1620s were broadcast admiringly in numerous Spanish *relaciones* translated from French, very many of them published in Barcelona by the printer Esteve Liberós,<sup>76</sup> and in fifteen *avvisi* catalogued by Sandro and Tullio Bulgarelli. The Antwerp printer, Abraham Verhoeven, who began publishing the Flemish periodical newspaper *Nieuwe Tijdinghen* in 1620, likewise covered Louis XIII's anti-Huguenot campaigns.<sup>77</sup> News of the war also came out in England.<sup>78</sup> England's bid to aid the Huguenots, with the Duke of Buckingham's

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71 See BDRS 6251; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 596, 606; Henry Ettinghausen, 'Muy grandes herejes»: los ingleses e Inglaterra en las relaciones españolas de los siglos XVI y XVII,' in Bégrand 2009: 159-171. The English émigré College at Valladolid appears in a relation supposedly written to English Catholic refugees in Flanders, published in Antwerp in 1592, which eulogises Philip II for providing a haven there for the persecuted: *A relation of the King of Spaines receiving in Valliodolid, and in the English College of the same towne, in August last part of this yere. 1592. VVryten by an English priest of the same college, to a gentleman and his vvyf in Flaunders, latelie fled out of England, for profession of the Catholique religion* (see USTC 412829).

72 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 75; and Almansa y Mendoza 2001: 71-2.

73 See Bulgarelli 1967: 129.

74 See BDRS 5779, 5781. Whilst he does not touch on news pamphlets on the massacre and its aftermath, Robert Kingdon does deal with the propaganda that it sparked off across Protestant Europe (*Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres, 1572-1576*, Harvard University Press, 1988).

75 See Weller 1872: 419, 430.

76 See Ettinghausen 2000a: 45-6, 48, 50, 53, 56-7, 59, 64, 67, 74, 77-8, 80.

77 See Arblaster 2006: 24.

78 See, for instance, *A Relation of a sea-fight betweene the Duke of Guise and the Rochellers, the 27 of October, 1622: together with the submission of the Protestants in France, and the reducing of the town of Montpellier, and other of the chief townes in Languedoc* (London, 1622 - copy in the British Library, C.55.d.14.(3.)).

disastrous three-month siege of the town of St Martin, on the Île de Ré in 1627, produced a spate of English pamphlets, whilst the French defeat of the English forces under Buckingham was reported in relations published in Lisbon and in Rome.<sup>79</sup> In 1628 the *Articles of agreement made betweene the French King and those of Rochell, upon the rendition of the towne* were published in London, and a 250-page book by Michel de Marillac on Buckingham's campaign came out in Paris in 1628, detailing the entire enterprise and ending with the defeat and retreat of the English forces.<sup>80</sup>

Finally, it was even feasible for a Christian to achieve media notoriety in both Catholic and Protestant Europe. The infamous end of the doubly relapsed Marco Antonio de Dominis – the 'Fat Bishop of Spalato' caricatured in Thomas Middleton's *A Game at Chess* – is told in a newsletter, published in London in 1624, entitled: *A relation sent from Rome, of the processe, sentence, and execution, done vpon the body, picture, and bookes, of Marcus Antonius de Dominis, Archbishop of Spalato, after his death*.<sup>81</sup>

## The Reformed Church

News aimed at discrediting Rome was being published even before Luther nailed his Theses to the church door in Wittenberg. Five years earlier, in 1512, a German *Flugschrift* had put into print the story of a nun in Florence who had given birth.<sup>82</sup> Luther's own first news ballad, which told how two monks had been executed in Brussels in 1523 after refusing to recant their Lutheran beliefs, set the pattern for the uncompromisingly partisan news production that was to accompany religious strife for the remainder of the century, and for long thereafter. Typically, the amazing birth of a so-called Jesuit sow near Mülhausen was the news item in a pamphlet published at Eisleben, Luther's birthplace, in 1577.<sup>83</sup> Other German anti-Jesuit pamphlets include a *Neue Zeitung*, described as a true report, published in the Bavarian town of Hof in 1569, that tells of a Jesuit who dressed up as the devil in order to terrify a girl into giving up her Protestant beliefs and who was stabbed to death, and a ballad, published in 1584, that reported a Jesuitical raising from the dead in Vienna.<sup>84</sup>

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79 See BDRS, 3302; Bulgarelli 1988: 191-2.

80 *Relation de la descente des Anglois en l'Isle de Re [ ] iusques à la défaite & retraite desdits Anglois* (copy in British Library, 596.c.11.(1)).

81 Cited in British Library catalogue.

82 See USTC 750979.

83 See USTC 707390.

84 See USTC 750098, 644811. However, some pro-Jesuit news pamphlets were published in parts of Germany that remained Catholic, such as one printed at Ingolstadt in 1586 which reported frightful diabolical lies about terrible murderous acts supposedly committed by the Jesuits that had been spread throughout the land (USTC 679309).



Fig. 4.8. *Ein wunderbarer Fisch*, a Protestant *Flugblatt* printed in 1546 that satirically depicts a monk as a freakish squid, supposedly caught near Copenhagen (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

Hundreds of sixteenth-century German pamphlets, nearly all of them grossly sectarian, gave out frightening news of materialisations of divine wrath, such as monstrous births, murders, storms, floods and ghastly apparitions in the heavens.<sup>85</sup> One example is a *Flugschrift* published in Nuremberg in 1546 that tells of an extraordinary fish that may be related to the caricature of a monk-squid and that was supposedly caught in Denmark and whose grotesque image fills most of a *Flugblatt*

<sup>85</sup> See below, chapters 6 and 7.

printed that same year (Fig. 4.8).<sup>86</sup> Whatever the case, it seems clearly to follow the pattern of the joint publication by Luther and Melanchthon in 1523 of their much translated pamphlet which told how a calf-monk had been born in Saxony, whilst a pope-ass had been found in Rome after floods there in 1496 – a suitably obvious satirical depiction of what Luther regarded as the Antichrist.<sup>87</sup> That same pamphlet was still appearing in English in 1579, translated by John Brooke, under the title: *Of two Woonderful Popish Monsters*.<sup>88</sup> A nice instance of English anti-papal news that is, typically, hardly distinguishable from propaganda is the newsletter, printed in London in 1552 by Thomas Gaultier, entitled: *Wonderfull newes of the death of Paule the. iiii. last byshop of Rome and of diverse thynges that after his death have happened, wherein is trulye set the abominable actes of his most mischevous life*.<sup>89</sup> Another instance, the story of a disaster that befell a Catholic bishop in France, is told in a newsletter printed in London in 1592: *The most rare strange and wonderfull example of Almightye God shewed in the Citie of Telonne [i.e. Toulon] in Prouence on a cruell Papisticall Bishop*.<sup>90</sup>

Earlier, we noted news pamphlets printed in Catholic countries on the martyrdom of Catholics, but Protestants were enabled to compete with them. Some of the principal early Protestant victims were celebrated in the books of martyrs written by Jean Crespin and John Foxe in the 1550s. The St Bartholomew's Day Massacre, in which French Catholic mobs killed thousands of Huguenots in August 1572, was amply reported in the *Neue Zeitungen* published in Protestant cities in Germany, such as Erfurt and Nieder-Weisel, but it also figures in at least one Spanish *relación*, as well as in a number of *avvisi*, although, of course, neither the Spanish nor the Italian pamphlets condemn the massacres.<sup>91</sup> On the contrary, one *avviso*, published in Rome, actually gives an account of the order of the solemn procession led by the pope precisely in order to celebrate 'la felicissima noua della destruttione della setta Vgonotana.'<sup>92</sup>

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86 See USTC 752041.

87 See Jean Céard, *La Nature et les prodiges. L'insolite au XVIe siècle, en France*, 2nd edn., Geneva, Droz, 1996: 79-82. One *Flugblatt* combines a human with a pig's head and one whose body, hind legs and tail are those of a calf, both supposedly born in 1578, the explanation given for the latter – that it was the result of a sexual misdemeanour committed by a Spaniard – doubtless intended as a slur on Roman Catholics.

88 See David Cressy, *Agnes Bowker's Cat. Travesties and Transgressions in Tudor and Stuart England*, Oxford University Press, 2000: 31.

89 See USTC 504777.

90 See Collins 1943: 26.

91 See Weller 1872: 396-9; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 171; Bulgarelli 1967: 133, 135, 138, 140-1. Referring to French Catholic reactions to the massacres, Wilkinson (2004: 2) comments: 'the reading public eagerly consumed repeated editions gloating at the misfortune of the Huguenots.'

92 Bulgarelli 1967: 138.

However, not all persecution of Protestants was conducted by way of massacres. Shaaber cites, for example, a report on the death of ‘one Richard Atkins, executed by fire in Rome, the seconde of August, 1581,’ and *The strange and cruell martyrdome of an Englishman in the Towne of Dunkerke [...]. With the manner of his torments, and his great patience at his death, which he suffered for the profession of the Gospell of Christ Iesus*, published in London in 1591.<sup>93</sup> A German *Neue Zeitung auss Hispanien* published in 1580 tells of the discovery in Spain of a new heretical sect called the ‘Alombratos’ (i.e. the *alumbrados*) and their repression by the Inquisition in the summer of 1579.<sup>94</sup> A Protestant account of an *auto de fe* was contained in a newsletter registered at the Stationers’ Company in 1594 by John Danter and entitled *The Cruell handlinge of one Nicholas Burton merchant tailor of London by the bloody Spaniardes in the Cittye of Cyvill* [i.e. Seville] *whoe was there burned for the testimony of Iesus Christ*.<sup>95</sup>

## The Jews

The Jews were fair game for both Catholics and Protestants, and – unless the news was of their conversion – they almost invariably appeared in news pamphlets containing thoroughly scurrilous, vicious and often impossible stories. A *Flugschrift*, printed in Nuremberg in 1506 and then in Strasbourg in 1507 by Matthias Hupfuff, which was certainly plausible, told of fighting between Old and New Christians in Lisbon.<sup>96</sup>

Another *Flugschrift*, produced by Hupfuff in 1515 and presumably meant to be amusing, told of a Jewess who had been made pregnant by a Christian and was persuaded that an angel had made her conceive the Messiah.<sup>97</sup> Another story, which dates from at least the fifteenth century and whose first known appearance in print occurs in 1524, is contained in the account in verse of the antisemitical Dog of Alba de Tormes, near Salamanca – a precursor of the Hound of the Baskervilles – whom the Jews tried to kill and which took its revenge by terrorising them, being endowed with a nose that enabled it to smell out Jews at will.<sup>98</sup>

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93 See Shaaber 1966: 183.

94 See Weller 1872: 528.

95 See Collins 1943: 106.

96 See USTC 702797, 702868.

97 See USTC 707062.

98 See Adrienne L. Martín, ‘Antisemitismo canino en las Coplas del perro de Alba’, *Creneida*, 2 (2014), 298-315. Martín (p. 301) reproduces an edition of the poem that has on its front page a large woodcut of the monstrous dog.

The perennial imaginary threat of a world Jewish conspiracy is reflected in some sixteenth-century *Neue Zeitungen*, doubtless inspired in part by Luther's rabid antisemitism. One such pamphlet, allegedly sent from Constantinople and published in 1562, is the report of a supposed great army of 'roten Juden' (i.e. red Jews) gathered together in the Caspian mountains.<sup>99</sup> Virtually the same story is told in a *Neue Zeitung* published in Vienna in 1596, as well as in an English pamphlet entitled *Newes from Rome*, printed in London ten years later.<sup>100</sup> A *Flugblatt* printed in Nuremberg in 1591 denounced the desecration of a host by Jews in Pressburg (modern Bratislava),<sup>101</sup> whilst in a *Flugschrift*, published in Dresden and Vienna in 1599, two so-called false Jews are said to have used sorcery to kill several thousand head of cattle.

An internationally classic antisemitical fabrication is the so-called 'blood libel,' the accusation made repeatedly that Jews killed Christian boys in order to use their blood for ritual purposes, the earliest important example of which is that of William of Norwich, found dead in 1144 with the result that the infant was revered as a martyr and the supposed murderers were executed. Other instances of the blood libel occurred in most of Europe, providing grounds for expropriations, massacres, torture, trials and expulsions of the Jews. One instance is contained in a *Flugblatt* printed at Prague in 1574 which tells how two Jews and their female accomplices were tried and executed for plotting to torture a Christian child.<sup>102</sup> That case of alleged ritual murder, supposedly committed in Litomischel (Litomerice), in Bohemia, was anticipated by a century by the notorious case of the infant Simon of Trent. When Simon was discovered, mutilated and murdered, at Easter 1475, nearly the whole of the entire tiny Jewish community of Trent was arrested and tortured, and most of them were hanged, decapitated or burned at the stake. Simon – who was instantly revered as a martyr in Trent and its environs, performed over a hundred miracles within a year, and was included in the Calendar of Saints until 1965 – had his story immediately told in a flood of gory reports and poems in Latin, Italian and German, some of them amply illustrated, which were published within days of the

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99 See Weller 1872: 253. Two editions, without place of printing, are included in USTC: 676990, 676997. A similar story was printed in Cologne in 1574 (USTC 677437). For the legend of the red Jews, see Andrew Colin Gow, *The Red Jews: Antisemitism in an Apocalyptic Age, 1200-1600*, Leiden, Brill, 1994.

100 See Weller 1872: 825; Shaaber 1966: 182.

101 See USTC 677606; Weller 1872: 864; USTC 752164.

102 *Warhafftiger Bericht von zweyen Juden die zwey Weiber bestellt haben, das sie inen ein Christen Kind folteri bringen, und wie die sach offenbar ist worden, und die Weiber sampt den Juden sint gericht worden, in der Stat Litomischel In der Kron Behem gelegen* (USTC 750112). Another *Flugschrift* on an alleged Jewish ritual murder was published in 1573 in Ulm and in Kromeriz (USTC 676015, 676018). See P. Po-chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder. Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany*, Yale University Press, 1988.

event.<sup>103</sup> A *Flugblatt* was published in Nuremberg in 1475 illustrated with a woodcut of Simon lying dead, with cuts all over his body and with the pincers, knife and needles supposedly used to bleed him to death, accompanied by three Jews. By around 1500, this classic depiction of the child martyr was tellingly accompanied – for example in a *Flugblatt* depicting a painting on the Bridge Tower at Frankfurt – by one of the most obnoxious antisemitical inventions, the so-called *Judensau*, a sow suckled by Jews. The case of Simon of Trent is a very early example of the deliberate use made of the press to mount a successful political publicity campaign that, in this instance, was used to sway opinion in the face of opposition to Jew-baiting by the Vatican.<sup>104</sup>

The first item in a verse *relación* printed around 1578, which describes two marvellous miracles, concerns the son of a widow and a Jew in Avignon, whilst an *avviso* published in Milan, and then in Florence, in 1602, tells of a rabbi in Padua who was illuminated by the Holy Spirit and converted to Christianity, together with four of his children.<sup>105</sup> The legend of the Wandering Jew, who was supposed to have witnessed the Crucifixion and to have roamed the world ever since, is contained in a *canard* printed in Bordeaux in 1609, as well as in Lyon, and in Saumur in 1617, and a *canard* published in Paris in 1619 tells of a Jewish woman who profaned the sacrament and was executed.<sup>106</sup> As we shall see in chapter 7, the news of conjoined twins born to a Jewess in the ghetto of Venice in 1575 was to be widely publicised, and not only in Italy.

Jews had been expelled from Spain in 1492, unless they converted, but until the nineteenth century the Inquisition put on trial New Christians who were denounced for having lapsed. From the middle of the sixteenth century, *autos de fe*, performed with great solemnity in public, were frequently the subject of *relaciones* that portrayed the victims' humiliation as richly deserved lessons, to be learned and cherished by the faithful. On occasion, the lesson could be exported. An *avviso* of an *auto* held in Valladolid in June 1559, which gives the names of all the victims, male and female,

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103 Amongst the publications on Simon of Trent printed in the year of his death, the USTC lists the following: *Tormenti del Beato Simone da Trento* (editions in Sant'Orso and Treviso), *Historie von Simon zu Trient* (Trent), and *Relatione de Simone puero tridentino* (Augsburg, Mantua, Nuremberg, Rome, Sant'Orso, Treviso and Venice). See R. Po-chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder. Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1988; id., *Trent 1475. Stories of a Ritual Murder Trial*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1992.

104 See R. Po-chia Hsia, *Trent 1475. Stories of a Ritual Murder Trial*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1992; Stephen Bowd and J. Donald Cullington, *'On Everyone's Lips': Humanists, Jews, and the Tale of Simon of Trent*, Tempe, Arizona, ACMRS, 2012.

105 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 193; Bulgarelli 1988: 11.

106 See Seguin 1964: 487-9, 394.

was published in Bologna that same year.<sup>107</sup> Aurora Domínguez Guzmán lists twenty-three Spanish relations on thirteen different *autos de fe* published between 1601 and 1632.<sup>108</sup>

Thanks very largely to the news revolution that was made possible by the printing press, from the end of the fifteenth century the very mention of the name of a nation, or its people, could instantly conjure up either positive or negative images and reactions. And the same went for religions and sects. News coincided with other forms of information and indoctrination – not least sermons – to reinforce, for Catholic consumers, the belief that Protestants were damned for all eternity, and vice versa, and that, for both Protestants and Catholics, infidels (principally Muslims and Jews) were destined for no better a fate. Whilst here we have been concerned with news that directly addresses sectarian issues, we have already noted, when discussing news of rulers and of war, that it, too, was dominated by sectarian, as well as political, considerations. In the following chapters we shall see that the same held true in respect of the entire range of news topics covered by the early modern press.

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107 See Bulgarelli 1967: 85.

108 See Aurora Domínguez Guzmán, ‘Relaciones de autos de fe impresas en el siglo XVII,’ in *Varia bibliographica. Homenaje a José Simón Díaz*, Kassel, Reichenberger, 1988, 217-30. An auto de fe, held in Valladolid in October 1623, very shortly after the Prince of Wales’s departure from Madrid, is reported in a *relación* published in that city (see Agulló y Cobo 1975: 87); one staged in Madrid’s Plaza Mayor the following January inspired a *relación* printed in Seville; and one held there in July was reported in *relaciones* published in Madrid, Barcelona and Seville (see Agulló y Cobo 1975: 136, 126, 144); and another, performed in Seville in November 1624, was recounted in a *relación* printed there, as was one held in Cordova in 1625 (see Agulló y Cobo 1975: 135, 177).



## The Devil, Sex and Violence, Crime and Punishment

Referring to the production of newsletters in England, Joad Raymond has the following to say:

In addition to pamphlets of continental wars and politics, the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century bookseller's stall catered for sensation. While domestic politics was subject to an unspoken proscription, accounts of witchcraft, executions, apparitions and monstrous births, children who spoke in tongues, parhelia, earthquakes, dire predictions and other anomalous phenomena were reliable commercial enterprises.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, by no means all early modern European news had to do directly or explicitly with political or confessional matters. Ostensibly, a great deal of it was primarily concerned to titillate, aiming to arouse positive – or, more often, negative – reactions in readers and listeners. Only in France does there appear to be a term to define this kind of press: the *canard*. Jean-Pierre Seguin's bibliography of *canards* lists over five hundred pamphlets for the hundred years from 1529 to 1631, but, as was the case with other kinds of news, sensationalist news pamphlets were by no means confined to one country. One element they have in common across the continent is titles that nearly always stress the sensationalism of the stories that they tell, some of the commonest epithets used being 'épouvantable,' 'maravilloso,' 'espantoso,' 'spaventevole'

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond 2003: 108.

and ‘erschrecklich,’ with one of the preferred words in English being ‘strange,’ in the sense of abnormal or shocking.<sup>2</sup>

However, unlike most of the sensationalist press today, the *canards* and their equivalents outside France almost always exploited the opportunity to draw explicitly moralising conclusions from their astonishing, and often gruesome, stories. As such, they frequently approach the mechanics of the sermon, spelling out, on the one hand, the disastrous consequences of giving in to temptation and, on the other, the divine mercy to be had by those who avoid sin or else repent in time. Indeed, at least as much as news about rulers and victories, sensationalist news was heavily charged with value judgements based on political and theological considerations. What Steve Chibnall says about Tudor and Stuart crime reporting, in ballads and in newsletters, applies elsewhere, too: it was ‘both a frank commercial speculation and a form of social control.’<sup>3</sup>

Referring to the sixteenth-century English press, G.A. Cranfield comments: ‘Then, as now, blood and sex reigned supreme,’<sup>4</sup> whilst, in the introduction to his anthology of sensationalist *canards*, Maurice Lever states that, in the sixteenth century, ‘le fait divers “tragique” ou “sanglant” fait fureur.’<sup>5</sup> Apart from the 517 *canards* catalogued by Seguin, Lever adduces the abundant evidence of the taste for sordid news to be found in the journal of the royal secretary Pierre de L’Estoile (1546-1611).<sup>6</sup> Amongst the types of news that developed further in the seventeenth century was the kind of sensationalistic stories denounced by Lope de Vega, including, as he put it, tales of men who rape their daughters, kill their mothers, speak to the devil, deny the Faith, blaspheme and invent miracles.<sup>7</sup> Even though the term is notoriously imprecise, it may be useful to think of stories such as these – and of human, animal and fabulous monster stories – as prefiguring or belonging to the Baroque. What they have in common is the desire to terrify or amaze by means of unusual or extreme experiences,

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2 Augustín Redondo remarks on the use of *estraño* in the titles of Spanish relations, noting that in the sixteenth century the term meant singular and extraordinary (‘Pedro Rezena, le brigand catalan. À propos d’une relation castillane de la fin du XVIe siècle,’ *Arquivos do Centro Cultural Português*, 31, 1992: 127-140: 129). Somewhat surprisingly, Pettegree (2014: 75) claims that German news pamphlets were ‘careful to avoid any sensationalism.’

3 Steve Chibnall, ‘Chronicles of the Gallows. The Social History of Crime Reporting,’ in Harry Christian, ed., *The Sociology of Journalism and the Press*, Keele, 1980, 179-217: 185.

4 G.A. Cranfield, *The Press and Society from Caxton to Northcliffe* London/New York, 1978: 3.

5 Lever 1993: 9.

6 See Lever 1993: 9-11. For sex and violence in Spanish *relaciones*, see Henry, Ettinghausen, ‘Sexo y violencia: noticias sensacionalistas en la prensa española del siglo XVII,’ *Edad de Oro*, 12, 1993: 95-107.

7 See María Cruz García de Enterría, ‘Un memorial “casi” desconocido de Lope,’ *Boletín de la Real Academia Española*, 51, 1971: 139-160, esp. 141, 144.

as part of a culture intended to astound the masses.<sup>8</sup> However, as we shall see, they first occur in the press long before the historical period normally associated with the Baroque, although some variants do appear to become far commoner from the end of the sixteenth century onwards.<sup>9</sup>

## The Work of the Devil

News involving the devil clearly relates closely to the sermons that readers, and non-readers, of the news could hear in church, at the very least, every Sunday: ‘Signs of apocalypse were everywhere, the preachers cried, evident in comets, monstrous births, the activities of heretics and witches.’<sup>10</sup> The Italian student Girolamo da Sommaia, who studied at Salamanca University at the beginning of the seventeenth century, notes in his diary on 23 February 1605 that he had heard a sermon in which the preacher had spoken of a priest and a sinner being carried off by the devil.<sup>11</sup> But horror stories concerning the devil appeared in hundreds of relations, both long before and long after that date.

The tales told in those pamphlets were fear-inspiring, but they also had a positive message to purvey: evil was always punished, and the endings, if not happy, were at least retributive, with the devil often depicted as the purveyor of divine wrath. The second item in a two-subject *Erschreckliche Zeittung* published in 1551 concerns a woman who was seen to be carried off by the devil, who then let her drop down to the ground,<sup>12</sup> whilst a *Schreckliche zeitung: Warhafftiger vnd gründtlicher Bericht*, published in 1559 in at least seven editions in towns that included Nuremberg and Erfurt, told how a shepherd was set on fire by the devil, in accordance with God’s will.<sup>13</sup>

Specific sins that brought about demonic castigation were remarkably varied. Thus, a *canard* printed in Paris tells the tale of a young Flemish girl from Brabant who, in 1582, because she was excessively vain when it came to clothes, was strangled by the devil, who caused her body to be turned into a black cat, as was witnessed by all the people who attended her funeral.<sup>14</sup> (As in the case of Agnes Bowker, that was

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<sup>8</sup> In England, too, ‘It is as if the quality of being extraordinary, sensational, prodigious was regarded as essential to news’ (Shaaber 1966: 9). See also Cressy 2000.

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of these considerations in the Spanish context, see Ettinghausen 2013b: 89-102.

<sup>10</sup> Bruce Gordon, ‘Late Medieval Christianity,’ in Peter Marshall, ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Reformation*, Oxford University Press, 2015: 1-41, 2.

<sup>11</sup> See Haley 2012: 284.

<sup>12</sup> See Weller 1872: 195.

<sup>13</sup> See Weller 1872: 236.

<sup>14</sup> See Seguin 1964: 405-6.

just one of many instances of unpleasant connections made between cats and sinful women, especially witches.<sup>15</sup>) An *avviso* published in Milan in 1588 – *Il grandissimo et maraviglioso miracolo* – tells of a man who bore false witness against his cousin and was strangled by the devil, who appeared in the form of a serpent.<sup>16</sup> Another *avviso*, printed in Lyon, Milan, Venice and Viterbo in 1620, told of ‘vn caso Horribile, e Spauenteuole Successo’ that occurred near Riom, in France, involving a man who mistreated his parents and was devoured by seven horrid serpents – as the title makes clear, an example of, and to, the dissolute youth of these times (Fig. 5.1).<sup>17</sup> For its part, a *canard*, printed in Paris in 1614, tells of a young man in Aix-en-Provence who blasphemed and scorned the mass, was carried off by the devil and hanged himself from an almond tree.<sup>18</sup> And another relation, printed in Paris five years later, told how a man in Provence who had taken vows to enter the Church, but had failed to keep them, had had his ‘parties honteuses’ cut off by the devil.<sup>19</sup>

On other occasions we have news of demonic possession, such as the relation involving four Spaniards who had allowed themselves to be possessed by the devil and were tried in Bordeaux, a report that was published there and in Paris in several editions between 1610 and 1626.<sup>20</sup> And early in the seventeenth century, news also comes out of massive attacks by the devil. In 1608 we find a detailed account of how a woman in the town of Madrilejos had a whole army of demons expelled from her,<sup>21</sup> and a *relación* in verse printed in Murcia in 1613 explained how, that summer, thirty-five legions of devils – which might have meant nearly a couple of hundred thousand of them – had suddenly appeared in the town of Castro.<sup>22</sup> News such as this was, quite clearly, not intended to be taken lightly.

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15 For the story of Agnes Bowker, see chapter 7, below, and Cressy 2000: 9-28.

16 See Bulgarelli 1967: 198. At the end of the period we are concerned with, three *relaciones* in verse published in Barcelona between 1617 and 1625 explain how a merchant was carried off by demons because he refused to go to confession; how a vulgar woman cursed her children, telling them they could go to the devil, and how that produced very unpleasant consequences; and how the devil, dressed up as a young man, told a tailor that his wife was having an affair with a black slave, whereupon the tailor killed her, and how he made a moving confession from the gallows. These *relaciones* are reproduced in Ettinghausen 2000a: 88, 98, 28.

17 See Bulgarelli 1988: 101.

18 See Seguin 1964: 388.

19 See Seguin 1964: 441.

20 See Seguin 1964: 419-23.

21 *Relacion de vn caso raro, en que fueron expelidos de vna muger casada muchos demonios, en la villa de Madrilejos, a los 14. dias del mes de Octubre deste año pasado de 1607. por el padre Luys de la Torre* (n.p., 1608?) (BDRS 5850).

22 This *relación* is reproduced in Henry Ettinghausen, *Noticias del siglo XVII: relaciones de sucesos naturales y sobrenaturales*, Barcelona, Puvill, 1995. The calculation is based on the fact that Roman legions were made up of up to 5,400 soldiers each.

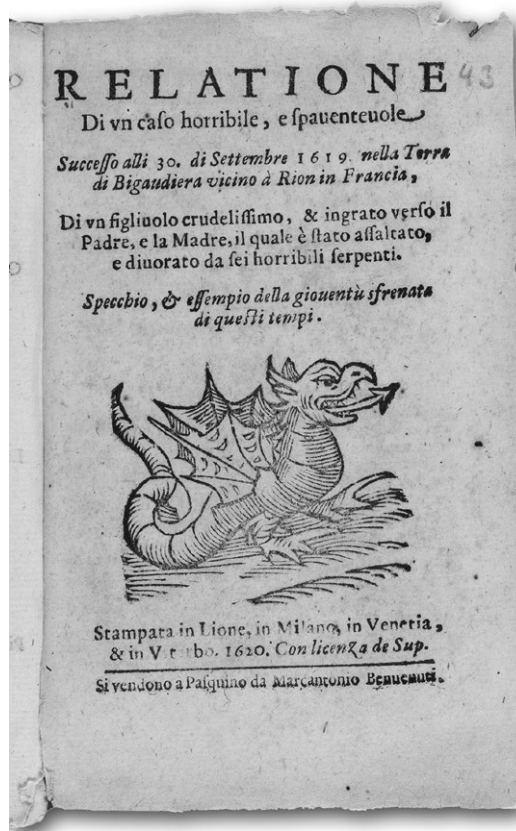


Fig. 5.1. First page of an *avviso* on the man near Riom who mistreated his parents, headed by the key word 'RELATIONE' in large capitals, with a woodcut of a dragon representing the seven serpents that are said to have devoured the criminal, and naming the cities where the story had been published before being printed in Viterbo in 1620 (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Roma).

However, the devil did not always have his way. A *Flugblatt* printed in 1609 explains how an evil woman met the devil on a heath one day and fought, scratched, tore and bit so much that she beat him – a tale presumably intended, at least in part, as a warning against unsavoury female company.<sup>23</sup> A *relación* written in verse and printed in Barcelona in 1616 explained the 'caso admirable' of a poor shepherdess whom the devil, disguised as a shepherd, had tried to seduce and who – thanks to her devotion to the Virgen del Rosario – had left him frustrated.<sup>24</sup> As the title stressed, this is a very useful and profitable story for those who are especially devoted to the Brotherhood

<sup>23</sup> See Seguin 1964: 99; Coupe, 1967: ill. 24.

<sup>24</sup> Reproduced in Ettinghausen 2000a: 19.



Fig. 5.2. Front page of a *canard* that tells how a robber dressed up as the devil and was hanged in Bayonne in December 1608. The striking woodcut of the devil, which takes up most of this front page, had doubtless been recycled. The printer stresses the supposed truth of the account by setting 'TRES-VERITABLE' in large capitals (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris).

of the Rosary. Nor was what seemed to be the devil always the genuine article. A *canard*, printed in Bayonne and in Troyes in 1609, tells how a robber dressed up as the devil and illustrates him in a large woodcut (Fig. 5.2).<sup>25</sup>

Part of the sensationalist press quite explicitly amounts to either anti-Catholic or anti-Protestant invective. Umpteen *Neue Zeitungen* appeared in the course of the sixteenth century on horrid crimes that involved religion. One, published in 1569, reports on a Jesuit who appeared to a young Protestant in the form of the devil and tried to scare him out of his beliefs.<sup>26</sup> A parallel to that is an *avviso* published in Naples in 1586 which tells how, when a play was put on in London that made fun of Catholics, a swarm of devils appeared from hell and carried off and killed several of the actors.<sup>27</sup>

25 See Seguin 1964: 99.

26 See Weller 1872: 355-6.

27 See Bulgarelli 1967: 176.

To which a nice corollary was provided by an incident that inspired at least two English ballads and three newsletters in 1607 when a play put on by the Jesuits in Lyon was interrupted by a thunderstorm, and five of the actors, including those who played God and Lucifer, were stunned by lightning.<sup>28</sup> Amongst the numerous reports of providential punishment meted out for diverse instances of sacrilege and blasphemy, a typical example, told in a *canard* published in Paris, Troyes and Venice in 1609, involves a Turk who with his scimitar smote a crucifix which then started bleeding, whereupon the Turk was unable to move until he vowed to convert to Christianity.<sup>29</sup>

Some sins, in particular avarice and usury, are frequently depicted in the press as subject to supernatural punishment. A *Neue Zeitung* published in Wolfenbüttel in 1579 tells the story of Georg Pflüger, a greedy baker who tried to make as much money as he could during a famine and then found that his bread turned to stone, whereupon he went and hanged himself. Like very many other news pamphlets of the time, this one is written in verse and was meant to be sung.<sup>30</sup> In England a ballad registered at the Stationers' Company in 1594 tells of the divine justice meted out to 'a cruell horder of corne,' whilst a comparable story is reported in a *relación*, published in Barcelona in 1624, which involves a wheat merchant who refused to go to confession and was carried off by devils, and which stresses that the story is, in particular, a lesson to unscrupulous wheat merchants.<sup>31</sup> Another Spanish *relación*, undated but published in Madrid, tells how an image of Christ in Ourense, in Galicia, performed an 'ejemplar castigo' (i.e. exemplary retribution) on a moneylender in Villa del Caño. And an account of the providential punishment inflicted on six Milanese bandits who had pillaged a church near Cremona was published in Italian in Venice, and then in French in Lyon in 1607, and again in Paris in 1618.<sup>32</sup>

## Sexual Deviance

Cross-dressing occurs in a number of news pamphlets, sometimes, but not always, in connection with crime. One that is not is a newsletter printed by Wynken de Worde in 1517 and entitled: *This mater treateth of a merchauntes wyfe that afterwarde went like a man and was called Frederyke of Jennen*.<sup>33</sup> Another, an Italian pamphlet printed at Venice in 1600, tells of two women married to each other and, in a remarkably

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28 See Shaaber 1966: 149; Collins 1943: 119.

29 See Seguin 1964: 383.

30 See Weller 1872: 512.

31 See Shaaber 1966: 150. The Spanish *relación* is reproduced in Ettinghausen 2000a: 88.

32 See Seguin 1964: 93-4.

33 See USTC 501388.

non-condemnatory way, refers to this as a true and pitiful case – one that involved the partner who dressed as a man revealing her true nature when her clothes caught alight as she was roasting chestnuts.<sup>34</sup> Many instances of cross-dressing, though, do involve crime and violence. A *canard* entitled *Discours émerveillable*, published in Paris in 1584, tells how a Flemish woman, Martine Dallencourt, ran away from her father, who wanted to rape her, dressed up as a man, changed her name and married a merchant's daughter. When she was accused of raping two children and was sentenced to be burned, her true sex was discovered and her accusers were burned instead.<sup>35</sup> In a similar vein, an undated sixteenth-century *relación* in verse tells the story of a girl named Teresa de Llanos who, having supposedly disposed of twenty people – the first two being brothers of hers who had tried to prevent her marrying – had then dressed as a man, was tried and sentenced to death, but was spared when it was discovered that she was a woman.<sup>36</sup> Cross-dressing is also involved in an *occasionnel* which tells how a male pickpocket dressed up as a woman and tricked a young man with a proposal of marriage.<sup>37</sup>

By no means all sexual misdemeanours in the news involved cross-dressing. A *canard* printed in Paris in 1604 tells the tale of a brother and sister, Julien and Marguerite de Ravalet, who were decapitated for adultery and incest.<sup>38</sup> And 'incestuous co-pulation, betweene the brothers sonne and the sisters daughter, being vnmarried persons,' is given as the cause of the birth of 'a monstrous, deformed Infant' near Hereford, the subject of a news pamphlet published in London in 1600.<sup>39</sup> The divine castigation claimed for cases of adultery could inspire English newsletters, such as one written by a certain Samuel Saxey and printed in London in 1583, entitled: *A straunge and wonderfull example of the judgement of almighty God shewed upon two adulterous persons in London, in the parish of S. Brydes, in Fleetestreete*.<sup>40</sup>

Very few sexual offences would seem to have appeared in the news in Spain. One that did, perhaps because of its moralistic ending, is the story set in Seville in which a man who had found his wife in fraganti had been given the right to behead her and her lover, but relented. This 'Memorable suceso' is told in a *relación* published in Seville

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34 *Caso ocorso di due donne maritate insieme, nella città di Verona* (USTC 807400).

35 See Seguin 1964: 12.

36 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 350.

37 See Seguin 1964: 104.

38 See Seguin 1964: 25.

39 See Collins 1943: 44.

40 See USTC 509813. For Spain, see María Sánchez Pérez, 'El adulterio y la violencia femenina en algunos pliegos sueltos poéticos del siglo XVI,' *Revista de Dialectología y Tradiciones Populares*, 2013: 287-303.



and in Lima in 1624.<sup>41</sup> Another Spanish sexual news story, also printed in Seville and in Lima in 1617 or 1618, told how María Muñoz, a nun in the city of Úbeda, strained herself while doing some heavy manual work in the convent garden and discovered that she had had a sex change, whereupon she had to leave the convent. However, that story too had a happy ending, as María's father had always wanted a male heir.<sup>42</sup>

Luis de Figueroa, from Madrid, is named as the author of an incredibly tortuous and unlikely *Relacion verissima* that appeared in two versions, one printed in Granada in 1600, the other in Cuenca in 1603.<sup>43</sup> The Granada version is set in the Valencian village of Bocairent; the Cuenca version, in Seville. Both begin by telling how a beautiful, virtuous and well-born lady gave birth to a black baby, the completely obvious explanation for its colour being given as the result of her black servant having left her black infant lying on the bed when her mistress conceived. The Cuenca printer who published this story, Bartolomé de Selma, also made musical instruments and played the sackbut, and in 1603 he printed a pamphlet written by one Juan de Godoy that presents itself as a *Relacion muy graciosa* ('A most amusing account') of the life and death of La Zarabanda – i.e. the sarabande, a notoriously lascivious dance.<sup>44</sup> Both of De Selma's pamphlets give the *relación* a new, apparently parodical, twist, a development that was not to become at all widespread in Spain until nearly a century later. A prodigious and horrifying story, set in Spain but told in a *canard* published in Paris in 1617, relates how an incubus abused a Spanish lady from Salamanca and tells of the amazing signs that then appeared above the city.<sup>45</sup>

## Witchcraft and Sorcery

Witchcraft and the devil were inextricably linked. Especially in northern Europe, where the witch craze raged especially in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, trials of witches and sorcerers frequently made the news.<sup>46</sup> Witchcraft was, on occasion, ascribed to religious opponents, as in the confession, printed in London in 1566, of one John Walsh that he had been tempted into practising witchcraft by a

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41 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 128.

42 The *relación* is reproduced in Ettinghausen 1995.

43 See IB16 8891; Ettinghausen 1995.

44 *Histoire prodigieuse et espouvantable d'un Esprit Incube, lequel a abusé une jeune Damoiselle Espagnolle, natifve de la ville de Salemanque. Ensemble les signes merueilleux apparus au ciel sur ladicte ville, le Dimanche 8 de Juillet 1617* (Agulló y Cobo 1966: 400).

45 See Seguin 1964: 307.

46 See Wolfgang Behringer, *Witches and Witch-Hunts*, Cambridge, Polity, 2004; id., 'Witchcraft and the Media,' in Marjorie Plummer and Robin Barnes, eds., *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2009.

Catholic friar, the pamphlet adding, for good measure, an account of the diabolical practises performed by several popes.<sup>47</sup> A relation, published in Lyon and Troyes, tells how Mansfredo and Fernando Dolardi, respectively the devil's treasurer and his banker, were burned at the stake in Vesoul, in Franche-Comté, in 1610 after confessing to an infinite number of acts of sorcery and witchcraft.<sup>48</sup> Another *canard*, printed in Paris in 1614, explains how an Italian sorcerer named Carmenio was sentenced to be burned alive in Pesaro, together with the donkey he had used in order to cast his spells.<sup>49</sup> A seriously sensational story of mass-murdering witches, that ends with an account of the horrific executions carried out in Manchen (Munich?), was printed at Nuremberg and published in translation in London in 1601 under the title: *A Strange Report of Sixe most notorious witches, who by their diuelish practises murdered about the number of foure hundred small children*.<sup>50</sup> The story of sorcery and witchcraft practised by Dr John Fian, and of what became known as the North Berwick witch trials, in which he was tortured and sentenced to be burned at the stake for a supposed attempt on the life of James VI of Scotland, came out in London probably in 1592 under the lengthy title:

*Newes from Scotland, declaring the damnable life and death of Doctor Fian a notable sorcerer, who was burned at Edenbrough in Ianuary last. 1591. Which doctor was regester to the diuell that sundry times preached at North Barrick Kirke, to a number of notorious witches. With the true examination of the saide doctor and witches, as they vttered them in the presence of the Scottish king. Discovering how they pretended to bewitch and drowne his Maiestie in the sea comming from Denmarke, with such other wonderfull matters as the like hath not been heard of at any time. Published according to the Scottish coppie.*<sup>51</sup>

However, the difficulty of dealing with possessed persons had been illustrated in a news pamphlet, published in London in 1573, which claimed that six men, all pulling together, had been unable to prevent the devil from carrying off Alexander Nyndge at Herringswell in Suffolk.<sup>52</sup>

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47 See Shaaber 1966: 156. A nicely alliteratively entitled item, printed in London in 1592, was *A most wicked worke of a wretched Witch* (see Shaaber 1966: 275). A newsletter concerning three English witches was registered at the Stationers' Company in 1595, entitled: *Lamentable newes from Newgate Barnet and Bragnford beinge the indictment arraignment Iudgement and execucon of three wicked witches* (see Collins 1943: 110).

48 See Seguin 1964: 417-18.

49 See Seguin 1964: 431.

50 See Collins 1943: 52.

51 Copy at Bodleian Library, 014789888.

52 See Shaaber 1966: 157.

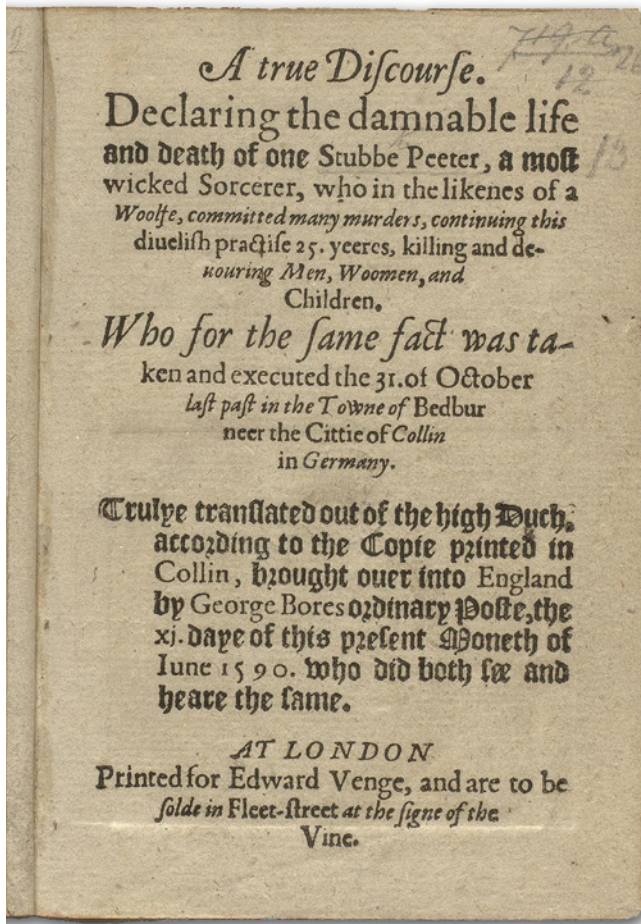


Fig. 5.3. First page of an English translation (London, 1590?) of a *Flugschrift* on the werewolf Stubbe Peeter that makes imaginative use of gothic, roman and italic type, but does not use any visual images. Images do, however, appear in a later page which shows eight scenes of Peeter's capture, torture and execution (© The British Library Board, C.27.a.9).

One particular form of possession enabled the devil to turn men into wolves. A case, reported in a *canard* printed at Sens in 1574, concerns Gilles Garnier, from Lyon, who, unable to feed his family, made a bargain with the devil to become a werewolf, devoured several infants and was burned at the stake.<sup>53</sup> *A true discourse. Declaring the Damnable life and death of one Stubbe Peeter, a most wicked Sorcerer*, published in London in 1590, explains how Peeter, the German protagonist, had

<sup>53</sup> See Seguin 1964: 401-2.

likewise obtained from the devil the ability to become a wolf, had spent twenty-five years devouring men, women and children, and had been executed at Bedburg, near Cologne. As the title-page explains, the pamphlet had been *Trulye translated out of the high Dutch* [i.e. German] *according to the Copie printed in Collin* [i.e. Cologne], *brought ouer into England by George Bores ordinary Poste*, and it claims that the postman had been an eye-witness to the execution (Fig. 5.3).<sup>54</sup>

Also in Germany, a *Flugblatt* was published in 1533 on the execution for witchcraft of a woman who had been convicted of setting fire to the town of Schiltach, in the Black Forest.<sup>55</sup> A *Neue Zeitung* published in Frankfurt in 1571 reports on the witches – godless, heretical, devil’s wives – who were burnt at the stake in the imperial city of Schlettstadt, in Alsace; and another, published in 1579 in the Flemish town of Ursel, tells of the terrible acts performed by a Jesuit and a witch and describes how the witch, when she was burned at the stake in Dillingen, was carried up into the air by the devil.<sup>56</sup> An eight-page *Flugschrift* printed in Basel in 1580 combined news of the burning of witches with atrocities committed by the Turks, and another, printed in 1591, tells of three witches – one in Lisbon and two in Chelmsford – with both of the English witches ending up being hanged.<sup>57</sup> In 1596 a German pamphlet was printed with two distinct pieces of news – the burning of witches in Rottenburg and the awful weather in the Tyrol – each to be sung to a different hymn tune.<sup>58</sup>

The execution of fifty wizards and witches in Douai is reported in a *canard* published in Paris in 1606,<sup>59</sup> and one printed in Paris in 1626 tells how the Baron of Chenevières was executed in the Place de Grève, in Paris, for having practised sorcery and magic.<sup>60</sup> As for Spain, where the witch hunting fever was far less intense than in northern Europe, news about witches was rare, although the subject of magic and witchcraft is common in Golden Age literature.<sup>61</sup> However, a *relación* in verse published in Granada in 1615 tells how a coven of witches and sorceresses had been

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54 See Collins 1943: 6-7. Referring to seventeenth-century England, Dolan (2013: 55) notes that ‘witchcraft pamphlets have received more sustained and textured readings as texts than have pamphlets on other topics.’

55 See Pettegree 2014: 94-5.

56 See Weller 1872: 376, 511.

57 See USTC 707209; Weller 1872: 738.

58 See USTC 705369.

59 See Seguin 1964: 409.

60 See Seguin 1964: 455.

61 See Eva Lara Alberola, *Hechiceras y brujas en la literatura española de los Siglos de Oro*, Universitat de Valencia, 2010; id., *Señales, Portentos y Demonios. La magia en la literatura y la cultura españolas del Renacimiento*, ed. Eva Lara and Alberto Montaner, Salamanca, SEMYR, 2014.

discovered in the town of Priego, had done a great deal of harm and were being hunted down and tortured in order to obtain their confessions.<sup>62</sup> Some bad women, though, could become newsworthy sinners without being treated as witches. A Spanish actress, known as La Baltasara, became the subject of a *relación* and then of a play. La Baltasara, whose professional life is documented, gave up what was commonly thought of as a highly immoral calling to become a hermit near Cartagena. A *relación* in verse on her life, written by one Valentín de Miranda and published in Valencia and then, in 1615, in Barcelona, made the most of the licentiousness of her life as an actress in order to render all the more impressive her dramatic resolve to repent. The exemplarity of the tale is brought home by the ending: La Baltasara is found dead, after three years of penance, kneeling on the ground embracing a crucifix.<sup>63</sup> Nor were all eccentric women accused of witchcraft, even in England. A relatively harmless misdemeanour was recorded in *A ballad shewing how a fond [i.e. foolish] woman falsely accused herself to be the Kinge of Spaines daughter and beinge founde a lyer was for the same whipped through London [...] beinge known to be a butchers daughter*, a pamphlet registered at the Stationers' Company in 1592.<sup>64</sup>

## Murder

Umpteen *Flugschriften* in the sixteenth century relate horrid murders. A *Neue Zeitung* written by Melanchthon and published in 1546 tells how a Spaniard named Alphonsus Diasius (or Decius) 'grawsamlich' (i.e. gruesomely) murdered his brother Johann in the town of Neuburg, and compares this contemporary news item to the story of Cain and Abel.<sup>65</sup> A *Flugblatt* published in Augsburg in 1573 tells in ghoulish detail, and depicts graphically, how a young man killed a girl and then chopped her up into little pieces (Fig. 5.4).<sup>66</sup>

Amongst many other sensational murder stories told in the German press, one involves a landlord named Blasi Endres who, in the town of Wangen, killed his entire family and his servants. A *Flugblatt* printed in Augsburg in 1585 depicts the slaughter

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62 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 607.

63 See María Cruz García de Enterría, 'La Baltasara: pliego, comedia y canción,' in *Symbolae Pisanae. Studi in onore di Guido Mancini*, ed. Blanca Perriñán and Francesco Guazzelli, Pisa, Giardini Editori, 1989, 219-38; Almudena García González, 'Un suceso real como argumento de comedia: la conversión de La Baltasara,' *Revista de Literatura*, 76, 2014: 101-21. The Barcelona, 1615 edition of the *relación* is reproduced in Ettinghausen 2000a: 15.

64 See Collins 1943: 105.

65 See Weller 1872: 178.

66 See USTC 750109.

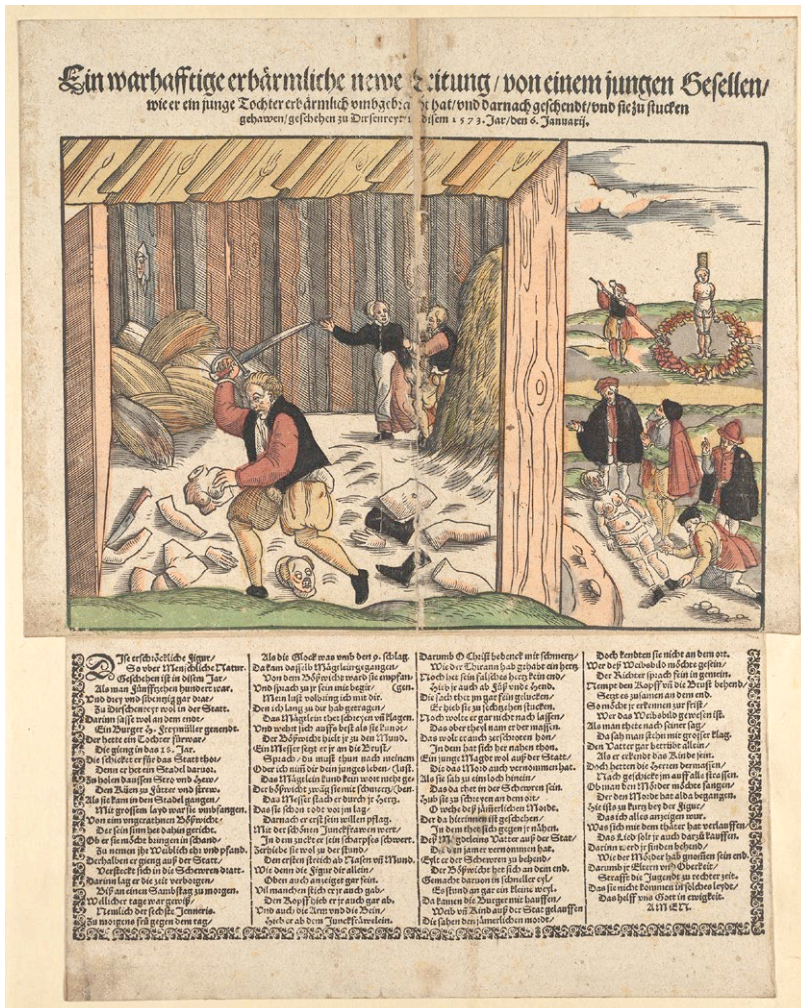


Fig. 5.4. A *Flugblatt* in verse published in Augsburg in 1753 that tells how a young man killed a girl and then chopped her up into little pieces, also illustrating his execution and her reconstitution and burial (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

he inflicted and also his execution.<sup>67</sup> The murder of a father by his son and daughter – in Bregenz, near Lake Constance – is unusually tame stuff for a sensationalist *Neue Zeitung*, but it provides the plot for one printed in 1595.<sup>68</sup> Four years later, another tells how a man killed his wife and six children.<sup>69</sup> Other news stories present desperate

67 See Weller 1872: 621.

68 See Weller 1872: 815.

69 See Weller 1872: 870.

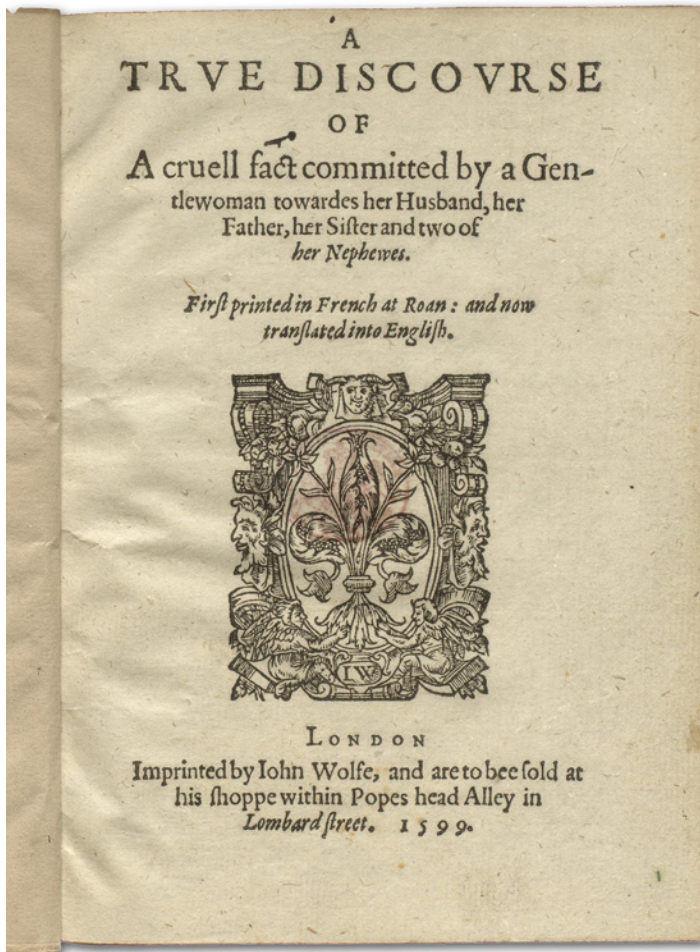


Fig. 5.5. First page of a newsletter, translated from French and printed by John Wolfe, that tells of a Neapolitan woman who got her lover to poison numerous members of her family. The sober engraving below the title – a standard printer’s mark, containing the printer’s initials (IW) – contrasts remarkably with the lurid illustrations used in many German *Flugblätter* of the time (© The British Library Board, 1104.b.19).

instances of murder or suicide in the face of starvation. A *Flugschrift*, published in Erfurt in 1580 as a verse pamphlet to be sung to the tune of the hymn ‘In dich hab ich gehoffet Herr,’ tells how a starving widow devoured her five children, whilst the same story, but involving only four children, appears in *Neue Zeitungen* published in Vienna, Strasbourg and Schweinfurt.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> See Weller 1872: 517, 523-5. In England, too, there were pamphlets that ascribed murder to husbands unable to bear the pain suffered by their sick wives (see Davies 1986: 72-3).

Although the earliest item in Seguin's bibliography of *canards* is dated 1529, the first to report murders are dated 1574. One of these is an *Histoire horrible et espouventable*, published in Paris, that tells of a Swiss boy who strangled his father.<sup>71</sup> The other relates how a woman named Flaminie killed one of her children in Naples. This comparatively tame crime story, however, has a title that perhaps led its purchasers to expect more: *Histoire du plus espouventable et admirable cas qui ait jamais esté ouy au monde*.<sup>72</sup> A case reported in a *canard* that ran and ran for over a quarter of a century – we know of editions published in Paris in 1577, in Lyon in 1587 and 1598, and in Rouen in 1609 – is a good deal more sensational. It tells the story of another Neapolitan woman, Anne de Buringel, who got her lover to poison numerous members of her family and is entitled: *Le vray discours d'une cruauté exercée par une Damoiselle envers son Marit, son Pere, sa Soeur et deux de ses Neveux*.<sup>73</sup> A Rouen edition of this *canard* was, evidently, the source of the newsletter, printed in London by John Wolfe in 1599 (Fig. 5.5).<sup>74</sup> A *canard* published in Lyon in 1610, whose title begins *Accident terrible, pitoyable, et espouvantable*, tells how a farm labourer who had simply intended to beat his son went and killed him and then hanged himself from grief, how his wife went to see what had happened, leaving her baby on the bed, how the baby fell on the floor and broke its neck, and how she too went and hanged herself.<sup>75</sup> Another sensational story that was republished several years after it first came out is the *Histoire horrible et effroyable*, printed in Châlons and Paris in 1619 and again in 1637, that tells how a man butchered and devoured seven children.<sup>76</sup>

Sometimes the victims come from the nobility, as in the case of the Marquis de la Maçonnière and his family, whose murder by masked men in their Château de Boiscourt, and the retribution wrought upon their assassins by the local populace, are recounted in a *canard* published in Paris in 1622,<sup>77</sup> another example being the *Cruel et estrange meurtres et massacres fait dedans le Chasteau de Broignon [...]. Ensemble les estranges et espouventables choses qui s'y sont passees*, printed in Paris two years earlier.<sup>78</sup>

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71 See Seguin 1964: 3, 4.

72 See Seguin 1964: 1, 2.

73 See Seguin 1964: 5-8. I cite the title of the Rouen edition (Seguin 1964: 8).

74 See *A true discourse of A cruell fact committed by a Gentlewoman towardes her Husband, her Father, her Sister and two of her Nephewes. First printed in French at Roan: and now translated into English* (Collins 1943: 41).

75 See Seguin 1964: 51.

76 See Seguin 1964: 72-3.

77 See Seguin 1964: 75.

78 See Seguin 1964: 24.



As for Italy, in 1586 Orazio Salviani printed in Naples the story, set in Pavia, of a married noblewoman who was wooed by two gentlemen and who came to grief when her house blew up.<sup>79</sup> Another tale, published in Mantua in 1587, concerns a girl who slit her brother's throat for having killed her lover and was promptly executed: the story was doubtless all the more sensational because it concerned fratricide committed by a woman.<sup>80</sup> An *avviso* published in Venice and Viterbo in 1620 reported a 'caso Maraviglioso, e Compassionevole' that had occurred recently in Ragusa in which a villainous woman had killed her husband and children.<sup>81</sup> The following year a 'Successo Miserabile' in Normandy occupied an *avviso* printed in Viterbo, but previously published in French in Rouen, in which a man deprived his sister of her heritage, and she, in desperation, killed two of her children and threw herself and another of her children into a river.<sup>82</sup>

Spanish *relaciones* also report on murders when they are sufficiently shocking. A verse *relación* in Catalan, printed in Barcelona in 1573, tells of the robberies, rapes and murders committed by one Janot Poch (Fig. 5.6), whilst another version, printed the same year, also in Barcelona, names the murderer as Montserrat Poch.<sup>83</sup> The 'lastimoso caso' (i.e. pitiable case) of a slave who went on a killing spree in the house of one Dr Bermudo in Écija is told in a *relación* published in Cordova in 1616.<sup>84</sup> A *relación* in verse, published in Barcelona in 1618, tells how a gang of gypsy bandits waylaid, killed, roasted and ate a friar in the Sierra Morena – a story that was bound to intensify the anti-gypsy prejudice questioned by Cervantes just a few years earlier in his short story *The Little Gypsy Girl*.<sup>85</sup>

A large proportion of the Spanish *relaciones* of murders, like many of those related elsewhere, involve crimes of passion and family violence. One such, written in verse and printed in Barcelona in 1572, relates the *Caso terrible y espantoso* of two brothers in Flanders who killed their father and cut out, roasted and ate his heart, whereupon

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79 *Un Crudelissimo, et compassionevole caso, occorso nella città di Pavia* (USTC 806106). The same story, but set in Toulouse, was printed by Alessandro Benacci in Bologna the following year: *Un Crudelissimo et compassionevole caso, occorso nella città di Tolosa in Francia*, (USTC 806195).

80 *Nuovo, et horrendo caso occorso in Roma, colpa del dishonesto amore di una giovane, che ha scannato il proprio fratello, il quale havea vcciso il suo amante* (USTC 806242).

81 See Bulgarelli 1988: 108.

82 See Bulgarelli 1988: 109.

83 See BDRS 5604, 5609.

84 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 614.

85 The *relación* on the murder of the friar is reproduced in Ettinghausen 2000a: 32. An earlier case is that of the two men who killed their father and then roasted and ate his heart, a story told in a *relación* in verse printed in Barcelona in 1574 (see Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 345-6).

the earth trembled and swallowed them up.<sup>86</sup> Another, published in Valencia in 1587, is the report of a woman who had killed her husband with a view to marrying her lover.<sup>87</sup> In another, printed in 1590, we find the account of how a woman killed her father in Zamora, the motive given being her disgust at being forced to marry against her will.<sup>88</sup> In 1622 a *relación* in verse printed in Barcelona explained the divine retribution meted out to a lad who, egged on by his father, had stoned his mother to death.<sup>89</sup>

In some cases the point is made that the murderers are noblemen. Thus, one *relación* reports in verse on a knight who, enamoured of a married woman, killed her husband and his brother-in-law, whilst another, in the form of two ballads published in a *Relacion autentica y verdadera*, tells how a knight in Antwerp had given false testimony against a married lady of high birth who had rejected his perfidious advances and how she had cut off his head in her bed.<sup>90</sup> The story is presented as a warning to lascivious men. Both *relaciones* were published in Barcelona in 1616.

As for England, as Sara Barker observes, whilst very few foreign murder stories were translated, domestic murders inspired a large number of news pamphlets.<sup>91</sup> One notable item printed in London in 1595 includes three separate murder stories – *Two notorious Murders. One committed by a Tanner on his wiues sonne, nere Hornechurch in Essex. The other on a Grasier nere Ailsburie in Bucking-hamshire. With these is intermixt another murdrous intending fellonie at Rislip in Middlesex. All done this last month* – and another, entitled *Three Bloodie Murders*, and published in London in 1613, also offered value for money.<sup>92</sup> In England, as elsewhere, sensational news – in particular, news of murders – was quite often recycled several years after

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<sup>86</sup> See R. Consuelo Gonzalo García, 2006a, 'Casos tremendos y prodigiosos en prosa y verso: Escudero de Cobeña y tres pliegos sueltos del duque de T'Serclaes de Tilly (S. XVI),' in *Las relaciones de sucesos. Relatos fácticos, oficiales y extraordinarios*, ed. Patrick Bégrand, Besançon, Presses Universitaires de Franche-Comté, 37-99, 40-48.

<sup>87</sup> See IB16 9693.

<sup>88</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 243. A *relación* in verse, printed in 1584, tells how a lady from Coimbra killed her parents for the same motive (see Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 353-4).

<sup>89</sup> Reproduced in Ettinghausen 2000a: 58. A *relación*, published in Madrid in 1625, tells how two daughters in the Majorcan village of Petra killed their father because he gave dowries every year to poor orphan girls (see Agulló y Cobo 1975: 160), whilst another, printed in Madrid in 1638, simply tells how a disobedient son beat up his father and cut off his mother's breasts because his parents disapproved of his mistress: *Caso admirable y ejemplar en que se da cuenta como en la Villa de Sarrato un hijo desobediente cortó las tetas a su madre y a su padre dio de bofetadas, porque le apartaron de su manceba* (copy in Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, VE 169/3).

<sup>90</sup> Reproduced in Ettinghausen 2000a: 20, 22.

<sup>91</sup> See Barker 2013a: 181-2. Marie-Hélène Davies (1986: 70) notes that in England news pamphlets 'are chiefly works of the seventeenth century'.

<sup>92</sup> See Collins 1943: 31; Shaaber 1966: 290-1.

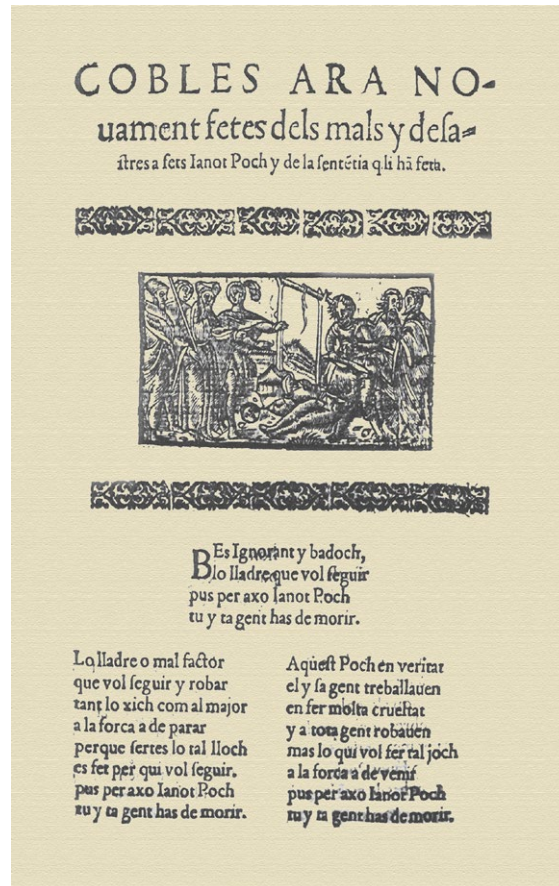


Fig. 5.6. First page of a *relación* in Catalan quatrains, published in Barcelona in 1573, on the deeds and the execution of the highwayman Janot Poch, with a woodcut depicting gallows and a decapitation (Fondo García Enterría, Universidade da Coruña).

the event. Thus, the story of the demonic possession of Alexander Nyndge, first printed in 1573, was republished after more than forty years, and *The manner of the cruell outrageous murder of William Storre*, which first came out in 1603, was reprinted ten years later.<sup>93</sup>

The attraction of violence as a topic for news stories is nicely illustrated by a pamphlet registered by Thomas Paulet at the Stationers' Company in 1605, entitled: *A pittifull Ballad made by one Robert Grene who knockt his maister on the Head in Christmas*

<sup>93</sup> See Shaaber 1966: 290-1, 99, 290.

*Last*.<sup>94</sup> Another – which, incidentally, testifies to the expression ‘bloody-minded’ (no doubt in a literal sense) in 1595 – was published in London under the title: *A most horrible & detestable murther committed by a bloudie minded man upon his owne wife and most strangely revealed by his childe that was under five yeares of age*.<sup>95</sup> The murder of young children was held up as particularly heinous. A newsletter published in 1606 told of *The Horrible murther of a young boy of three yeres of age, whose sister had her tongue cut out, and how it pleased God to reueale the offenders, by giuing speech to the tongueless Childe*.<sup>96</sup> Whether explicitly, or not, the devil was obviously implicit in murder. He is depicted egging on a murderer in the woodcut that illustrates a pamphlet published in London in 1620.<sup>97</sup>

As in other countries, the involvement of the gentry, either as victims or as assassins, clearly added spice to the English sensational press, as in the newsletter of 1616 entitled: *A true relation of the ground, occasion, and circumstances, of that horrible murther committed by Iohn Bartram, Gent. vpon the body of Sir Iohn Tyndal of Lincolns Inne, Knight*.<sup>98</sup> And the same was true of clergy, as can be seen in this newsletter printed in 1609:

*A true relation of the most inhumane and bloody murther, of Master Iames Minister and preacher of the word of God at Rockland in Norfolke Committed by one Lowe his curate, and consented vnto by his wife, who both were executed for this fact this last assises: he being drawne and hanged, and shee burned, who at his death confessed the murther of his owne child, vnlawfully begotten, and buried it him selfe*.<sup>99</sup>

Crime stories could also be turned into, or invented as, vehicles for religious propaganda, as in one, printed in London in 1606, that makes its purpose quite clear in its doubly alliterative title: *The Parricide Papist, or Cut-throate Catholicke*.<sup>100</sup>

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94 See Collins 1943: 115.

95 See USTC 512736.

96 See Collins 1943: 79.

97 *The Cry and Reuenge of Blood. Expressing the Nature and haynousnesse of wilfull Murther. Exemplified In a most lamentable History thereof, committed at Halsworth in High Suffolk, and Lately Conuicted at Bury Assize, 1620*. Kyle and Peacey (2008: 147) reproduce the first page of this pamphlet.

98 See Shaaber 1966: 251. Kyle and Peacey (2008: 136) reproduce the first page, with a woodcut illustration, of a diferent relation of the same murder, printed in London in 1617.

99 See Shaaber 1966: 210. Raymond (2003: 125-6) notes that some crimes involving the nobility were reported in manuscript, but not in print, as in the scandalous case of the second Earl of Castlehaven's execution in 1631 for sodomy and for raping his wife.

100 See Collins 1943: 77. A pamphlet entitled *Three Bloodie Murders*, published in 1613, includes the story of a preacher whose murder is attributed to an assassin who had converted to Catholicism (see Davies 1986: 73).

## Mass Murder and Massacre

Unless the murder victims were out of the ordinary (in particular, gentry or clerics), or else the relationship between murderer and victim was close (as in parricide or infanticide), multiple murder would appear to have been seen, both by publishers and public, as more sensational and saleable than the mere killing of single victims. But mass murder was almost certainly understood to be a cut even above multiple murder. An early example is the crimes committed by the man who killed twenty-two people in Jerez, told in verse, in a *relación* printed in Seville, in or around 1515.<sup>101</sup> In 1583 a *Flugschrift*, designed to be sung to the hymn tune of 'Ach Gott thu dich erbarmen,' told the story of Wolf Breymüller, who had supposedly poisoned twenty-seven people in Aufkirchen, and an *Erschröckliche Zeytung* published in 1570 had told how two mass murderers, Farkass and Paul Wasansky, had killed 124 people in 'Eybetschitz in Märhen' (i.e. Ivančice, in Moravia).<sup>102</sup>

On occasion, a sufficiently outrageous crime story could achieve wide international circulation. An extraordinarily sensational case was that of a man named Christman, who was said to have murdered over nine hundred people. An *Erschröckliche neue Zeytung*, printed in Mainz in at least three editions in 1581, reports his crimes, arrest and execution.<sup>103</sup> The story was also reported in France – *Admirable discours d'un brigand nommé Christeman execute à mort en la ville de Berckessel* – where it also went into numerous editions in 1581 and in 1590, as well as, in 1582, in a *Discours admirable des merdres et assinatx de nouveau commis par un nommé Cristeman Alemant*.<sup>104</sup> The same gory story was published in London by John Wolfe in 1584 under the very full title:

*Newes out of Germanie. A most wonderfull and true discouse of a cruell murderer, who had kylled in his life tyme, nine hundred, threescore and odde persons among which six of them were his owne children begotten on a young woman which he forceablie kept in a cave seven yeeres, with the manner how he was taken, and the aboundance of wealth that was found in the said cave: executed at Berkessell on the 14. of June.*<sup>105</sup>

From the deeds of individual mass murderers, we progress to massacres committed by gangs and armies. The massacres reported in the early modern press – as, indeed, later – are always committed by the enemy. A German pamphlet published

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101 See Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 344.

102 See Weller 1872: 592, 360-1.

103 See Weller 1872: 543; USTC 750156, 3472, 53001.

104 See USTC 750156, 53001, 74299.

105 See USTC 510114.

in at least five editions in Nuremberg in 1561 repeatedly highlights synonyms for horror in the opening words of its title: *Sehr grewliche, erschröckliche, vor vnerhörte, warhafftige Newe zeyttung*. The perpetrators here of the massacre of Christian prisoners – men, women and children – were the troops of Ivan the Terrible, and the story is presented as a warning to Protestants to mend their sinful ways.<sup>106</sup> A comparable story that appeared that same year involves the death of eighty-eight Protestants in the kingdom of Naples, whilst Ivan the Terrible reappears as the subject of a *Warhafftige vnd erschröckliche Zeitung* published in Augsburg in 1563, in which he is described as ‘dem grausamen Feind dem Moscoviter’ (i.e. the gruesome Muscovite foe).<sup>107</sup> Except in those cases where archival evidence supports reports of violent crime, it is impossible to tell which stories are pure inventions aimed simply at exploiting a market that would seem to have lapped up blood and thunder. As Roger Chartier puts it,

The differences between fictional tales in print and printed relations of real events are tenuous indeed, since invented narrative attempts to gain credibility by reiterating the ‘proofs’ of its authenticity and the event in print exists only as it has been put into the text and picture that represent it to the reader or viewer.<sup>108</sup>

## Assassinations

Assassination was a particularly spectacular form of murder, because it deliberately upset the (divinely) established political order, and the punishments meted out allowed the authorities to apply the most ghastly tortures available. The attempted assassination of William of Orange in Antwerp by Juan de Jáuregui in 1582 is reported in an *occasionnel* in French, printed in Antwerp by Plantin, as well as in a *relación* printed in Valencia and in *A true discourse* printed in London.<sup>109</sup> William’s murder, two years later, by Balthasar Gerard left the Dutch Protestant rebellion against Spain leaderless and was depicted, together with the execution of his assassin, in a finely engraved *Flugblatt*.

The assassination at Blois of the Duke of Guise by Henri III’s bodyguards in 1588 was reported in numerous *Neue Zeitungen*, and the assassination of Henri III himself the following year was related in a *Französische Zeitung* and in an *avviso* printed

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<sup>106</sup> See Weller 1872: 247.

<sup>107</sup> See Weller 1872: 248, 263.

<sup>108</sup> Roger Chartier, *The Culture of Print. Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Polity, 1989: 4.

<sup>109</sup> See USTC 4136; IB16 10090, 10085.

in Como.<sup>110</sup> Henri IV of France was the subject of attempts on his life in 1593 and 1594. A letter to the French ambassador bearing news of the second attempt was published in London, and a ballad in English by Jean Châtel, was registered with the Stationers' Company by Thomas Millington, whilst the following year Millington registered a newsletter on Châtel's execution.<sup>111</sup> The king's assassination in 1610, the torture and execution of his assassin, Ravaillac, and the coronation of Marie de Medici were reported in a very large number of shocked and shocking news pamphlets: in Barcelona, Saragossa, Seville and Valladolid, and in Turin, Ronciglione, Viterbo, Milan, Florence, Venice, Treviso, Bologna and Rome.<sup>112</sup> English readers could choose between numerous publications bearing titles such as *The terrible and deserved death of Francis Rauilliack* (complete with a woodcut showing the king's assassin being drawn and quartered by four horses) and the copy of a letter *Declaring the manner of the execution of Francis Rauillart, or A True Report of the most execrable Murder committed vpon the late French King Henrie the 4 of famous memory*.<sup>113</sup> Numerous eulogies of the king's life, and laments at his death, were also published in England.<sup>114</sup> However, when the Italian politician Concino Concini, Marquis d'Ancre and favourite of Maria de Medici, was assassinated, probably on Louis XIII's orders, in Paris in 1617, a forty-eight-page relation on the event appeared in London that same year that was less than complimentary to the victim: *The true relation of the deserved death of that base and insolent tyrant, the Marquis d'Ancre, the most vnworthie Marshall of France: Together with a manifestation of the combination and tyranny of him and his adherents*.

As for England, one of the many plots to overthrow Elizabeth I ended in July 1584 with the culprit, Francis Throckmorton, tortured and executed, and with a news pamphlet published in London entitled: *A true and perfect declaration of the Treasons practised and attempted by Francis Throckemorton, late of London, against the Queenes Maiestie and the Realme*.<sup>115</sup> The Gowrie conspiracy, which supposedly

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110 See Weller 1872: 688-95, 708; USTC 806462. 'Translation of French news increased from the mid-1580s to a peak in 1589-90, when the assassination of Henri III brought a coincidence between English and French political interests' (Raymond 2003: 103).

111 See Collins 1943: 30, 108.

112 See BDRS 4411, 5851, 1906, 5335; Bulgarelli 1988: 42-50, 55. For reports in France and Spain on the assassination, see Augustin Redondo, 'Entre Francia y España: el asesinato del rey galo Enrique IV (1610) y sus repercusiones a través de las relaciones de sucesos,' in García López and Boadas, eds., 2015: 110-23.

113 See Shaaber 1966: 175; Collins 1943: 96.

114 See Shaaber 1966: 179, n. 19; Collins 1943: 96, 98.

115 The first page is reproduced in Kyle and Peacey 2008: 46. The Lopez conspiracy is the subject of a newsletter published in London in 1594 (Collins 1943: 30).

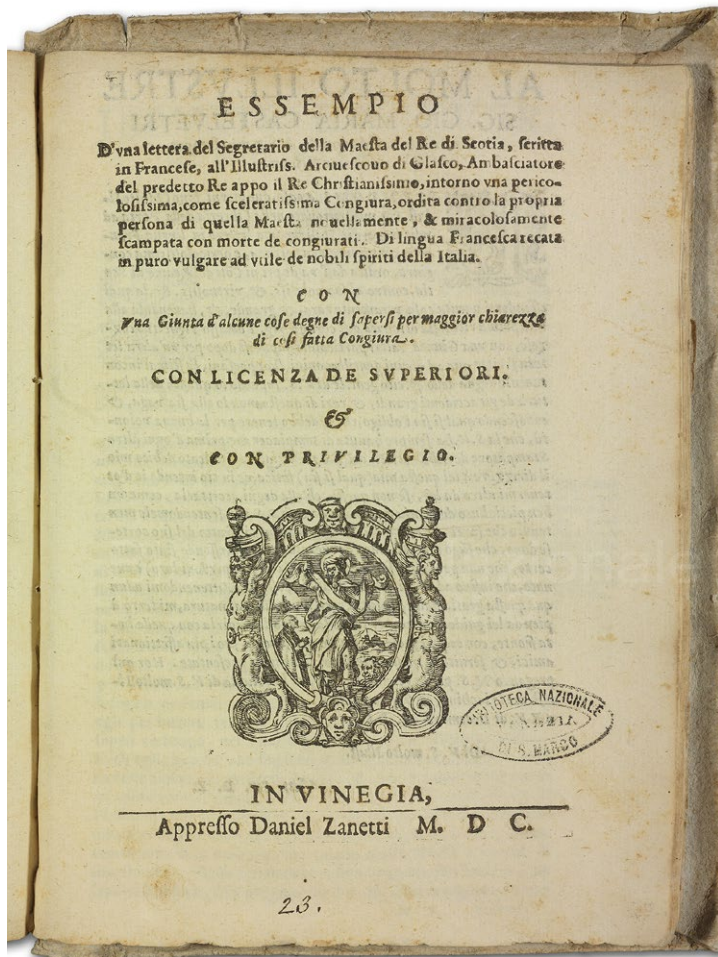


Fig. 5.7. First page of an Italian translation, from French, of the letter from James I's secretary that tells of the Gowrie conspiracy. The lengthy title – which highlights the first word ('ESSEMPIO,' meaning copy) – is accompanied by a printer's device. As in many French *occasionnels* of the time, the bulk of the title is offset to the right margin (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice).

involved an attempt on the life of James VI of Scotland in 1600, was the news in a pamphlet printed at Edinburgh entitled *A Discourse of the vnnaturall and vyle Conspiracie, attempted against the Kings Majesties Person, at Sanct-Johnstoun*, and the plot was also reported in an *avviso* published the same year in Venice (Fig. 5.7), as well as in two *occasionnels*.<sup>116</sup>

116 See Collins 1943: 45; Bulgarelli 1967: 352; USTC 34447, 83268.



## Executions

The punishment of criminals was not just a matter of doing justice, but of making sure that justice was seen to be done. Punishment – whether in the form of ritual humiliation or execution – was generally performed in public in order to satisfy people’s desire to see felons suffer for their crimes and as a lesson to would-be wrongdoers. Ideally, criminals confessed and repented, accepting and justifying the sentences inflicted upon them. Newsletters reporting murders thus routinely give accounts, not just of the crimes, but also of the trials and of the sentences carried out. The arrest and punishment of criminals is a feature of the press that, in the early modern period, as now, provided reassuring evidence of the efficacy of the authorities, whilst also titillating palates keen for sensationalism.

The capture of sixty Catalan bandits (thirty-eight alive and twenty-two dead) – banditry was endemic in Catalonia – provided the copy for a *relación* published in Barcelona in 1573.<sup>117</sup> The topic reappears early in the seventeenth century in numerous *relaciones* published in Barcelona that celebrate the campaign promoted by the then Spanish viceroy, the Duke of Alburquerque, to take control of the situation,<sup>118</sup> whilst a *Verdadera relacion*, published in Valladolid in 1608, tells how four Portuguese pilgrims arrested fourteen bandits who had stolen a monstrance and who were then castigated in the city of Girona.<sup>119</sup>

However, highway robbery was by no means confined to Catalonia. The arrest and execution of one Captain Guillery and sixty-two of his henchmen is recounted in an *occasionnel* published in La Rochelle and Paris in 1608 which tells how they were broken on the wheel.<sup>120</sup> The same story, but with eighty henchmen and with their execution taking place not in La Rochelle, but in Nantes, was published the same year in Poitiers.<sup>121</sup> A robber who pretended to be the devil and was hanged in Bayonne appears in an *occasionnel* published at Bayonne and Villefranche in 1608, and at Troyes in 1609,<sup>122</sup> and the execution of five thieves who forced a wealthy yeoman

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117 See IB16 3456. For Catalan banditry in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Agustí Alcoberro, ‘Visió popular del bandolerisme del XVII: una aproximació,’ in *Primer Congrés d’Història Moderna de Catalunya*, Universitat de Barcelona, II, 1984: 569-77; Xavier Torres Sans, *Els bandolers (s. XVI-XVII)*, Vic, 1991. For early relations on banditry in Catalonia, see Pep Balsalobre, ‘Plecs poetics catalans dels segles XVI i XVII relatius al bandolerisme. Un inventari,’ *Llengua & Literatura*, 9, 1998, 287-364. Redondo (1992) analyses a manuscript Spanish relation that refers to a probably fictitious Catalan bandit in the Roussillon at the end of the sixteenth century.

118 Several such *relaciones* are reproduced in Ettinghausen 2000a: 7, 9, 21, 23, 26, 105, 108, 109.

119 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 465.

120 See Seguin 1964: 95-6.

121 See Seguin 1964: 97.

122 See Seguin 1964: 98-9.

in Budworth, near Chester, to sit on red-hot gridirons and then to eat his roasted buttocks, is told in a newsletter, published that same year.<sup>123</sup> The execution of one Captain Carrefour, reputedly the chief of all the robbers in France, together with an account of his most notorious thefts and murders, is recounted in an *occasionnel* published in Paris in 1622 and 1623, whilst the capture and execution in Mantua of Pelandra, the notorious bandit leader of Romagna, is reported in a *relatione* published in Macerata in 1629.<sup>124</sup>

A *canard* printed in Toulouse in 1584 is remarkable for concluding its account of how one Marguerite Haldebois killed her husband and two children, because her spouse mistreated and starved them, with the complaint that she uttered from the scaffold regarding the duties of husbands towards their wives and children.<sup>125</sup> On occasion murder and miracle converge, as in a *canard* printed in Lyon in 1618 which tells how a young woman was beheaded for burying her baby alive, how the baby survived for six days and how it died shortly after receiving baptism.<sup>126</sup> Some news pamphlets highlight grisly details of the execution of criminals, as in the case of a young woman in Bourg en Bresse whom the executioner failed to behead after three attempts, or that of a man who had been sentenced to be hanged, strangled and burned and who was spared all of that when, on the ladder leading up to the scaffold, the devil wrung his neck.<sup>127</sup> A dramatic stay of execution, arising from the so-called Main Plot against King James, is detailed in an account of the events that took place at Winchester in December 1603 when the king's pardon for the conspirators arrived in the very nick of time.<sup>128</sup>

The execution in Britain of royalty and members of the nobility in the early modern period was very frequently reported not only at home, but also abroad. The beheading of Anne Boleyn in 1536 is told in an *avviso*, and it is one of the items in a multi-event Spanish *relación* published that same year.<sup>129</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, the execution of the Duke of Northumberland in 1553 made the news in English, German, Dutch and Italian, as did that of Mary Stuart in 1587. The trial and execution of the Earl of Essex in 1601, in which his dealings with Catholics were a

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123 See Collins 1943: 94.

124 See Seguin 1964: 106-7; Bulgarelli 1988: 206.

125 See Seguin 1964: 11.

126 See Seguin 1964: 70.

127 See Seguin 1964: 79, 83-4.

128 See Collins 1943: 63-4. For the miraculous prevention of a hanging, see Roger Chartier, 'Los ocasionales. La ahorcada milagrosamente salvada,' in Roger Chartier, *Libros, lecturas y lectores en la Edad Moderna*, trans. Mauro Armijo, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1993, 203-45.

129 See Bulgarelli 1967: 37; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 60.

principal issue, was reported in English newsletters, as well as in several Spanish *relaciones*.<sup>130</sup>

England was not, however, unique in executing prominent citizens. A newsletter translated from Dutch and published in London in 1621 told of the aftermath of the defenestration of Prague in 1618 and the defeat of the Bohemian Protestants in 1620 at the Battle of White Mountain, when forty-seven noblemen were executed in Prague's main square.<sup>131</sup> The execution of deposed noblemen being, though, rare in Spain, the beheading of Rodrigo Calderón, one of Philip III's chief ministers, in Madrid's Plaza Mayor in October 1621 provided young Philip IV with the opportunity to display his determination to root out the corruption that had marred his father's reign. The event was recorded in a score of *relaciones*, most of which put the emphasis on Calderón's Christian contrition and stoical composure on the scaffold.<sup>132</sup> The event also made the press abroad, including a twenty-page newsletter printed the following year in London: *Newes from Spaine. A relation of the death of Don Rodrigo Calderon, marques of seven churches, &c. Faithfully translated according to the Spanish copy printed at Madrid. By Fernando Manojó. From the court.*<sup>133</sup>

News stories of criminals of all kinds and classes sentenced to death frequently end not just by stressing the culprit's contrition, but very often include as a conclusion the text of the last speech, supposedly written by the person concerned, often said to have been uttered from the scaffold.<sup>134</sup> One such is contained in a *canard* printed in Paris in 1597 whose title begins: *Discours tragique et pitoyable*.<sup>135</sup> The lengthy title of a thirty-two-page newsletter published in London in 1604 on the murder of Thomas Caldwell highlights the inclusion of an account of the repentant life led in jail by one of the murderesses and of the exemplary pious letter written to her husband by another of the condemned:

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130 See Collins 1943: 52; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 373, 379.

131 *A true relation of the bloody execution, lately performed by the commaundment of the Emperours Maiestie, vpon the persons of some chiefe states-men, and others; in Prague the chiefe citie of the kingdome of Bohemia* (copy in British Library, 185.a.11).

132 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 13, 16, 51.

133 See IB17 28137. The translator misunderstood the Spanish author's second patronym – 'de la Corte' – taking the expression to mean that the report came from the court. The USTC (5003327) gives the place of printing as Madrid.

134 See J.A. Sharpe, 'Last Dying Speeches. Religion, Ideology and Public Execution in Seventeenth-Century England,' *Past and Present*, 107, 1985, 144-67; Pieter Spierenburg, *The Spectacle of Suffering: Executions and the Evolution of Repression: from a Preindustrial Metropolis to the European Experience*, Cambridge University Press, 1984; Paul Friedland, *Seeing Justice Done. The Age of Spectacular Capital Punishment in France*, Oxford University Press, 2012.

135 See Seguin 1964: 14-17.

*A true discourse of the practises of Elizabeth Caldwell, Ma. Ieffrey Bownd, Isabell Hall widdow, and George Fernely, on the parson of Ma. Thomas Caldwell, in the county of Chester, to haue murdered and poysoned him, with diuers others Together with her manner of godly life during her imprisonment, her arrainement and execution, with Isabell Hall widdow; as also a briefe relation of Ma. Ieffrey Bownd, who was the assise before prest to death. Lastly, a most excellent exhortorie letter, written by her own selfe out of the prison to her husband, to cause him to fall into consideration of his sinnes, &c. Seruing like wise for the vse of euery good Christian. Beeing executed the 18. of Iune. 1603. VVritten by one then present as witnes, their owne country-man, Gilbert Dugdale.*<sup>136</sup>

This could be described as a fine example of the combination of yellow press and sermon.

When, however, condemned criminals refused to repent, their determination could be held up as the final proof of their perversity. Thus, the trial and execution of Guy Fawkes and his fellow conspirators in January 1606 gave rise to several newsletters that made a point of stressing their obduracy.<sup>137</sup> A particularly curious case is the pamphlet entitled *The Life and Death of Gamaliell Ratsey, a Famous Thiefe of England, executed at Bedford the 26. of March last past, 1605*, the biography of a soldier turned highwayman, published a few months after his execution. As Joad Raymond remarks, the pamphlet contains ‘A picaresque narrative of a criminal’s ingenuity on his path to destruction [...] told in a lively, vernacular style, somewhere between Greene’s rogue pamphlets and the novels of Daniel Defoe.’<sup>138</sup> But it is followed by a forty-one-stanza poem of repentance, supposedly written ‘with his owne hand when hee was in New-gate.’ And *The Life and Death* was, evidently, successful enough to warrant the almost immediate publication of a sequel: *Ratseis Ghost. Or The second Part of his madde Prankes and Robberies*.<sup>139</sup>

News of possession by the devil, of the abominations committed by witches and sorcerers, and of murder, mass murder and massacre was bound to have a powerful effect upon populations conditioned by centuries of sermonising and confession into believing that unredeemed sinners and criminals were destined to burn in hell for all time. At the same time as it doubtless terrified readers and listeners, however, it also offered them prurient insights into the depths of depravity.

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136 See Collins 1943: 67-8.

137 See Collins 1943: 75, 79, 117.

138 Raymond 2003: 121.

139 See Anon., *The Life and Death of Gamaliel Ratsey [...]*, Shakespeare Association Facsimiles, No. 10, London, Oxford University Press, 1935.

## Natural Disasters, Signs, Portents, Wonders and Miracles

It is perhaps not excessively surprising that events such as geographical discoveries, battles, treaties, embassies, royal births, marriages and deaths, ecclesiastical celebrations, murders and the execution of public figures and of outstandingly brutal criminals should have been amongst the favourite news topics in sixteenth-century Europe, or that on many occasions they should have been picked up by the press and broadcast internationally. However, the same was also true of several other types of news. Amongst these, natural disasters clearly shocked, terrified and fascinated the purveyors and the consumers of news, whilst a remarkable array of signs, portents and wonders held the public in awe and were widely exploited as signifying divine wrath.<sup>1</sup> As for miracles, they provided further proof of the power of Providence to reward those with the right faith, and to warn and punish those without.

In his *Histoires prodigieuses* (Paris, 1560) Pierre Boaistuau collected together a large number of stories on most of the kinds of extraordinary happenings and beings that will be discussed in this and the following chapter. His hugely successful book, which was translated into many languages, chronicles terrifying appearances of the devil, signs and visions seen in the heavens (including comets, dragons, flames and warring armies), storms, tempests and floods, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. Boaistuau's *Histoires* also includes such titbits as foul acts committed by the Jews,

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<sup>1</sup> Pettegree, however, observes (2014: 74) that 'news of floods, earthquakes and destructive fires, celestial apparitions and notorious crimes [...] were not particularly common in the pamphlet literature,' but 'found a more natural home in the ballad sheets and illustrated broadsides that also play an increasing role in the news market of this period.' That may have been truer of Germany than of other countries.

women who turned into men and men who castrated themselves in order to become women, the appearance of evil spirits, the news of eighteen men and fifteen women who danced non-stop for a year without tiring, a ghost that appeared to the philosopher Athenodorus, and so on. And he had plenty to say about many kinds of monsters. The world that he portrays closely reflects much of the news reported in the contemporary pamphlets and broadsides that we shall be looking at.

## Floods and Storms

The weather as a staple topic of general interest is very far from being a modern-day novelty. However, in early modern Europe, news reports, like sermons, very often expressed the notion that natural disasters occurred for moral reasons, that they were a cause for concern, not just for curiosity. Sometimes this was implied, sometimes it was made explicit, as in an *occasionnel* published in 1529 on a hailstorm in Germany that struck a village that had been excommunicated whose title begins: *Sensuyt la merueilleuse gresle qui est cheutte au pays dallemaigne sur ung gros village nomme Berchs par le moyen dung excommunicament qui fuest gecte audit village.*<sup>2</sup> In principle, catastrophes occurred for good reason. When, however, it came to the very severe flooding in Rome in 1530, which made the news internationally, it was more difficult to stress the moral appropriateness of the disaster, at least in Catholic countries. Thus, the Roman floods inspired an *avviso* published in Venice that put the emphasis on the destruction and the loss of life.<sup>3</sup> It was also reported in two *Flugschriften*, which ran to at least four editions each, and which simply describe the floods as 'erschrecklich'.<sup>4</sup> Another *Flugschrift* on the same floods was printed in the Catholic cities of Augsburg, Munich and Strasbourg,<sup>5</sup> and they were also recorded in several *occasionnels* and *canards*, as were those that affected Flanders that same year.<sup>6</sup>

Flooding afflicted Sicily and northern Italy in 1557. Its effects on Palermo are reported in a *Nuovo avviso* published in Rome and in a *canard* printed in Rouen;<sup>7</sup> the floods that struck Rome are recorded in *avvisi* published there which, as usual, detail

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2 See Seguin 1961: 77.

3 *Diluvio di Roma che fu a di sette di ottobre l'anno del millecinquecento e trenta col numero delle case roinate, delle robbe perdute, animali morti, huomini e donne affogate, con ordinata discretione di parte in parte &c* (USTC 800540).

4 See Weller 1872: 53-4.

5 See USTC 701734-5, 705233.

6 See Seguin 1961: 100-3; Seguin 1964: 123-7. For Flanders, see Seguin 1961: 104.

7 See Bulgarelli 1967: 78; Seguin 1964: 129.



Fig. 6.1. A *Flugblatt* in verse, printed at Augsburg, that claims to depict the storms that struck the city of Ghent in 1586, illustrated with a dramatic woodcut that shows thunderbolts and dragons attacking a city (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

the destruction and the casualties, and in a German pamphlet printed in Augsburg;<sup>8</sup> and those that affected Florence are reported in an *occasionnel* and in *canards* printed in Paris and Rouen.<sup>9</sup> The widespread reporting of the hardship caused by floods is illustrated by the press coverage of those that afflicted Piedmont in 1583, reported in an *avviso* which states that the same account had been published in Milan, Bologna

8 E.g. *Novi avisi del grandissimo diluvio, il quale e stato in Roma. Con li nomi delle case, palazzi, ponti, & uigne ruinate. Et con il numero de le genti, & bestiame che sono morti* (USTC 845315); *Ein erschrecklich und grausamlich gewässer, so sich in der Statt Rom, durch die Tyber begeben* (USTC 752189).

9 See Seguin 1961: 122; Seguin 1964: 130-1.

and Ravenna before being printed in Perugia.<sup>10</sup> Three years later, a *Flugblatt* in verse, printed at Augsburg, with an engraving that showed dragons in the sky, claimed to depict the storms that struck the city of Ghent (Fig. 6.1).<sup>11</sup> Plaques still record today the level reached by the historic floods in Rome on Christmas Day, 1598. Naturally, they were widely reported in Italy, including *avvisi* printed in Milan, Modena and Rome,<sup>12</sup> and also internationally, in a *relación* printed in Seville by Rodrigo de Cabrera, in a *canard* printed in Paris and in a newsletter printed by John Wolfe in London.<sup>13</sup>

Turning to northern Europe, storms – ‘Schrecklichen vngewittern’ – in Silesia are reported in a *Neue Zeitung* published in Nuremberg in 1536, and a ‘grawsamen Vngewitter’ in Heidelberg the following year is the subject of an *Erschrockliche Neue zeytung*, one edition of which was published in Wittenberg.<sup>14</sup> A Dutch pamphlet on the storms that damaged the Flemish town of Mechelen in 1546 was published in Amsterdam, and German pamphlets on the ‘schrecklichen Wetter’ and the ‘Donner und Blixen’ in Mechelen were printed at Hannover, Wittenberg and Nuremberg, whilst an *Erschreckliche neue zeitunge* reported the cloudbursts that caused flooding in and around Schweinfurt in 1551.<sup>15</sup>

At least three editions of an *Erschreckliche Neue Zeytung* published in 1564 reported on the floods that destroyed three hundred houses near Salzburg, presenting the disaster as a warning to all pious Christians, and the following year an ‘erschreck Wasserflut’ near Freiburg was reported in another *Neue Zeitung*.<sup>16</sup> The terrible All Saints’ Flood, on 1 November 1570, that swept over the dykes in the Netherlands and badly affected Antwerp gave rise to news reports of the city’s plight, described in a pamphlet printed in Augsburg as *Warhafftige doch erschroeckenliche beschreybung der grewlichen wassernot so geschehen ist zu Antorff in dem Niderland*, and, in one published in Paris, as: *Les merueilleuses et espouventables tourmentes de mer et effroyables ondes veuées en la ville d’Anvers* (Fig. 6.2).<sup>17</sup>

The snow and ice floes that caused havoc in Flanders in the winter of 1623/24, and in particular the breach caused in the Lek dyke, south of Utrecht, are recounted

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10 See Bulgarelli 1967: 158.

11 See USTC 750186.

12 See USTC 807353, 807384. Petrucci Nardelli (1982: 4, 6) discusses floods in Rome in 1618.

13 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 310; Seguin 1964: 147; Collins 1943: 39. This last ítem is entitled: *A terrible deluge or ouerflowing in Roome at their Christmasse last, Whereby a great number of houses were ouerthrowne, to the value of sixe millions of Duckets lost, and a thousand fourehundred persons drowned.*

14 See Weller 1872: 105, 112.

15 See USTC 441547, 705222, 705633, 707375; Weller 1872: 195.

16 See Weller 1872: 273, 283.

17 See USTC 705699, 13104.



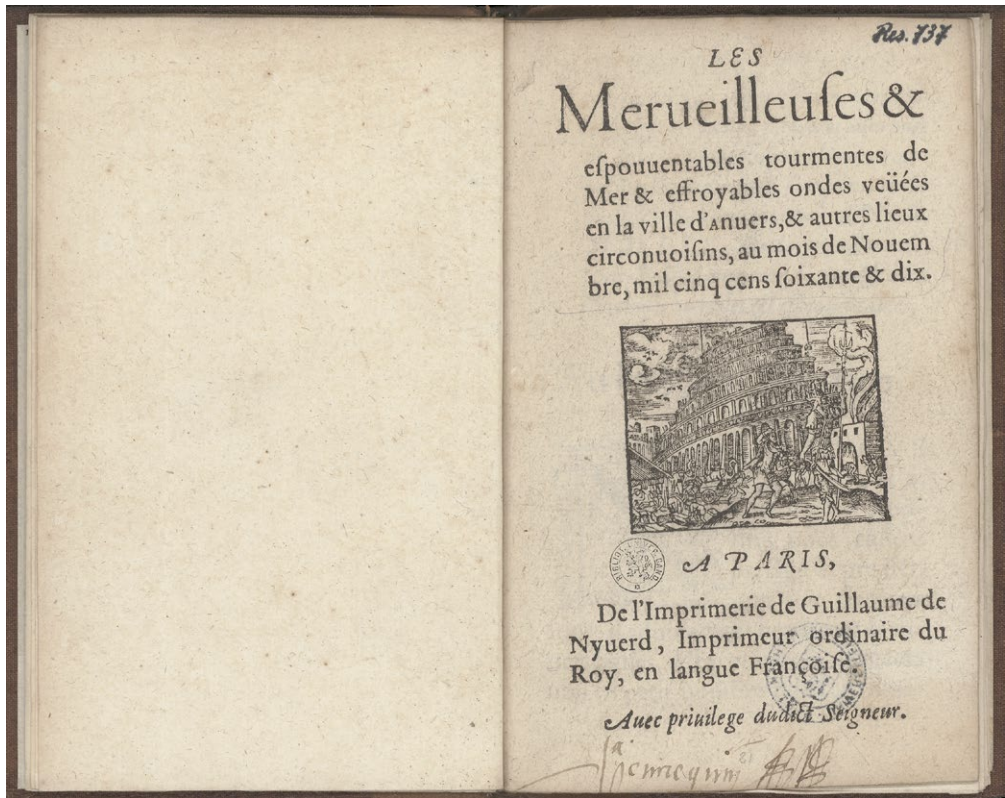


Fig. 6.2. First page of an *occasionnel* or *canard* on the storms and floods that affected Antwerp in 1570, with the bulk of the title offset to the right margin, as is common in French titlepages. The woodcut would appear to be a reused portrayal of the tower of Babel (Centrale Bibliotheek van der Universiteit, Ghent).

in a *relación* printed in Madrid.<sup>18</sup> The same floods are the subject of *relaciones* brought by the latest 'Correo extraordinario' (i.e. special post) from Flanders, and also of *relaciones* on the losses caused by the floods which, it is claimed, had swept through more than forty towns and cities, one of the reports being based on letters written to the German ambassador.<sup>19</sup>

Amongst the *relaciones* on floods and storms in Spain, we can cite two that occurred in 1589, in Cordova and in Pastrana, the former recorded in a ballad published in Cordova that talks of a tempest and an earthquake, the latter published in Valladolid.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 103.

<sup>19</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 118; BUS 87, 106.

<sup>20</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 239; IB16 15522.

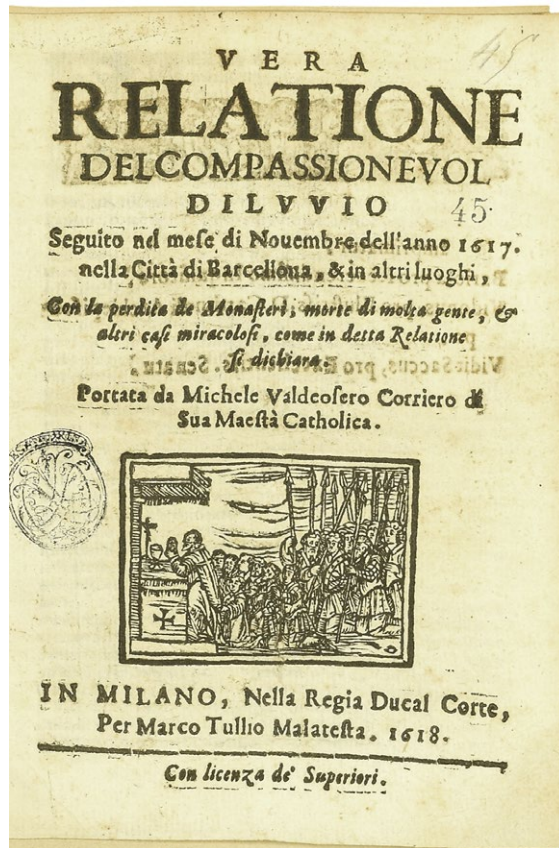


Fig. 6.3. First page of an 8-page *avisillo*, translated from Spanish and printed in Milan in 1618, describing in detail the damage caused by the extensive flooding in Catalonia in November 1617, including the loss of over 150 houses and two monasteries in the city of Tortosa. The page bears the name of the postman who carried the news to Seville and highlights in large capitals the generic term 'RELATIONE.' The woodcut illustration – showing people at prayer, apparently in the open air – was evidently not made to order. It was doubtless part of the printer's stock, usable in a variety of contexts, here simply to represent supplication for divine mercy (Biblioteca Alessandrina, Rome).

Earlier, in 1562, the very heavy seas that struck twenty-five ships off the port of La Herradura, near Almuñécar, with the loss of perhaps as many as five thousand lives, had been reported in a *relación* in verse on that 'desastrado subcesso' (i.e. disastrous event) written by one of the survivors, Fernando Moyano.<sup>21</sup> In 1611 the floods that affected Mexico were reported in a *relación* printed there.<sup>22</sup>

21 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 130.

22 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 504.

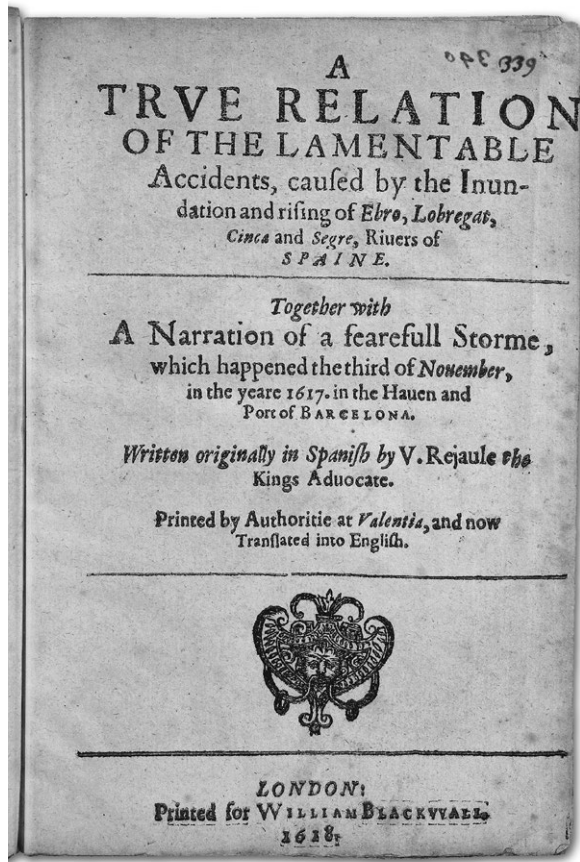


Fig. 6.4. First page of *A True relation*, in English, on the same floods in Catalonia, translated from a Spanish *relación* printed in Valencia, with large capitals used at the top of the page to stress the subject of the report, the only visual element being a small printer's device (Bodleian Library, Oxford).

Again, some floods were reported internationally. A *relación* of the floods that hit Catalonia in November 1617 was published in Seville the following year and rapidly spread, with an Italian translation of the same pamphlet printed in Milan (Fig. 6.3), a *canard*, translated from the Spanish and presented to Louis XIII, published in Lyon and Paris, and an English translation of a *relación* printed in Valencia published in London, entitled: *A true relation of the lamentable accidents, caused by the inundation and rising of Ebro, Lobregat, Cinca and Segre, rivers of Spain* (Fig. 6.4).<sup>23</sup> Seville was particularly prone to the flooding of the Guadalquivir, prompting *relaciones* on

<sup>23</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 723; Bulgarelli 1988, 90; Seguin 1964: 154-5; BDRS 4301. There is a copy of the English edition (discussed by Barker 2013: 180-1) at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, Vet. A2 e.20.

many occasions, for instance in 1608 and in 1618.<sup>24</sup> As for the floods that affected the city at the beginning of 1626, ten editions of *relaciones* written by at least four different authors were published in Barcelona, Cordova, Lima, Lisbon, Salamanca, Saragossa, Seville and Valladolid, as well as an *occasionnel* printed in Paris by Jean du Hamel.<sup>25</sup> The floods caused by the Tormes in Salamanca that same year are reported in *relaciones* published in Salamanca, in Valladolid and in Seville, as well as in an *occasionnel*, also printed in Paris by Du Hamel.<sup>26</sup>

The alarm and the damage caused by storms and floods in England also filled plenty of newsletters. One of the earliest surviving examples is a *canard* printed in Paris in 1561 which offers a *Brief discours de la tempeste et fouldre advenue en la cité de Londres*.<sup>27</sup> But news of awful weather in England kept London printers busy, too. William How printed Thomas Knell's report, *A declaration of such tempestious, and outragious fluddes, as hath been in divers places of England. 1570*; the blizzards during the winter of 1578/79 inspired the ballad *Tarltons Devise vpon this vnlooked for great snowe*; and wicked weather in 1590 was reported in yet another newsletter: *A most true and lamentable report, of a great tempest of haile which fell upon a village in Kent, called Stockbery, about three myles from Cittingborne*.<sup>28</sup> The very serious flooding in 1607 was reported widely, including a newsletter that offered *A true relation of the great floods which happened in Couentry, in Lynne, and other places*; one on the 'ouerflowings of Waters' in Somerset, Gloucestershire and Norfolk; and another on 'The wonderfull and most fearefull accidents of the great ouerflowing of waters' as they affected Monmouthshire (Fig. 6.5).<sup>29</sup> Those same floods were also reported in a *canard* published in Paris.<sup>30</sup>

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24 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 449-50. A *relación* of the 1618 floods is reproduced in Ettinghausen 2000a: 35.

25 See Seguin 1964: 157. I am most grateful to Carlos Santos Fernández for allowing me to see his unpublished article on relations on the floods in Seville in 1626.

26 Ettinghausen (1995) reproduces the *relación* published in Salamanca. For the others, see Agulló y Cobo 1975: 222, 235; and, for the *canard*, Seguin 1964: 158. Javier San José Lera (*Silva para una inundación: la de Salamanca en 1626*, Salamanca, Seminario de Estudios Medievales y Renacentistas, 2004) publishes the manuscript of a 1147-line poem on the floods in Salamanca in 1626, one of innumerable examples of poetic treatments of news that include popular ballads, at one extreme, and sophisticated erudite compositions (as in this case) at the other. For *relaciones* in verse on storms and tempests, see María Sánchez Pérez, 'Noticias sobre desastres naturales: tormentas y tempestades en pliegos sueltos poéticos (siglo XVI),' in López Poza, ed., 2006b: 191-99.

27 See USTC 16234.

28 See USTC 507353; Shaaber 1966: 165; USTC 511411.

29 See Shaaber 1966: 163.

30 See Seguin 1964: 148.

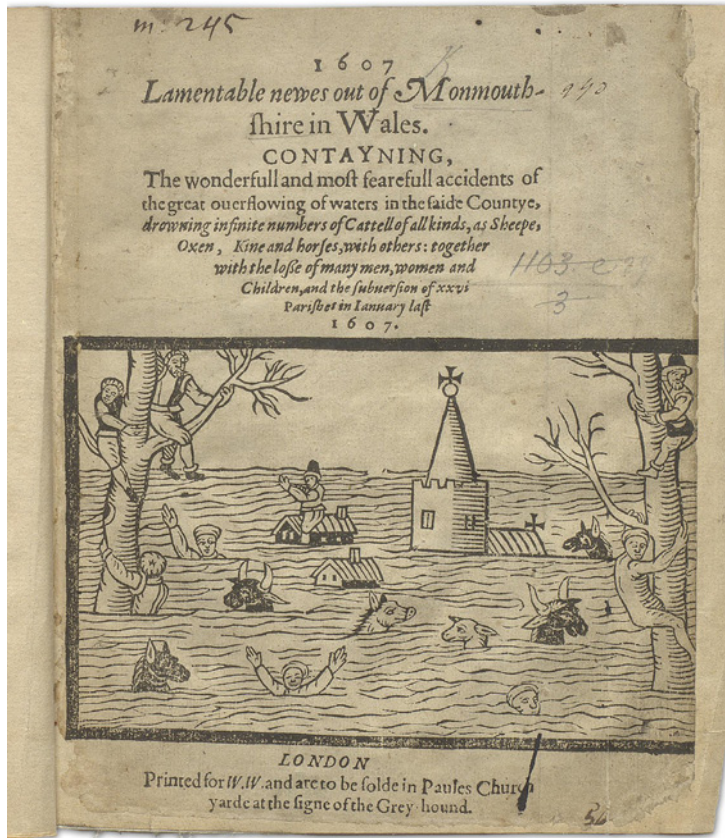


Fig. 6.5. First page of a newsletter, printed in London in 1607, on the floods in Monmouthshire, with a woodcut that could have served to illustrate any devastating flood (© The British Library Board, C.122.d.12.c).<sup>31</sup>

Further newsletters were inspired by the freezing winter of 1608, including one entitled *The great frost; cold doings in London*, and the exceptionally stormy winter of 1612/13 inspired publications that included *The Windie Yeare* and the alliteratively entitled *The Wonders of this windie winter*.<sup>32</sup> The former, a thirty-page newsletter, included the pathetic detail of ‘how a woman was found in the water, with a sucking child at her brest, with the nipple in it mouth, both drowned.’ Another exceptionally cold winter inspired a dialogue between a London shopkeeper and a north-country

<sup>31</sup> Davies (1986: 371) reproduces a very close variant of the same woodcut from the first page of the pamphlet on the ‘ouerflowings of Waters’ in Somerset, Gloucestershire and Norfolk.

<sup>32</sup> See Collins 1943: 87; Shaaber 1966: 165. Kyle and Peacey (2008: 144) reproduce the first page, with a woodcut illustration, of this pamphlet, published in 1613. Davies (1986: 83) describes the illustrations in this and similar English pamphlets of the time as ‘frighteneing in the horror of the calamities they depict.’

man, printed the following year, with a title that begins *The cold yeare. 1614. A deepe Snow, In which, Men and Cattell haue perished*, and a woodcut showing animals and people half-buried in the snow and two men throwing snowballs.<sup>33</sup> A freak storm in Suffolk, which supposedly rained wheat, had been reported in a twenty-seven-page newsletter written by one William Averell, ‘student in diuinitie,’ and headed *A wonderfull and straunge newes*, printed in London in 1583, which presented the phenomenon as ‘a notable example to put vs in remembraunce of the iudgements of God, and a preparatiue, sent to moue vs to speedy repentance.’<sup>34</sup>

### Earthquakes and Volcanic Eruptions

Earthquakes were the subject of a very large number of news pamphlets throughout the early modern period. One of the earliest to have survived, a *Flugschrift* translated into German from a letter written by the Portuguese Manuel Borges, published in Cologne in 1523, reports an earthquake that had shaken Portugal, Andalusia, the Canaries and North Africa the previous year (Fig. 6.6), and a Spanish *relación*, based on a letter sent to the Marquis of Tarifa and printed in Valencia by Francisco Díaz Romano, tells of the powerful quake that jolted Portugal in January 1531.<sup>35</sup> An Italian *avviso* published in 1538 reported the great signs and tremors experienced near Naples and Pozzuoli.<sup>36</sup> The ‘espantable terremoto’ that occurred in Guatemala in 1541 was reported in *relaciones* printed in Mexico, Medina del Campo and Seville, all of which make it clear that the event was a warning that all men should mend their ways and prepare for the day that God wishes to call them (Fig. 6.7), whilst a storm in Guatemala two years later was reported in a *relación* published probably in Seville.<sup>37</sup>

The earthquake that hit ‘Schgarbaria’ (Scarperia), near Florence, in 1542 was reported widely: in an Italian *avviso*, in a French *canard*, in a Dutch pamphlet printed in Antwerp, in at least three editions in Germany of *Ain erschrockenliche Newe Zeyttung*, and in London, in at least two editions that same year, entitled: *Heuy* [i.e. heavy] *newes of an horryble erth quake, which was in the cytie of Scharbaria in this present yere of. xlii.*<sup>38</sup> An earthquake in Cleves in 1543 was the subject of a *canard*

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33 Reproduced in Davies 1986: 351.

34 See USTC 509660.

35 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 37.

36 See USTC 800721.

37 See IB17 1601-50, 16092, 16091; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 80; IB17 15733.

38 See, above, Fig. 1.7; Seguin 1964: 189; USTC 403116; Weller 1872: 141; USTC 503284, 503316. For this earthquake, including the Italian *avviso*, see Filippo Bellandi, Dennis E. Rhodes and Franco Cardini, *Il terremoto del Mugello del 1542 in un raro opuscolo dell'epoca*, Florence, Studi Storici Artistici, 1987.

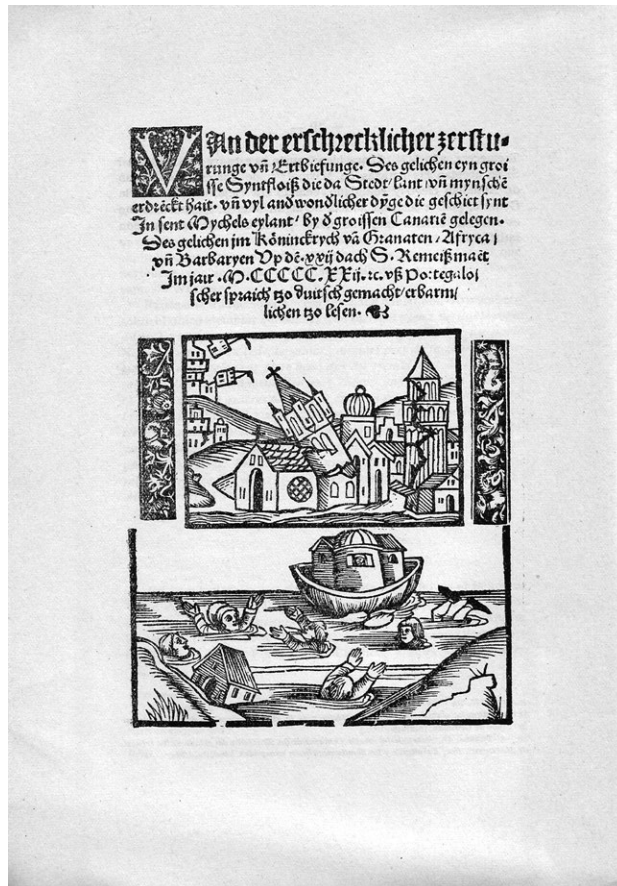


Fig. 6.6. First page of the German translation of a report in Portuguese of the 1522 earthquake that affected Portugal, Andalusia, the Canaries and North Africa, bringing together two otherwise unrelated, and doubtless recycled, woodcut images to purvey graphically the damage to property and persons (Cologne, 1523). The first image has separate decorative woodcuts on either side; the second could easily have started life as an illustration of Noah's ark (Collection of G. von Waldheim: see Varela Hervias and Von Waldheim 1948).

printed in Paris, and one that affected the eastern Mediterranean, including Cyprus and Jerusalem, in 1546 was reported in a *Zeitung* translated from Italian and printed in Wittenberg and in an *occasionnel* published in Paris.<sup>39</sup> In the second half of the

<sup>39</sup> See Seguin 1964: 190; Weller 1872: 177; Seguin 1961: 117. See also Nancy Joe Dyer, 'La relación del terremoto en el Mediterráneo, 1504-1542,' in *España y el mundo mediterráneo a través de las relaciones de sucesos (1500-1750)*. *Actas del IV Coloquio Internacional sobre Relaciones de Sucesos (París, 23-25 de septiembre de 2004)*, ed. Pierre Civil et al., Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2008, 141-56.

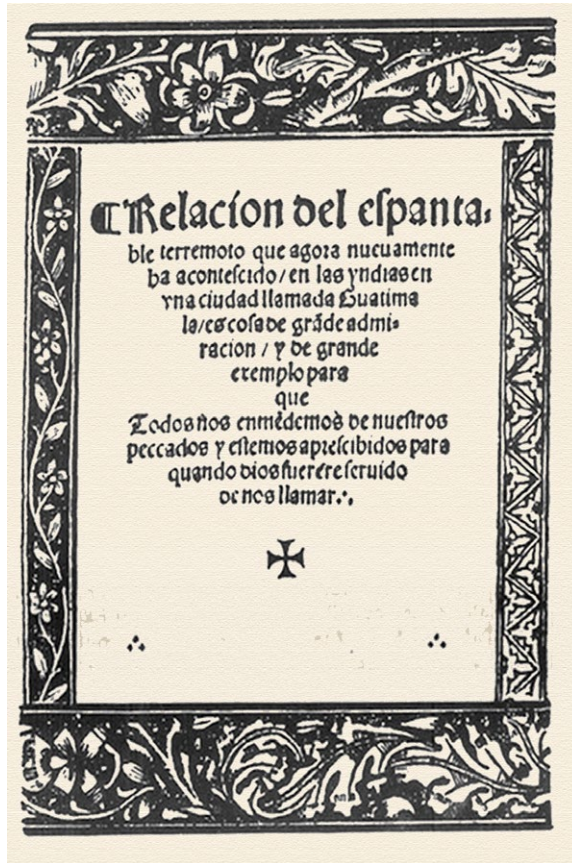


Fig. 6.7. The Guatemala earthquake of 1541, in a *relación* whose striking front page boasts heavy woodcut decorative borders, reminiscent of illuminated manuscripts. The absence of any attempt at illustration contrasts with the earlier German Flugschrift (see Fig. 6.6) and is typical of early Spanish *relaciones*. The first line of the title, beginning with the keyword 'Relacion,' has been made to stand out in large type (Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA).

sixteenth century, *canards* covered the news of numerous tremors, mostly in France, but also elsewhere: in Rethymno, in Crete, in 1559; in Jerusalem, in 1561; in Buda and Lyon, in 1578; in Tours, Orleans and Chartres, in 1579; in Rouen, Beauvais, Pontoise, Mantes, Poissy, Saint Germain en Laye and Calais, in 1580; in Lyon, Geneva, Berne and elsewhere, in 1584; in Angers, in 1588; and so on.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See, for Rethymno, USTC 10774; for Jerusalem, USTC 41872; for Buda and Lyon, Seguin 1964: 198-9; for Tours, Orleans and Chartres, Seguin 1964: 200-1; for Rouen, Beauvais, Pontoise, etc., Seguin 1964: 202-204; for Lyon, Geneva, etc., Seguin 1964: 206; and, for Angers, Seguin 1964: 207.



In the same period, other earthquakes also made the headlines in Germany and England. One that occurred in 1564 was reported in a *Flugschrift* entitled, *Ein sehr grawsame vnd erschreckliche Geschicht vnd Zeitung*, which tells of its effects in the area around Nice, as well as in *Eyn ware, Erschröckliche, vnd Erbermtliche Neue zeytung*, which recounts how it laid to waste seven towns in Piedmont.<sup>41</sup> Another, which shook Rome at the end of 1565, is the second item in a newsletter printed by Thomas Hacket.<sup>42</sup> The earthquake that destroyed half of the city of Ferrara in 1570 was widely covered across the continent: in, at the very least, France, Germany, England and Spain, including several *canards* and at least two *Neue Zeitungen* (constituting the second item in a two-part *Wahrhafftige, Erschreckliche Neue Zeitung*, whose first part tells of floods in Friesland), as well as *A coppie of the letter sent from Ferrara the xxii. of November 1570*, printed by Thomas Purfoot the following year, and a *relación* written in verse by one Bartolomé de Flores, published in 1571 in the village of Martín Muñoz, near Segovia, which combines two natural disasters – the earthquake and storm in Ferrara and the floods in Flanders.<sup>43</sup>

An earthquake in England in 1580, which was reported as having caused very few casualties, none the less made a great impression, with three pamphlets and two ballads entered at the Stationers' Company within two days of the occurrence.<sup>44</sup> The quake that shook Vienna in 1590 is reported in at least three *Flugschriften* and in a newsletter registered by John Wolfe entitled *A true Discripcon of the fearefull yearthquake which happened at Vienna in Austria*; and one that occurred in Lima was reported in a *relación* published there in 1609.<sup>45</sup>

English readers of, and listeners to, the news would be treated to more accounts of earthquakes in the seventeenth century, including one that affected Münster in 1612 and one at Pleurs (perhaps the village of that name in the Département of Marne) in 1618.<sup>46</sup> The French original, published earlier that year in Paris, spoke of an earthquake that had killed over two thousand townsfolk and had set fire to forests

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41 See Weller 1872: 275-6.

42 *The great wonders that are chaunced in the realme of Naples with a great misfortune happened at Rome and in other places, by an earth quake in the moneth of December last past* (USTC 506533).

43 See Seguin 1964: 193-7; Weller 1872: 364-5, 367; USTC 507238; IB16 8943.

44 See Shaaber 1966: 164.

45 See Weller 1872: 726-8; Collins 1943: 103; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 474.

46 *A most true relation of a very dreadfull earth-quake with the lamentable effectes thereof, vvch began vpon the 8. of December 1612. and yet continueth most fearefull in Munster in Germanie. Reade and tremble. Translated out of Dutch by Charles Demetrius, publike notarie in London* (Rotterdam [i.e. London], 1612?); *Newes from Italy, or, A prodigious and most lamentable accident lately befallen: concerning the swallowing vp of the whole city of Pleurs. Tr. out of the Fr. copy* (London, 1618).

thereabouts.<sup>47</sup> Two other misfortunes, although falling short of earthquakes, filled another newsletter published the same year: *A true relation of two most strange and fearefull accidents, lately happening the one at Chagford in Deuonshire, by the falling of the Stanary Court-house, the 6. day of March last The other at Branson within a mile of Burton vpon Trent in Staffordshire.*<sup>48</sup> But it was not only English consumers of the news who learned of earthquakes at that time. An earthquake on Terceiro Island, in the Azores, in 1614 was reported in several Spanish *relaciones* printed in Madrid, in Barcelona and in Seville.<sup>49</sup> The same year, one that hit Granada was recorded in a *relación* published there, and one in Mantua made the news in a *relación* printed in Valencia in 1619.<sup>50</sup>

As for volcanic eruptions, Pliny the Younger's epistles on the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 – one of the earliest eyewitness accounts of a natural disaster to have survived – provided a model for the journalistic treatment of disasters in early modern Europe. An earthquake and eruption of Etna in 1536 is described in an *avviso* whose title begins *Li horrendi, & spauentosi prodigij, & fuochi*, in an *Erschröklihe Warhafftige Newe zeittung*, translated from French, and also in a Spanish *relación* published the same year that describes the eruption as producing 'horrendas y espantosas señales y peligrosos fuegos' (i.e. horrendous and terrifying signs and perilous fires).<sup>51</sup> An account in French of another great eruption of Etna was printed at Lyon by Benoît Rigaud in 1566, and reprinted there the following year.<sup>52</sup> An eruption on Pico Island, in the Azores, in 1562 was reported in a *relación* published in Seville and in a Dutch pamphlet printed at Antwerp.<sup>53</sup> A newsletter on the French victory at Rouen against Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, in 1592, contains, for good measure, an account of the eruption of Teneguía, a volcano on the Canary island of La Palma. The eruption of Vesuvius at the end of 1631, which killed around three thousand people, was reported very widely: in numerous *relationi* printed in Naples, Rome and Venice, in *relaciones* published in Barcelona and Calatayud, in at least one *occasionnel*, and in a *Flugblatt* in prose accompanied by a large woodcut that shows three erupting volcanoes.<sup>54</sup>

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47 See Seguin 1964: 211.

48 Copy at Bodleian Library, 014230641.

49 See BDRS 1986 (as of 21/5/14, the BDRS description attributes this copy to Barcelona, Gabriel Graells and Esteban Liberós); BDRS 864, 5686.

50 See BDRS 5337, 4365.

51 See Bulgarelli 1967: 34; Weller 1872: 103; IB16 15653.

52 See USTC 34869, 10746.

53 See IB16 4739, 409393.

54 See Bulgarelli 1988: 218, 220-2; Ettinghausen 1995; Seguin, 1983: 44; Coupe 1967: ill. 3. See also Petrucci Nardelli 1982: 13-18.

## Fire

Lightning could be a particularly dramatic cause of disaster, not least when it struck public or ecclesiastical buildings. The bolt that hit the spire of Old St Paul's cathedral in 1561, melting the bells and destroying the roof, was reported in numerous English ballads and pamphlets, and also in a *canard* published in Paris, whose last page contains an eight-line poem that calls upon the reader to consider how the disaster demonstrates the fragility of life (Fig. 6.8). The damage caused to Segovia cathedral by lightning in 1614 was reported in a *relación* published in Seville; and

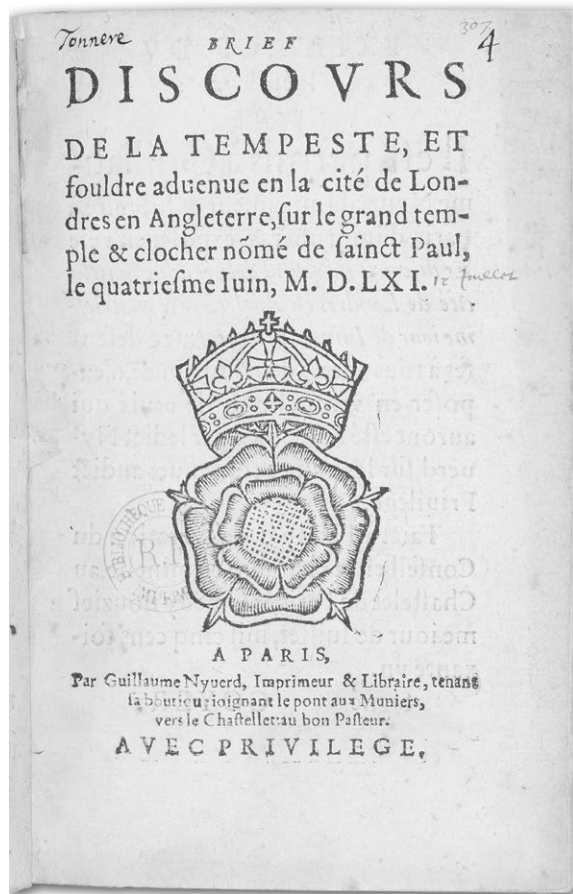


Fig. 6.8. First page of an *occasionnel* on the lightning strike on Old St Paul's cathedral in 1561, with a woodcut device, perhaps intended to signify the Tudor Rose. The French translator finishes off this 12-page account with a poem in which he suggests that the fire at St Paul's is a reminder of Sodom and Gemorra (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris).

the fire caused by lightning at Quimper cathedral in 1620 was reported in *canards* printed in Rennes and Paris.<sup>55</sup> Lightning strikes cried out to be presented as divine punishment, especially when they occurred in enemy territory, as in the *canard*, printed in Lyon in 1622, which told how, in the Huguenot town of Castres, the body of a Dominican friar had been disinterred, dragged through the streets, chopped up with swords and sticks and burned, and how, that very night, lightning had struck the church steeple, under which munitions were stored, and as many as 120 houses had gone up in flames.<sup>56</sup> An English newsletter, also published in 1622, tells of the fire caused by a thunder storm that damaged the city of Cork and recalls the battle of the starlings witnessed over that city the previous year.<sup>57</sup>

However, not all the disastrous fires that made the news were explicitly attributed to lightning. The fire that devastated Prague castle in 1541 is reported in a *Neue Zeitung* published in at least two editions in Augsburg, and one that destroyed ships anchored in the Guadalquivir at Seville in 1554 is recorded in a *relación* written in verse.<sup>58</sup> When in 1546 a powder magazine blew up in the Catholic Netherlandish town of Mechelen, killing 150 people and destroying some 800 houses, at least one pamphlet in French, two in Dutch and a dozen in German were published on the disaster.<sup>59</sup> As Alastair Duke puts it:

The reports combined stories of high drama – the rescue of a man trapped for three days under rubble – with the stereotypical miracle, in this case, the delivery of child from the womb of its dead mother. For good measure, they also invited readers to heed the fate of the gamblers in a tavern who had died still clutching their gaming cards.<sup>60</sup>

*Canards* reporting fires include one that occurred in the Arsenal, or shipyards, of Venice in 1569, one that ravaged the same city in 1574, one that damaged the church of St Catherine in Valencia in 1584, and one that burned down the royal palace in

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55 See Shaaber 1966: 162-3; Seguin 1964: 171-2; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 569; Seguin 1964: 183-4.

56 See Seguin 1964: 187.

57 *A relation of the most lamentable burning of the cittie of Corke, in the west of Ireland, in the province of Monster, by thunder and lightning With other most dolefull and miserable accidents, which fell out the last of May 1622. after the prodigious battell of the birds called stares, which fought strangely over and neare that citie.* A similar item is referred to in Shaaber 1966: 130, n. 57.

58 See Weller 1872: 132; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 103.

59 See Robert Foncke, *Die Explosion des Mechelner Sandtores (1546) in Flugschriften der damaligen Zeit*, Antwerp, Die Sikkell, 1932.

60 Alastair Duke, 'A Legend in the Making: News of the 'Spanish Inquisition' in the Low Countries in German Evangelical Pamphlets, 1546–1550,' in *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries*, ed. J. Pollmann and A. Spicer, Farnham, Ashgate, 2009: 119-35, 119.

Paris in 1618.<sup>61</sup> The fire in Paris was reported in at least three *canards*,<sup>62</sup> one of which was doubtless the source of the English translation published in a ten-page newsletter in London, headed *Newes from France*, which referred to the material losses suffered by tradesmen and to the official papers that had been thrown out of the burning building in the hope of saving them.<sup>63</sup> A *canard* printed in Lyon reported the fire that destroyed the Pont aux Oiseaux and the Pont au Change in Paris in 1621, whilst a *relación* published in Barcelona attributed that same disaster to sabotage by Huguenots,<sup>64</sup> and an English translation of the *canard*, also headed *Newes from France*, read the incident as involving the divine intention ‘to heale the vicer of their vices.’<sup>65</sup>

As for England, the fire that burned down some four hundred houses and killed around fifty people in Teverton in 1598 – another fire, known as the Dog Fight Fire, was to occur there in 1612 – inspired a newsletter printed in London;<sup>66</sup> and, when the Globe Theatre burned down in 1613, two ballads on the disaster were entered at the Stationers’ Company the very next day.<sup>67</sup> That same year a newsletter was published in London on two more fires.<sup>68</sup> Headed *Fire from Heauen*, it first told the strange story of how one John Hittchell, from the parish of Christchurch in the county of Southampton,

was consumed to ashes, and no fire seene, lying there in smoaking and smothering three dayes and three nights, not to be quenched by water, nor the help of mankind. With the lamentable burning of his house and one childe, and the grieuous scorching of his wife: with the birth of a Monster, and many other strange things hapning about the same time: the like was neuer seene nor heard of.

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61 See Seguin 1964: 159, 161. The fire in Valencia was narrated in a heroic poem by the rector of the parish and published two years after the event in a 36-page pamphlet. As such, it was not a typical *relación*. For another relation of the 1574 fire, see Céard 1996: No. 2. For a *relación* in verse on the fire that damaged St Catherine’s, in Valencia, see Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 276-8.

62 See Seguin 1964: 163-5.

63 *Newes from France. Or A relation of a maruellous and fearfull accident of a disaster which hapened at Paris the seuenth day of March, this present yeare 1618. where by meanes of a terrible fire, all the pallace was burnt and consumed. Together with a narration of the losse and ruine of many tradesmen, who had all their goods consumed by the said fire* (British Library, C.114.d.5.(10.)).

64 See Seguin 1964: 169; Agulló y Cobo 1975: 29.

65 *Nevves from France. A true relation of the great losses which happened by the lamentable accident of fire in the citie of Paris, the 24. day of October last past, 1621 which burnt downe the Merchants Bridge, the Changers Bridge, and diuers houses neere vnto them* (Shaaber 1966: 207).

66 *The true lamentable discourse of the burning of Teuerton in Devon-shire the third day of Aprill last past* (Collins 1943: 36).

67 See Shaaber 1966: 163.

68 The first page is reproduced in Kyle and Peacey 2008: 43.

The author's name is given as John Hilliard, 'Preacher of the word of life in Sopley,' and the reader is besought to 'Reade and tremble.'<sup>69</sup> The second fire described was the conflagration that burned down half of the town of Dorchester that same summer.

## Signs and Portents

At the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth, Sebastian Brant, famous as the author of *The Ship of Fools*, wrote over a score of broadsides on natural disasters and astrological events, including an eclipse of the sun. Referring to sixteenth-century England, M.A. Shaaber surmised that 'The age was never weary of reading signs and portents in natural happenings of all sorts or of explaining miraculously what it was difficult to account for otherwise.'<sup>70</sup> A newsletter that typifies this, written by one Francis Shakelton, was printed in London by John Kingston in 1580 under the title: *A blazyng starre or burnyng beacon, seene the 10. of October laste (and yet continewyng) set on fire by Gods providence, to call all sinners to earnest and speedie repentance.*<sup>71</sup> As Joad Raymond puts it,

God was not parsimonious in his messages. Thomas Day's apocalyptic call for repentance, *Wonderfull Straunge Sightes Seene in the Element Over the Citie of London and Other Places* (1583), listed the diversity of warning signs: 'his creatures, and miraculous tokens, strange monsters, blazing commets, unwonted enundations of waters, strange fishes, perillous warres, earthquakings, and last of all, firy constellations'. Day described phosphorescent parhelia, not dissimilar to the aurora borealis, a warning to England to abandon its sins.<sup>72</sup>

The international nature of early news communication is exemplified by one of the thousands of items acquired by Ferdinand Columbus for his library in Seville – a French *canard*, purchased in Turin in 1531, that included no fewer than three celestial horrors: a terrifying comet that had appeared over Westrie, in Germany; an amazing fiery torch that had crossed France, making a hideous din above Lyon; and the storm of stones that had afflicted Italy at the same time.<sup>73</sup> Another *canard*, published in Lyon in 1538, told of terrible and marvellous signs that had appeared near Naples.<sup>74</sup>

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69 Cited in British Library catalogue.

70 Shaaber 1966: 144.

71 See USTC 509149.

72 Raymond 2003: 109-10.

73 See HARRISSE 1971: 29.

74 See Seguin 1964: 188 (and Plate XVIII).

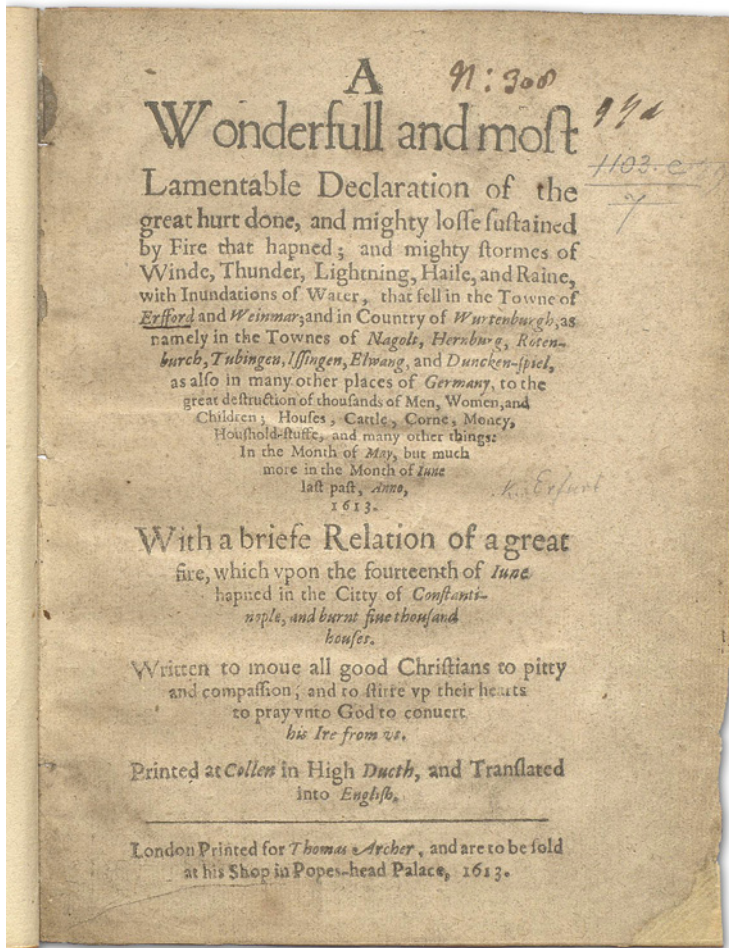


Fig. 6.9. First page of a newsletter on fire and storms in Germany. Printed in London in 1613, the title, which uses a large number of fonts, offers a very full account of the pamphlet's contents, as well as the motive claimed for its publication: 'to moue all good Christians to pitty and compassion, and to stirre vp their hearts to pray vnto God to conuert his Ire from vs' (© The British Library Board, C.31.e.24.(2)).

In 1543 a *Flugschrift*, translated from French, which appeared in at least three editions, told how Constantinople had been plunged into darkness for two days and drenched for an hour by a storm of blood and water that had killed a large number of people.<sup>75</sup> Another instance of terror afflicting the Turk is the *occasionnel* printed

<sup>75</sup> See Weller 1872: 153. The phenomenon of blood rain (nowadays understood as rain tinged red by desert storms) is recorded from Antiquity onwards and was frequently reported in sixteenth-century Europe, being generally thought of as presaging bad news.

at Le Mans in 1573: *Les merueilleuses et espouventables visions apparues au grand Turc Selin Soltan*.<sup>76</sup>

Celebrations of disasters befalling the Ottoman empire included news of a great fire in Constantinople in 1613 that destroyed five thousand houses, told in a single paragraph at the end of a fourteen-page English newsletter, translated from a *Flugschrift* published in Cologne, which begins by concentrating on the frightful storms that had hit many German towns, including Erfurt, Weimar and Tübingen (Fig. 6.9).<sup>77</sup> The Turks, the arch-infidels who posed an almost constant military threat to early modern Europeans, could be counted upon to be castigated by Providence with tribulations that pushed the concept of natural disaster to the brink of the supernatural.

## The Plague

News pamphlets concerning the plague seem to have been rare in early modern Europe. However, a very early Spanish *relación* by Diego de Torres, Professor of Astrology at the University of Salamanca, published there in 1485, interprets an eclipse of the sun as medically beneficial against the plague.<sup>78</sup> The plague that afflicted Padua in 1576 was reported in an *avviso* printed in Venice, whilst the progress of the plague in Milan was publicised in Bologna the following year.<sup>79</sup> A *relación* in verse, printed in Barcelona in 1590, told of the plague that had struck that city the year before.<sup>80</sup> A pamphlet in a similar vein is the verse *relación* on the plague that afflicted Logroño in 1599 and that was published there.<sup>81</sup> One, in verse, printed in Valencia in 1582 had told of the awful pestilence that had struck Cairo and Turkey the year before, expressing the hope that the Lord would spare 'us'.<sup>82</sup> That same *relación* added the news of the loss of twenty large merchant ships that had sunk on their journey from Alexandria to Constantinople, both pieces of news offering, no doubt, welcome encouragement to Spaniards who were suffering the heavy financial and material consequences of Philip II's foreign policy.<sup>83</sup>

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76 See USTC 5152.

77 Copy at British Library, 1608.781.

78 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 2.

79 See USTC 818343, 814625. See also Petta 2010.

80 See Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 287.

81 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 331.

82 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 206.

83 See Laura Puerto Moro, 'La relación de catástrofes "naturales" y "sobrenaturales" como profecía anti-turca en pliegos sueltos poéticos del s. XVI,' in Civil, Crémoux and Sanz, eds., 2008: 225-36: 229.



A broadside printed in London, presumably in 1603, gave a breakdown of casualties from the plague in southern England, which had been responsible for over three thousand deaths, apparently offering as a small consolation an account of occasions when the plague had affected other countries.<sup>84</sup> The following month, a lengthy lamentation, written by one William Muggins and printed by Ralph Blower, came out in London, entitled: *Londons mourning garment, or funerall teares worne and shed for the death of her wealthy cittizens, and other her inhabitants*, together with a prayer and the numbers of dead, arranged according to each parish, between July and November.<sup>85</sup>

### Comets and Meteorites

A large number of *canards*, *relaciones* and *Flugschriften* give accounts of comets, which were nearly always understood as ill omens, and interpreted as such, with Constantinople featuring as a favoured location.<sup>86</sup> A recurrent item in the European press is the horrific visions that supposedly plagued the Ottoman emperor, a typical instance being a *canard* bought in 1535 at Lyon for Ferdinand Columbus which tells of the miraculous and terrifying vision seen by the Great Turk in Constantinople in 1524 and which purports to set out the interpretations offered by the sultan's astrologers.<sup>87</sup> A *Neue zeytung von Constantinopoli* published in at least three editions in 1542 tells how a comet hung over Suleiman the Magnificent's palace for forty days and created all kinds of havoc, from earthquakes to storms and fires.<sup>88</sup>

However, not all comets and meteorites appeared over Turkey. The fall to the earth of a meteorite at Ensisheim, in Alsace, which was seen from a radius of 150 km in November 1492, was recorded by Sebastian Brant, whose broadsides on the spectacular event were published, in Latin and German, in Basel, Reutlingen and Strasbourg.<sup>89</sup> A comet that is said to have appeared over Germany and France, and to have left a shower of stones over Italy, in 1527, is reported in a *canard*,<sup>90</sup> and the sighting

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<sup>84</sup> A true bill of the vvhole number that hath died in the cittie of London, the city of VWestminster, the city of Norwich, and diuers other places, since the time this last sicknes of the plague began in either of them, to this present month of October the 20. day, 1603 (cited in British Library catalogue).

<sup>85</sup> Copy at British Library, C.95.a.10.

<sup>86</sup> Seguin catalogues reports of a broad variety of comets and other signs published in *canards* as omens of doom to the Turk (Seguin 1964: 268-77).

<sup>87</sup> See HARRISSE 1971: 253. For the anticipation of and reactions to the planetary conjunction of 1524, which was expected by many to bring about a second flood, see Paola Zambelli, ed., *'Astrologi hallucinati.'* Stars and the End of the World in Luther's Time, Berlin/New York, Walter de Gruyter, 1986.

<sup>88</sup> See Weller 1872: 147.

<sup>89</sup> See USTC 743680-2.

<sup>90</sup> See Seguin 1964: 226.



Fig. 6.10. A *Flugblatt* in prose on the comet seen over Augsburg in 1577, printed there that same year, and presented as a memento of the event, with a dramatic depiction of a comet crossing the sky above a city (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

of another comet, combined with armies seen warring in the skies, was published in Paris in 1568: *La description d'une merveilleuse, horrible et prodigieuse commette et apparition effroyable d'hommes armez et combatans en l'air*.<sup>91</sup>

In 1577 a huge comet appeared that remained visible for several months, its tail spreading in a great arc across the sky, and observers all over Europe took measurements of its changing position. A *Flugschrift* reporting it was printed at Augsburg, as was a

<sup>91</sup> See USTC 10770.

*Flugblatt* (Fig. 6.10).<sup>92</sup> The same comet appeared in a Spanish *relación* published in Barcelona the following year, and another appeared in a *relación* in 1596, as well as in one entitled *Discurso o pronostico*, published that same year in Valencia.<sup>93</sup>

Forty years later, the appearance of three comets in 1618 had a massive media impact and sparked off a spate of polemical and scientific writings, amongst them works by Galileo, Orazio Grassi and Kepler. Half a dozen editions of a *canard* printed in Paris in 1618 tell how one of the comets had appeared over the city for several days.<sup>94</sup> And in Spain several pamphlets were also published: one that told the significance of one of the comets, as explained by the sage Aben Omar of Jerusalem at the behest of the Great Turk; a sixteen-page discourse by the Seville astrologer Juan Casiano; an explanation and astronomical poem by Rafel Homeron, who described himself as an ‘Astrologo Poeta Catalan’ (i.e. a Catalan astrologer-poet); a thirty-six-page treatise by the Lisbon mathematician Pedro Mexía; a sixteen-page *Breve y curiosa relación* by one Juan de Puget; and a sixteen-page discourse and a thirty-two-page treatise on the two comets sighted in Spain – both of the last two items printed in Granada.<sup>95</sup>

## Apparitions in the Heavens

Literally hundreds of sixteenth-century German *Flugblätter* and *Flugschriften* tell of apparitions seen in the skies, most especially faces, and diarists across Europe attest to them, almost always appearing to accept the reports unquestioningly. A *Neue Zeitung* published in at least four editions in 1535 tells of the ‘wunderbarlichs’ (i.e. marvellous things) seen in the mountains near the town of Amberg.<sup>96</sup> Another, published in Augsburg in 1536, offers an account of a great and wonderful sign and face observed at midday.<sup>97</sup> Yet another describes the ‘Wunderzeychen am himmel erschynen’ (i.e. amazing signs that appeared in the heavens) during a terrible storm in 1538.<sup>98</sup> And a *Flugblatt* printed in 1543 reports the appearance of a face in the sky near the town of Pforzheim, but illustrates the event with a couple of dragons

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<sup>92</sup> *Neue Zeytung von dem Cometen, So jetzt im Nouember dises 1577. Jars erschinen* (USTC 752417); *Ein kurtze Erinnerung von dem Cometen, so auff den 12. Tag Novembris des 1577. Jars zu Augspurg erschinen und erstmals gesehen worden* (USTC 750125).

<sup>93</sup> See IB16 13048, 2553; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 276.

<sup>94</sup> See Seguin 1964: 251-6 (and Plate III).

<sup>95</sup> See Ettinghausen 2000a: 36; BDRS 3228, 5500, 2320, 5889, 5888, 5892.

<sup>96</sup> See Weller 1872: 90.

<sup>97</sup> *Ain grosz wunderbarlich zaichen und gesicht so am hellen Himel nach mittag inn der Marggrafschaft Leußnitz von Vilglaubwürdigen vom adel und andern gesehen ist worden wie volget* (USTC 609863).

<sup>98</sup> See Weller 1872: 119.

breathing fire near a village, doubtless simply because the woodcut was recycled from a previous publication.

Another *Flugblatt*, supposedly translated from an Italian original and printed in 1547, gave the news of horrifying faces seen in the heavens above Rome; and, in Magdeburg in 1549, Pankraz Kempf printed *Ein wunderlich gesicht newlich bey Braunschwig am Himmel gesehen*.<sup>99</sup> Five years later, a *Warhaffte Zeitungen*, published in Strasbourg and Augsburg, reports the apparition of a hundred men in the sky above Ingolstadt, Regensburg and Nuremberg; another *Flugschrift*, published in Nuremberg, tells of a marvellous face that appeared celestially in 1560; whilst yet another, printed at Augsburg in 1561, records that a face had been seen in the skies above Emskirchen.<sup>100</sup> Two horrific faces – one observed by scholars at the University of Wittenberg, the other appearing above ‘Schnotzbach’ (Schnodsenbach?) – are both described in *Flugschriften* published in 1562, and a terrifying and marvellous face that materialised above Hamburg is depicted in a *Flugblatt* published in Augsburg that same year.<sup>101</sup> The second item in a *Flugschrift* printed in Strasbourg in 1567 tells how two armed men with fiery swords appeared in the sky above Calais, and another, published the following year, reports the appearance in the heavens above the town of Bitterfeld, in Saxony, of a hand holding a bloody sword.<sup>102</sup> Similarly, the tale of a gruesome and horrible face was published in 1571 in a *Neue Zeitung* in Prague, the city over which it had been spotted, as was the sighting by three students of a face hovering above Mühlhausen in 1573.<sup>103</sup>

Parhelia, or sundogs – triple suns – occur frequently in sixteenth-century news pamphlets, especially in Germany, as do triple rainbows. Both phenomena are found together in a pamphlet by Melanchthon, printed at Wittenberg in 1551, which claims that they were espied above that city for an hour and a half.<sup>104</sup> The story of three suns in the sky above Cologne was printed in Frankfurt in 1571, whilst another instance inspired a pamphlet published at Nuremberg in 1583, and yet another, a broadside printed in 1593.<sup>105</sup> A slight variant on the same theme, with four suns and two rainbows, had been the subject of a pamphlet printed at Erfurt in 1575, whereas another pamphlet has three suns – defined as ‘erschrocklichen Wunderzeichen’ (i.e.

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99 See USTC 647517.

100 See Weller 1872: 203, 240; USTC 750073.

101 See Weller 1872: 254, 257; USTC 751981.

102 See Weller 1872: 332-3.

103 See Weller 1872: 377; USTC 750107.

104 See USTC 750246.

105 See USTC 750601, 750166; Weller 1872: 772.

ghastly prodigious signs) – appearing at night above the city of Münster in 1595.<sup>106</sup> Likewise, ‘Three sunnes’ seen in Cornwall in 1621 prompted a news pamphlet printed in London the following year.<sup>107</sup> A similar happening – the appearance in Rome and other parts of Italy of a wondrous circle within which there were three suns – is recounted in a Spanish *relación* published in Barcelona in 1622.<sup>108</sup>

Bloody suns also appear in the news. *Ein erschrockliche neue zeittung*, published in Dillingen, tells of a blood-coloured sun that blazed in the heavens near the city of Augsburg in 1564.<sup>109</sup> A comparably sanguinary supernatural event – a fountain running with blood in the Protestant village of Görlingen – was reported in an *Erschrockliche Neue Zeittung* printed in the Catholic city of Augsburg in 1592.<sup>110</sup> A newsletter published in London in 1606 told the ‘Strange fearful & true newes’ that the sun had shone ‘like Bloude’ for all of nine days, that two armies had been seen fighting in the heavens, and that a woman had given birth to three sons who had ‘Prophisied many strange & fearefull things.’<sup>111</sup>

Angels, too, figure in the early modern press, as, for instance, in a *Neue Zeitung* published in Dresden in 1564 that tells how three angels had come down from heaven to warn the townsfolk of Cassau, in Hungary, to repent. Whereas in 1567 it was just one angel face that appeared to a maidservant in Prague, it was two that loomed above a city in Silesia which became the subject of a newsletter entered at the Stationers’ Company in 1593.<sup>112</sup> That same story was printed in a *canard* at Lyon in 1594, entitled: *Histoire autant veritable que merueilleuse de l'apparition de deux anges en Silesie*.<sup>113</sup> Presumably quite coincidentally, that same year a Paris printer produced a *canard* about a gold tooth that had grown in the mouth of a young Silesian lad: *Histoire merueilleuse d'une dent d'or creue en la bouche d'un jeune garçon en Silesie*.<sup>114</sup>

Some heavenly happenings were less than pleasant. A *Dreyerley. Denckwürdige, vnnd warhafftige, doch schröckliche vnnd Erbärmliche Zeytung auss Prag* (i.e. A triple, notable and true, though horrific and pitiable, report from Prague), printed

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106 See USTC 707412; Weller 1872: 809.

107 See Shaaber 1966: 146.

108 See Agulló y Cobo 1975: 45.

109 See Weller 1872: 285.

110 See Weller 1872: 744.

111 See Shaaber 1966: 146.

112 See Weller 1872: 278, 323; Shaaber 1966: 146.

113 See USTC 12507.

114 See USTC 56872.

in that city in 1581, tells how ravens, panthers and lions had fallen from the skies, and thunder and plaintive wailing had been heard. Unusually for this type of news story, the terrifying vision was (it is claimed) witnessed in the town where the news was published.<sup>115</sup> 1582 was a bumper year for news of multiple horrific happenings published in cities such as Heidelberg, Augsburg, Cologne and Nuremberg.<sup>116</sup> A *Flugschrift*, published in translation in London in 1594, told of *Strange signes seene in the aire, strange monsters behelde on the land, and wonderful prodigies both by land and sea, ouer, in, and about the citie of Rosenberge in high Germany*.<sup>117</sup>

Jean-Pierre Seguin refers to over fifty French news pamphlets on signs observed in the heavens and notes that the reports of supposedly different happenings often repeat the same details as previous ones and frequently begin with accounts of similar events that had occurred in antiquity.<sup>118</sup> A report of three suns appearing above Naples at four o'clock in the morning in August 1531, together with a seven-year-old girl squirting water from her breasts, appears in a two-fold *canard*.<sup>119</sup> As if to reciprocate, a triple sun story, located in France, appeared in an Italian news pamphlet published in Rome in 1536: *El gran prodigio di tre soli apparsi in Franza adi nove de setembrio a hore tredese. In di de sabbato. Cosa molto stupenda*.<sup>120</sup> Bloody rain and a planet in human form over the south of France are reported in a *canard* published in Lyon in 1574 that purports to have been written by one A. de Blegers de la Sale, described as being a 'docteur Mathematicien, Astrophile et Poesiphile,' and a similar story of bloody rain, as well as of two warriors fighting in the sky, occupies a *canard* published in Paris in 1608.<sup>121</sup> In 1579 we find the account of a dragon that appeared above Paris: *Du serpent ou dragon volante, grand et merueilleux apparu et veu par un chacun sur la ville de Paris*.<sup>122</sup> The fact that this story was printed in the city above which the dragon had supposedly appeared suggests that its publisher expected Parisians to accept at least the possibility of its veracity.

As we have already seen, visions of men, or of whole armies, fighting in the skies are a frequent subject of *canards*. The titles they bear often begin with the words *Prodiges merueilleux*, or *Signes merueilleux*, but many stress the horror that

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115 See Weller 1872: 544.

116 See Weller 1872: 548-52, 554-6.

117 See USTC 512493.

118 See Seguin 1983: 44-5.

119 See Seguin 1964: 229.

120 See USTC 800720.

121 See Seguin 1964: 221, 295 (and Plate IX).

122 See USTC 1940.

their content was meant to inspire – ‘épouvantable,’ ‘terrible,’ and, most especially, ‘effroyable’ being the commonest epithets used to describe them.<sup>123</sup> Seguin comments on the fact that those events are often supposedly accompanied by other unusual or unpleasant phenomena, such as flames, fires, crescents, stars, human figures holding flying serpents, carriages drawn by monsters or elephants, terrifying women, angels, suns, hideous screams, dragons, salamanders, crows, ants, castles, ships, chariots and, most commonly, comets.<sup>124</sup> To give just one example, two entire armies were reported as having appeared above Périgord in September 1587 in a *canard* printed that year in Lyon.<sup>125</sup> But this craze was not confined to the sixteenth century. A *canard* printed in Tours and then in Paris in 1609 tells how, in the town of Angers, three thousand armed men were seen fighting in the air;<sup>126</sup> and Seguin notes the fact that the description of a battle in the skies above Nîmes, Montpellier and Lyon published in Paris and Rouen in 1621 is reproduced five years later in an account of events supposed to have taken place over London, published in Liège...<sup>127</sup>

In most cases, it was made clear that the *raison d'être* of terrifying visions – as with the twelve thousand ghosts that appeared above Angoulême<sup>128</sup> – was to signify divine displeasure and to portend providential vengeance. ‘Signes espouvantables et prodigieux’ that manifested themselves over Rome in 1618 are said, in a *canard* printed in Paris the following year, to have made all of Italy tremble with fear.<sup>129</sup> More explicitly politically slanted was *Les signes merveilleux et espouvantables, apparus sur la ville de la Rochelle*, published in Paris in 1621, a *canard* that supported Louis XIII’s campaign against the Huguenot stronghold which was translated into Spanish from an edition printed in Toulouse and was published in Barcelona and Valencia that same year.<sup>130</sup>

In addition to comets, suns, faces, armies and ghosts, some news pamphlets told of crosses appearing in the heavens. A pamphlet in Italian on the miraculous appearance in 1591 of crosses above Paris, Bourges, Amiens and Montdidier was published in Lyon, Milan, Pavia and Ferrara, before being reprinted in Bologna, and a

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123 Jean-Pierre Seguin, ‘Notes sur des feuilles d’information relatant des combats apparus dans le ciel (1575-1652),’ *Arts et Traditions Populaires*, 1-2, 1959, 51-62: 262-70.

124 See Seguin 1959: 60-1.

125 See Seguin 1964: 284 (and Plate V).

126 See Céard 1977: 482, No. 35.

127 See Seguin 1959: 59.

128 See Seguin, 1959: 260.

129 See Seguin 1964: 261-3.

130 For the French *canard*, see Seguin 1964: 311. The Barcelona edition of the Spanish translation is reproduced in Ettinghausen 1995.

*canard* printed in Paris in 1619 tells of a bloody cross and a fiery globe that appeared over Germany.<sup>131</sup> A resplendent cross seen in Hungary, accompanied by sighs, moans and howls, is reported in a *relazione* published in Milan in 1601, whilst a *Relazione del Spaventoso, et Horrendo Caso*, published in Venice and Rome in 1623, tells of a miscellany of horrors: a fire caused by a thunderbolt, the marriage of three people, and animals and portentous signs that appeared in the skies.<sup>132</sup>

News such as this appears to be relatively rare in Spain and tends to be sited at a safe distance, as in a *relación* printed in Saragossa in 1600 that speaks of the miraculous and mysterious cross that appeared in the sky above the cathedral of Narni, near Rome.<sup>133</sup> Two years later, in *relaciones* published in Seville and Valladolid, that same cross appeared above the cathedral of Terni, in southern Umbria.<sup>134</sup> However, the prognostications inspired by the great signs that appeared above Cordova in November 1605 are analysed by one Dr Reyes de Castro in a *relación* published in Cordova, and wonders and marvellous signs seen in Constantinople are described in a pamphlet printed in Seville in 1619.<sup>135</sup>

## Miracles

Given the wonders and marvels seen in the heavens and recorded by hundreds of pamphlets across early modern Europe, it is hardly surprising that miracles also provided a staple source of awesome news. One of Ferdinand Columbus's's innumerable purchases, bought for him in Lyon in 1535, is a *canard* that tells of the latest miracles performed by Notre-Dame de Souffrance, whereby two still-born babies were brought to life and the victim of an accident involving a cartful of stones was saved from certain death by a prayer offered to the Virgin.<sup>136</sup> A miracle performed on the English-Scottish border for the benefit of a marquesse who was devoted to the rosary was similarly recorded in a *relación* in verse printed in Alcalá de Henares in 1592.<sup>137</sup> A twin-subject *relación*, printed in Cordova in 1594, tells how the image of Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza was found near Andújar and how a cross appeared in Caravaca.<sup>138</sup> The famous 'discovery,' in caves outside Granada between 1595 and

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131 See Bulgarelli 1967: 220; Seguin 1964: 264.

132 See Bulgarelli 1988: 8, 143.

133 See IB16 15712.

134 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 393, 395.

135 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 422; BDRS 3474.

136 See HARRISSE 1971: No. 151.

137 See IB16 17109.

138 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 251.



1606, of the forged lead books of Sacromonte, supposedly containing the prophetic and liturgical teachings of the Virgin Mary, caused a sensation in Spain and was celebrated in a *relación* published in Granada, then in Baeza, in 1595, as well as in Malaga and probably Barcelona, and in other *relaciones* published in Granada in 1608 and possibly in 1617.<sup>139</sup> Another successful Spanish miracle story – the church bell in the village of Velilla, south-east of Saragossa, which reputedly rang of its own accord, especially to foretell bad news – appears in several *relaciones* in the course of the seventeenth century. One such occurrence, published in 1601 in a *relación* in Granada, also appears in an *avviso* printed in Rome and in Rimini.<sup>140</sup>

But miracles did not only come singly. *Relaciones* written between August 1600 and June 1601 by the Jesuits in Gandía, south of Valencia, and sent to Madrid report on numerous miracles performed there, thanks to the intervention of the founder of the Order, Ignatius Loyola.<sup>141</sup> News of a miracle performed by him in Lima in 1607 appeared in a *relación* published in Barcelona in 1609, as did news of one performed in Naples that was printed in Barcelona in 1616.<sup>142</sup> Not to be outdone, St Dominic appeared bringing a dead boy back to life in a *relación* published in 1601, whilst devotees of the Virgen del Carmen could feel satisfied that a *relación* published in Barcelona in 1609 recounted five different miracles performed by her in Naples.<sup>143</sup>

A *relación* in verse printed in Madrid in 1611 told of three miracles performed by two figures of Christ on the cross, including one instance in which an ill man died a ‘desastrada muerte’ (i.e. a disastrous death) after rejecting the ministry of one of the figures, which had unnailed itself in order to offer him comfort.<sup>144</sup> Another *relación*, printed in Cagliari in 1612, praised the miracles performed by the crucifix in the Sardinian village of Galtelli, in particular highlighting its bleeding, which had been verified by the baron of Galtelli and the archbishop of Cagliari.<sup>145</sup> A *relación* printed in Cuenca in 1613 told of a miracle in which a duchess, whose husband was a Lutheran, secretly gave refuge to some Catholic pilgrims, one of whom turned out to be Christ in disguise.<sup>146</sup>

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139 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 265, 263; IB16 15706; BDRS 4404; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 454, 684.

140 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 383; Bulgarelli 1988: 7. For Spanish accounts of miracles in verse, see Sánchez Pérez 2006a: 236-57.

141 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 377, 386.

142 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 469-70, 625.

143 See BDRS 4885, 4644.

144 See BDRS 5420.

145 See BDRS 5659.

146 See BDRS 5325.

Then, as now, evidence of the ability to perform at least one miracle was required in order to achieve sainthood. Teresa of Avila, who had been beatified in 1614, was the subject of two *relaciones*, published in Granada in 1617 and 1618, that gave accounts of a miracle she had performed in the village of Huéneja, bringing a dead girl back to life,<sup>147</sup> and news of a miracle performed repeatedly in the corpse of St John of the Cross, who had died twenty-four years earlier, is reported in a *relación* published in Madrid in 1615.<sup>148</sup>

Some of the miracles reported in the news could be said to sound more like instances of divine punishment. One such is the story, told in an Italian pamphlet published in Rome in 1588, of what became of a gambler who blasphemed in the city of Lucca.<sup>149</sup> Much the same could be said of a *relación* in verse, printed in Valencia in 1620, that told of the ‘espantoso castigo’ (i.e. shocking punishment) inflicted by ‘la divina magestad’ upon some Turks who attempted to rape a Christian maiden who had begged the Virgin to protect her.<sup>150</sup> Miracle news was not, however, confined to Spain and Italy. A *canard* printed in Paris in 1580 tells of a miracle involving a sacred host in Poland that had been desecrated by Jews, and another, printed in Paris seven years later, explained the discovery near Loudon of a threatening letter written in gold addressed to those who failed to fulfil the commandments of the church.<sup>151</sup>

News pamphlets in several countries record some remarkable cases of people wrongly convicted of crimes who were hanged but supposedly miraculously survived, sometimes after several days had elapsed.<sup>152</sup> A *Relatione del miracoloso, e stupendo caso*, published in Bracciano in 1622, told the story of four men condemned to be hanged in Mantua who were saved at the last moment when the Madonna delle Grazie caused the first victim’s rope to break, as he was a devotee of hers.<sup>153</sup> On other occasions English newsletters claim the resuscitation of the dead, who then summon their readers to repent, as in one pamphlet, entitled *Miraculous Newes*,

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147 See BDRS 5422; Agulló y Cobo 1966: 709.

148 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 594.

149 See USTC 806303.

150 See BDRS 4332.

151 See Seguin 1964: 379A, 321.

152 See Shaaber 1966: 147; USTC 752394.

153 See Bulgarelli 1988: 136. A 14-page newsletter that spelled out *A true relation of Go[ds] vvonderfull mercies in preseruing one aliue, which hanged fiue dayes, who was falsely accused* was published in London, probably in 1605. Chartier traces this type of miracle to the Middle Ages (see Roger Chartier, ‘Los ocasionales. La ahorcada milagrosamente salvada,’ in Roger Chartier, *Libros, lecturas y lectores en la Edad Moderna*, trans. Mauro Armíño, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1993, 203-45: esp. 220 ff).

*From the Citty of Holdt*, translated from Dutch and published in London in 1616, in which three bodies rise from the grave, ‘admonishing the people of Iudgements to come.’<sup>154</sup> Some unusual occurrences are interpreted as signs of God’s grace, as in a ballad entered at the Stationers’ Company in 1596 which tells how divine mercy was shown to the poor in the Suffolk town of Orford by ‘the sodden [i.e. sudden] growth of peaze vppon the Sea Rock.’<sup>155</sup>

## Strange Tales

Some miracles in the news in France seem to have a distinctly lurid feel about them. A *canard* probably printed in 1607 reports what it terms a ‘Nouveau miracle’ that involved the stories of two infants near Barcelona who were eaten by a hog and of two others who were accidentally burned by their mother in an oven.<sup>156</sup> An even more remarkable tale, reported in a *canard* published in Paris and Douai in 1608 and 1612, is that of a child in Palermo who was cut into pieces by his mother and was restored by St Francis.<sup>157</sup> The account of three pilgrims saved from bandits, one of whom had his missing hand replaced by St James, is told in a *canard* printed in Lyon in 1609.<sup>158</sup> Ten years later, the Virgin brings back to life a boy in Lyon who had been dead for twenty-four hours, his parents’ successful prayer being added to the narrative for good measure.<sup>159</sup> A suspiciously shaggy dog story is that of the prodigious hound in Lisbon that made a habit of sitting on its haunches and holding its front paws together, as if praying, when it saw the sacrament being taken to the house of a dying person. The *relación* that told that story, printed in Granada and Barcelona in 1630, and in Seville in 1631, was also published in Italian in a *relazione* printed in Naples the same year.<sup>160</sup>

Some news stories told in the early press stand somewhere in between accounts of miracles and what we understand by urban legends. As we have seen, ‘strange’ (meaning unfamiliar or abnormal) is one of the commonest epithets used in English newsletters, other than those dealing with battles or official events, and strangeness is a quality that many of the news stories display, even when they do not use the

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154 See Shaaber 1966: 148. Davies (1986: 85) refers to editions of this pamphlet printed in Cologne, Antwerp and England.

155 See Shaaber 1966: 148.

156 See Seguin 1964: 112.

157 See Seguin 1964: 337-8.

158 See Seguin 1964: 345.

159 See Seguin 1964: 352

160 See IB17 36447; the Seville edition is reproduced in Ettinghausen 1995; Bulgarelli 1988: 224.

word in their titles. A newsletter which does use it is one entitled *A Straunge and terrible Wunder wrought very late in the parish Church of Bongay*, printed in London in 1577. It tells the story of what came to be known as ‘The Black Dog of Bungay,’ or ‘Black Shuck,’ which, during a violent thunder storm, had killed several worshippers in the local church.<sup>161</sup> (That same hound was believed to have gone on to visit Holy Trinity Church, known as the Cathedral of the Marshes, at Blythburgh during the same storm: after charging down the aisle, it had fled through the north door and had left large scorched gouges on it.) Another odd tale occurs in a pamphlet, entered at the Stationers’ Company in 1605 by Francis Burton, which also typically uses ‘strange’ in its title: *A Narration of the Strange throughinge [i.e. throwing] of Stones whiche happened in Chicke Lane*.<sup>162</sup> Three pamphlets registered in 1596 by Thomas Middleton also exemplify strangeness nicely: [1] *The miraculous preservation of a Child of Seauen yeeres old from the bloodye Spanyards that spoiled Narden a towne in North Holland*; [2] *A most excellent example of a virtuous wife, that fed her father with her owne milke beinge condemned to be famished to death*; and [3] *A wofull ballad of a Knightes daughter in Scotland whoe was murdered by her husband, being likewise the husband of another wife and howe it was reuealed by his first wife and her sonne*.<sup>163</sup> A story, published in 1608, which sounds excessively tall, is *A true relation of the trauels of M. Bush*, who, it is claimed, built a pinnace in which he travelled – by air, land and water – from Lambourne, in Berkshire, to London (Fig. 6.11). What we understand by tabloid journalism has a long history.

Strange tales were not, however, confined to England. In 1569, Christoph Schweizer published in Zurich the story of a terrifying human face that had been found in an egg in Burgundy, whilst a *Warhafftige Neue Zeyttung* published in 1585 tells the tale of two young girls who fell ill and started dancing for ten days and ten nights, eating only a few nuts, drinking half a dozen light beers and saying marvellous things, whereupon one of them died and the other one vanished.<sup>164</sup> *A true and admirable Historie of a Mayden of Consolens, in the prouince of Poitiers that for the space of three yeares and more hath liued, and yet doth, without receiuing either meate or drinke*, translated from French, was published in London in 1603.<sup>165</sup> Another prodigy

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161 See Shaaber 1966: 146-7.

162 See Collins 1943: 116.

163 See Collins 1943: 110.

164 The first story is: *Ein erschrockenliche Geschichte eines Manns angesicht in einem Ey erfunden worden, in Burgund* (USTC 753101). The second story (see Weller 1872: 624) may well have been inspired by the Dancing Plague, which struck residents of Strasbourg in July 1518, when people danced constantly for weeks, most of them eventually dying from heart attack, stroke or exhaustion.

165 See Collins 1943: 62.

of fasting was a girl named Katharina who, in the village of Schmittweiler, according to a *Flugblatt* printed in Latin in Strasbourg in 1585, had managed not to eat for seven years, but she, it has to be admitted, is depicted bedridden. Not to be outdone, a girl whose fast lasted considerably longer was Eve Fliegen, *A true and wonderfull relation* of whose doings, translated from Dutch and published in London in 1611, told how she had gone without food for fourteen years, whilst a ballad version of her

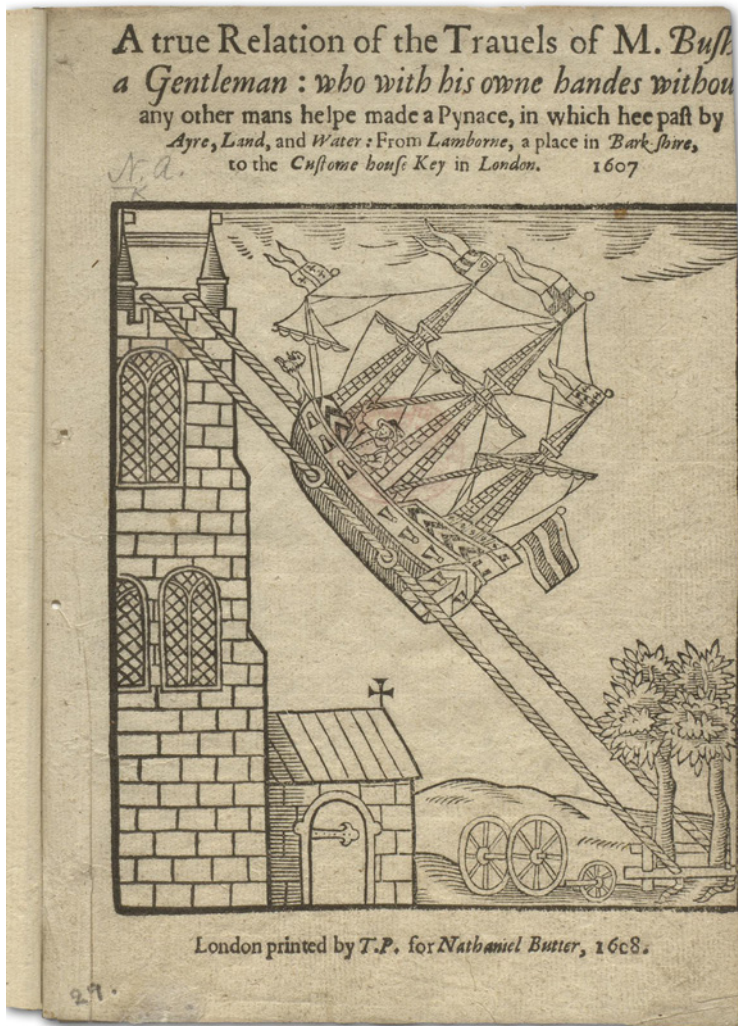


Fig. 6.11. First page of a 36-page newsletter on the amazing journey of William Bush, supposedly completed in 1607, with a large spectacular woodcut showing his four-wheeled pinnace being launched from the church tower at Lambourne (© The British Library Board, C.32.d.16).

story claimed that she had fasted for sixteen years ‘and is not yet neither hungry nor thirsty.’<sup>166</sup> A *canard* printed in Paris in 1618 recounted the *Histoire prodigieuse* of a man from Provence who neither ate nor drank, who did nothing but walk and talk, and who was supposedly presented to the Queen Mother at Blois.<sup>167</sup>

A *Neue Zeitung* printed in 1598 tells how an eighty-two-year-old man who had been born deaf and dumb started speaking three days before he died, and a *canard*, published in 1603, tells a comparable tale: on his return to Paris, a deaf-mute boy who had made a pilgrimage to Loreto was suddenly able to speak and understand French and Italian.<sup>168</sup> The ruined castle of Bicêtre, near Paris, is the setting for a ghost story – an ‘*Histoire Memorable et Espouventable*,’ as the title has it – told in a *canard* printed in Paris in 1623 that locates the spirits and phantoms in the castle’s cellars and chambers.<sup>169</sup> Another far-fetched story is that of the 380-year-old man in Portuguese India who had married eight times, told in a *Verissima relacion* published in Salamanca in 1609, and still being reprinted half a century later.<sup>170</sup> However, the story recounted in a *relación* published in Seville in 1618 of Catalina de Erauso – a nun who ran away from her convent, dressed as a man, and fought in the Spanish army in Chile and Peru – actually happens to be true.<sup>171</sup>

If pervasive news of warfare and crime provided serial images of a world permanently threatened by violence and death, the innumerable reports of what we call natural disasters – of terrifying floods and storms, earthquakes and eruptions, fires and the plague, comets and meteorites – and of distinctly supernatural signs, wonders, portents, apparitions and miracles, supported by comparable stories delivered from the pulpit, could not but reinforce the conviction that the only possible protection against all-pervasive evil was faith and conformity. As the newsletter published in London in 1613 on fire and storms in Germany put it at the beginning of the opening thirty-line first sentence of its preface ‘To the Reader:’

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166 See Shaaber 1966: 147.

167 See Seguin 1964: 497 (and Plate XXXI).

168 See Weller 1872: 858; Seguin 1964: 336.

169 See Seguin 1964: 450 (and Plate XXII).

170 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 478. An edition published in Cadiz in 1664 (copy in Granada University Library) claims to follow the text of one printed in Lisbon in 1622.

171 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 688; and also Gabriel Andrés, ‘Las primeras relaciones de sucesos sevillanas sobre la Monja Alférez, Doña Catalina de Erauso,’ [https://www.academia.edu/6721503/Las\\_primeras\\_relaciones\\_de\\_sucesos\\_sevillanas\\_sobre\\_la\\_Monja\\_Alf%C3%A9rez\\_Do%C3%B1a\\_Catalina\\_de\\_Erauso\\_en\\_l%C3%ADnea](https://www.academia.edu/6721503/Las_primeras_relaciones_de_sucesos_sevillanas_sobre_la_Monja_Alf%C3%A9rez_Do%C3%B1a_Catalina_de_Erauso_en_l%C3%ADnea), 2014, 3-10. A similar story is told in an *occasionnel* published in 1654 (Seguin 1983: 41); Gabriel Andrés, ‘Construcciones autobiográficas y relaciones de sucesos sobre la Monja alférez Catalina de Erauso,’ in García López and Boadas, 2015: 163-76.

That the great and fearefull day of the Lords terrible and last Iudgement to be giuen vpon this wicked world, is at hand, and ready to come vpon vs (good Reader) now more then sufficiently is seene and manifestly perceiued; for that daily experience, together with the fore-shewing and Propheysings of our Lord and Sauour Iesus Christ himselfe, and his holy Prophets doe assure vs thereof which plainely tells vs, that signes and tokens shall be seene in the firmament, and that men heare on earth should thereby and there-with be stricken into great feare, grieffe, sorrow and anguish of heart, to behold the same [...].<sup>172</sup>

Only when such threats and disasters overtook Turks, and Moslems in general, Jews and (depending which side one looked from) Catholics or Protestants could a European reader of the news feel comforted that Providence used such means to punish infidels and heretics, as well as those Christians who failed to follow the church's teachings.

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172 Copy at British Library, call number 1608.781.





## Monsters: Human, Animal and Fantastical

Phenomena that occur *contra natura* were named by Cicero *monstra*, *prodigia*, *ostenta* and *portenta* – *monstra* when they demonstrated something, *prodigia* when what they showed was something ominous, and *ostenta* or *portenta* when they made something manifest or evident. Whilst the Middle Ages developed the bestiaries and consolidated them with moral readings of real and imagined beasts, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw a colossal proliferation of books on marvels and signs, catalogues of portents, histories of monsters and amazing happenings, whose content was spread further by innumerable pamphlets and broadsides designed to describe, illustrate, interpret and exploit them.<sup>1</sup> Prodigies were collected and recorded by learned Protestant writers, such as Conrad Lycosthenes and Jobus Fincelius in Germany, and the Huguenot minister Simon Goulart in France, whilst in Catholic countries the production of monsters was often interpreted as the result of the rise of heresy, not least during the French Wars of Religion.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to offering stories about the devil, natural disasters and supernatural signs and visions, Pierre Boaistuau's *Histoires prodigieuses* contains, above all, dozens of chapters on divers monsters, amongst them sea monsters, monsters with two bodies, a man out of whose belly another human hung (except for its head), a man

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<sup>1</sup> See María José Vega, *Los libros de prodigios en el Renacimiento*, Bellaterra, Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, 2002: 7-9. In a broader sense, David Cressy (2000) examines a wide range of strange incidents reported in Tudor and Stuart England that challenged the social order and public opinion. For *relaciones on prodigia*, see Augustin Redondo, 'Los prodigios en las relaciones de sucesos de los siglos XVI y XVII,' in García de Enterría et al., eds., 1996: 287-303.

<sup>2</sup> See Alexandra Walsham, 'Reformation Legacies,' in Marshall, ed., 2015: 257-9.

whose belly was open so that his entrails could be seen, multiple births, conjoined twins, the monstrous offspring of a dog and a bear, a creature that was human from the waist up, and dog below, another whose lower half was a horse.<sup>3</sup> As regards contemporary instances, Boaistuau deals with such things as a monstrous serpent presented to the king of France, a hermaphroditic animal with eyes in its knees born in Ravenna shortly before the city was sacked, a child born in Cracow with a serpent that gnawed its back, and a monster born in 1551 in the lands of La Marche...

Monsters in the early modern news come in all shapes and sizes. They also have a variety of origins. Some are deformed humans – conjoined twins abound – whilst others are animals, and yet others are combinations of the two, or of various different beasts. One stock story is the birth of animals to humans, with women variously producing, amongst other offspring, serpents, dogs, cats, monkeys, lions, bears and elephants. When they are given, the reasons for these animal offspring vary from the mother having been frightened, or having thought of an animal when she conceived, to simple divine displeasure provoked by acts of sacrilege or incest. One case examined in detail by David Cressy that at the time involved prolonged private and public investigation, was the claim that a girl named Agnes Bowker had given birth to a cat at Market Harborough in 1569.<sup>4</sup> The belief in such possibilities as that is attested to at least as far back as Hippocrates, Aristotle and Pliny.<sup>5</sup> The birth of animals to Jewish women was also a stock expression of antisemitism, as in a pamphlet, printed in Strasbourg and in the Bavarian town of Hof, in 1575 that tells of a Jewess in the village of Binzwangen who had given birth to two piglets.<sup>6</sup>

It will be convenient to try to categorise the news of monsters according to whether they are human, animal or fantastical, even though the writers of such news,

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3 Jean Céard notes that Boaistuau, and also Ambroise Paré in his *Des monsters et prodiges*, on occasion borrow stories that had appeared in *canards* (see Jean Céard, *La Nature et les prodiges. L'insolite au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, en France*, 2nd edn., Geneva, Droz, 1996: 470-1). He also points out that only 20 out of the 517 *canards* catalogued by Jean-Pierre Seguin (Seguin 1964) deal with monsters and that only 15 different monsters are involved (Céard 1996: 476).

4 See Cressy 2000: esp. chapter 1.

5 See Luce Arrabal, 'Algunos casos de partos prodigiosos estudiados en el Siglo de Oro,' *Ibérica*, 4, 1983, 103-114: 110-113; Aaron W. Kitch, 'Printing Bastards: Monstrous Birth Broad-sides in Early Modern England,' in Brooks, Douglas A., ed., *Printing and Parenting in Early Modern England*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005, 221-36; Jennifer Spinks, *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany*, London, Chatto & Pickering, 2009. The literature on monsters is enormous. One attempt to follow the topic up to the present time is María Sánchez Pérez, 'La transmisión y difusión de los casos horribles y espantosos desde sus orígenes hasta el siglo XXI,' *Arbor*, Anejos, No. 7 ('En los márgenes del canon'), ed. Ana Cabello et al., 2011, 205-18.

6 *Ain gewisse Wunderzeitung von ainer schwangeren Judin zu Binzwangen [...] an statt zwaier Kinder zwai leibhafte Schweinlin oder Färilin gepracht hat* (USTC 751640, 750209).

and doubtless their readers too, must often have been uncertain whether what they were dealing with were real or imaginary beings. To give just one instance, amongst Sebastian Brant's numerous *Flugschriften*, one concerns a deformed sow in Alsace, of which Dürer made an engraving, and another reports a 'zwiefältigen' (i.e. double) goose and a six-footed piglet.<sup>7</sup> Monster news stories lent themselves to striking illustrations, a practice that goes back even beyond that masterpiece of engraving, the Nuremberg Chronicle, illustrated in 1495 by Dürer's godfather, Anton Koberger, with two thousand woodcuts. As we shall see, not only did monsters abound in the early modern news but, thanks to the press, some monsters achieved international media fame.

## Deformed Infants

In early modern Europe, as also before and after, abnormality fascinated. By the beginning of the sixteenth century, part of the European press already delighted in enabling its readers to wonder in amazement and horror at terrifyingly monstrous infants, often accompanied by appropriately explicit woodcuts. At least to judge by the surviving material, this occurred especially in Germany, where *Flugblätter* illustrating extraordinary beings abound. An early example is Wolf Traut's *Flugschrift* entitled: *Zu wissen. Ein wunderlich und erschrockenlich ding* (i.e. Be it known. An amazing and terrifying thing), that describes a creature born in 1511, the year in which the pamphlet was printed.<sup>8</sup> A child, supposedly born in 1543 in Winterswijk, in the Netherlands, to one Herr Lasinger's sister, had lived for four hours and had then been embalmed. Hardly surprisingly, the ludicrously horrific creature is exhibited in a *Flugblatt* as a warning from God (Fig. 7.1), just one of innumerable attempts at developing such stories for moralistic ends.<sup>9</sup> A horrendous monster born in Germany is described in an *avviso* published in Ferrara in the 1530s – *Aviso del nasimento d'un horrendo mostro nato d'una dona in Alemagna bassa in una tera chiamata Vuiscrug* – and it is possible that the second of the two terrifying monsters reported in a *relación* printed in Valencia in 1531 was the same as the one described in that *avviso* – *Monstruos espantables: nueuamente nacidos, el vno en el término de Boloña, y el otro en la Baxa*

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<sup>7</sup> See *Von der wunderbaren Geburt des Kindes bei Worms* (Augsburg, 1495 - USTC 743639); *Von der wunderbaren Sau zu Landser* (Basel, 1496 - USTC 743670); *Von der zwiefältigen Gans und den sechsfüssigen Ferkeln zu Gugenheim* (Basel, 1496 - USTC 743685). See also USTC 743664.

<sup>8</sup> See USTC 752949.

<sup>9</sup> See Julie Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism: Monstrous Births in Post-Reformation England*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005; Dudley Wilson, *Signs and Portents: Monstrous Births from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment*, London, Routledge, 1993.

*Alemaña* – both of which, it is claimed, were signs sent by Christ to warn us of his ire at the grave offences that are committed against him every day.<sup>10</sup>

One of several reports that explain how women give birth to monsters after copulating with animals is the *canard*, published in Paris around 1600, which illustrates the offspring – half human, half ape – of a chambermaid in Messina who had supposedly had sex with a monkey.<sup>11</sup> For its part, the birth of a calf to a woman in Geneva is treated as a miracle in a *canard* printed in Paris and Lyon in 1609, whilst another *canard*, printed at Tours in 1580, had told of a baby that was in the womb for nearly two years and had had to be extracted bone by bone.<sup>12</sup>

As for pamphlets that describe cases in detail, infants with gross abnormalities abound. One, written by Burkard Waldis and published in 1542, told of the amazing birth of a two-headed child.<sup>13</sup> News of a ‘wunderbarlichen, schröcklichen vnd abschewlichen Geburt’ (i.e. an amazing, horrid and loathsome birth) is the subject of a *Neue Zeitung*, printed in Strasbourg in 1569, whose front page carries a woodcut of another two-headed baby; and an infant with the lower part of another body and two arms sticking out of its left shoulder is depicted in a *Flugblatt* printed in Nuremberg, which claims that it was born in 1578 on the Rialto.<sup>14</sup> Another *Flugblatt*, also printed in Nuremberg in 1578 and entitled *Eine erschreckliche Missgeburt*, shows an infant born with four hands and four legs.<sup>15</sup> As we shall see, the 1570s were a particularly good decade for extraordinary births, with 1578 an especially good year.

To judge by the examples that survive, the English reading public went in for sensational stories of misshapen children in a big way from shortly after the mid-sixteenth century, the expression ‘monstrous child’ being used repeatedly in the titles of newsletters on the subject.<sup>16</sup> They include the birth of monstrous children at Much Horkesley, near Colchester, and at Chichester, both in 1562; at Freshwater, on the Isle of Wight, in 1564; at Stoney Stratford and at Swanbourne, in

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10 For the Italian pamphlet, see USTC 800501; for the Spanish *relación*, printed in Valencia by Francisco Díaz Romano in 1531, see Fernández Valladares 2009: 37. Similarly, in 1564 Thiebolt Berger printed in Strasbourg a pamphlet on the birth of a misshapen child, presented as a sign sent by the Almighty (see USTC 750023).

11 See Seguin 1964: 471 (and Plate XXVII).

12 See Seguin 1964: 480-1; and *Histoire estrange d'une femme qui a porté enfant vingt et trois mois et qui en fin a esté tiré par le costé, os à os* (USTC 62249).

13 See USTC 750292, 750023.

14 For the first pamphlet, see Weller 1872: 353.

15 See Weller 1872: 490.

16 A dozen and a half surviving relations of monstrous births published, mostly in the form of broadsides, in England up to 1600 are listed in Cressy 2000.



Fig. 7.1. A highly fanciful *Flugblatt*, printed at Strasbourg, depicting an extraordinary infant, supposedly born in 1543 at Winterswijk, in the Netherlands (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

Buckinghamshire,<sup>17</sup> and at Mitcham, Surrey, all in 1566; at Maidstone, Kent, in 1568; at 'Paskewet,' in Monmouthshire, in 1585; at Ottringham, in Holderness, in 1595; at Colwall, in Hereford, in 1600; and at 'Namen,' in Flanders, in 1608.<sup>18</sup> As David Cressy

17 In 1566 Alexander Lacy printed a newsletter with a title that gave a full account of this instance: *The true description of two monstrous children lafully begotten betwene George Stevens and Margerie his wyfe, and borne in the parish of Swanburne in Buckingham shyre, the. iii. of Aprill. Anno Domini. 1566, the two children having both their belies fast joyned together, and imbracyng one another with their armes* (USTC 404192 – illustrated in Cressy 2000: 33).

18 See Cressy 2000: 31-2. Davies (1986: 81) describes the woodcuts that illustrate many of these news pamphlets.

suggests, 'Sensational reporting fed on itself, in bursts and clusters, so that reports of one incident led to another and another in a chain.'<sup>19</sup> One broadside – *The true description of a monstrous Chylde Borne in the Cytie of Anwarpe*, supposedly in 1564 – shows a child with an excessively large head and accompanies the woodcut with a commentary in verse which states that God 'In shape doth shew our sinfull life.'<sup>20</sup> The broadside on the monster child born on the Isle of Wight in 1564 includes a woodcut of the lower part of its body, with 'a cluster of longe heare about the Nauell,' and verses that exhort readers thus:

Let vs all feare, and in mynde beare,  
This forme so monstrous:  
That no hurte wraught, nor euill thought,  
What shall become of vs.<sup>21</sup>

Many of the accounts stress the dire providential consequences to be expected, as in the case presented in a newsletter printed in London in 1609 as:

*A true relation of the birth of three monsters in the city of Namen in Flanders as also Gods iudgement vpon an vnnaturall sister of the poore womans, mother of these abortiue children, whose house was consumed with fire from heauen, and her selfe swallowed into the earth. All which hapned the 16. of December last. 1608.*<sup>22</sup>

### *Conjoined Twins*

Conjoined twins had a special fascination for early readers of the printed news. A large number of *Flugblätter* survive in which the engravers went out of their way to present the precise condition of the infants. Amongst the earliest reports is the *Flugschrift* by Sebastian Brant on twins born at Worms conjoined at the head. It came out in 1495 in Basel and in Strasbourg, illustrated on the first page with a woodcut, and, in three different editions, in Augsburg (Fig. 7.2).<sup>23</sup> Pamphlets in Latin on conjoined twins were published by Jacob Locher at Ingolstadt in 1499, and in Zurich, with the twins, who are there said to have been born in 1543, conjoined at the chest.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Cressy 2000: 32.

<sup>20</sup> Bodleian Broadside Ballads Online, Bod.11201.

<sup>21</sup> Bodleian Broadside Ballads Online, Bod.16313.

<sup>22</sup> Copy at Bodleian Library, 016416435. The first page (reproduced in Davies 1986: 350) purports to show the house on fire, the woman being swallowed up and, below, the three monsters.

<sup>23</sup> See USTC 743639-43. Ewink (1995: fig. 81) reproduces what looks like the same woodcut as part of a *Flugblatt*.

<sup>24</sup> For the first pamphlet, see See Pettegree 2010: 148.

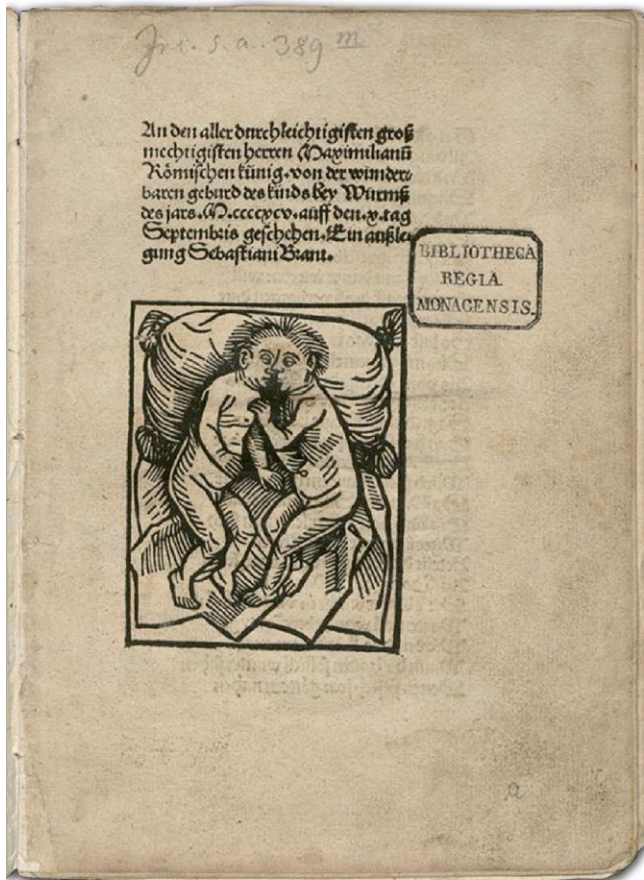


Fig. 7.2. Front page of Sebastian Brant's *Flugschrift* on twins born at Worms in 1495 conjoined at the head. Like many early pamphlets, this one does not indicate the place of printing or the name of the printer, but its woodcut illustration, doubtless made to order, is striking. The pamphlet is dedicated to Emperor Maximilian (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft).

One particular story of conjoined twins that originated in Venice achieved wide coverage in Italy and was also reported in Germany. The twins had been born in 1575 to a Jewess in the Venice ghetto, and that fact certainly accounted in large part for their notoriety. They are illustrated, both back and front, in an Italian broadside which claims that they suckled through both of their mouths and excreted via their single navel.<sup>25</sup> Another depiction of the twins – this time front view only, and without

<sup>25</sup> See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.1. Ewinkel (1995: fig. 61) also reproduces an Italian copper engraving of the same twins.

even the tiniest descriptive text, unless it has been lost – was also published with a title in Italian.<sup>26</sup> This same story of the ‘monstrous birth’ to a Jewish woman was rapidly developed into a discourse on the destiny of the Jews in a pamphlet printed in Venice by Domenico Farri: *Discorso sopra il significato del parto mostruoso nato di una hebrea in Venetia*.<sup>27</sup> It was reprinted the same year by another Venetian printer, Bolognino Zaltieri, together with annotations by one Giovanni Giuseppe Gregorio, who likewise interpreted the deformed offspring as a prognostication of the destiny of the Jews, and that pamphlet was reprinted in 1576 in Bologna.<sup>28</sup> A German *Flugblatt* on the same Venetian conjoined twins was published in Heidelberg with what looks like a remarkably exact copy of the front view of the twins shown in the Italian broadside, together with quite a lengthy text, said to have been translated from Italian, a fact which suggests that the Italian broadside may originally have been longer than the fragment preserved, or else that an illustrated *avviso* on the story had also been published.<sup>29</sup> Whereas the Italian edition that shows front and back views describes the case as marvellous and stupendous, the Heidelberg *Flugblatt* calls it a true and frightful birth.

The Venetian Jewish conjoined twins were not, however, the first to make the news internationally. In 1552 John Daye had printed in London a broadside with a fine illustration of conjoined twins born at Middleton Stoney, in Oxfordshire, explaining how ‘the good wyfe was delivered of thys double Chylde, begotten of her late husbände John Kenner;’ how one of the children would sleep while the other one was awake, and how they had both been baptised (Fig. 7.3).<sup>30</sup> The story was published, the same year, in a Dutch pamphlet printed in Antwerp.<sup>31</sup> Typically, the ‘monstrous Chylde’ (i.e. conjoined twins) born at Stoney Stratford in 1566 is illustrated, back and front, in a broadside which describes its peculiarities and ends by glossing in verse the statement that this case is ‘a warning of God, to moue all people to amendment of lyfe.’<sup>32</sup>

A *Parto maravilloso* (i.e. a wondrous birth) that is said to have occurred in Genoa in 1617 – another case of conjoined twins, one of whom was said to excrete for

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26 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.2.

27 See USTC 805209.

28 *Discorso sopra gli accidenti del parto mostruoso nato di una hebrea in Venetia nell'anno 1575 a di XXVI di maggio Dove si ragiona altamente del futuro destino de gli hebrei. Di novo ristampato, e con le annotazioni di Giovanni Gioseppe Gregorio cremonese ampliato* (USTC 805208, 805303).

29 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.3 (USTC 750118).

30 See USTC 516524.

31 *Dye descriptie ende contrefeytinge vande twee kinderen die in Engelant, binnen den dorpe van Middleton inder plaetsen, aen malcanderen geboren sijn anno MDLII* (USTC 404192).

32 Bodleian Broadside Ballads Online, Bod.5295.





Fig. 7.3. A broadside printed in London on the 'double Chylde' born at Middleton Stony in 1552, with a woodcut illustrating the back view, poems in Latin (in roman type) and in English (in gothic) and an explanatory prose text in English (also in gothic). The engraving anticipates depictions of the Venetian twins, over twenty years later (see below, Appendix III, Figs. A3.1-3) (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

both of them – is reported in a *relación* published in Murcia which states that it had previously been printed in Valencia and in Rome, whilst a *relación* on the death of James I of England in 1625 ends with a report on two conjoined girls born in Madrid.<sup>33</sup> An instance of dual publication – as a broadside and as a *relación* – is to be found in the birth of conjoined infants to a poor woman in the town of Tortosa, half way between Barcelona and Valencia, presented as a pamphlet that was printed on both

33 See BDRS 5885; Agulló y Cobo 1975: 182.

sides of a single sheet published in Madrid in 1634, and as a broadside published the same year in Valencia. The texts and the woodcuts of the front and back views of the twins are virtually identical.<sup>34</sup> Three *occasionnels* or *canards* published in Paris in 1605 provide early examples of a more scientific approach to conjoined twins, offering as they do portraits said to have been done from life and also external and internal descriptions of the twins made on the basis of the dissection carried out at the School of Medicine in Paris.<sup>35</sup>

### *Monstrous Humans*

Whilst at one extreme, as we shall see, amazing quantities of impossibly minute humans could make the news, so did unusually large ones. The tale of a seriously overweight girl in Esslingen is told in a pamphlet published at Worms in 1549.<sup>36</sup> A far older story was the ‘Histoire veritable’ of the giant Theutobocus, king of the Teutons, who was defeated by the Roman consul Marius five hundred years before the birth of Christ, a tale told in a *canard* published in Paris and Lyon in 1613, its claim to *actualité* consisting of the fact that Theutobocus’s tomb had recently been discovered at the castle of Chaumon, near the town of Romans, in the Dauphiné.<sup>37</sup>

An internationally successful monster story is the one that appears first to have been told in an Italian print containing the portrait in profile and a brief description of a *Horribil mostro* that had supposedly been born in January 1578 to a doctor’s wife in Piedmont. This monstrous human boasted claws on its fingers and seven horns, including two made of flesh – one of them worn around its neck and the other, far longer than the rest, dangling down its back. The print bears the inscription ‘formis All’Arca di Noe.’<sup>38</sup> This Italian print, or perhaps a similar one, was probably the model for the illustrated broadside, also produced in 1578, by the Chambéry printer François Poumard, in which he offered the *Vray pourtraict, et sommaire description d’un horrible et merueilleux monstre*.<sup>39</sup> In addition to translating the brief description in the Italian print and using it as a title, Poumard’s broadside appends an accompanying

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34 The first item is reproduced in Ettinghausen 1995; the second, in Carrete Parrondo, Checa Cremades and Bozal 1987: 313.

35 See Seguin 1964: 472-4. One of these pamphlets (Seguin 1964: 472), a broadside, is illustrated (Plate VIII). Another (Seguin 1964: 473), a pamphlet, is also illustrated (Plate XXVII).

36 See *Ein unerhörte ubernatürliche gestalt einer grosz geschwollenen Junckfrawen zu Esslingen als hie furgemalet und hernach gemelt würt* (USTC 752794).

37 See Seguin 1964: 492-4.

38 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.4. Irene Ewinkel reproduces a version of the same monster included in a book published in 1665 (see *De monstis. Deutung und Funktion von Wundergeburten auf Flugblättern im Deutschland des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1995: fig. 109).

39 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.5; Seguin 1964: 467.

text that appropriates the story in order to turn it into a mini-sermon, treating the monster as a dire warning of what God has in store for an impenitent mankind, its seven horns interpreted as representing the seven deadly sins.

If this bizarrely horned human was perhaps made familiar only to Italian and French readers, an even more extravagant being – complete with seven heads and arms, ram’s or ox’s feet, and a single eye in the middle of its central head – was brought to the attention of early news fiends, not only in Italy and France, but also in Germany and Spain.<sup>40</sup> At least two different prints were published in Italy: one with a very brief description placed at the bottom of the page, the other with the same description, but placed at the top. As such, this version is a counterpart to the Italian print of the horny human from Piedmont, and it, too, bears the inscription ‘Formis All’Arca di Noe.’<sup>41</sup> The description, likewise, links the two monsters, as this one, too, is said to have been born in January 1578, but to an old woman in Eusrigo, in ‘terra del nouarese,’ i.e. in the same geographical area as Piedmont. This spectacularly sensational story was also published as a broadside in 1578 by the same Chambéry printer, François Poumard, who that same year produced the nearly matching broadside of the Piedmontese monster.<sup>42</sup> The unfortunate seven-headed individual is – the title claims – depicted in the woodcut from life. And, in this case, too, Poumard adds a brief text after the portrait which, this time, interprets the phenomenon as a warning against sensuality and a presage of sinister events. The monster from Eusrigo also appears in a print that describes it as a *Wahre abcontrafeitung eines Schrecklichen Münsters* (i.e. a true portrait of a terrifying monster) and claims that it was born in January 1578 in the region of Milan.<sup>43</sup> A *Flugblatt*, headed by a similar title, but accompanied by a far longer text, purporting to have been translated into German from Dutch, was published at Kampen and illustrates the same creature, whilst also referring to far earlier examples of comparable monsters and interpreting its appearance as a warning from God.<sup>44</sup>

Curiously enough, the two monsters that had been publicised separately in Italy and in France – with the seven-headed and seven-armed creature also appearing in Germany – were imaginatively brought together in a German *Flugblatt* printed in Strasbourg, also in 1578, along with reference to another monster witnessed by one Dr Simon Pauli of Frankfurt and with a brief account of the storms that had caused

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40 See Folke Gernert, ‘Relaciones de sucesos monstruosos y las *Histoires prodigieuses* de Pierre de Boaistuau,’ in Cátedra García and Díaz Tena, eds., 2013: 191-209.

41 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.6.

42 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.7: Seguin 1964: 466.

43 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.8.

44 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.9.

the Neckar to flood, depicted in the background.<sup>45</sup> Perhaps even more curiously, a Spanish version of the multi-headed, multi-armed monster, in the form of a four-page *relación*, appeared three-quarters of a century later, when in 1654 the Madrid printer Diego Díaz illustrated the creature with a woodcut evidently made from an earlier print. However, his title claims that the report had reached Madrid from the city of Girona and that the ‘prodigioso monstruo’ had been born and captured in the mountains of Cerdanya, in northern Catalonia.<sup>46</sup> Irene Ewinkel reproduces two very similar *Flugblätter* printed at Augsburg, also in 1654, which likewise claim that the monster was born in Catalonia, one of them noting that the king of Spain had ordered it to be brought to the Escorial, whilst the other ends by observing that only God knows what it signifies.<sup>47</sup> Both of these Augsburg printings were doubtless based, directly or indirectly, on the Madrid edition. And Ewinkel points out that the monster was still being reproduced in a book by Fortunius Licetus entitled *De monstribus*, printed in Amsterdam in 1665...<sup>48</sup>

Some other monsters also achieved international careers. In 1628 the Barcelona printer Esteve Liberós put out a *relación* that claimed to reproduce a report, allegedly sent to a Barcelona merchant by a Genoese resident in Madrid, of the birth in Lisbon of a ‘monstruoso Niño.’<sup>49</sup> It also held that the engraving on the front page – showing a shell-covered infant born with a helmet on its head, a cross on its chest and wearing boots – was based on a portrait of the boy that had been sent to Philip IV.<sup>50</sup> The story told in this *Relacion verdadera* is that the boy’s mother was so ashamed of him that she starved him to death but that his body was disinterred and a drawing made of it that was sent to court, where it was at first held to be a hoax. The report ends by wondering whether the monster was a warning to mankind or, in view of the cross on its chest, a sign that Christendom would be exalted. Either way, the author argues that the mother should not have been ashamed or horrified, since pious parents have sometimes had monstrous children and that the latter have sometimes turned out to be monsters of virtue and holiness. The same story, with a similar woodcut, appears in a sixteen-page *canard* entitled *La naissance d'un monstre ayant la face humaine, la teste et la reste du corps couvert d'une armure façon d'escailles. Né á Lisbonne, ville capitale de Portugal*, printed in

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45 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.10.

46 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.11.

47 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.12; Ewinkel 1995: figs. 46-7.

48 See Ewinkel 1995: 256, fig. 116.

49 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.13.

50 For the reproductions discussed here of prints depicting this creature, see below, Appendix III, Figs. A3.13-15.

Paris in 1628.<sup>51</sup> And, just as the multi-headed, multi-armed monster that had been publicised in Italy, Germany and France in 1578 reappeared in 1654 at the press of the Madrid printer Diego Díaz, it was another Madrid printer who, more than thirty years later, recycled the shell-covered boy with the cross on his chest who had figured in the pamphlets printed in Barcelona and Paris. Thus, that self-same little monster comes up again in a woodcut – most probably based on the one in the *canard* – in a *Verdadera y nueva relación* printed in Madrid in 1659 by Gregorio Rodríguez, whose text affirms that it had been born the previous year in Cagliari.<sup>52</sup>

Another monster story that also appears to have originated in Spain and then to have been exported tells of a creature that was engendered by a witch's magical charms in the body of a man named Hernando de la Haba, who gave birth to it via his anus in the village of Ferreira, east of Granada. The tale is contained in a *relación* in verse published in Barcelona in 1606,<sup>53</sup> as well as in a *canard* printed the same year in Rouen – which claims to be based on a pamphlet printed in Madrid – and in another that came out in Paris sixteen years later.<sup>54</sup>

On occasion, monsters could be used as propaganda. One instance is the three-eyed, three-horned boy with ass's ears, a nose with only one nostril, and legs and feet facing backwards, the significance of which was its place of birth – Ostraviza, in Dalmatia, in the lands of the Turk.<sup>55</sup> As a broadside, printed in Seville probably in the 1620s, claims, Turkish soothsayers tried to interpret the meaning of the little monster's attributes, concluding that the backward-facing legs and feet signified the imminent end of the Ottoman state – a highly welcome message for a Spanish readership.<sup>56</sup> The text ends by exhorting Christian princes to unite in defeating the implacable common enemy, whose perdition has been predicted by Heaven. The bizarre boy from Ostraviza also appeared in a woodcut that is very similar to that in the broadside, in a *Verdadera y notable relacion*, supposedly translated from Italian and published in Granada in 1624.<sup>57</sup> He also travelled abroad, and appears in a sixteen-page *canard* printed in Paris in 1624, which suggests that the story may have

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51 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.14; Seguin 1964: 483.

52 See below, Appendix III, Fig. A3.15. Raymond (2003: 124-5) discusses the recycling, or delayed reprinting, of English newsletters, including one that described the appearance in Somerset of the devil in the guise of a headless bear, published in 1584, and again in 1614.

53 See Pedro Cordoba, 'L'Homme enceint de Grenade. Contribution à un dossier d'histoire culturelle,' *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez*, 23, 1987: 307-30.

54 See Seguin 1964: 476-7.

55 Both of these are reproduced in Ettinghausen 1995.

56 The broadside was printed by Juan de Cabrera, who was active in Seville in the period 1623-31.

57 The front page is reproduced in Carrete Parrondo 1993: 57.

been published in Spain earlier than is suggested by the surviving prints.<sup>58</sup> However, one story that does not seem to have been taken up outside Spain is that of another unlikely freak – a baby boy born with thirty-three eyes situated all over its body – which was printed in 1613 by Llorenç Deu in Barcelona and is said to have been published previously in Baeza.<sup>59</sup>

### *Infant and Maternal Prodigies*

Some monsters are perhaps better thought of as extreme infant prodigies. Such might be the case of the story told in a ‘maravillosa carta,’ supposedly sent from Venice to the Spanish court and thence to the Bishop of Valencia, that was printed in that city as a *relación* and which tells of a baby boy who had been born in Babylonia and could speak, and do other remarkable things, from birth (Fig. 7.4).<sup>60</sup> A similar case is described in the second of three reports that make up a *Flugschrift*, supposedly translated from French and published in at least two editions in 1543, concerning a baby that was born larger than normal and which, very shortly after it was born, could both walk and talk.<sup>61</sup> A comparable story that appears in a *Neue Zeitung* in 1579 tells of a baby wrapped in snow-white clothes that was found in Cologne and announced marvellous things, a story that is told again in a *Neue Zeitung* printed in 1593 but which situates the baby in Lâbach and adds the report of a deformed birth.<sup>62</sup> A similar case, set in the Dutch town of Purmerend, is reported in a pamphlet printed in at least two editions in Antwerp in 1599 (Fig. 7.5)<sup>63</sup> which was also published in English that same year in London by John Wolfe, under the title: *A Strange and Miraculous Accident happened in the Cittie of Purmerent, on New-yeeres euen last past 1599 of a young child which was heard to cry in the Mother’s wombe before it was borne, and about fourteene days of age, spake certaine sencible words, to the wonder of euery-body.*<sup>64</sup> In 1587 a *canard* printed in Bordeaux had divulged a *Discours très merueilleux et espouvantable*, set ten leagues from Antwerp, involving three children who had been able to speak very soon after being born but had died shortly afterwards.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> See Seguin 1964: 482. The illustration (reproduced in Seguin 1964: Plate XXVIII) is said to correspond to Seguin 1964: 476, but that item is a *canard* on the monster born in Ferreira.

<sup>59</sup> Reproduced in Ettinghausen 2000a: 8. There was also an edition printed in 1613 in Valencia (BDRS 0098).

<sup>60</sup> See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 45.

<sup>61</sup> See Weller 1872: 148.

<sup>62</sup> See Weller 1872: 510, 770.

<sup>63</sup> See USTC 424284, 407994.

<sup>64</sup> See Collins 1943: 40.

<sup>65</sup> See Seguin 1964: 484A.

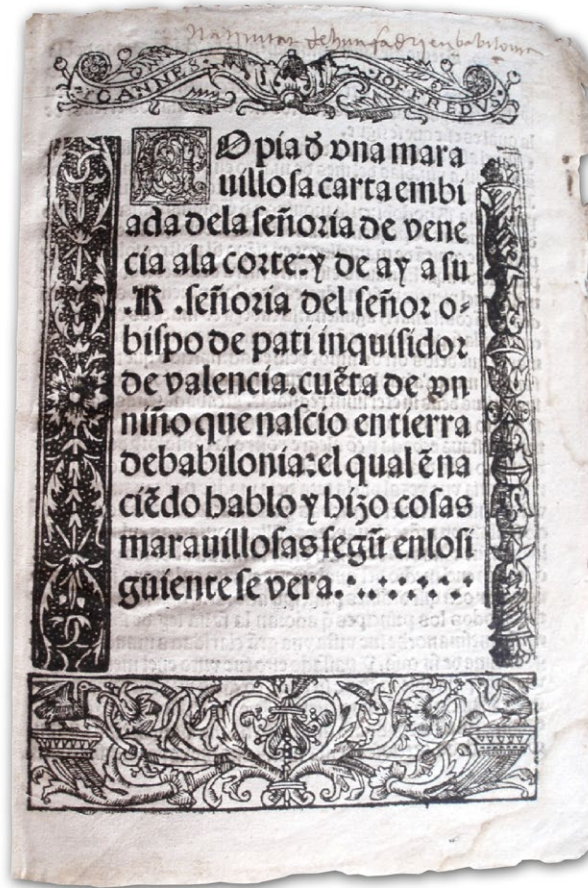


Fig. 7.4. First page of a *relación*, published in Valencia in c.1533, on an infant prodigy born in Babylonia, with the title set inside a frame of woodcut decorative blocks. Unlike French, and especially German, prints of the period, Spanish *relaciones* of the time very rarely attempt visual illustration (Biblioteca del Palau, Peralada).<sup>66</sup>

A particularly spectacular case that merits being termed a maternal prodigy, and which travelled on the international circuit, is told in an English broadside published in about 1620. The story centres upon a rich woman who, after making fun of her poor sister for having had twins – or, alternatively, being barren and having cursed a poor woman who was blessed with twins – was punished by giving birth to 365 children at one multiple delivery, each child being the size of a new-born mouse.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>66</sup> See Fernández Valladares 2009: 37-8.

<sup>67</sup> See Shaaber 1966: 150. The woodcut from the newsletter, showing the woman in bed and the children on a table, apparently in a shallow basket, is reproduced in Watt 1991: 125.



Fig. 7.5. First page of an 8-page Dutch newsletter, one of at least two editions printed in Antwerp, on a miraculous child, born on New Year's Eve, 1599, in the Dutch town of Purmerend, that was heard to cry before it was born, at birth said: 'O myn Godt' three times, and could speak several words only a fortnight later. The title, which includes a lengthy summary of the story, has a rather crude woodcut of the baby. The printer made use of varied fonts, opening with the striking words 'EEN MIRAKEL' in large roman type, which contrasts with the gothic type used thereafter (Universiteitsbibliotheek, Leiden).

This story clearly derives from the one of an Irish woman called Margaret who had supposedly given birth on a silver platter to 365 or 366 children, likewise the size of mice, a case that had been taken up in Antonio de Torquemada's *Jardín de flores curiosas*, published in Lleida in 1573 – another nice instance of news recycling.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> See Arrabal 1983: 106.



Indeed, the longevity of many such tales is illustrated by the fact that a *relación* in verse, published sixty years later, in 1633, told the story of a woman in Seville who, in the twelve years she had been married, had had fifty-two children, combining that report with the story of a lady in Ireland (clearly, Margaret) who had given birth to 370 mouse-sized children at a single sitting on a silver platter and, to boot, had had them all baptised.<sup>69</sup>

## Animals

Something which doubtless fascinated as much as it repelled readers of the early modern press was the fear of wild or strange animals. A French broadside printed at Lyon around 1555 tells of a terrifying attack by hordes of dogs in the 'pays de Biart,' in southern France, together with other horrors, including the appearance for eight days in the sky above Pau of a man with his arms outstretched, as if crucified, not to mention a frightful dragon, a merman and great flocks of birds. A *canard* published in Paris in 1587 tells of the ravages caused by a wolf in the forests of the Ardennes, whilst another, printed at Vienne in 1616, reports the damage caused in that city by a lynx, and a 'discours effroyable,' published in Lyon and Paris in 1605, tells of the plight of a girl who was carried off and raped by a bear that kept her in its den for three years.<sup>70</sup>

However, animals did not necessarily have to be wild in order to be newsworthy. The birth in Hampstead of a big pig in 1562 was the subject of a newsletter printed by Alexander Lacy under the title: *The description of a monstrous pig the which was farrowed at Hamsted besyde London*.<sup>71</sup> As if not to be outdone, William How printed a pamphlet in 1570 that told of *A mervaylous straunge deformed swyne*.<sup>72</sup> The description of an animal, which reads and looks remarkably like a phenomenally huge and gentle giraffe, appears in a pamphlet printed at Nuremberg in 1559, which describes it as a rare and marvellous beast, the likes of which had never before been seen (Fig. 7.6).<sup>73</sup>

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69 Fernando Álvarez, *Relacion muy verdadera en que se da cuenta de vna muger natural de Seuilla, que en tiempo de doze años que es casada ha parido cinquenta y dos hijos y oy en dia esta viua. Cuentase de vna señora muy principal de irlanda que pario trezientos y sesenta hijos en vna fuente de plata y los bautizaron* (Seville, 1633). See Aurora Domínguez Guzmán, 'Algunas lecturas curiosas en la Sevilla del siglo XVII,' *Archivo Hispalense*, 205, 1984, 77-103: 84.

70 See Seguin 1964: 115 (and: Plate XVII), 119, 485.

71 See USTC 505951.

72 See USTC 507149.

73 See *Ein seltzam und Wunderbarlich Their, der gelichen von uns vor nie geschen worden* (USTC 752477).

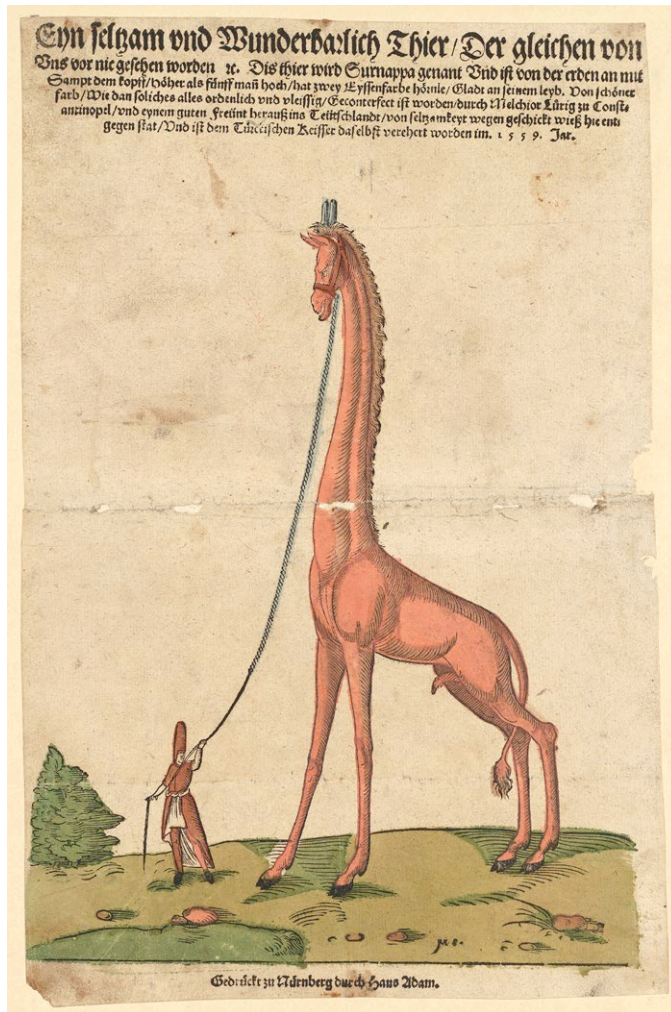


Fig. 7.6. A seemingly phenomenally huge giraffe, in a *Flugblatt* printed at Nuremberg in 1559. The fact that the animal is shown as roughly four times as tall as its keeper suggests that it was based on a description, rather than taken from life (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

Occasionally, reptiles or invertebrates also appear in news pamphlets. One such is a *Wahrhaftige, erschrockliche, Neue zeytung*, published in Vienna in 1550, about the adders and lizards that had invaded Hungary.<sup>74</sup> The true portrait of a monstrous worm found in a horse's heart in London was offered to the public in a broadside in

<sup>74</sup> See Weller 1872: 193.

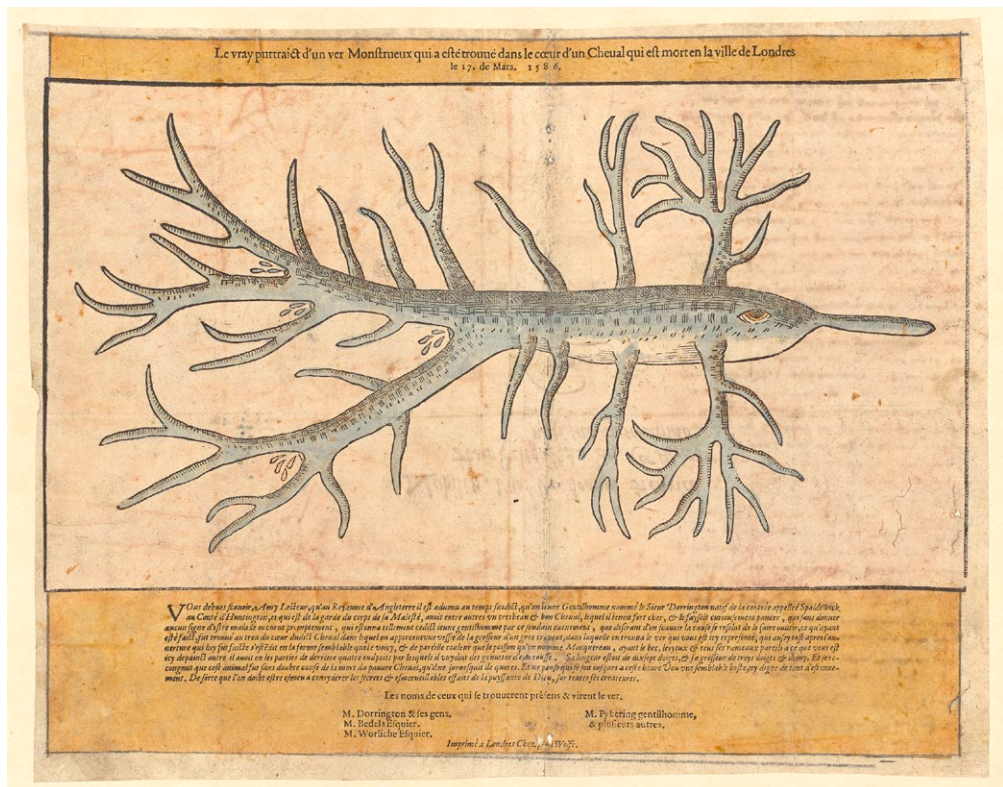


Fig. 7.7. The 'ver Monstueux' found in a dead horse in London, illustrated in a broadside in French printed in London by John Wolfe in 1586. The text ends by naming five of the many witnesses said to have seen the monstrous worm with their own eyes (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

1586 by the London printer John Wolfe and was presumably intended for export, as it was printed in French (Fig. 7.7).<sup>75</sup> A German pamphlet, published in Strasbourg in 1564, that describes an awful, terrifying, huge worm captured in Lybia, 'near Turkey,' offers the suggestion that the animal in question was a crocodile.<sup>76</sup> The following year the same story came out in a broadside in Antwerp, and another horrid crocodile story appeared in Ingolstadt in an undated illustrated pamphlet entitled: *Warhaftige Abconterfect und beschreibung aines wunderbarlichen und graussamen Wurms*

<sup>75</sup> *Le vray pourtraict d'un ver monstrueux qui a esté trouué dans le coeur d'un cheval qui est mort en la ville de Londres le 17 mars 1586* (USTC 76621).

<sup>76</sup> *Warhaftige Beschreibung eines grausamen erschrocklichen grossen Wurms. wölcher zu Lybia inn Türckey an der Babylonischen Gränzten wunderbarlicher weiß gefangen und umgebracht worden ist oder da in Latein Crocodili vnnnd auff Teütsch Lindwurm genennet würr* (USTC 750710).

*Crocodili*, (i.e. True portrait and description of a wonderful and awful crocodile worm).<sup>77</sup> An even stranger can of worms, reported in Paris in 1623, is the story of the maggots with children's faces that fell out of the sky in several parts of Provence.<sup>78</sup>

If conjoined twins fascinated readers, conjoined animals, and animals with other kinds of genetic deformities, did likewise and also inspired the production of numerous illustrated broadsides and relations. One example, published as a broadside in English, apparently in Germany, in 1531, went under the lengthy and fully descriptive title:

*This horyble monster is cast of a sowe in Eestlande in Pruse two myle from Runyngbergh in a vyllage which is called Lebenhayn whiche monster hathe had a great wyde mouth, with two eyen, foure eares, no stomacke nor guttes and two hertes, VIII. Fete, and the body was growen togyther from the nauyll up to the hede, and with thys foresayde monster were broughte forth. V. yonge pygges alyve.*<sup>79</sup>

Another is the double calf's head superbly depicted in a *Flugblatt* printed at Augsburg in 1555.<sup>80</sup> Yet another conjoined animal, an ox born near Augsburg, is depicted in a *Flugblatt* printed in that city in about 1560, and a similar-looking two-headed cow was illustrated in a broadside *canard* published in Paris in 1569.<sup>81</sup> A lamb with two mouths, born near Frankfurt, described as really amazingly frightful, is the subject of a German pamphlet printed at Augsburg in 1567.<sup>82</sup> A pig born in 1570 with one head and two bodies is depicted in a *Flugblatt* printed in Zurich, with a text in verse. And a similar-looking animal, with the rear half of a second body sticking out of its side, made the news in a *canard* printed in Paris in, or just after, 1578.<sup>83</sup> A comparable aberration – a conjoined hare – is illustrated in a *Flugblatt* printed at Heidelberg that claims that the animal was caught in the Hartz Mountains in 1583.

A fantasy that clearly appealed to writers and readers of news pamphlets concerned the possibility of transgressing the frontiers between animals and humans. In the previous chapter we saw a few examples of men who had made bargains with the devil and had turned into werewolves. An account by Christoph Copenhus of

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77 See USTC 415426, 752385.

78 See Seguin 1964: 122.

79 See USTC 502334.

80 See USTC 750204.

81 See USTC 750070; Seguin 1964: 465 (and Plate XXIII).

82 *Ein warhafftige wunderbarliche erschrockliche Geburt von einem Schaff, welches zü Merfeldt zwo meil wegs von Franckfort am Main, geborn ist worden* (USTC 751990).

83 See Seguin 1964: 468.

the wild man of Wolfenbüttel was published in Strasbourg in 1542 under the title: *Der wilde mann von Wolffenbeütel*, and a wild woman found in Newfoundland is depicted, together with her daughter, in a *Flugblatt* printed at Augsburg in 1566.<sup>84</sup> In a *canard* published in Paris in 1609, what is described as a miracle is said to have occurred to a woman who scorned God's omnipotence and gave birth to a calf,<sup>85</sup> and a *canard* printed at Sens in 1582 told the story of a child turned to stone.<sup>86</sup> Whilst the engravers of German *Flugblätter* were capable of producing the many examples of splendidly convincing illustrations that have been preserved, most especially thanks to Johann Jakob Wick, comparatively few survive published elsewhere in Europe, and, for the most part, their quality is less impressive.

### *Birds and Fish*

Birds and fish, if big or strange enough, could also make the news. A Dutch broadside on an odd bird found in England is dated 1587, whilst an *Vnnatürliche Zeitung*, published the same year in Augsburg, tells of seven wonderful rare birds caught in England the previous year.<sup>87</sup> What could be the same story, though published in Nuremberg two years before, is the news of strange birds sighted in Lincolnshire.<sup>88</sup> In 1591, for his part, John Wolfe registered at the Stationers' Company a newsletter entitled *A wonderful & true reporte of strange Birdes seene in Fflaunders*.<sup>89</sup>

Fish, however, appear far more commonly in the surviving press than do birds. Two *Flugblätter* printed at Augsburg in 1565 offer, respectively, a 'seltzamen Meerwunder' (i.e. a strange sea monster) found in Brazil and a forty-seven-foot tuna caught off Gibraltar covered with pictures of warships.<sup>90</sup> The text of the latter, which reproduces the brief attestation of the Spanish notary Juan Frutuoso, is said to have been translated from French. In 1566, Thomas Purfoot printed a similarly propagandistic newsletter – *The discription of a rare or rather most monstrous fishe taken on the east coast of Holland* – whose illustrative woodcut is described by Marie-Hélène Davies as 'purely symbolic: it is a devil-fish and its scales are like beggars' bowls, its eyes like an owl's, its mouth like a parrot's beak, and its tail like a priest's cope. It

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84 See USTC 634769, 751987.

85 See Céard 1996: 481, No. 22.

86 *Le prodigieux enfant petrefié de la ville de Sens* (USTC 65475).

87 The Dutch broadside is reproduced in Pettegree 2010: 349; see also Weller 1872: 661.

88 *Ein warhafftige beschreibung und urtheil von etlichen Frembden vögeln, der gleichen vor nie, aber issund in Engelandt in der Grafschaft von Licolne sind acsehen worden* (USTC 752124). Another edition came out in 1587 in Frankfurt.

89 See Collins 1943: 104.

90 See Weller 1872: 287, 286.

is a satire against Mother Church.<sup>91</sup> More prosaically, a giant squid is illustrated in a German *Flugblatt* printed in 1566 in Augsburg, entitled *Warhafftige Contrafactur eines Fisch, so im Holandischen strom gefangen ist worden*.<sup>92</sup>

In 1568 Thomas Colwell printed the news of *A moste true and marveilous straunge wonder, the lyke hath seldom ben seene, of. XVII. monstrous fishes, taken in Suffolke, at Downham brydge, within a myle of Ipswiche*.<sup>93</sup> It probably sold well, for the following year he printed another fishy story – *The true discription of this marveilous straunge fishe, whiche was taken on Thursday was sennight* – which had been caught in the Channel and cut up and sold in Billingsgate market.<sup>94</sup> A swordfish caught in Finland is the item that made the news in an illustrated *Flugblatt*, with a text in verse, printed in Cologne in 1584, whilst a marvellous swordfish and a horn-fish caught in Denmark did likewise in a *Flugblatt* published in Magdeburg in 1588.<sup>95</sup> A similar story – but with the swordfish turned into three horn-fishes – occurs in another German pamphlet published the same year.<sup>96</sup> Three marvellous herrings caught in December 1587 and treated as a ‘Seewunder’ had merited a pamphlet published in Nuremberg.<sup>97</sup>

Whilst most unusual fish are treated as just that, some news pamphlets manage to squeeze moral lessons out of them. A case in point is a *Wunder neue Zeitung*, published in 1588 in Berlin, which reports a herring that brought warnings to all mankind.<sup>98</sup> What could well be that same herring, located in Norway, is the protagonist of a Dutch/French pamphlet published in 1598, of one published in French in Amsterdam, and of an English newsletter: *A most strange and wonderfull Herring, taken on the 26. Day of Nouember 1597*, translated from Dutch and printed in London in 1598.<sup>99</sup>

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91 Davies 1986: 79-80.

92 See USTC 506475, 751988.

93 See USTC 506836. Davies (1986: 78-9) notes that, in England, ‘up to about 1590 monsters tended to appear on broadsides, while they decorated quartos or octavos after this date.’

94 See USTC 506887. The illustrated broadside is reproduced in Watt 1991: 166.

95 *Ein Newer seltzamer Fisch und Mehrwunder, genant der Schwerdtfisch, welcher ein Schnabel hat gleich eim Richtschwert oder Cordelass, so newlicher zeit in Finlandt gefangen worden* (USTC 750172); Weller 1872: 666.

96 *Warhafftige Contrafactur dreyer wunderbaren Horn Fische so [...] in Dennemarck* (USTC 752506). This *Flugblatt* is reproduced in Walsham 2015: 259.

97 See USTC 751521.

98 See Weller 1872: 667. I have been unable to locate a copy of this *Flugschrift*. However, a pamphlet printed in Cologne in 1588, which recounts an amazing discussion held by herrings in Norway and, in the air, between geese and ducks, was presumably meant to be taken as a fable, rather than as hard news (see USTC 750194).

99 See USTC 429781, 80750; Shaaber 1966: 152.



Fig. 7.8. Men measuring a whale stranded near Antwerp, in a splendidly engraved and water-coloured *Flugblatt*, printed at Augsburg in 1577, showing back and front views of the cetacean (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

However, not surprisingly, what clearly impressed people most were whales. In 1577 in Nuremberg, Hans Weigel printed a description of a huge whale that had been caught near Antwerp, and a superbly illustrated *Flugblatt*, showing men measuring the whale, was put out by Hans Rogel in Augsburg, with a commentary that states that only God can know its significance (Fig. 7.8).<sup>100</sup>

<sup>100</sup> See USTC 750127, 750266.

In 1598 a sperm whale, which had been washed up on the beach at Berckhey, near Scheveningen, had a huge media impact and was reported in several contemporary chronicles.<sup>101</sup> An illustrated pamphlet, which came out in separate French and Dutch editions printed at Haarlem in 1599, curiously combined that whale story with the occupation of the Duchy of Cleves by Spanish troops, the connection presumably being that both stories came from the Netherlands and that both items were to be read as monstrous.<sup>102</sup> An English translation, which put the arrival of the Spanish troops first and included a map and a folding plate, was published in London in 1599, with a title that makes much of the cruelty of the Spanish troops.<sup>103</sup> A newsletter printed in London by Peter Short in 1595 brought together news of two different monsters, one of them being ‘a most strange and huge fish, which was driven on the sand at Outhorn in Holderness,’ the connection between the two being simply that they had both appeared in Holderness.<sup>104</sup>

Sea monsters could also be used as propaganda, as in the case of a fish supposedly found in a river in Poland, depicted with a cross in its mouth and bearing several weapons on its body, including a Turkish halberd, in a broadside published in Seville dated 1614. That same unlikely monster was the subject of an unillustrated four-page *relación*, published in Lima in 1625, which claims that a picture of the huge fish had been sent to Spain the previous year. Whereas the short verse text in the broadside was somewhat inexplicit regarding the significance of the marine monster, the *relación* discusses its meaning in great detail, interpreting it as the Turkish threat to Christendom that is to be countered by the Spanish lion.<sup>105</sup>

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101 See Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1988: esp. 130 ff.

102 *Description du grand poisson baleine, que s'est venue rendre a Berckhey, avec un sommaire recit des choses depuis le dernier d'aougst 1598 jusques a maintenant passees au pays de Cleve par l'advenement de l'armee espagnolle* (see USTC 441619, 424353). The Dutch edition is entitled: *Walvisch van Berckhey: dat is, eene beschrijvinghe des grooten vischs, die tot Berckhey ghestrandet is [...] Met noch een cort verhael der geschiedenissen int vorstendom Cleve door den aecomste van den Spaenschen leger* (USTC 424353).

103 *A briefe relation, of what is hapned since the last of August 1598. by comming of the Spanish campe into the dukedom of Cleue and the bordering free countries, which with most odious and barbarous crueltie they take as enemies, for the seruice of God, and the King of Spaine (as they say) [...] Together with a description of the vvhale of Berckhey, or the great fish which stranded or came on shoare at Berckhey in Holland, the third of February 1598* (USTC 514075). The report of a whale washed up at Harwich was printed in London in 1617 (Shaaber 1966: 152), and an Italian *avviso* published in Bracciano gives a detailed account of a whale that was washed up on the coast in 1624 (Bulgarelli 1988: 147).

104 *A most certaine report of a monster borne at Oteringham in Holderness, the 9. of Aprill last past. 1595. Also of a most strange and huge fish, which was driven on the sand at Outhorn in Holderness in February* (USTC 512808).

105 The broadside and the *relación* are reproduced in Ettinghausen 1995.



## Fantastical Beasts: Serpents, Dragons, etc.

Ben Jonson – who, in *Volpone*, *News from the New World* and in *The Staple of News*, excoriated the early seventeenth-century European news business – recounted sensationalist stories about miraculous letter-preserving fish in Flushing.<sup>106</sup> Indeed, many news pamphlets tell of unreal animals, some of which are said to have appeared in locations associated with enemies, in particular infidels and heretics. A *Flugblatt* dated 1543 tells of a frightening face that materialized near the village of Zessenhausen but illustrates the news with a woodcut of two dragon-like creatures attacking the countryside, whilst a *canard* published in Lyon in 1578 tells how the Huguenot inhabitants of La Rochelle and Saint-Jean-d'Angély were tormented and slaughtered by serpents and by other venomous beasts and were only saved if they commended themselves to St Sebastian.<sup>107</sup> An illustrated *Flugblatt* printed at Augsburg in 1586 depicts two nasty animals that are said to have arrived in Germany, one of which eats men, the other women.<sup>108</sup> A ballad entitled *The worlds warning of an Alarum from sinne by the vision of 2 Dragons seene fighting in the ayre neere Gaunte* (i.e. Ghent) was recorded at the Stationers' Company in 1609.<sup>109</sup> Not to be outdone, a *canard* printed at Lyon that same year describes a seven-headed 'terrible et espouventable dragon' that had appeared over Malta and had shouted and screamed.<sup>110</sup>

However, very unpleasant beasts could sometimes be recorded uncomfortably close to the readers of the news. A French *occasionnel*, published in 1531, bears a woodcut that takes up nearly the whole of the bottom half of the first page to show a huge dragon hovering above a town, illustrating the story of the terrible and wondrous sign seen above Paris.<sup>111</sup> And a similar-sounding 'Serpent ou dragon, grand et merveilleux' that appeared above Paris in 1579 is reported in a *canard* printed in that very city.<sup>112</sup> In 1614 John Trundle printed in London a newsletter that described a 'strange and monstrous Serpent (or Dragon)' that had been discovered two miles from Horsham, in Sussex, and told how its 'strong and violent poison' contributed 'to the great annoyance and diuers slaughters both of Men and Castell [i.e. cattle].'<sup>113</sup> In

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106 See Nevitt 2006: 51-2.

107 See Seguin 1964: 114; USTC 750021.

108 See USTC 750188.

109 See Shaaber 1966: 146.

110 See Seguin 1964: 250 (and Plate XVI).

111 See Seguin 1961: 97.

112 See Seguin 1964: 237 (and Plate XII).

113 See Andrew Hadfield, 'News of the Sussex Dragon,' *Reformation*, 17, 2012: 99-113.

his masque *News from the New World*, Ben Jonson's Factor (or news writer) was to complain about 'your printed conundrums of the serpent in Sussex, or the witches bidding the devil to dinner at Derby – news that when a man sends them down to the shieres where they are said to be done, were never there to be found!'<sup>114</sup>

The most outrageously outlandish beasts, however, were generally sighted at a considerable distance. Thus, a marvellous composite green monster that had supposedly appeared on the seashore at Santos, in Brazil, where it had been killed, towers above its six assailants in an Italian broadside dated 1565 (Fig. 7.9). A very similar German broadside, which also sets the incident in Brazil and was printed at Augsburg, but shows only two bowmen, gives the date of the event as 1564.<sup>115</sup> An even more imaginary beast, spotted between Antibes and Nice, was illustrated in a French broadside published around 1560 which showed it to be definitely man-eating.<sup>116</sup>

The monsters that appear in some news pamphlets were not all exactly news. Indeed, some of them originate in antiquity or the Middle Ages. A merman, known variously in Italian as *Nicolo*, *Cola Pesce* or *Pesce Cola*, had made early appearances in a book written by the Englishman Walter Mapes (c. 1140-1209) and in several other medieval writings.<sup>117</sup> He was still going strong at the beginning of the seventeenth century, *Pece Nicolao* being the subject of a *relación* published in Barcelona in 1608 which tells, in verse, how he became a merman and explains how he had recently reappeared, had told mariners about the utopian lives of the fishes in the sea and had revealed to them important secrets concerning seafaring.<sup>118</sup> Mermaids and mermen also materialise in the English press. A case comparable to that of *Pece Nicolao* is that of *A true and faithfull relation of a wonderfull seamonster, A sea-man lately taken at sea, betweene Denmark and Norway*, entered at the Stationers' Company in 1621, whilst in 1604 William White had registered at the Stationers' Company a pamphlet entitled: *The most true and strange report of a monstrous fishe that appeared in forme of a woman from the Wast vpward scene in the sea*.<sup>119</sup>

In 1607, the year before the *relación* about *Pece Nicolao*, another Barcelona printer had brought out a *Relacion muy verdadera* that turns out to be an even more

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114 Jonson 1969: 294.

115 See USTC 752412.

116 See USTC 750069.

117 See Julio Caro Baroja, 'El "Pesce Cola" o el "Peje Nicolao"; *Revista de Dialectología y Tradiciones Populares*, 39, 1984: 7-16.

118 Reproduced in Ettinghausen 1995.

119 See Shaaber 1966: 152; Collins 1943: 115.



Fig. 7.9. A marvellous composite green monster that had supposedly appeared on the seashore at Santos, in Brazil, depicted in an Italian broadside, c. 1565, with a brief description engraved below (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

far-fetched story: that of a terrifying and ferocious animal, known as Corlisango.<sup>120</sup> The title of this verse relation tells how the beast appeared in the city of Gelda, by the Hyrcanean Sea, in the province of Albania. However, the description of Corlisango and the account of its doings are an elaborate and extended witticism that exploits figurative meanings of words (relating, for instance, to parts of the face and the body and to clothes) in order to invent a totally impossible creature. The extent to which the whole composition depends on Spanish puns makes it most unlikely that the relation was translated from German, as the title claims. Lacking, it would seem, any hidden agenda, this *relación* would appear to be intended simply as a clever nonsense poem that, incidentally, parodies monster news pamphlets.

A perhaps even more impressive beast, described at length in the verbose title of a *relación* written by Licenciado Juan de Fonseca and published in Granada in 1612, as

<sup>120</sup> Reproduced in Ettinghausen 1995.

an animal or a monster, is one that was supposedly found in Bengal.<sup>121</sup> It is portrayed as being capable of recalling the past and foreseeing the future and, we are assured, would resemble a rational being, were it only able to speak. What is more, it revered the name of Jesus and abhorred the names of false idols. So impressive was it, in fact, that the king of Mogor and his entire kingdom had, it was claimed, been moved by it to convert to Christianity. The pamphlet ends with two space fillers, the first of which is a ballad that tells how a gypsy girl told the baby Jesus's fortune.

Whilst the more sensationalist kinds of news stories were ridiculed by many sophisticated writers from England to Spain, it is remarkable that other serious and well-educated men appear to have accepted them without demur. Thus, Pierre de l'Estoile (1546-1611), the notary and royal secretary who kept a voluminous journal under the reigns of Henri III and IV, included in it pamphlets of all kinds, as did his near-contemporary, the Catalan advocate, chronicler and historian Jeroni Pujades (1568-1635), in his *Dietari*, into which he inserted some eighty news pamphlets, which he summarised in his text. They included reports of battles, of the doings of royalty, of an auto de fe, of beatifications and martyrdoms, but also accounts of armies fighting in the sky, of demons and fiery chariots, and of bloody rain. And he appears to have accepted unquestioningly the miraculous church bell in Velilla and the apparition of horrid signs and monsters over La Rochelle.<sup>122</sup> In early modern Europe, monsters – human, animal and fantastical – formed part of those terrifying phenomena that hailed from time immemorial, survived in folklore, and were repeatedly brought to the minds and imaginations of readers of, and listeners to, the news, further increasing the conviction that mankind, by its sins, was favoured by the divinely inspired warnings of the horrors that awaited those who were not Christians or who failed to repent in time.

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121 See BDRS 5341.

122 See Expósito 2014: 474-6.

## Conclusion

As we have seen, by early in the seventeenth century, the press covered just about every one of the topics that Robert Burton names in the preface to his *Anatomy of Melancholy*:

warre, plagues, fires, inundations, thefts, murders, massacres, meteors, Comets, spectrums, apparitions: of townes taken, cities besieged in *France, Germany, Turkey, Persia, Poland, &c.*, dayly musters and preparations, & such like [...], battels fought, so many men slain, monomachies, shipwrackes, Piracies & Seafights, Peace, Leagues, Stratagemmes, & fresh alarums [...], weddings, maskings, mummeries, entertainments, lubilies, Embassies, tilts & tournaments, trophies, triumphes, reuels, sports, playes, then againe, treasons, cheating, trickes, robberies, enormous villanies of all sorts, funerals, burials, death of Princes; new discoveries, expeditions [...].<sup>1</sup>

Not to mention quite a number of topics that Burton does not mention, such as triumphal entries, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, martyrdoms, deformed infants, monsters and (in Catholic countries) beatifications and canonisations.

What we have tried to emphasise throughout this book is the fact that Burton's experience as a consumer of news was by no means unique and was not confined to his own countrymen. However, as we have pointed out, the extent to which that was true has been masked in at least four major ways: first, by the loss in their totality of probably the majority of early printed news pamphlets; secondly, until the very recent projects aimed at systematically cataloguing and putting online the holdings

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1624: 3.

of libraries throughout the world, by the inaccessibility of the vast majority of those that survived; thirdly, by the disparate terms used to describe them in the various national histories of early journalism; and, fourthly, by the fact that the diverse formats, layouts and woodcuts of the pamphlets and broadsheets produced in different countries have helped disguise how much they have in common. Thanks, in particular, to the Universal Short Title Catalogue, this book has attempted to offer a survey of what it is perhaps not too much of an exaggeration to describe as the early modern globalisation of information, and it is obvious that research in the future, bringing to bear more detailed studies of particular news stories that we have included, as well as those we have omitted, can only reinforce the claim.

As we have seen, the pre-periodical printed news is an international industry in two fundamental ways. It takes root throughout Europe virtually with the beginning of printing and, from the start, it covers news from across the continent and beyond. That is exemplified by the first seven items in Emil Weller's bibliography of *Neue Zeitungen*. The first pamphlet he lists, published in 1505, deals with news from Brazil; the next two, printed in 1509, bear news from Padua and Venice; the fourth, published the following year, includes items from France, Germany and England; the fifth, printed in 1513, carries news of the Holy Roman Empire, England and France; and the sixth and seventh, which appeared in 1515, deal, respectively, with France and with the Empire, Hungary and Poland.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most notable facts that emerge from the preceding chapters is the extent to which, by the end of the fifteenth century – a mere thirty years after the appearance of the earliest surviving printed news pamphlets – a remarkably broad range of types of event had already become accepted as the repertoire of publishable news. The data available, which represent only a fraction of what was actually printed, show how, to take just a few striking examples, the fall of Negroponte in 1470 gave rise to over a dozen works, how in 1474 a *Flugschrift* reported a battle against the Turks, and how the rout of the Turkish besiegers of Rhodes in 1480 was reported in print internationally as far afield as Audenaarde and London. In 1486 the election of Emperor Maximilian as King of the Romans was publicised in German in Mainz, and in Dutch in Antwerp; and in 1493 Columbus's letter on his first transatlantic voyage was published in at least half a dozen different countries. As for more sensational stories, as early as 1475 an Italian *relatione* on the supposed Jewish ritual murder of Simon of Trent had appeared in print within months – if not weeks – of Simon's death, to be followed by news pamphlets on the atrocity printed in at least five Italian and two German cities. More than enough

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<sup>2</sup> See Weller 1872: 1-7.

material survives to show that printed news was circulating across Europe, and being translated and printed internationally, well before the end of the fifteenth century.

To judge by the surviving evidence, the internationalisation of news gathered pace in the sixteenth century. From a very early date numerous *Flugschriften* publicise in their titles the fact that they are translations. Typical is one printed in Basel in 1522 which states that it is a 'Translation usz Hispanischer sprach zu Frantzoesisch gemacht',<sup>3</sup> implying that the text had been translated from Spanish into French, and then into German. Another, on Charles V's journey from Tunis and his triumphal entry into Naples in 1536, is described as 'auss Welsch [i.e. French] zu Latein, vn jetz zu teütsch gebracht'<sup>4</sup> – another two-fold translation – and it is perfectly possible that the original report had been penned in either Italian or Spanish. Translations were made from many languages. A *Flugschrift* on an earthquake in Morea in 1545 states that it had been 'Newlich in Italianischer sprach zu Verona gedruckt, vnd yetz verdeuscht.'<sup>5</sup> Another, printed in 1570, implies that it had been translated from Dutch or French: 'Erstlich Gedruckt Zu Antwerpen, volgens in gemein Teutsch vbergesetzt.'<sup>6</sup> And another, on the floods in Paris in 1579, asserts that it had been 'Auss den glaubwürdigen, vnd mit Permission zu Pariss getruckten Frantzösischen Zeitungen verteutschet' (i.e. translated into German, with permission, from the trustworthy French news pamphlet printed in Paris).<sup>7</sup> And this is just a minute sample of the entire picture. Before the middle of the century it is not uncommon to find the same piece of news published in as many as five different languages, the earthquake near Florence in 1542 being just one of numerous instances.<sup>8</sup>

In France, as well, very many of the *occasionnels* are translations.<sup>9</sup> To give just one early instance, a pamphlet on an earthquake near the Canaries was translated from Portuguese and appeared in French in Antwerp in 1522.<sup>10</sup> Another pamphlet published in French in Antwerp, in 1564, actually advertises itself in its title, not by its content, but as a translation of printed Spanish news: *Nouvelles imprimees en*

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3 See USTC 699313.

4 See Weller 1872: 104.

5 See Weller 1872: 159.

6 See Weller 1872: 371.

7 See Weller 1872: 502.

8 See above, chapter 6.

9 See Seguin 1961. Seguin (1983: 35) notes that it is not until the end of the first third of the sixteenth century that French news publishing appears really to have taken off, achieving a sharp increase in production from around 1580, with Paris and Lyons as the chief centres.

10 See Varela Hervias and Von Waldheim 1948.

*langage castillan arrivees a Anvers par poste*.<sup>11</sup> Regarding Spain – and, indeed the rest of Europe – by the end of the time scale we have been looking at, the trend had changed only to the extent that it had become overwhelming. It is symptomatic that, amongst a collection of 126 *relaciones de sucesos* published in Barcelona between 1612 and 1628, as many as seventy-six percent give news of events that had supposedly occurred either abroad or at sea, and as many as ten percent of them actually state that they are translations.<sup>12</sup>

As for Italy, the first six *avvisi* catalogued by Tullio Bulgarelli, all published in 1526, have to do with the Treaty of Madrid, signed by Spain and France the year after the Spanish defeat of the French at Pavia, and also with Charles V's triumphal entry into Seville and his marriage to Elizabeth of Portugal.<sup>13</sup> Clearly, so successfully networked were centres of production of printed single event newsletters by the end of the first quarter of the sixteenth century that they were perfectly capable of creating what amounted to, and cannot have helped being understood as, Europe-wide news stories.

In sixteenth-century England news from abroad was far more abundantly printed than home news, with at least three-quarters of foreign news coming from and concerning France and the Netherlands.<sup>14</sup> Some newsletters state in their titles that they had been translated more than once. A curious instance is a thirty-six-page pamphlet published in London in 1580 by John Charlewood with news from Antwerp supposedly translated into English 'partly out of French, and partly out of Lattin,' whilst Shaaber gives several examples of pamphlets translated twice over. Before being published in English in 1589, an account of a girl who had lived without eating, drinking, sleeping, 'neyther auoydeth [i.e. without discharging] any excrements,' had first been rendered from German into French; another pamphlet, entitled *The strangest aduenture that euer happened*, and printed in London in 1601, had been written in Spanish and turned into French, before coming out in English; *Good newes from Florence*, published in 1614, had previously been translated from Italian into French; and *Letters from the greate Turke*, published in 1606, had supposedly been translated from Hebrew into Italian, and then into French, before being published in English.<sup>15</sup>

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11 See USTC 13543.

12 See Ettinghausen 2000a. For a discussion of seventeenth-century translated *relaciones*, see also Sagrario López Poza, 'Relaciones de sucesos traducidas al español,' in Cátedra García and Díaz Tena, eds., 2013, 249-73.

13 See Bulgarelli 1967: 1-6.

14 See Shaaber 1966: 168-9.

15 See Shaaber 1966: 187.



Shaaber cites the case of the printer John Wolfe, who returned to London in 1579 after doing his time as an apprentice printer in Florence, and who entered at the Stationers' Company, or actually published, some 150 newsletters before the end of the sixteenth century, two-thirds of them being translations of foreign originals; whilst Lisa Ferraro Parmelee analyses Wolfe's role as a printer of English versions of French battlefield reports, letters and government edicts, a role that he earned, thanks to his extensive connections with the continental book market.<sup>16</sup> Shaaber lists nearly forty English items, either published or entered at the Stationers' Register in 1590 alone, on Henri IV's successes against the League, whilst D.C. Collins notes that very nearly half of the newsletters published in England between 1589 and 1602 are described on their front pages as translations of French pamphlets.<sup>17</sup>

News from abroad – not least of wars, natural disasters, miracles and monsters – was, clearly, lapped up, and not only by the English public. As we have seen, as early as 1542 an earthquake near Florence was responsible for a *canard* printed in Paris, a Dutch pamphlet printed in Antwerp that went into at least three editions, and a newsletter that made at least two editions in London that very same year. In 1552 many Dutch readers of the news had become momentarily familiar with the name of Middleton Stoney, an otherwise inconsequential hamlet near Bicester, thanks to the 'double Chylde' that had been born there and was depicted in a pamphlet printed in Antwerp that year. As two newsletters registered with the Stationers' Company in London in 1600 attest, in the very last year of the sixteenth century any Englishman who cared to buy or borrow the relevant pamphlets could make himself acquainted with military operations that had recently taken place at such outlandishly sounding locations as 's-Hertogenbosch or Stuhlweissenburg.'<sup>18</sup>

News reached European readers from all over the world. An Italian *avviso* bought in Rome in 1525, and destined for Fernando Columbus's library in Seville, told of a Portuguese victory in India.<sup>19</sup> A *Copie. Newe zeyttung*, sent from Mauritania, was published in Nuremberg in 1558.<sup>20</sup> A Spanish *relación*, printed perhaps in 1608, pretends to offer a copy of a letter sent to James I of England by the king of the Philippine island of Terrenate who had been taken prisoner by the Spaniards two

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16 See Shaaber 1966: 286-7; Ferraro Parmelee 1996: 32-4

17 See Shaaber 1966: 169-72; D.C. Collins, ed., *Battle of Nieuport 1600. Two News Pamphlets and a Ballad*, Shakespeare Association Facsimiles, No. 9, Oxford University Press, 1935: ix.

18 Sara Barker (2013a: 164) notes that English 'news pamphlet producers and, one can deduce, news pamphlet consumers saw news items telling continental stories as occupying much the same mental space as their domestic counterparts.'

19 See HARRISSE 1971: 406.

20 See Weller 1872: 227.

years before.<sup>21</sup> A *relación* published in Seville in 1614 reports on the wars fought between various kingdoms in Portuguese India; and a letter from the Jesuit Pedro Páez, reporting on the conversion to Christianity of the Emperor of Ethiopia, was published as a *relación* in Seville and in Lima in 1619.<sup>22</sup> By 1629, Diego Flamenco, a printer in Segovia, was putting out news of what purported to be everything that had been going on in China, Tibet and Cochinchina, the southernmost parts of what today are Vietnam and Cambodia.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, well before the development of the periodical press early in the seventeenth century, locations spread across the known world could already come to life, acquire personality and exist in news consumers' imaginations as the loci of events with which they had become familiar. They could even assume complex images, made up out of several related, or unrelated, news stories. Ferrara could be perceived as a city that indulged in lavish festivities and was also prone to earthquakes; Seville could be understood to be, amongst other things, a major focus for the diffusion of news and a city liable to major flooding. And Rome, of course, as well as being the goal of ambassadors from all over the world and also prone to floods, led the way in conjuring up totally opposing visions for Catholic and Protestant readers, whilst Constantinople evoked a generally common vision of exoticism, heathenness, cruelty and peril.

The international nature of the press owed a great deal to the many and changing political and military coalitions formed during the sixteenth century, not least to those between states that remained within the Roman Catholic Church and between those that adopted the Reformation. At times, it was also favoured, most notably in England, by the control on or prohibition of the publication of local political news. And news from abroad, by definition, possessed an aura of foreignness. Indeed, as we have seen repeatedly, on many occasions one and the same news story could be told across natural, national and even confessional borders. As Sara Barker suggests, referring especially to English translations of foreign news pamphlets on natural disasters, monstrous births, strange creatures and demonic possession, 'signs of the end of days were appearing all over Europe. This was more than just human interest stories crossing linguistic boundaries. This was news in the service of the divine plan.'<sup>24</sup> The permeability of frontiers to the press presents, at least at first sight, a paradox in the age of the consolidation of nation states.

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21 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 466.

22 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 566, 757-8.

23 *Relacion nueva y cierta [...] dando aviso de todo lo que pasa en el gran Catayo y Reinos del Tibet y Cochinchina* (Segovia, 1629).

24 See Barker 2013b: 238.

Amongst the very many questions that will in the future need to be addressed is the degree to which the huge international traffic in news and the massive publication of translations helped to turn what might originally have been local or national modes of reporting into a range of Europe-wide types of journalistic narrative. The extent to which that can be established will doubtless stand in contrast to the relative immobility of the news pamphlets' typography, layout and visual illustrations, which were evidently determined, above all, by the skill, sophistication and aesthetic traditions of local printers and engravers.

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Brendan Dooley has recently been concerned to define and examine the concept of contemporaneity from early modern times, understanding by contemporaneity 'the perception, shared by a number of human beings, of experiencing a particular event at more or less the same time,' thus contributing to 'a notion of participating in a shared present.'<sup>25</sup> Dooley illustrates his thesis as follows: 'Already in the seventeenth century, something of what happened in Venice was known in Strassburg, events in Palermo were on the pages of papers in Augsburg.'<sup>26</sup> Those thoughts are closely related to the widespread discussion that has taken place over the past few years on the legitimacy of extending back to the early modern period Jürgen Habermas's notion of a public sphere.<sup>27</sup>

One of the main purposes of this book has been to try to suggest that the awakening of contemporaneity, in the sense that Dooley defines it, and of a public sphere, of public opinion and of shared world views, should be seen as having taken place in much of Europe a good deal earlier than the seventeenth century. Joad Raymond observes that, 'Between the mid-sixteenth century and the end of the

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<sup>25</sup> Dooley 2010: xiii. See also Brendan Dooley, 'News and doubt in early modern culture. Or, are we having a public sphere yet?,' in Dooley and Baron, eds., 2001: 275-90.

<sup>26</sup> Id.

<sup>27</sup> A very extensive bibliography testifies to the current interest in the development of the public sphere in early modern Europe, including Alexandra Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print. Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, Cambridge University Press, 1997; Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, eds., *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, Manchester University Press, 2007; Antonio Castillo Gómez, James S. Amelang and Carmen Serrano Sánchez, eds., *Opinión pública y espacio urbano en la Edad Moderna*, Gijón, Ediciones Trea, 2010; Dooley, ed., 2010; Patrick Boucheron and Nicolas Offenstadt, eds., *L'espace publique au Moyen Âge. Débats autour de Jürgen Habermas*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2011; Massimo Rospocher, ed., 2012. *Beyond the Public Sphere. Opinions, Publics, Spaces, in Early Modern Europe*, Bologna/Berlin, Il Mulino/Duncker & Humblot, 2012; and also Hélène Duccini, *Faire voir, faire croire. L'opinion publique sous Louis XIII*, Paris, Champ Vallon, 2003; *Public Opinion and Changing Identities in the Early Modern Netherlands. Essays in Honour of Alastair Duke*, ed. Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer, Boston, Brill, 2007.

seventeenth, pamphlets became part of the everyday practice of politics, the primary means of creating and influencing public opinion [...] a foundation of the influential moral and political communities that constitute a “public sphere” of popular political opinion.<sup>28</sup> He is not talking only about news pamphlets. And yet news pamphlets, in particular, had a central role to play in that development, especially through the influence that they exercised by their pervasive infusions of explicit and implicit moral, social and political stances. Although the periodical press was to represent a further step forward in the information industry at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the realisation of contemporaneity would appear to have taken root at least a century before, with the creation across Europe of readily available international news stories.

The really fundamental disruption of pre-modern notions of shared experience seems to have derived to a very great extent from the mechanisation of the copying of news that was made feasible by the printing press. Previously, copying had been chiefly a one-to-one transaction, with one person obtaining a copy of a text from another, or else it had been, at most, a craft business based on the work of individual scribes, at best organised in groups in scriptoria working for small, select and prosperous clienteles of subscribers. Written communication, and its reproduction, based on an urban cottage industry was transformed by printing into the manufacture of copies on a hitherto unimagined scale, creating and catering for an incalculably large and anonymous market, capable, if the demand warranted it, of providing in a few days many thousands of copies of a single news pamphlet. The revolution in the scale of production meant that great quantities of material could be diffused both within and beyond the immediate locality of the printing shop, finding their way into the countryside, into other urban centres, and abroad. And this quantitative leap undoubtedly brought about qualitative change.

As we have seen, the press took off very soon after the establishment of printing shops as just one amongst a wide range of ephemera that they put out alongside more substantial undertakings. The improvements in postal services, the human mobility and curiosity increased by discovery, trade and war, the spread of printing from town to town, the demand for up-to-date information on current affairs, the concern on the part of civil and ecclesiastical authorities (especially in the course of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation) to spread and reinforce their self-images and messages – these and other factors ensured that the printing revolution

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<sup>28</sup> Raymond 2003: 26. Wilkinson (2004: 2) argues for ‘an active public opinion as early as the sixteenth century,’ and Barker (2013: 186) considers that ‘early modern people existed in a news culture which went far beyond their immediate communities.’

would rapidly produce an information revolution, both fuelling and feeding a hunger for news.

Referring, it seems, to the eighteenth century, Asa Briggs and Peter Burke note that ‘newspapers contributed to the rise of public opinion,’<sup>29</sup> but there is no obvious reason why the process should not at least have begun as much as two centuries earlier. After all, Briggs and Burke point to the vigorous debates that took place in the early years of the Reformation regarding the functions of the pope and the nature of religion, and they claim that ‘The involvement of the people in the Reformation was both a cause and a consequence of the involvement of the media’ and that ‘print converted the Reformation into a permanent revolution.’<sup>30</sup> Within both Catholic and Protestant countries, the news revolution, set in motion when printed news pamphlets first began to appear in quantity, both created and supplied a market for novelty, for the urge to keep abreast of notable events occurring across the known world. Printing quickened, and quenched, a thirst for more.

One nice little proof of this pudding is provided by Matías Escudero de Cobeña, a wealthy landowner who lived in the remote village of Almonacid de Zorita, some seventy miles east of Madrid, and who, on his death in 1595 at the age of sixty-eight, left a manuscript entitled *Relación de casos notables* (i.e. account of notable events), containing 924 short chapters that detail remarkable, and mainly current, events. Although Escudero de Cobeña acquired some of his information first hand or by word of mouth, a great deal of it came from chronicles and, most especially, from *relaciones de sucesos*.<sup>31</sup> Escudero offers summaries of hundreds of noteworthy political and military events, including a very large number from abroad: from France, England, the Papacy, Portugal, the Holy Roman Empire, Protestant Germany, Flanders, Italy, Turkey, North Africa, the Indies. Amongst his favourite non-political topics is news of stars and eclipses, and he also records the appearance of three suns in 1580 and of three comets in 1584. Other events that he mentions frequently are miracles

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<sup>29</sup> Briggs and Burke 2014: 59.

<sup>30</sup> See Briggs and Burke 2014: 63. They also suggest (2014: 68) that ‘Contrary to Habermas’s thesis, it may be argued that the German Reformation contributed to the rise of a “public sphere,” at least for a time;’ and they note (2014: 70) that ‘The French Wars of Religion were media wars as well as conflicts with swords and guns, conflicts in which pamphleteering, image-making, image-breaking and oral communication were all important,’ and (2014: 72) that ‘The public role of the media was, if anything, still greater in the Netherlands than it was in France, beginning with the revolt against Philip II of Spain.’

<sup>31</sup> See Francisco Fernández Izquierdo, *Relación de casos notables ocurridos en la Alcarria y otros lugares en el siglo XVI, escrita por el cronista de Almonacid de Zorita Matías Escudero de Cobeña*, Guadalajara, Ayuntamiento de Almonacid de Zorita, 1982: esp. 56-7; R. Consuelo Gonzalo García, ‘Sucesos extraordinarios en torno a infieles y cristianos en la segunda mitad del siglo XVI: Escudero de Cobeña y el registro bibliográfico de la memoria popular,’ in López Poza, ed., 2006b: 85-106.

and exemplary punishments meted out by Providence, as well as the plague, fires, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, locusts, monstrous births, storms, rainfalls of blood, floods and crime. Whilst many of the political events that he includes are based on *relaciones*, the same also goes for non-political events, including several that we have noted, such as the disaster that struck twenty-five ships in the port of La Herradura, on the coast of Granada, in 1562; the eruption on Pico Island, in the Azores, that same year; the phenomenal storm that caused floods in Ferrara in 1570/71; the All Saints' Flood in Flanders, that same winter; and the martyrdom of a Spanish woman on Calvary in 1581. Matías Escudero states that he owned a printed portrait of the monstrous human with seven horns that was born to a doctor's wife in Piedmont in 1578 – most probably the pamphlet published in Italy or France, unless he had a copy of a lost Spanish *relación*. And, as for crime, he himself states that it was from a printed news pamphlet that he obtained the story of two sons in Holland who had killed their father, as a result of which one of them was swallowed up by the earth and the other was tortured and quartered. In England, too, 'Readers of pamphlets and news did in fact read with excitement, with an interest in passions, emotions, miracles and wonders, and with an appetite that seemed even to them unreasonable.'<sup>32</sup>

The continuous updating of the repertoire of newsworthy events that ensued coincided with the taste for imitations and continuations of what are today recognised as some of the seminal works of literature of the time. To take just the Spanish case, an amazing number of works cashed in on the success of the first literary bestsellers to come out in print: on Fernando de Rojas's *La Celestina*, first published at the very end of the fifteenth century; on Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo's novel of chivalry *Amadís de Gaula* (1508), to which Feliciano de Silva alone wrote five sequels; on the *Palmerín* chivalric cycle begun, in 1511, with the publication of *Palmerín de Oliva*; on the anonymous picaresque novel *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554); or, in the case of the pastoral novel, on Jorge de Montemayor's *Los siete libros de la Diana* (1559?); not to mention, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, *Don Quixote*.<sup>33</sup> To give some idea of the dimensions of the mania for more, nearly one new book of chivalry per year appeared between the first publication of *Amadís* and the middle of the sixteenth century. It is hard to imagine that such a craze for new works in newly established genres could have taken off to the same extent, had it not been for their diffusion via the printing press, or that the thirst for novel novels was unconnected to a craving for new news.

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<sup>32</sup> Raymond 2003: 93.

<sup>33</sup> See William H. Hinrichs, *The Invention of the Sequel: Expanding Prose Fiction in Early Modern Spain*, Woodbridge, Tamesis, 2011.

The internationalisation of the printed news needs also to be seen in the context of the development of international cultural exchange operating in early modern European vernacular literatures, and vice versa. To take, again, the Spanish example, the first English translation of *Lazarillo de Tormes* was published in London in 1586, but it had appeared in French as early as 1560, and in Dutch in 1579, and it would be published in German in 1617 and in Italian in 1622. *Amadís de Gaula*, and its numerous offspring, appeared in Spanish, Italian and French well before the end of the sixteenth century, with the second Book coming out in London in 1595. At the beginning of the seventeenth century James Mabbe, who taught Spanish at Oxford, produced and published English translations of several of Spain's bestselling books of fiction: *La Celestina*, Mateo Alemán's huge picaresque novel *Guzmán de Alfarache*, and some of Cervantes's *Novelas ejemplares*. The enormous success of *La Celestina*, with over ninety editions of the work in Spanish published between 1499 and 1644, had produced translations into Italian, German, French, Dutch, English, Latin and Hebrew by 1650.<sup>34</sup> Another remarkable international success, Antonio de Guevara's *Relox de príncipes*, came out in English in at least eighteen different editions or states between 1535 and 1586.<sup>35</sup>

Spanish fiction had, for the most part, been published in French translation before it had appeared in English: Diego de San Pedro's *Cárcel de amor* (Seville, 1492) came out in French in 1526 (going into thirteen editions by 1604), Juan de Flores's *El triunfo de amor* in 1530, Diego de San Pedro's *Tractado de amores de Arnalte y Lucenda* in 1539 (with fourteen editions by 1582), *Palmerín de Oliva* in 1546. As for the *Amadís* cycle – *Amadís de Gaula* was François I's and Charles V's favourite reading matter – over four hundred editions had been printed in France alone by the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>36</sup> And it was not only works of literature that Spain exported. Fray Bartolomé de las Casas's denunciation of the atrocities committed by the conquistadors on the indigenous peoples of the Americas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, first published in Spanish in 1552 and then rapidly banned in Spain, became one of the key works in the creation of the Black Legend of Spanish cruelty, appearing in Dutch and French in 1578, in English in 1583 and in German in

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34 See James Mabbe, *The Spanish Bawd*, ed. José María Pérez Fernández, MHRA Tudor and Stuart Translations, X, London, MHRS, 2013, 4-8.

35 See Alexander S. Wilkinson, 'Vernacular translation in Renaissance France, Spain, Portugal and Britain: a comparative survey,' *Renaissance Studies*, 29, 2015: 19-35. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/rest.12112/full#rest12112-note-0013>

36 See Wilkinson 2015; and Louise Wilson, 'The Publication of Iberian Romance in Early Modern Europe,' in *Translation and the Book Trade in Early Modern Europe*, ed. José María Pérez Fernández and Edward Wilson-Lee, Cambridge University Press, 2014: 201-15.

1599, with as many as seventy editions of the work in translation being published between 1578 and 1648.<sup>37</sup>

Of course, it was by no means only Spanish books that appeared in translation. As early as 1570, in *The Scholemaster*, Roger Ascham was referring to ‘fonde bookes, of late translated out of Italian into English, sold in euery shop in London.’<sup>38</sup> However, Italian books were nearly all published in French long before appearing in English. To take just a few of the best known late medieval and Renaissance works of literature, Boccaccio’s *Decameron* (Florence?, 1469/70?) came out in French in 1541 and in English in 1620; Boccaccio’s *Fiammetta* (Padua, 1472), in French in 1532 and in English in 1587; Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso* (Ferrara, 1516), in French in 1544 and in English in 1591; Castiglione’s *Il Cortegiano* (Venice, 1528), in French in 1535 and in English in 1561; Tasso’s *Gerusalemme liberata* (Venice, 1580), in French in 1587 and in English in 1594. Italian authors – notably Boccaccio, Castiglione and Ariosto – were also translated into Spanish and had enormous influence on literature in Spain, with the *Decameron* in Spanish first published in 1496, *Fiammetta* in 1497, *Il Cortegiano* in 1534, and *Orlando furioso* in 1549. The *Decameron* had been published in German as early as 1476.<sup>39</sup> At least one German work of fiction – Sebastian Brant’s *Das Narrenschiff* (Basel, 1494) – rapidly made its mark internationally, with translations into Latin and into French published in 1497, and a translation into English in 1509. And Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini’s epistolary novel in Latin, *Historia de duobus amantibus*, written in 1444, rapidly became, in vernacular translations, ‘a European bestseller.’<sup>40</sup> News narratives became a pan-European commodity at the same time as fiction.

Unlike the manuscript *avvisi* and the later printed gazettes and corantos, the single event news pamphlets provided their readers and hearers not just with bare news items, but, like the prose literature of the period, and indeed the epic poetry, with well-wrought stories, articulated by means of greater or lesser narrative and rhetorical skill, with a view to conveying information, selected on the basis of its perceived importance and saleability, as well as its value as entertainment, or at least diversion, and conforming more or less explicitly to the interests of church and state.

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<sup>37</sup> See Bartolomé de las Casas, *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, Madrid, Castalia, 1999: 50.

<sup>38</sup> Cited in Joshua Reid, ‘The Enchantments of Circe: Translation Studies and the English Renaissance,’ *Spenser Review* 44.1.6 (Spring-Summer 2014).

<sup>39</sup> For the early editions of translations of Boccaccio, see Guyda Armstrong, ‘Translation Trajectories in Early Modern European Print Culture: The Case of Boccaccio,’ in Pérez Fernández and Edward Wilson-Lee, eds., 2014: 126-44.

<sup>40</sup> See José María Pérez Fernández, ‘Translation, *Sermo Communis*, and the Book Trade,’ in Pérez Fernández and Wilson-Lee, eds., 2014: 40-60, 46.



As Andrew Pettegree puts it, ‘The patriotic optimism of the news pamphlets served Europe’s rulers well in their first precocious efforts at the management of public opinion.’<sup>41</sup> Readers of, and listeners to, the printed news, beginning in the fifteenth century – in towns and cities, and even in the countryside – could scarcely have avoided realising that they formed part of an international network of consumers who had access to reports of events taking place across the world at large, to a volume of commonly shared information that was incomparably larger than had been the case with their grandparents or even their parents. Many of them were well aware that the press enabled them to extend their comprehension of the world in which they lived, and beyond; some of them may even have realised that it was crucial in helping to manipulate and condition their world views.

From the start, the printed news was doubtless discussed and argued over interminably, in private and in public, as was to be the case thereafter. At the beginning of Part II of *Don Quixote*, published in 1615, the priest in the anonymous village in La Mancha seeks to test the deranged *hidalgo*’s mental state by assessing his reaction to the news, in particular to the latest rumour that the Turks were preparing a powerful fleet to attack Christian forces once again in the Mediterranean. Don Quixote does not question the authenticity of the news, though he does fail the sanity test, his reply being that Philip III should issue a proclamation commanding all the knights-errant in Spain to meet at court, and that just half a dozen of them would suffice to put an end to the Turkish threat.

Some consumers of the news, especially those with access to sensitive non-published information and to gossip, were amongst those best placed to read critically and to question both rumour and the pamphlets that came off the presses. Typical of such a well-informed elite was the circle that included the brilliant Spanish writer Francisco de Quevedo, who, amongst a remarkable range of works, wrote numerous satires and political tracts. He and his very many correspondents reveal an obsession with keeping up to date with the news, with transmitting the latest intelligence to their friends and with comparing and commenting on their sources. He and they had access not only to printed news pamphlets, but also to well-informed private letters and to well-placed contacts in government. Unlike the writers of published *relaciones*, with their all-pervasive positive messages, Quevedo often treats the news with irony and even sarcasm. In October 1615 he witnessed in Burgos the betrothal

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41 Pettegree 2014: 7. For the early news industry in Catalonia, seen in terms of the celebration of power, see Henry Ettinghausen, ‘Celebracions del poder. Política i premsa a Catalunya a començaments de l’edat moderna,’ *Caplletra. Revista Internacional de Filologia*, 57, 2014, 151-71. See also Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts, *After Habermas. New Perspectives on the Public Sphere*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2004.

of Louis XIII to Ana, Philip III's daughter, an event that inspired printed *relaciones* and also the letter that Quevedo sent to his close friend, the Duke of Osuna, at that time Viceroy of Sicily. The letter bears a title written in Quevedo's hand that reads: *Relacion y nuevas y visitas* (i.e. Relation, news and visits), but it is unlike any published *relación*. It is, in fact, a burlesque relation that, instead of solemnly recounting the elaborate ceremonials that marked the occasion, uproariously satirises the Spanish nobility who made the most of the opportunity to fawn before their monarch.<sup>42</sup>

Towards the end of his life, Quevedo was to write with the deepest pessimism about the defeats inflicted on the Spanish forces by the Catalans and the Portuguese in the early 1640s. In a letter written to his friend Francisco de Oviedo, six weeks before his death in September 1645, he movingly compares the reverses suffered by Spanish arms to his own bodily decline: 'The events in this war look to me like those in my convalescence: I emerge from one infirmity, only to enter another. May God put this right, Don Francisco, for truly these grievous events cannot be remedied or corrected by amending *relaciones*.' Immediately after which, in that same letter, he rubs the point home by referring thus to an outrageously extravagant piece of sensationalist news that he had just read: 'I'm amused by the story of how a woman gave birth to a child through her mouth. It's as if all writers of gazettes and liars didn't give birth through their mouths to armies and successes and notable events!'<sup>43</sup> Printed news pamphlets, to various degrees censored and self-censored, provided information that could falsify the truth by systematically omitting bad tidings and exaggerating good ones, and they could even report events that were untrue or patently impossible. But they also offered the basis for discussion of a broad diversity of widely shared information within a burgeoning public sphere and for the development, contestation and calibration of public opinion. What is more, they enable us to see how early modern European readers of, and listeners to, the news were invited or conditioned by the press to perceive themselves and the world at large.

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42 See Henry Ettinghausen, "'Relación y nuevas y visitas:" la primera carta conservada de Quevedo al duque de Osuna,' *La Perinola*, 10, 2006: 73-86.

43 See Henry Ettinghausen, 'Quevedo y las actualidades de su tiempo,' *Edad de Oro*, 13, 1994: 31-45, 36-7. Quevedo's words are: 'Los sucesos de la guerra me parecen a los de mi convalecencia; salgo de un mal y entro en otro. Dios lo remedie, señor don Francisco; que verdaderamente estas cosas grandes ni se sanan ni se autorizan variándolas en las relaciones. Hame caído en gracia lo de que parió una mujer por la boca un hijo, como si todos los gaceteros y mentirosos no pariesen por la boca ejércitos y sucesos y cosas notables' (Francisco de Quevedo-Villegas, *Epistolario completo*, ed. Luis Astrana Marín, Madrid, Instituto Editorial Reus, 1946: 498).

## Appendix I:

# The Nomenclature of the Pre-Periodical Printed News. The Consolidation of ‘Relation’

### Nomenclature

One major reason why it has taken so long fully to realise that printed single subject newsletters were a pan-European phenomenon is, quite clearly, the disparity of the names by which they are known today in different languages and cultures – as we have noted, in Spanish, as *relaciones de sucesos*; in Italian, as *avvisi a stampa*; in French, as *occasionnels* or *canards*; in English, as newsletters, news books or broadsides; in German, as *Flugschriften*, *Neue Zeitungen* or *Flugblätter*; and so on. However, it is worth bearing in mind that they were not born with those names.<sup>1</sup>

The earliest items we know of usually start off with titles that, like today’s newspaper headlines, simply state the subject they are dealing with. Thus, in Germany, we find titles that begin: *Von der wunderbaren Geburt des Kindes bei Worms* (1495), or *Einreitung Römisch Königlicher Majestät in Worms* (1495);<sup>2</sup> in Spain, *Eclipse del sol* (1485), or *La dolorosa muerte del Principe Don Juan* (1497);<sup>3</sup> in France, *Le sacre du Roy trescrestien Loys douziesme* (1498), or *La prise du Royaume de Naples* (1501);<sup>4</sup> in Italy, *La triomphale Entrata di Carlo* (1535), or *Li horrendi, & spaventosi prodigij, &*

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1 An earlier version of this section is included in Henry Ettinghausen, ‘International Relations: Spanish, Italian, French, English and German Printed Single Event Newsletters prior to Renaudot’s *Gazette*,’ in Raymond, Joad, and Noah Moxham, eds., *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden, Brill, in press.

2 See USTC 743679, 746999.

3 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 2, 6.

4 See Seguin 1961: 3, 13.

*fuochi* (1536);<sup>5</sup> in England, *The Confession and ende of Thomas Norton* (1570), or *The Scottish queens Burial at Peterborough* (1587).<sup>6</sup>

From very early on, though, some newsletters present themselves to their potential readers under titles that make use of generic names. In Spain, the following are amongst the earliest terms used to introduce a title: *Tractado* (treatise), from around 1477; *Coplas* (couplets), 1496; *Romance* (ballad), 1525; *Discurso*, 1529; *Descripción*, 1533; and so on.<sup>7</sup> And a similar variety occurs elsewhere, the various nomenclatures vying with each other for pre-eminence in each language and culture.

One early generic name is still extremely familiar to us: *News*. A few of the early French pamphlets, known today as *occasionnels*, begin their titles with *Nouvelles*, although *Discours* becomes frequent after the middle of the sixteenth century. Agulló y Cobo dates the earliest Spanish *relación de sucesos* whose title begins *Nuevas* to around 1536, and she tentatively dates as printed eleven years earlier a pamphlet beginning *Relacion de las nuevas de Italia*.<sup>8</sup> The term *novelas* – borrowed from Italian *novelle* or French *nouvelles* – can be found in some Spanish titles, such as that of a *relación* published in Granada in 1613, which refers to ‘los sucessos del gran Turco, y otras nouelas deste año’ (i.e. the doings of the Great Turk and other news of this year).<sup>9</sup> English pamphlets with titles that begin with the word *Newes* date back at least as far as the 1540s.<sup>10</sup>

Other titles begin by highlighting the epistolary nature of newsletters. Seguin notes that one of the most frequent terms in the titles of *occasionnels* is *Lettre* – the most commonly used variations being *Copie d'une lettre* and *La coppie des lettres*, with the earliest instances dating from the beginning of the sixteenth century.<sup>11</sup> In Spain we find printed newsletters entitled *Traslado de la carta* at just the same time,<sup>12</sup> and one of the first of very many entitled *Copia de una carta* occurs in the

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5 See Bulgarelli 1967: 27, 34.

6 See Shaaber 1966: 116, 120.

7 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 1, 3, 14, 27, 33, 41.

8 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 59, 31.

9 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 545. In modern Spanish, however, *novela* means a novel.

10 E.g. Heuy [i.e. heavy] *newes of an horryble earth quake whiche was in the cytie of Scharbaria in this present yeare of. Xlii* (London, 1542 – USTC 503284); *Newes from Rome concerning the blasphemous sacrifice of the papistical Masse* (Canterbury, 1550 – USTC 504453).

11 See Seguin 1961: 21. Other examples: *Lettres nouvelles de milan envoyees au roy* (Paris, 1500); *Lettres envoiez A paris declairantes la conqueste et prise du Bastillon par les francoys contre les gevenois* (1507); *Le double des lettres envoyez a la Royne et a monseigneur dangolesme* (Lyon, 1509) (Seguin 1961: 10, 25, 32).

12 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 16, 19.

mid-1530s.<sup>13</sup> In sixteenth-century Italy, over seventeen percent of the 354 *avvisi a stampa* listed by Tullio Bulgarelli, start with *Lettera, Copia di una lettera*, or similar. According to David Randall, it is only at the end of the sixteenth century that English newsletters ‘began to acquire titles such as “The Copy of a Letter,” “This Is a True Copy,” etc.,’<sup>14</sup> although Shaaber quotes a title beginning *An Epistle* that dates from 1538.<sup>15</sup> In Germany some early titles begin *Brief, Sendbrief, Missive, Copie* or *Abschrift*,<sup>16</sup> although by far the commonest term used is *Neue Zeitung*. So much is that the case that it has become the name by which Germans most often refer to the genre, even though *Flugschrift* is a more all-embracing term. In the Netherlands we find a news pamphlet entitled *Copie der brieven* printed in 1522, and in 1536 one entitled *Copie van eender letter*, both of them published in Antwerp.<sup>17</sup>

A generic substantive used very prominently in titles in Italy was *avviso/avvisi*. Indeed, over twenty-one percent of the *avvisi a stampa* listed by Tullio Bulgarelli for the sixteenth century have titles that begin *Avviso, Avvisi, Novi avvisi* or *Ultimi avvisi*. However, like the Italian term *gazzetta*, *avviso* also became one of the names used on occasion elsewhere to designate a type of news report, in particular in Spain and in France. In Spain the term *aviso* is rare before the very end of the sixteenth century, when many of the examples occur in newsletters translated from Italian. In France in the 1580s we find at least two *Advis* that may well also be translations from Italian.<sup>18</sup> *Aviso* seems, however, to have been uncommon in England or Germany, although one very famous exception is the pioneering periodical newspaper entitled *Aviso Relation oder Zeitung* that began printing in Wolfenbüttel from 1609, a title that deliberately brought together three of the most important names available for news pamphlets.

## The Relation

*Relación de sucesos* (i.e. account of events) is the modern Spanish expression for a usually single event newsletter. It is based on the term *relación*, whose earliest appearance in Agulló’s bibliography occurs in a pamphlet printed in about 1517, entitled: *Esta es una relacion de dos casos nuevamente acaescidos* (i.e. This is a

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13 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 45.

14 See David Randall, *Credibility in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Military News (Political and Popular Culture in the Early Modern Period)*, London, Pickering and Chatto, 2008: 21.

15 See Shaaber 1966: 42.

16 See Roth 1914: 13.

17 See USTC 437186, 437820.

18 *Nouveaux advis de l'estat du Christianisme des pays et royaumes des Indes Orientales et Japon* (Paris, 1582), and *Advis de Rome tiré des lettres de l'évesque du Mans* (Paris, 1589).

report of two recent happenings).<sup>19</sup> In about 1525 we see the word standing on its own – *Relacion de las nuevas de Italia*<sup>20</sup> – a practice that was to become very common indeed. Then we find elaborations on the term that stress the truth of the news, such as: *Verdadera relación* (1534), *Relación muy verdadera* (1538?), *Relación cierta y verdadera* (1542?), etc. From the middle, and especially from the last third, of the sixteenth century, the commonest terms used in Spanish titles are *Relación* (with or without adjectives) and *Carta* or *Copia de una carta*, with *Relación* predominating from roughly the 1590s onwards.<sup>21</sup> *Relación's* eventually spectacular success may be gauged from a collection of single subject newsletters published in Barcelona in the second and third decades of the seventeenth century, in which only nine percent of the ítems are entitled *Carta, Copia de una carta* or *Traslado de una carta*, whereas the titles of an overwhelming seventy-five percent of them contain the term *relación*.<sup>22</sup> And – something that does not appear to have been fully realised up to now – the term *Relation* applied to news pamphlets was by no means confined to Spain.

Out of Tullio Bulgarelli's 354 sixteenth-century *avvisi a stampa*, the titles of thirty-two begin with *Relatione*, five with *Vera relatione*, two with *Relatione vera*, one with *Piena relatione* and one with *Breve relatione* – in all, over eleven percent of the total. And it is interesting to see that a few of them were printed in Italy in Spanish.<sup>23</sup> In Italy *Relatione* begins to be used in titles more frequently after the 1570s, and in the course of the seventeenth century the picture in Italy, too, changes dramatically.<sup>24</sup> Out of the 716 seventeenth-century Italian items catalogued by Sandro and Tullio Bulgarelli, only a dozen have *avviso* or *avvisi* in their titles, thirty or so begin with *Lettera* or *Copia d'una lettera*, and another thirty use *Ragguaglio*. But what predominates absolutely is titles beginning *Relatione* – around 392, representing as much as fifty-five percent of the total.<sup>25</sup>

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19 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 22.

20 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 31.

21 For a useful assessment of some of the commonest terms in the Spanish context, see Jean Pierre Étiennevre, 'Entre relación y carta: los avisos,' in García de Enterría et al., eds., 1996: 111-21.

22 See Ettinghausen, 2000a.

23 E.g. *Relacion dela iornada succedida a los sieie del mes de octubre mil quinientos setenta y uno* (Rome, 1571) (USTC 829481); *Relación del progreso de la armada de la Santa Liga con un breve discurso sopra el accrescentamiento de los turcos* (Milan, 1576) (USTC 811181).

24 See Bulgarelli 1967. Amongst early titles using the term is: *Relatione della morte, et esequie del serenissimo principe Carlo, figliuolo del catolico re Filippo II re di Spagna* (Venice, 1569) (USTC 838599). Its use here is very likely due to this being a translation from Spanish.

25 See Bulgarelli 1988. Five begin *Seconda relatione*; 18, *Breve relatione*; 36, *Nova relatione*, or variants; 40, *Distinta relatione*, *Compita relatione*, *Esatta relatione*, etc.; 68, *Vera relatione*, etc.; and 225, a bare *Relatione/Relazione*.

As for France, when he discusses the titles given to *occasionnels*, Jean-Pierre Seguin does not comment on the term *Relation*. That is hardly surprising, as only one out of the 365 pre-1560 *occasionnels* catalogued by him uses *Relation* in its title: *Relation de la journee excellente tenue par la majeste de l'empereur* (1530),<sup>26</sup> and I know of only two other *occasionnels* prior to the end of the sixteenth century that do so.<sup>27</sup> Thereafter, however, in France, too, the designation *Relation* becomes very common, being used by Renaudot, alongside *Extraordinaire*, to designate the supplements to his gazette that picked out especially important single events for detailed coverage by devoting an entire pamphlet to them.

Joad Raymond makes the point that the titles of early English newsletters 'suggest the lexicon of news: a declaration, a brief declaration, a letter, a relation, a discourse, a true discourse, news sent, news from, news out of, a description, a true report, a true recital, articles, a journal.'<sup>28</sup> However, M.A. Shaaber had noted that, whilst newsletter titles often used such terms as *Discourse, Report, Declaration, Description* or *Narration*, 'the word *relation* occurs most frequently in titles and even more often in the accounts themselves.'<sup>29</sup> Indeed, Shaaber cites eleven titles beginning *A relation*, fourteen beginning *A true relation*, two beginning *A most true relation*, and one beginning *A true and perfect relation*.<sup>30</sup> The earliest of them was printed in 1592, and the term appears to become common from the very beginning of the seventeenth century.<sup>31</sup> Raymond cites a letter written by Brilliana Lady Harley to her son in 1639, in which she charmingly tells him: 'I would have sent you the relation of the takeing of Brisake, which is of great importance, but your father leaft it at the bishops.'<sup>32</sup>

Whilst the term *Relation* was typically applied to single item news pamphlets, from roughly the turn of the seventeenth century it could also designate pamphlets

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26 See Seguin 1961: 89.

27 These are: *Briefve relation de la guerre d'Irlande* (Brussels, 1596), and *Translat de la relation faicte en langue espaignole [...] de la forme de la derniere maladie & mort de Sa dicte Ma<sup>te</sup>* (Antwerp, 1599), an account of the last illness of Philip II, evidently based on a Spanish *relación*.

28 Raymond 2003: 105.

29 Shaaber 1966: 12.

30 See Shaaber 1966: 359-60, 365, 354. Amongst the late sixteenth-century instances are the following: *A true relation of the French Kinge his good successe, in winning from the Duke of Parma, his Fortes and Trenches* (London, 1592 – Shaaber 1966: 312); *A relation of the King of Spaines receiving in Valliodolid, and in the English Colledge of the same towne, in August last part of this yere. 1592* (Antwerp, 1592 – USTC 412829). On claims to truthfulness in seventeenth-century English relations, see Dolan 2013.

31 For an English Relation printed c.1600, see chapter 1, above, Fig. 3.6.

32 Raymond 2003: 98.

that contained more than one news story. By the very beginning of the century some German publications that aimed to cover six months' or a year's worth of European news were being published in English, or at least their publication was planned. One such was registered by James Shawe at the Stationers' Company in 1602: *Calendarium Historicum or the first parte of Relacions of all the most notable occurrences happened in Europe since the month of August 1601 till this present August 1602 translated out of the Ierman tongue by I.R.*<sup>33</sup> Another example of a multi-subject English newsletter published before the appearance of the first periodical publications and entitled *Relation* is:

*A relation of all matters passed: especially in France and the Low-Countries, touching the causes of the warre now in Cleueland. Together with such occurrences of note as have happened in Spaine, Italie, England, Germany, Hungarie and Transyluania, since March last to this present, 1614. Translated according to the originall of Mercurius Gallo-Belgicus* (London, 1614).

And, indeed, many of the first English corantos actually call themselves *Relation* in their titles.<sup>34</sup>

As for Germany, although it is in Latin, one of the first printed works to use the term *Relation* in its title is Johannes Franciscus de Pavinis, *Relatio circa canonizationem beati Bonaventurae* (Cologne, ca. 1486-94).<sup>35</sup> However, it was predated by an extremely successful pamphlet in Latin – the *Relatione de Simone puero tridentino*, on the alleged murder of a young boy by Jews in Trent – which came out, it would seem, in the very year of the supposed atrocity, 1475, in Mantua, Sant'Orso, Rome, Treviso and Venice, before being printed in German in Augsburg and Nuremberg under the title: *Relatio de Simone puero tridentino Die geschicht und legend von dem seyligen kind und marterer genannt Symon von den luden zu Trientt*.<sup>36</sup> Shaaber argues that, 'from the fact that early seventeenth-century German books of news were sometimes headed "*Aviso* [or *Avisa*], *Relation* oder *Zeitung*," it would appear that the term had some international currency.'<sup>37</sup> In fact, however, in addition to the pamphlet published in Germany in Latin on Simon of Trent, we know of German newsletters entitled *Relation* printed as early as the

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33 See Collins 1943: 113.

34 See Dahl 1952.

35 See Motsch, 2011: 231, n. 10.

36 All of these editions are listed in the USTC. This news story is examined in more detail above, in chapter 4.

37 Shaaber 1966: 12. The *Aviso Relation oder Zeitung* began printing in Wolfenbüttel from 1609.



1540s,<sup>38</sup> and – although he limits his bibliography to news pamphlets entitled *Neue Zeitung* – Weller notes how, in the course of the second half of the sixteenth century the term *Relation* becomes more and more common.<sup>39</sup> Over a century and a half ago, Richard Grasshoff was already using the term *Relation* as a synonym for *Neue Zeitung*.<sup>40</sup> And even earlier, R.E. Prutz gave the first German printed news pamphlets the generic name *Relationen*, entitling the second section of his history of German journalism: ‘Älteste politische Flugschriften: Relationen,’ deliberately using the term *Relationen* in order to differentiate the earliest printed German pamphlets from modern *Zeitungen*, whilst observing that such pamphlets were also known by many other names.<sup>41</sup> *Relation* clearly sounded like a foreign term in German, as is shown by the fact that the word often appears in roman type on the first pages of *Flugschriften* that were otherwise printed entirely in gothic type.<sup>42</sup>

From the end of the sixteenth century, then, national variations on the term *Relation* (*Relación*, *Relatione*, etc.) had taken off as the common, though by no means exclusive, generic name used in the titles of printed single subject newsletters in all those countries we have been looking at, and doubtless in others too.<sup>43</sup> However, a recent issue of the periodical *Renaissance and Reformation*, entitled ‘Things not easily believed: introducing the early modern relation,’ is important in the present context to the extent that it barely mentions relations in the sense of

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38 Early examples include: *Neue Zeitung. Und relation so der gesträng Herr Balthasar von Gültlingen uff Donderstag den. XXII. Tag Julii diß. XLVI. jars* (1546 – USTC 677538); *Relation und extract von aussagen und besonderen kundtschafften des Türckens erobering Zigeths erfolgt auff den 7. Tag Septembris. 1566* (Augsburg, 1566 – USTC 690554); *Relation und bericht des Cardinals von Chastillon was sich zwüschen der Koeniglichen wüerden in Franckreich verordneten* (Heidelberg, 1568 – USTC 690550).

39 See Weller 1872: 364.

40 See Grasshoff 1877: 4.

41 Prutz 1845: 98, 100. Roth (1914: 13) also refers to other generic titles, such as *Sendbrief*, *Missive*, *Copie* and *Abschrift*. *Absgeschrift* (a variant of *Abschrift*), meaning ‘copy.’

42 In the course of the sixteenth century, it is probably true that the majority of German news pamphlets included *Zeitung*, or *Neue Zeitung*, in their titles, which is the reason why the classic bibliographer of early German printed news pamphlets, Emil Weller, decided to limit himself to those so entitled, as he makes clear in the preface to his bibliography of sixteenth-century news pamphlets, stating that he had omitted all those entitled *Anzeigen*, *Berichte*, *Historien*, *Relationen*, etc. (see Weller 1872: 1). That would appear to be the chief reason why the term *Neue Zeitung* has remained the accepted term for the first printed German news pamphlets and has affected the study of those pamphlets ever since. Very many of the pamphlets entitled *Neue Zeitungen* listed by Weller were meant to be sung, and actually specify the tune to be used for the purpose (‘In Thon...’). But Weller also published a bibliography of ballads (Weller 1862-4), vol. 1 of which begins with a section (‘Historische Lieder und Gedichte’) that catalogues over 900 songs and poems on current events, published between 1500 and 1699, overwhelmingly on victories.

43 Some northern countries were relatively slow off the mark when it came to printing. As Pettegree (2010: 110) notes, ‘Only twenty-six editions printed in Denmark during the fifteenth century are known, and just sixteen books in Sweden.’

news pamphlets.<sup>44</sup> The main articles making up the issue treat of extensive narratives that include Venetian ambassadors' mandatory end-of-assignment reports on their return from foreign duty; the accounts written by the Jesuits on their missions in South America and New France, and those written by Franciscans on their journeys to the Holy Land; the *Diário da Navegação* penned by the Portuguese Pero Lopes de Sousa; *A True Relation of my Birth, Breeding and Life*, the autobiography of the English writer Margaret Cavendish; and some early modern travel books.

Whilst the kinds of relation that we have been concerned with scarcely merit a single mention in that entire issue of *Renaissance and Reformation*, the essays it contains serve to illustrate the extent to which the term could, in fact, refer to a broad variety of quite different kinds of narrative.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, the lengthy texts that it addresses could have included the many book-length relations on such complex events as major secular and ecclesiastical celebrations which – often including the sermons preached, the poems composed and recited or the texts of plays performed for the occasion, and descriptions of firework displays, processions, tourneys, etc. that they could encompass – could be regarded as reports of multiple events. However, one feature that the authors of the *Renaissance and Reformation* essays stress, and which also applies to the relations of single events, is the claim by virtually all these kinds of narrative that what they tell is true. Another is the fact that writings claiming to relate true events went by many different names. But the distinction between such texts as an account of the state of affairs in a foreign country or a travelogue or the story of a life, and a report on a single event – be it a battle, the death of a monarch, an earthquake, a miracle, or the appearance of a monster – is crucial. The term *Relation*, then, was not confined to news pamphlets, although that was doubtless its commonest usage.

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<sup>44</sup> See *Things not easily believed* 2011. In her 'Foreword' Natalie Zemon Davis mentions a few single event news pamphlets.

<sup>45</sup> Margaret Reeves (2011: 187-8) notes that *Early English Books Online* lists 2,437 items published up to 1656 that include the word *relation* in their titles, and that over 1,000 of them use the phrase 'true relation,' with the first 135 of these occurring before 1641 ('Writing to Posterity: Margaret Cavendish's *A True Relation of my Birth, Breeding and Life* (1656) as an "autobiographical *relazione*";' *Things not easily believed* 2011: 187-8).

## Appendix II:

### From Relations to Corantos and Gazettes

What we have been concerned with in this book is the pre-periodical printed news, which, as we have seen, normally appeared in the form of pamphlets and broadsides that presented accounts of single events. Especially in Italy and Germany, multi-event handwritten news digests had been produced by professional scribes at roughly regular intervals from at least the middle of the sixteenth century, in particular for the benefit of rulers and businessmen, although it was not until the following century that multi-event news pamphlets began going into print, in the form of corantos and gazettes, creating numbered and dated series produced in usually uniform formats, with roughly identical titles for each number, and doing so at regular (usually weekly) intervals.<sup>1</sup> Starting, as far as is known, with the weekly gazette-type *Relation aller Fürnemmen* begun by the book dealer Johann Carolus in Strasbourg in 1605 and the similarly weekly gazette-type Wolfenbüttel *Aviso Relation oder Zeitung* in 1609, the printed periodical newspaper was born.<sup>2</sup> The new model

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1 Pettegree (2014: 167-74, 177-81) stresses the impact on the development of the periodical press of the much improved international postal services at the beginning of the seventeenth century. One obvious advantage of the regular periodical news pamphlets – as the founder of the French *Gazette*, Théophraste Renaudot, pointed out in 1631 – was that they saved letter writers the trouble of having to tell their correspondents the latest news, often on the basis of mere hearsay (Seguin 1983: 37).

2 In a similar spirit to Mario Infelise (see above, chapter 1), Johannes Weber examines the first German periodical newspaper only in relation to the tradition of German manuscript news production, devoting a mere three sentences to ‘the many political press products that had been popular already in the sixteenth century: pamphlet and *Newe Zeitung*, calendar and chronicles, *Semestral- or Messrelation*, for these genres lacked periodicity as well as topicality. Although pamphlets (*Flugblätter* and *Flugschriften*) were often topical, in that they concern events of current interest, they only appeared sporadically. Insofar as they went beyond general propaganda, they were concerned with specific and exceptional or sensational occurrences’ (‘The Early German Newspaper – A Medium of Contemporaneity,’ in Dooley, ed., 2010: 72).

was soon being produced in Basel, Frankfurt, Berlin and Hamburg and was further greatly stimulated by the outbreak of the Thirty Years War.<sup>3</sup> The introduction of periodical printed news concentrated that industry in northern Europe. After Germany, it developed in the Netherlands from 1618, in particular in Amsterdam,<sup>4</sup> rapidly moving then to England and France. Meanwhile, Italy and Spain, far removed from the hub of early periodical newspaper printing, took up the business on a serious scale far later – Italy in 1637, and Spain in 1661, although, as we shall see, in Spain, at least, experiments with serial production had been attempted earlier, especially in Seville, Valencia and Barcelona.

This book, then, has been concerned with the earliest manifestations of the press: relations, almost entirely single event newspapers, printed at irregular intervals. That first model of printed news, based on narrative accounts of specific events and deriving from the concept of the letter or report, would continue well beyond the moment at which the corantos and gazettes began to offer the public a different news model, one that exchanged the detailed narration of a single news event for the brief mention of numerous events reported from several different information centres. However, the new model did not suddenly appear out of the blue. One feature of what we have been referring to as the single event news pamphlet that has scarcely been commented upon up to now is the extent to which those pamphlets did not, in fact, always limit themselves to narrating a single event.<sup>5</sup>

Although lacking the revolutionary characteristics of serial publication and regular periodicity, some multi-event relations were produced as early as the first quarter of the sixteenth century. Indeed, many quite early *Flugschriften* anticipate a key feature of the periodical press by bringing together several separate news reports on quite unrelated events. As early as 1522 we find a three-item *Flugschrift* that gives news about Yucatán, 'Prussla' and the Turk;<sup>6</sup> and, the following year, one whose title, instead of stating its contents, simply lists the origins of the numerous items it contains, thus following the style of the *avvisi a mano* and their equivalents in Germany and looking forward to the practice developed by the corantos and gazettes of heading each of their multiple reports by the place and date of its origin: *Newe zeytung Aus dem Niderlandt. Auss Rom. Auss Neapolis. Auss der Newenstat. Auss*

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3 See Pettegree 2014: 182-4. Geoffrey Parker notes that over 1,800 pamphlets and broadsheets appeared in Germany alone in 1618 (see *Europe in Crisis, 1598-1648*, Fontana Paperbacks, 1979: 303).

4 See Pettegree 2014: 187-8.

5 As Carmen Espejo points out, periodical and pre-periodical news pamphlets did not always correspond to entirely separate and incompatible compartments (see 'Un marco de interpretación para el periodismo europeo en la primera edad moderna,' in Chartier and Espejo, eds., 2012: 103-26).

6 See Weller 1872: 14.

*Oesterreych*.<sup>7</sup> A similar case is an account of the Franco-Italian wars, published in 1536, a pamphlet occupying six pages that ends with a gazette-type section entitled: *Weyter Newe zeytung Auss Franckreich von Lyon, Auss Engellandt, Auss Niderlandt, Auss Hyspania, Auss Portugal, Von Venedig, Auss Vngern. etc.*<sup>8</sup> In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, some *Flugschriften* go so far as to cover events occurring over several months. One such is the *Neuwe zeitung. Allerley sachen*, printed in Basel in 1576, which covers the period from August 1575 to April 1576, in twenty-four pages in one edition, and in twenty-eight pages in another.<sup>9</sup> Another example is a *Fünfferley Warhafftige Newe Zeyttung*, printed in Prague in 1585, whose title boasts the fact that it contains five separate news stories.<sup>10</sup> Towards the end of the century *Neue Zeitungen* are quite commonly given titles that highlight the location of the news story. Two such, both printed in 1580, are a *Persische, Türckische vnd Moscowittische Zeittung* and a *Pollnische Zeittung*.<sup>11</sup> And at the end of the century we find an *Vngerische, Sybenbirgische, Moldawische, Tartarische, Türckische, Englische, vnd Portugalische Zeittung*.<sup>12</sup> As regards periodicity, the Augsburg burgher Samuel Dilbaum had started publishing unnumbered coranto-type pamphlets purporting to cover the whole of Europe at roughly monthly intervals before the end of the sixteenth century, two of the earliest known examples, printed at Rorschach, in Switzerland, in 1597, being: *Januarius des 1597. jahrs. Historische relatio, oder erzehlung der fuernembsten handlungen und Geschichten so sich im Jenner des 1597. jars hin und wider fast in gantzem Europa, schrifft wirdiges verlauffen* and *Februarius anni 1597. Historische relatio, unnd erzehlung der fuernembsten Geschichten [...]*.<sup>13</sup>

The case of Spain is particularly interesting in this context, because the first home-grown Spanish periodical – the *Gazeta nueva* – did not start life until 1661, some forty years later than most countries in northern Europe, and then only as a monthly, produced (what is more) by a Fleming.<sup>14</sup> This apparent failure on the part

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7 See Weller 1872: 16. Roth (1914: 26-8) also mentions *Sammelzeitungen*, i.e. pamphlets that included several different events, the first of which were published in the 1520s.

8 See Weller 1872: 97.

9 See Weller 1872: 447.

10 See Weller 1872: 620.

11 See Weller 1872: 532-3.

12 See Weller 1872: 834

13 See USTC 664901, 675274, 657378. Sara Barker gives some examples of the packaging of several news stories in early seventeenth-century English pamphlets (see S.K. Barker, "'Newes lately come": European News Books in English Translation,' in *Renaissance Cultural Crossroads. Translation, Print and Culture in Britain, 1473-1640*, ed. S.K. Barker and Brenda M. Hosington, Leiden/Boston, Brill, Library of the Written Word, v. 21, 2013: 227-44, 241-2).

14 See E. Varela Hervias, *Gazeta Nueva, 1661-1663. Notas sobre la historia del periodismo español en la segunda mitad del siglo XVII*, Madrid, 1960.

of Spanish publishers and printers to keep up with the times has been seen by some as something of an embarrassment.<sup>15</sup> However, it is becoming increasingly clear that, far from just bucking the trend, Spain went in for several experiments that offered compromises between the two modalities: the non-periodical and the periodical.

Like some *Neue Zeitungen*, from an early date some Spanish *relaciones* untypically contain more than a single news story. In about 1525 we find an undated pamphlet printed at Alcalá de Henares by Miguel de Eguía entitled: *Relacion de las nuevas de Italia*, as if anticipating the corantos and gazettes of a century later.<sup>16</sup> A similar item, transmitted via Genoa, was published in Catalan in Barcelona in 1557: *Copia de les noves de Ytalia per letres de Genova*.<sup>17</sup> A *relación* published in 1536 that does not give the name of the place where it was printed offers news of France, Germany and the Turk: *Nuevas de Francia y Alemania. Sucessos de Turcos*.<sup>18</sup> Another, published in Toledo in 1572, gives the name of the author – itself a fairly unusual occurrence – as Gaspar de la Cintera and bears the title: *Aqui se contienen quatro nuevos acontecimientos* (i.e. Herein are contained four new events).<sup>19</sup> And one that was printed in Seville in 1574 includes news from China, Tunis, Turkey, Geneva and France, in which the news from China is said to have arrived via Mexico, whilst the news from Tunis, Turkey and Geneva is said to have been sent from Italy.<sup>20</sup>

The Seville printer Rodrigo de Cabrera produced a series of at least thirty *relaciones* on the Transylvanian war against the Turks between 1595 and 1600, including at least eight pamphlets that were numbered in series, although they were not periodical in the sense of being published at regular intervals. As Rubén González Cuerva and Carmen Espejo have shown, Cabrera's reports on Transylvania arrived via Italy, where gazettes were not generally printed until the 1630s, those on Transylvania being an exception, so that printed Italian *avvisi* were the chief source for Cabrera's series.<sup>21</sup>

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15 Whilst pointing to the growing evidence for some Spanish involvement in the development of a periodical press in and after 1618, Espejo (2013a: 38-40) discusses the problems affecting communication between northern Europe and Spain as one of the principal factors impeding the full-scale adoption in Spain of gazette-type publications in the period beginning with the start of the Thirty Years War.

16 See UB16 15691.

17 See UB16 10632.

18 This relation is examined in Gabriel Andrés, 'De la epístola a la relación: el pliego gótico de 1536 sobre los hermanos Davi (Irán-Cáller)', in '*Relaciones de sucesos' sulla Sardegna (1500-1750)*. *Repertorio e studi*, ed. Tonina Paba, Cagliari, CUEC Editrice, 2012: 39-50.

19 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 170.

20 See Agulló y Cobo 1966: 184.

21 See Rubén González Cuerva, "'El prodigioso príncipe transilvano': la larga guerra contra los turcos (1596-1606) a través de las relaciones de sucesos,' *Studia historica. Historia Moderna*, 28, 2006: 277-99; Carmen Espejo, 'The Prince of Transylvania: Spanish news pamphlets about the war against Turks (1595-1600)', in Raymond and Moxham, eds., in press.

From the end of the 1580s some Spanish news pamphlets use *Aviso* in their titles, a term that derives from Italian *avvisi* and which usually implies a compendium of varied pieces of news.<sup>22</sup> Thus, we have *Avisos de la China y Iapon* (Madrid, 1589), based on Jesuit letters published in Italian by Plantin the previous year.<sup>23</sup> What is more, at least one number survives of a similar publication printed in Barcelona – *Avisos de diversas partes* (i.e. reports from several places) – that covers June to September 1597 and in which both the word ‘Avisos’ and its multiple contents suggest a possible Italian origin.<sup>24</sup> Another pamphlet of the same year, this time published in Seville by Rodrigo de Cabrera, makes it quite explicit that the news came from Italy: *Nuevos avisos venidos de Roma*.<sup>25</sup> In subsequent years Cabrera published several other *Avisos* from Rome, and also *Nuevos avisos de Inglaterra* and *Avisos de Londres*, as did other printers, such as Gabriel Guasp in Majorca, whose *Nuevos avisos de Italia y otras partes* appeared in 1598.<sup>26</sup> The development in Spain of other series of numbered *relaciones* prior to the introduction of the periodical press is further suggested by such titles as *Quarta relacion de el auenida del Rio de Seuilla*, a pamphlet published in Seville in 1604 on the flooding of the Guadalquivir which implies three previous numbers on the same subject.<sup>27</sup>

Coinciding with the appearance of the first corantos in northern Europe, we also know of attempts made by a few printers, perhaps beginning as early as 1618, to publish news serially in Spain.<sup>28</sup> Whether, or not, any Spanish printer actually attempted to produce news periodically in the 1620s, seriality, at least, was achieved by the author or syndicate of authors of the seventeen numbered newsletters attributed to Andrés de Almansa y Mendoza that start with the death of Philip III at the end of March 1621 and go on until November 1624, the first fourteen of them seamlessly covering the two and a half years up to November 1623. These letters, which came out at irregular intervals, are a remarkable and unique experiment, not just because they cover thirty months non-stop, but also because they deal primarily with home

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22 See Carmen Espejo Cala, ‘Gacetas y relaciones de sucesos en la segunda mitad del XVII: una comparativa europea,’ in Ctedra Garca and Daz Tena, eds., 2013: 71-88, 78.

23 At the end of the century we find quite a number of pamphlets that use the term in their titles – between 1597 and 1599 Rodrigo de Cabrera prints news pamphlets entitled *Nuevos avisos venidos de Roma*, *Avisos de Roma* and *Avisos nuevos venidos de Roma*. Nearly all of them date the news precisely.

24 See Agull y Cobo 1966: 284.

25 See Agull y Cobo 1966: 286.

26 See Agull y Cobo 1966: 294, 319; 318, 373; 300; IB16 10634; and also Carmen Espejo Cala, ‘Relaciones de sucesos sevillanas. Un modelo de produccin bajo el signo de la decadencia,’ in Bgrand, ed., 2009: 71-92.

27 See Agull y Cobo 1966: 406.

28 See Carmen Espejo, ‘El mercado de las noticias en Espaa: *La Gazeta de Roma* (Valencia, 1619),’ in Andrs, ed., 2013: 25-53.

news – and not just with any home news, but with news of the liquidation of Philip III's administration and the installation of Philip IV's, under the government of the Count-Duke of Olivares. What – with the *Carta segunda que escribió un caballero desta Corte a un su amigo* (i.e the second letter written by a knight of this court to a friend of his) – was to become a series had started off with the extraordinary fly-on-the-wall account of Philip III's death. It is perhaps not surprising, given the intimate details of that account, that copies of nine editions of that relation survive, printed in Valladolid, Granada, Seville and Lima, with many of those that do not specify the place of printing no doubt published in Madrid.<sup>29</sup>

In Italy, from quite an early date, some *avvisi a stampa* – following the style of the *avvisi a mano* – also combine news from various different countries in ways that anticipate the corantos and gazettes. One such was printed in Bologna in 1569: *Copia d'alcuni avisi venuti nuovamente di Francia, di Oriliens d'Inghilterra, & d'Alemagna*.<sup>30</sup> Another, printed in Brescia in 1575, brings together news from three countries, stating that they have a common theme, namely preparations for war against the Turk: *Tutti gli avisi novi di tutte le parti di Europa, et massime di Roma, di Fiandra, et di Francia. Ne quali s'intende i preparamenti di guerra & ciò che si crede dell'armata turchesca*.<sup>31</sup>

As for England, in the last few years of the sixteenth century we also find publications that combine news from various countries, such as *Credible Reportes from France, and Flanders, or Newes from Rome, Spaine, Palermo, Geneuae, and France* (London, 1590), or *Newes from Rome, Venice, and Vienna* (1595), or *Newes from diuers countries. As, From Spaine, Antwerpe, Collin [i.e. Cologne], Venice, Rome, The Turke, and The prince Doria* (1597).<sup>32</sup>

What the gazettes and corantos gained by regular publication of a substantial range of news events in each number, whereby they could hope to create a readership that would look out for the following issue, they clearly lost by the brevity and prosaism with which they purveyed their news. As Andrew Pettegree aptly puts it, referring to periodical gazette- and coranto-type publications as newsletters and news-sheets, and to single event publications as news pamphlets:

Sticking closely to the model of the manuscript newsletter, the news-sheets adopted none of the features that made news pamphlets attractive to potential purchasers.

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29 See Ettinghausen 2004.

30 See USTC 804647.

31 See USTC 805264.

32 See Collins 1943: 6; Shaaber 1966: 312.



There were no headlines and no illustrations. There was little exposition or explanation and none of the passionate advocacy or debate that characterised news pamphlets; indeed, there was little editorial comment of any sort.<sup>33</sup>

Seguin contrasts the bare details of the brief item on the fire that ravaged the village of Sézanne en Brie given in Renaudot's *Gazette* of 28 March 1632 with the version contained in a sixteen-page *occasionnel* in octavo entitled *Le déplorable Embrusement et incendie de la ville de Césane en Brie*, published that same year, which emphasises the drama of the disaster, telling the story in the present tense for greater effect, and devoting three quarters of its text to historical considerations and to moralising conclusions.<sup>34</sup>

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33 Pettegree 2014: 184.

34 See Seguin 1983: 38.



## Appendix III:

### Notes on the Illustration and Layout of Front Pages in the Pre-Periodical Printed News

One of the very many questions raised by the study of the earliest European press is the extent to which it developed common procedures, layouts, styles and means of presentation. On the visual level, it seems clear that some convergence of conventions developed in the course of the sixteenth century. That is hardly surprising, since large numbers of news pamphlets travelled internationally and were picked up by printers abroad to be translated and republished. For most purposes, most printers had their own stocks of ready-made woodcut blocks with which to enliven their pamphlets, and could thus continue or develop the use of illustrative and decorative devices that had become standard in their regions. However, some news topics – especially those concerning deformed infants and monsters – were, by definition, extraordinary. Indeed, it was their extraordinariness that made them news. Whilst words could, and did, describe them, it was visual representations of them that brought them to life and made accounts of them eminently saleable.

Below we offer examples of four such news items, spanning over three quarters of a century, which show how some images of deformed infants and monsters were reproduced across national borders: the Venetian conjoined twins, in 1575; the seven-horned creature born in Piedmont, in 1578; the seven-headed monster born at Eusrigo or Milan in 1578, or in Catalonia in 1654; the shell-covered boy born in Lisbon in 1628, or in Cagliari in 1658. Although some illustrations are cruder, others more sophisticated, it is clear that, in each case, a first attempt at visual representation was taken up and followed by subsequent printers.

The last instance offered below includes no attempts at visual representation. Instead, Pedro Fernández de Quirós's account of the discovery of Australia (see above, chapter 3) which was published in at least five countries – Spain, Germany, the

Netherlands, England and France – provides a good opportunity to assess the extent to which the translation and transfer of news pamphlets internationally may have encouraged differing typographical traditions to converge by early in the seventeenth century. Printers who got hold of foreign newsletters and had them translated and then set up in print could negotiate a greater or a lesser compromise between the visual appearance of the original and the typographical styles and layouts that they normally provided and that they knew their customers were used to. In this instance at least, it is clear that, even in the second decade of the seventeenth century, shortly before the introduction of the periodical press, the urge to converge was far weaker as regards typography and layout than when it came to illustrating monsters and deformed infants.

### 1 The Venetian Conjoined Twins, 1575

In chapter 7 we saw how one of many internationally transmitted stories of deformed infants – the birth of conjoined twins to a Venetian Jewess – achieved wide coverage in Italy and was also reported in Germany. Two depictions of the twins in Italian show, in one case, front and back views (Fig. A3.1) and, in the other, the front

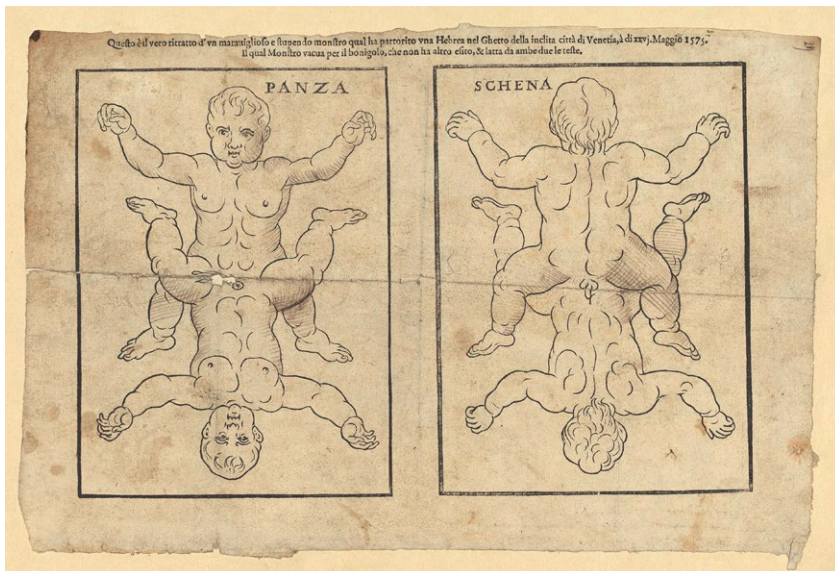


Fig. A3.1. An Italian broadside, or print, showing front and back views of the 'marauiglioso e stupendo monstro' reportedly born to a Jewess in the Venice ghetto on 26 May 1575 (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ewinkel (1995: 350) reproduces this same broadside, as well as another Italian version.



Fig. A3.2. Fragments of an Italian broadside, or *avviso*, on the ‘mostro’ born to a Jewish woman in the Venice ghetto on 26 May 1575. A cruder engraving than that in Fig. A3.1, it shows only the front view, though the back view may have been lost when the print was cut up (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

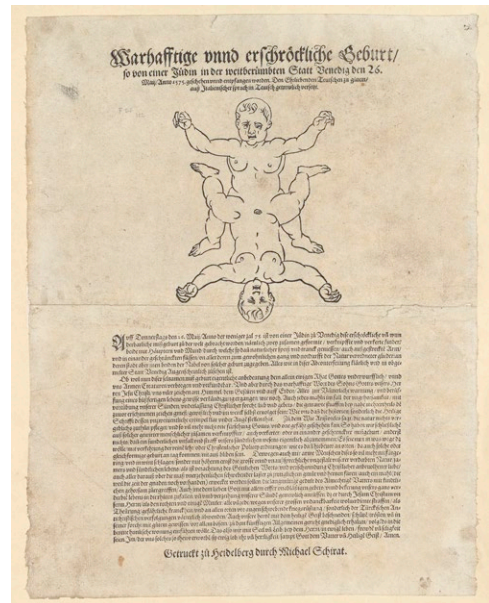


Fig. A3.3. A *Flugblatt* published in Heidelberg on the conjoined Venetian twins, born on 26 May 1575, presented as a *Warhafftige vnnnd erschrockliche Geburt*, again showing only a front view, but adding a lengthy text. The depiction of the twins is closer to that in Fig. A3.1 than in Fig. A3.2 (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).

view only (Fig. A3.2). The *Flugblatt* on the twins printed in Heidelberg (Fig. A3.3) also shows only the front view, although it seems to be closer in its depiction to the first of the Italian prints than to the second. The successive portrayals of the twins show how images were often carefully copied by successive engravers and printers. Curiously, the depiction of the Venetian twins is remarkably similar to that in the broadside printed in London, over two decades earlier, on the ‘double Chylde’ born at Middleton Stoney in 1552.<sup>2</sup>

## 2 The Monster Born in Piedmont in 1578

An Italian print of the ‘Horribil mostro’ born in Piedmont in 1578 was no doubt the direct, or indirect, model for the engraving in the French broadside, published the same year in Chambéry, which adds a moralising text (see above, chapter 7).

<sup>2</sup> See above, chapter 7, Fig. 7.3.



Fig. A3.4. An Italian print, or broadside, of a *Horribil mostro* supposedly born in Piedmont on 10 January 1578, with an inscription that simply describes the creature's features (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).



Fig. A3.5. A French broadside produced in 1778 by the Chambéry printer François Poumard, containing a portrayal of the monster supposedly born in Piedmont on 10 January 1578 that is closely but somewhat clumsily modelled, directly or indirectly, on the Italian print, followed by a text that presents the phenomenon as divine punishment for sin (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris).

### 3 The Monster Born in 1578 at Eusrigo or Milan – or in 1654 in Catalonia

The other monster also supposedly born in Italy in 1578, this one boasting seven heads and seven arms, ram's or ox's feet, and a single eye in the middle of its central head, appears in prints published in Italy, France, Germany and Spain (see above, chapter 7).



Fig. A3.6. An Italian print or broadside of a seven-headed, seven-armed ‘Horibile et marauiglioso mostro,’ supposedly born at Eusrigo in January 1578. It forms a counterpart to the Italian print of the horny human from Piedmont, as it, too, bears the inscription ‘Formis All’Arca di Noe’ (see Fig. A3.4) (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).



Fig. A3.7. A French broadside of the ‘merveilleux monstre,’ supposedly born at Eusrigo in January 1578, with a somewhat cruder depiction of the monster than in the Italian print or broadside, published by the same Chambéry printer, François Poumard, who that same year had produced the nearly matching broadside of the Piedmontese monster (Fig. A3.5). Here too he adds a brief text. This interprets the phenomenon as a warning against sensuality and a presage of sinister events (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris).



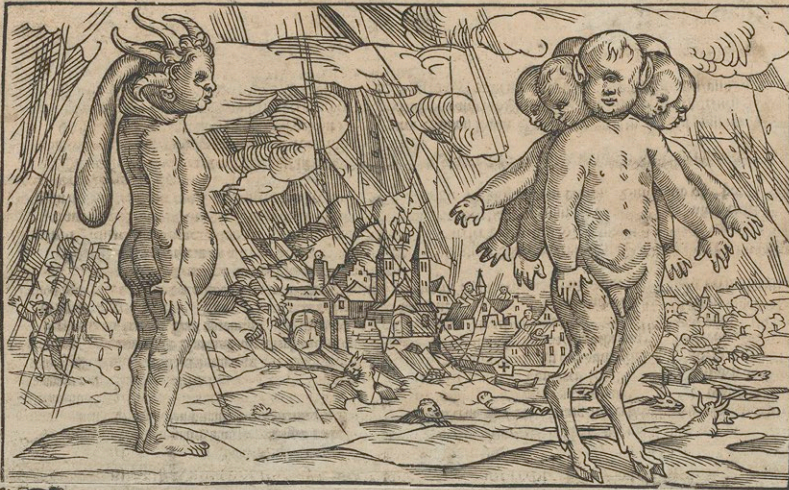
Fig. A3.8. A German print or broadside of a horrible monster, supposedly born in Milan in January 1578, described here as a 'Wahre abcontrafeitung eines Schrecklichen Münsters' (i.e. a true portrait of a horrid monster) (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).



Fig. A3.9. A *Flugblatt*, published at Kampen, of an 'erschrecklichen Wundergeburt,' supposedly born at Eusrigo in 1578, with a prose commentary on the left, purporting to have been translated into German from Dutch, that refers to far earlier examples of comparable monsters and interprets this one as a warning from God (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).



**Warhaftige vnd schröckliche bildnuß vnd gestalt zwoer neuer leydnigen vngewonlichen Mißgebur/dises gegenwärtige Jar aufkommen. Sampt der beschreibung des Ebdärmlichen Wasserquffes / sünst zu Hob im Land Wirtemberg/ den 15. Tag Mai/ dieses L. XXVIII. Jars vorgegangen**



**N**icht unfüglich mag dise nun gegenwärtige zeit wol eyne rechte Wunderzeit heysßen: seiteynmal im kurzem also vil Wunder vnd zeichen auff einander komen vnd folgen: das es frommen Herken cyn schrecken machet. Vnd warlich das se nicht gar on bedutunß vnd wirkung seyn / sÿber man leyder täglich hin vnd wider / fert vnd nahe / an den wunderlichen vnruhen / empdrungen / kriegen vnd Vtÿverriessen / verfolungen / verhergungen / verhätereien / Meuchelmörderien / falschen Lehen / einfallen fremddes Volcks / Kriegsgeschrey / plünderung fürnemmer Stätt / vngewonhten frantcheuten vnd Seuchen / absterben hoher Leut / Vngewittern / wütenden Winden / schwarzen Wasserquffsen / Mißgewächsen / vnd endlich allenthalben vñ sich herum an der Vnmenslichen vntreu vnd mißtrauen / an den vnchristlichen händeln / dem vbersatz / schänden / Tadeln vnd Vorkauff / an allerhand schand vnd lastern / Vortolasterungen / verachtung vnd verkerung Göttes Worts / verpottung fromer Leut warnung / vngeschosam gegen Oberr vnd Fürgesetze / vnd kurzum / an heutiger grosser sicherheyt / vnd erkaltung aller Lieb. Vnd das man nun der sünst vorgegangenen Wunder / die doch auch noch ire wirkung zu vollrichsten haben / geschweige / Als der erscheinung fremdder Stern / Cometen / Wundergesicht / vnd Himmelsläm / der verfinsternung Sonn vnd Moons / der Erdbiden / vnd anderer schröcklichen fällen.

So behelhe end erwige man allem dise beyde hie vorgebildete scheußliche Wundergeburten. Deren die eyne des nächsten verschüntenen Janers / dieses gegenwärtigen Jars 78. zu Coorige / im Nooarscher Land / des Neuländischen Gebiets / ist von eyner zünlich gefangenen Nationen an die Welt gebracht worden / oberhalb mit siben händen / sampt so vil Köpfen gestaltet / vnter welchen der fürnemst Köpff nur cyn Auge mitten im der sÿrn haere / vnd zwoy Schweinoren daran. Vnterhalb aber hat es Füß wie cyn ander Viech oder Thier.

Die ander Mißgebur oder Ehsenß ist gleichfalls auch im Janer / dieses 78. Jars / im gestalt / wie hie im gemäl angezegt / geboren worden / vnd dasselbig von eyner Weib im Piemont.

Es hat auch der Ehrwürdig vnd Hochgelehrter Herr Doctor Simon Pauli / Superintendentens zu Rostock / im der jüngst verlossenen Franckforter Postenmess / auch cyn der gleichen erschöcklich vmatürlich Gebürt / so bald zu anfang des Neuen Jars zu Greveemülen im Land zu Nechelburg von eyns Schneiders Weib an tag gebracht worden / im trud ausgehn lassen / vnd darbei eyne schöne Erinnerung vnd vermanung angehenckt / dahin wir dan die Leut wöllen gewisß haben.

Der dise haben wir auch stündlich den 15. tag des Mayens / im der Statt Hoeb am Neckel gelegen cyn Erbärmlich Wassererkrantz / allda es durch cyn Welckenbruch von den nächsten Bergen große Steyn gerissen vnd durch die Statt geführt vnd alles was es angetroffen / hinweg geschwollen vnd gestöret hat. Auch als man im etwas zuweyden die Statthor zusperret / hat es durch die Mauer hinter dem Spital eyner einprach gefaß / vnd also vnseren Leut vnd Viech Getreß vnd Viech frucht versürt / wiewöyl Häuser gar hingedröbet die andern verzeret. Das Weihenhalgangs zerissen die Weiden eingeworffen die Grabsteyn von der Statt aufgedröbet / vnd hie im die Statt geschwollen / also das die Leiden vnter den Leiden bis sint geschwollen / sonderlich hat man vnter denelbigen eyner Kindbettarin wargenoffen / die man fürs zuwoy begraben hatte. Auch hat es andern jamer mich angriffe / der hie zu lang wer zuerglen. Aber aus er allem hat man genug den zorn Gottes zuersehen wie schädlich es abang / wann er eyermal entbrunnt. Derhalben wer es groß juch solche warnungen büßfertiglich zuernehmen / ey man noch grüßliches erfahre / vnd Gott bawig werde. Amen. Das ist uns Gott gnädiglich beschÿne. Amen.

Eruckt zu Sträßburg / Anno M. D. LXXVIII.

Fig. A3.10. The two instances of 'Missgebur' that had been publicised separately in Italy and in France – with the seven-headed, seven-armed creature also appearing in Germany – here brought together in a *Flugblatt* printed in Strasbourg in 1758 that presents itself as a 'Warhaftige vnd schröckliche bildnuß vnd gestalt zwoer neuer leydnigen vngewonlichen Missgebur' (i.e. True and horrifying picture and image of two new loathsome extraordinary deformed infants), together with a lengthy prose commentary in German (Zentralbibliothek, Zurich).



Fig. A3.11. The rather crude woodcut, obviously based on an earlier print, of the seven-headed, seven-armed monster, now said to have been found in Catalonia, occupying the whole of the third page of a four-page *relación* printed in Madrid by Diego Díaz de la Carrera in 1654: *Copia de carta embiada de la Ciudad de Girona de 20 de Octubre, à vn correspondiente de esta Corte, en que le dà cuenta de vn prodigioso Monstruo que fue hallado, y preso en los Montes de Zardaña* (Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid).



Fig. A3.12. The seven-headed, seven-armed 'Monstrum,' said to have been found in Catalonia in 1654, in a *Flugblatt* published in Augsburg, the engraving achieving a far livelier and more convincing effect than the relatively crude Spanish version on which it was probably based, either directly or indirectly, and with a text that claims that the king of Spain had ordered the creature to be sent to the Escorial (Ewinkel 1995: plate 47).

#### 4 The Monster Born in Lisbon in 1628 – or in Cagliari in 1658

The account of the shell-covered boy born in Lisbon, published in 1628 by the Barcelona printer Esteve Liberós, distances the event from the publication by claiming that the report had been sent to Barcelona by a Genoese living in Madrid. A print of the boy was also published as a *canard*. And, in 1659, the print and relation were republished in Madrid, updated by making the birth occur in Sardinia the previous year.



Fig. A3.13. First page of a four-page *relación*, published in Barcelona in 1628, depicting the shell-covered 'monstruoso Niño,' reportedly born in Lisbon. The engraving is said to be based on a portrait sent to Philip IV (Biblioteca Nacional de Catalunya, Barcelona).

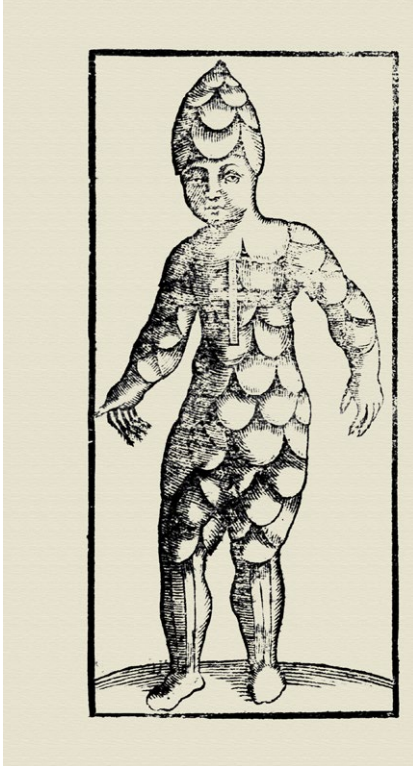


Fig. A3.14. Full-page woodcut from the sixteen-page *canard* entitled: *La naissance d'un monstre ayant la face humaine, la teste et le reste du corps couvert d'une armure d'escailles. Né à Lisbonne, ville capitale de Portugal [...] Traduit d'Espagnol en François* (Paris, 1628). The monster is described as having been regarded as 'Herauld sinistre de mal-heur,' and we are told that the people of Lisbon, where it was born and lived for four days, cried out: 'Dieu misericorde; O Dieu misericorde!' (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris).

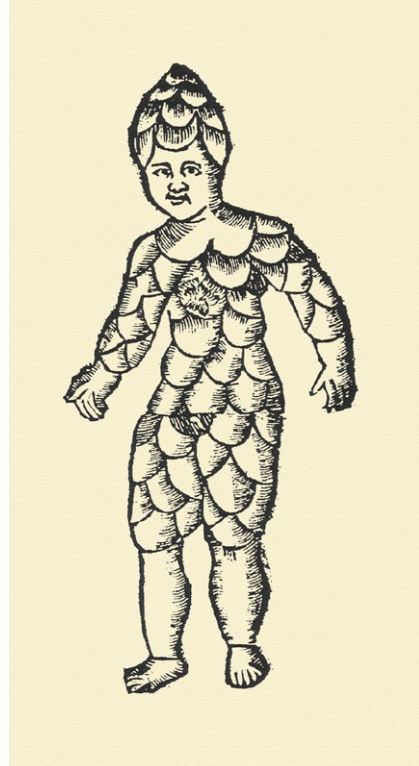


Fig. A3.15. Full-page woodcut in a *Verdadera y nueva relación*, published in Madrid in 1659, showing a portrait of the shell-covered boy, now supposedly born in Cagliari the previous year. The depiction of the boy is closer to that found in the French *canard* (Fig. A3.14) than to the earlier Spanish *relación* (Fig. A3.13) (Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid).

## 5 The Discovery of Australia, 1610

The Pamplona, 1610, edition of Pedro Fernández de Quirós's account of his discovery of Australia (Fig. A3.16) boasts a front page with a short title that goes directly to the point, with – as is common in Spanish *relaciones* – the first line being highlighted by the use of upper case. However, the visual effect is dominated especially by the large woodcut coat of arms of the kingdoms of Spain. The Spanish escutcheon occupies half of the page – evidently with a view to dignifying Quirós's petition to Philip III to recognize his discovery of a land that, he claimed, was rich and fertile – a style of typographical presentation that dates back at least eighty years to *relaciones* of an official nature printed in the 1520s and 1530s.<sup>3</sup>

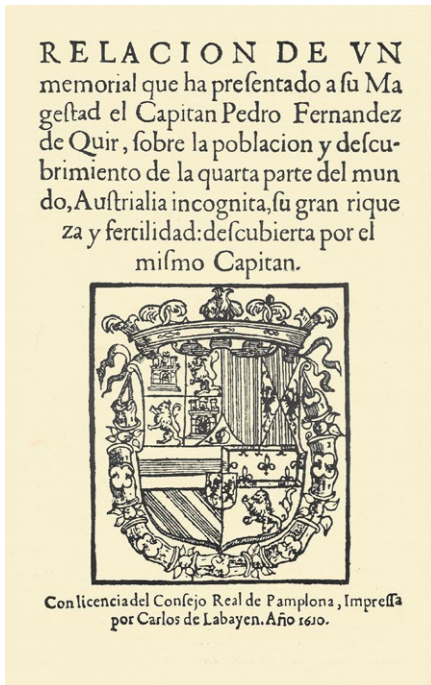


Fig. A3.16. Front page of the Pamplona, 1610, edition of Fernández de Quirós's *memorial* to Philip III, typically using a large woodcut royal coat of arms to officialise the *memorial*, or petition. Like almost all *relaciones*, except the earliest, this one states that it is published 'Con licencia' (i.e. with permission), in this case authorized by the royal council in Pamplona.<sup>4</sup>



Fig. A3.17. The Augsburg, 1611, edition, in German, of Fernández de Quirós's *memorial*, here entitled 'Relation,' set up in gothic type, except for the key words 'Terra Australis incognita' and the date, both set off in roman type, and with the name of the discoverer highlighted in large type.

<sup>3</sup> See above, chapter 1, Fig. 1.3.

<sup>4</sup> Figs. A3.16-22 are taken from Sanz 1964.

The German pamphlet, published the following year in Augsburg (Fig. A3.17), has a front page set up in gothic type, except for the key words in Latin, ‘Terra Australis incognita,’ which are highlighted in roman. The name of the author is made to stand out by being set in larger type, as are the printer’s name and the first words of the statement regarding the provenance of the text, specifying that the text is a translation of the edition published in Pamplona. Indeed, the care taken in laying out this page may be judged by the large number of type sizes used. Like many *Flugschriften* published in and after the 1560s, this one takes over the generic romance title *Relation*. However, it replaces the impressive Spanish coat of arms with a small standard woodcut ornament. Roman type is used only for the date in Roman numerals on either side of the ornament: ‘ANNO MDC.XI.’

The front page of the Dutch edition put out by Gerard Hessel (Fig. A3.18) in Amsterdam in 1612 uses gothic type, achieving interest by varying its size and by leaving the bottom of the page blank. For its part, the Latin text published the same year by the same publisher (Fig. A3.19) simply translates the Spanish title, highlights



Fig. A3.18. The same *memorial*, here borrowing the original Spanish designation of the pamphlet as ‘Een Memoriael,’ or petition, put out by the same publisher, but in Dutch, using gothic type and a small decorative woodcut ornament (Amsterdam, 1612).

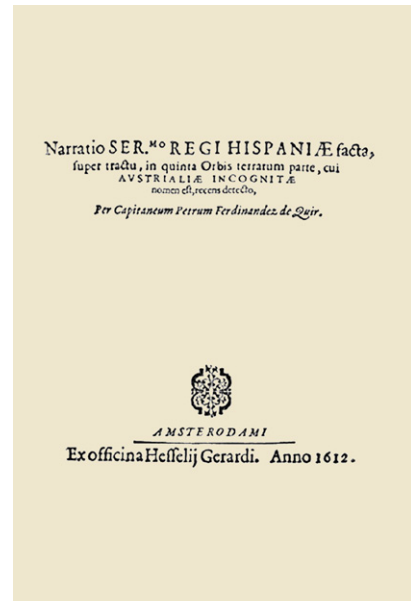


Fig. A3.19. First page of an edition in Latin of the *memorial* (Amsterdam, 1612), here entitled a ‘Narratio,’ set up in roman type and with elegant use of blank space.

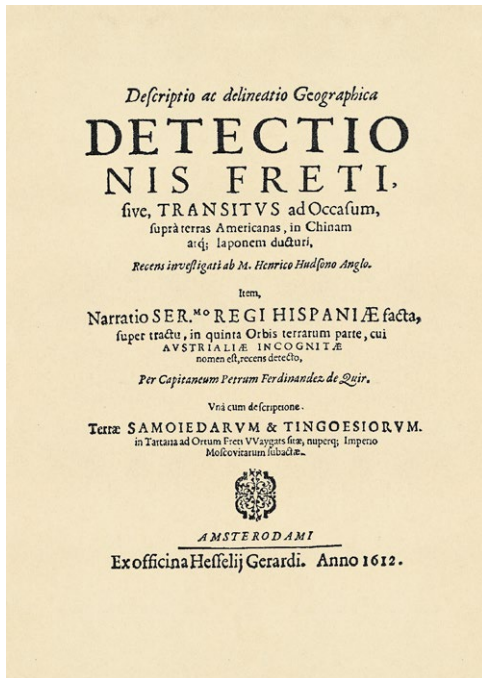


Fig. A3.20. The same *memorial*, together with two other texts, all in Latin and set up in roman type, put out the same year by the same Amsterdam publisher, stressing in large capitals the words 'DETECTIONIS FRETII,' and making imaginative use of italic and of various different sizes of type.

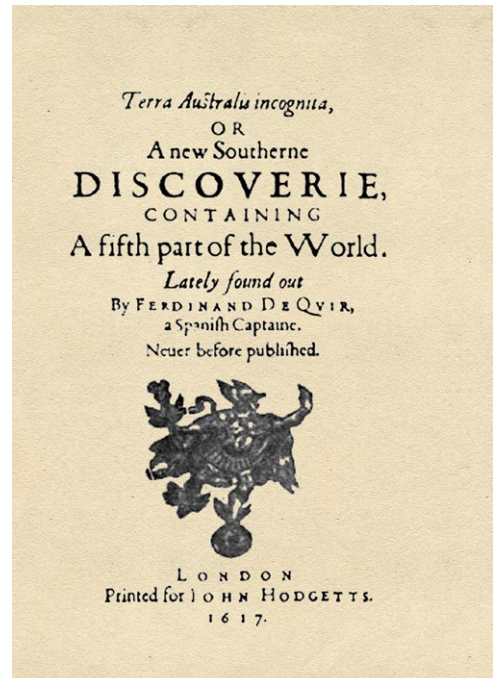


Fig. A3.21. First page of the English translation of the same *memorial* (London, 1617), which puts in large upper case the key word 'DISCOVERIE' and adorns the lower part of the page with an elegant woodcut of Mercury, the Roman god of commerce and communication. Here, too, effective use is made of various different fonts.

in capitals the dedicatee of the work (i.e. the king of Spain), sets off the name of the author and the place of printing in italics and includes a very small decorative ornament, leaving the middle of the page empty. Even in northern Europe, where gothic type persisted for vernacular texts until the beginning of the seventeenth century and beyond, most works in Latin were set up in roman, as here. The effect of both of these front pages contrasts sharply with the layout of the German edition published the previous year.

In 1612 Hessel combined the news of the discovery of Australia with that of two other geographical enterprises in a booklet printed in Latin (Fig. A3.20). On the front page, which makes use of several sizes of roman and italic fonts, the summary of Quirós's report is placed in between the news of Henry Hudson's expedition in search of the North-West Passage and a description of lands in Tartary. Hessel gives

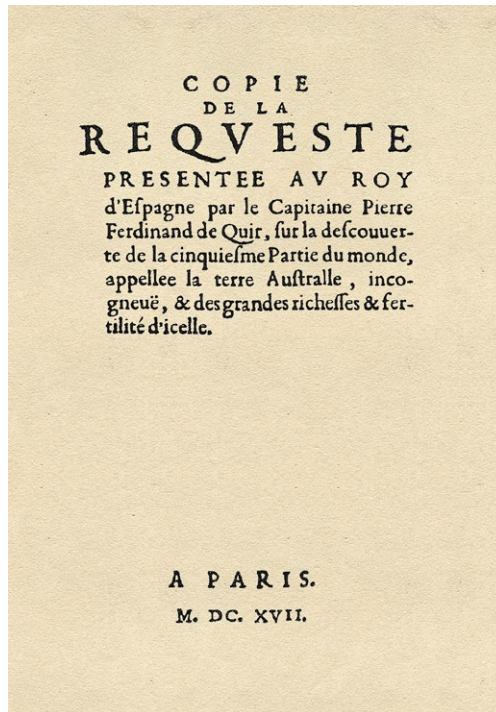


Fig. A3.22. Front page of the French translation of Fernández de Quirós's *memorial* (Paris, 1617), including typical French off-centring of the text of the title and highlighting the word 'REQUESTE,' the translation of *memorial* (meaning 'petition'), used in the Spanish original.

pride of place to the discovery of what was to become known as the Hudson Strait, and the privileged news status of that story is further stressed by setting the words 'DETECTIONIS FRETÍ' (i.e. discovery of the straits) in large capitals. As for Quirós's feat, it appears on this front page in the same type faces and layout as in the previous year's Latin pamphlet, and with the same decorative ornament and the same wording and type for the place and date of printing and the name of the publisher. The greater amount of text on this front page is compensated by reducing the size of the decorative ornament to a minimum.

John Hodgets's edition of the Australian news, printed in London in 1617 and claiming to offer 'A new Southerne discoverie [...] Neuer before published,' (Fig. A3.21) puts in striking upper case the key word 'DISCOVERIE' and embellishes the lower part of the front page with an elegant standard woodcut of Mercury. It, too, makes use of a variety of typefaces and sizes. For its part, the French text, published the same year in Paris (Fig. A3.22), picks out for special treatment the word 'REQUESTE,' the translation



of 'memorial' (i.e. 'petition'), used in the Spanish original. Whilst making use of several sizes of type, like many French *occasionnels* and unlike relations printed elsewhere, it aligns the print on the page with the right-hand margin, rather than centring it.

The variations between the styles used in these front pages are wide, with the visual effects running from the large coat of arms to standard woodcut ornamentation and printer's marks, and with some printers filling the front page, whilst others do not. The wording of the titles likewise differs very greatly, with lengthy and detailed descriptions of the content in some instances, and a bare minimum in others. And the same is true of the typography, notably the imaginative and startling exploitation in some examples of different typefaces and sizes.



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## List of Illustrations

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