

2 Early Modern Community Formation Across Northern Europe

How and Why a Poet in Poland Engaged with the Delft Thunderclap of 1654

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Abstract

The Delft Thunderclap, a massive gunpowder explosion which in 1654 devastated the Dutch city of Delft, elicited numerous responses by authors and artists from the Northern and Southern Netherlands. This chapter analyses another reaction, printed outside the Low Countries: a hitherto unknown Latin poem by the Silesian-Polish polymath Joachim Pastorius. His poem was published in 1657 in the Polish cosmopolitan city of Gdańsk, which maintained strong commercial and cultural ties with the Northern Netherlands. Pastorius had many Dutch contacts and likely based his verses on Dutch sources, specifically a famous poem by Joost van den Vondel. Pastorius applied a well-known rhetorical framework to inspire solidarity with the mourning Dutch. The disastrous Delft Thunderclap thus provided Pastorius with the opportunity to shape a transnational emotional community of learned readers and writers across Northern Europe, bridging Poland and the Dutch Republic.

Keywords

Delft Thunderclap – Dutch Republic – Poland – Gdańsk – literary relations – emotional communities

On 12 October 1654, nothing of note happened in the Baltic port city of Gdańsk (Danzig). At least, nothing which was deemed significant enough to be passed down through the ages and which is remembered to the present day. Almost one thousand kilometres away, however, a tragedy occurred



Figure 2.1 Herman Saftleven II, *View of Delft after the Explosion of the Gunpowder Arsenal on 12 October 1654*, second half of the seventeenth century, black chalk, pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash on two sheets of paper, 24.9 × 74.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Bequest of Helen Hay Whitney, by exchange, and The Mnuchin Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. David M. Tobey and Werner H. Kramarsky Gifts, 1995, 1995.197

which quite literally shook the earth. At approximately 10:30 a.m., disaster struck in the Dutch city of Delft. A quarter of the town was wiped away by an explosion in the gunpowder magazine of Holland, which was located in or near a former monastery and which probably contained over 90,000 lb of powder. The cause of the explosion has never been established, but the story goes that a clerk entered the magazine carrying a burning lantern, sparks of which may have set fire to the highly flammable stash of gunpowder inside. The disaster that followed is known as the Delft Thunderclap.¹ Hundreds

1 I would like to thank Dr Aleks Koutny-Jones and the editors of this volume for their helpful comments on previous versions of this chapter.

On the material aspects of the disaster, as well as possible explanations of its cause, see J. Weerheijm, W.P.M. Mercx, and H.J. Pasman, 'De ontloffing van het kruitmagazijn van Holland te Delft op 12 oktober 1654', in H.L. Houtzager, G.G. Kunz, H.W. van Leeuwen, M. van Noort, and M. Tienstra (eds), *Kruit en krijg. Delft als bakermat van het Prins Maurits Laboratorium TNO* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1988), 31–42; G.G. Kunz, "Alsof het hemelgewelf barstte en de aardbodem openscheurde ...", in Houtzager et al., *Kruit en krijg*, 43–51.



of houses were laid to waste, including that of the city's mayor, and an unknown but no doubt large number of human and animal casualties were either killed or severely injured: Contemporary estimates ranged from one hundred to one thousand fatalities. The Old and New Churches survived, but the blast destroyed their precious stained-glass windows. The gunpowder magazine itself was utterly eradicated, leaving only a crater filled with water and measuring some 4.5 m in depth. Allegedly, the explosion could even be heard on Texel – an island located over one hundred kilometres from Delft.

The calamity elicited a variety of responses. Drawings, paintings, and prints disseminated poignant visual images of the explosion, as well as of the material and human losses of the tragedy (Fig. 2.1).² In addition, Dutch pamphlets, sermons, poems, and historiographies discussed the disaster, interpreting it in various ways. This chapter analyses a unique and hitherto unknown reaction to the Delft Thunderclap: a Latin poem by the prolific

2 On visual representations of the disaster, see, for example, Carolyn Logan, 'Recording the News. Herman Saftleven's *View of Delft after the Explosion of the Gunpowder Arsenal in 1654*', *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 31 (1996), 203–10; Markus Bertsch and Jörg Trempler (eds), *Entfesselte Natur. Das Bild der Katastrophe seit 1600*, exh. Hamburger Kunsthalle, 29 June–14 October 2018 (Petersberg: Imhof, 2018), 176–77.

Silesian-Polish polymath Joachim Pastorius (1611–1681), who wrote numerous works in verse and prose and who for many years formed a central figure in the cultural, academic, and political life of Royal Prussia – an integral part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, subject to the Polish king. In addition, Pastorius had a close, personal attachment to the United Provinces and maintained friendly relations with several Dutchmen. His poem about the Delft Thunderclap was first published in Gdańsk in 1657. It forms a short yet exceptional testimony, as to my knowledge it is the only literary reflection on the disaster written and printed outside the Low Countries.

After an introduction of Pastorius's life and works, I consider the intricate literary ties between seventeenth-century Gdańsk and the Northern Netherlands. This provides context for the following section, in which I analyse the poem about the Delft Thunderclap in comparison to other contemporary publications on the event. Lastly, I discuss the poem's main goals and social potential. I argue that Pastorius's verses acted as a tool for evoking feelings of transnational solidarity. Literary historian Marijke Meijer Drees referred to the works of medievalist Barbara Rosenwein to assert that Dutch seventeenth-century authors who responded to the Delft Thunderclap applied a so-called rhetoric of emotions as a social coping strategy.³ Rosenwein coined the concept of 'emotional communities': 'groups – usually, but not always social groups – that have their own particular values, modes of feeling, and ways to express those feelings'.⁴ She has disputed that these communities are the same as Brian Stock's textual communities, which revolve around an authoritative text.⁵ However, Meijer Drees has followed historian Jan Plamper in arguing that an emotional community can also have textual components when people are emotionally connected through written media.⁶ Pastorius's reaction to the Delft Thunderclap exemplifies this type of emotional community, fuelled by a disastrous event and constructed via written words. Importantly, moreover, as Pastorius poetically engaged

3 Marijke Meijer Drees, "Providential Discourse" Reconsidered. The Case of the Delft Thunderclap (1654)', *Dutch Crossing* 40: 2 (2016), 108–21, at 118.

4 Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling. A History of Emotions, 600–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 3. Rosenwein has studied various emotional communities, focusing predominantly on medieval written sources. See, for example, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (New York and London: Cornell University Press, 2006) and 'Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions', *Passions in Context* 1: 1 (2010), 1–32. For an introduction to Rosenwein's work, see Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions. An Introduction*, trans. Keith Tribe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 67–71.

5 Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *The American Historical Review* 107: 3 (2002), 821–45, at 842, n. 76.

6 Meijer Drees, "Providential Discourse" Reconsidered', 118.

with a calamity which occurred in another country, this chapter reveals that such emotional communities could also be transnational, connecting people over vast distances and across political, cultural, and linguistic borders. In addition, this chapter contributes to the study of the poetical culture of early modern Gdańsk and Dutch–Polish literary relations.

From Silesia via the Dutch Republic to Gdańsk

The author of the poem at the heart of this chapter was Joachim ab Hirtenberg Pastorius. It is uncertain where exactly he was in the fall of 1654: he worked in Gdańsk from at least 1655 onwards, and it has been suggested that he settled there in December the previous year, but there appears to be no hard evidence to support this claim.⁷ In any case, he must have written his poem about the Delft Thunderclap somewhere along the Polish Baltic coast. It is likely – though uncertain – that he disseminated it in the direct aftermath of the explosion, after which he published it in Gdańsk in 1657. In order to contextualise his verses, this section introduces Pastorius's life and works.

Pastorius was born in Głogów (Glogau), in Silesia, in a Protestant household.⁸ He studied in Leipzig and Halle and from 1631/32 until 1641 travelled around Europe as tutor of multiple Socinian/Arian and Calvinist Polish youths. Keeping pace with the wider European trend of the time, Polish noblemen of means as a rule went on extended educational journeys across the continent.⁹ Pastorius visited the Dutch Republic at least thrice

7 See Kazimierz Kubik, *Joachim Pastorius. Gdański pedagog XVII wieku* (Gdańsk: Gdańskie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1970), 19–20.

8 For more information about Pastorius's life and works, see A. Birch-Hirschfeld, 'Autobiografia Joachima Pastoriusa', *Reformacja w Polsce* 9–10 (1937–39), 473–77; Kubik, *Joachim Pastorius*; Stanisław Salmonowicz, 'Kazimierz Kubik: *Joachim Pastorius gdański pedagog XVII wieku. Gdańsk 1970 ...*', *Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki* 17: 1 (1972), 135–39; Andrzej Skrobacki, 'Testament sekretarza królewskiego, historiografa, lekarza i kanonika warmińskiego Joachima Pastoriusa', *Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie* 1–2 (1973), 73–92; Lech Mokrzecki, 'Joachim Pastorius – Dyrektor elbląskiego Gimnazjum Akademickiego', in Mokrzecki (ed.), *Wokół staropolskiej nauki i oświaty. Gdańsk-Prusy Królewskie-Rzeczpospolita* (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Gdańskie, 2001); Elżbieta Starek and Grzegorz Kotłowski, *Łacińskie inskrypcje w kościołach Warmii. Katedra we Fromborku* (Pelplin: Wydawnictwo Bernardinum, 2017), 230–33; Paul Hulsenboom and Alan Moss, 'Tracing the Sites of Learned Men. Places and Objects of Knowledge on the Dutch and Polish Grand Tour', in Koen Scholten, Dirk van Miert, and Karl A.E. Enenkel (eds), *Memory and Identity in the Learned World. Community Formation in the Early Modern World of Learning and Science* (Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, 2022), 257–306, at 282–90.

9 Literature on the subject is extensive. See, for example, Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg, 'Adelige Mobilität und Grand Tour im polnischen und litauischen Adel (1500–1700)', in Rainer Babel



Figure 2.2 *Joachim Pastorius*, painted portrait after a print by Johann Alexander Böner, c. 1700, part of Pastorius's epitaph in Frombork Cathedral. Source: Stanisława Czajkowska

and also sojourned to London, Oxford, Orléans, and Paris. While he was a tutor, he also followed classes himself, for example at the Amsterdam *Athenaeum Illustre* and the University of Leiden,¹⁰ where he obtained a doctorate in medicine. He befriended several Dutch scholars, moreover, such as Gerardus Joannes Vossius (1577–1649), Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), and Marcus Zuerius Boxhornius (1612–1653). Back in Poland, Pastorius worked as a doctor and – from 1651 onwards – as a professor of history, first at the *Gymnasium* in Elbląg (Elbing) and then in Gdańsk. Pastorius was appointed court historian in 1649, and he also served as a Polish diplomat, for example participating in the peace negotiations between the Swedes and Poles in 1660. Two years later he received a Polish nobleman's title. Pastorius changed his confession several times, alternating between Arianism, Calvinism, and

and Werner Paravicini (eds), *Grand Tour. Adeliges Reisen und Europäische Kultur vom 14. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2005), 309–40; Dorota Żołądz-Strzelczyk, *O przedsięwzięciu peregrynacyjnej. Edukacyjne wojaże szlachty z Rzeczypospolitej w świetle instrukcji podróżnych* (Warsaw: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2020), 17–57.

¹⁰ Pastorius's name features twice in Leiden's *album studiosorum*, in 1636 and 1641. See *Album Studiosorum Academiae Lugduno Batavae MDLXXV–MDCCCLXXV* (The Hague: Apud Martinum Nijhoff, 1875), 280, 321.

Lutheranism but ultimately converting to Catholicism. Towards the end of his life, Pastorius held various ecclesiastical positions. He lies buried in Frombork Cathedral, Poland (Fig. 2.2).¹¹ A street in Gdańsk is named after Pastorius, and his native Głogów honoured him with a statue in 2019.

Pastorius's career path, which led him from Silesia via the Dutch Republic to Gdańsk, was typical at the time. It has long been established that seventeenth-century Silesian-born authors had close relations with the Northern Netherlands and were heavily indebted to Dutch examples. Multiple writers from Silesia, such as Martin Opitz (1597–1639) and Andreas Gryphius (1616–1664), were influenced by the works of their Dutch acquaintances, particularly Daniel Heinsius (1580–1655).¹² Silesia was at that time part of the Habsburg Monarchy, but the cultural ties with neighbouring Poland were strong.¹³ A number of Silesian authors studied and/or settled in Gdańsk, bringing their Dutch-inspired verses with them. However, research concerning this type of literary reception has been dedicated almost exclusively to German plays and poems from the first half of the seventeenth century, mostly leaving out later material and largely disregarding works written and published in other languages, particularly Latin.¹⁴ Joachim Pastorius has therefore thus far been excluded from studies regarding Silesian–Dutch literary relations.

11 My thanks go out to Stanisława Czajkowska of Frombork Cathedral for supplying me with valuable secondary material about Pastorius's epitaph, as well as for allowing me to use a photograph of the epitaph in this chapter. On the epitaph, see Tadeusz Piaskowski and Henryk Szkop, *Zabytki Fromborka* (Frombork: Muzeum Mikołaja Kopernika we Fromborku, 2003), 70; Starek and Kotłowski, *Łacińskie inskrypcje*, 234–37.

12 See, for example, Ulrich Bornemann, *Anlehnung und Abgrenzung. Untersuchungen zur Rezeption der niederländischen Literatur in der deutschen Dichtungsreform des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Assen and Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1976); Ferdinand van Ingen, *Holländisch-deutsche Wechselbeziehungen in der Literatur des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Bonn: Presse- und Kulturabteilung der Kgl. Niederländische Botschaft, 1981); Stefan Kiedroń, 'De Silezische dichterscholen en de Nederlanden', *Neerlandica Extra Muros* 54 (1990), 63–69; Evgeny Kazartsev, 'Frühe deutsche Jamben und ihre niederländischen Vorbilder', *Neerlandica Wratislaviensia* XVIII (2009), 23–39; Evgeny Kazartsev, 'Niederländische Quellen von Martin Opitz' Versrhythmik', *Zeitschrift für Germanistik*, n.s. XXIII: 3 (2013), 499–509.

13 See Mirosława Czarnecka, 'Polnisch-deutsche Wechselbeziehungen in Kultur und Kommunikation im Barock', in Jan Papiór (ed.), *Polnisch-Deutsche Wechselbeziehungen im zweiten Millennium* (Bydgoszcz: Akademia Bydgoska, 2001), 130–53.

14 A few Latin exceptions are discussed in Stefan Kiedroń, 'Neerlandica uit de kring van Martin Opitz (1597–1639)', *Colloquium Neerlandicum. Nederlands in culturele context. Handelingen twaalfde Colloquium Neerlandicum* 12 (1994), 153–64; Ümmü Yüksel, 'Daniel Heinsius als Leitfigur auf dem Wege zur deutschen Kulturnation im Spannungsfeld von Latein und Landessprachen', in Tom Deneire (ed.), *Dynamics of Neo-Latin and the Vernacular. Language and Poetics, Translation and Transfer* (Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, 2014). These contributions do not consider literature from Gdańsk, however.

Pastorius left a vast oeuvre, the majority of which has yet to be examined.¹⁵ His most influential work, *Florus Polonicus* ('The Polish Florus'), a Latin study of Polish history, was first published in 1641 in Leiden by Franciscus Hegerus (born c. 1602).¹⁶ Besides this and other works in prose, such as pedagogical treatises and speeches, Pastorius wrote countless Latin poems. While some scholarly attention has been aimed at Pastorius the pedagogue and historiographer,¹⁷ his Latin poetical oeuvre is still largely unexplored.¹⁸ Many of his poems were occasional and separately printed, but Pastorius also produced several larger poetical collections. His compositions cover a wide range of subjects, from European travel destinations to Christian saints, and from foreign politics to Polish royalty. Much like his poem about the Delft Thunderclap, most of these works were published in Gdańsk. The following section therefore considers the poem's place within the contemporary literary world of Gdańsk, which maintained strong economic and cultural relations with the United Provinces.

Early Modern Literary Relations Between Gdańsk and the United Provinces

The seventeenth-century Dutch Republic and Gdańsk both prospered immensely from their mutual trade relations, which stretched back to the

15 For an extensive yet incomplete overview of his works, see Kubik, *Joachim Pastorius*, 199–210.

16 Joachim Pastorius, *Florus Polonicus Seu Poloniae Historiae Epitome Nova* (Leiden: Apud Franciscum Hegerum, 1641). On the *Florus Polonicus*, see Ignacy Lewandowski, '“Florus Polonicus” Joachima Pastoriusa', *Meander* 23: 11–12 (1968), 522–29 and Lewandowski, *Florus w Polsce* (Wrocław, Warsaw, and Kraków: Zakład Narodowy Imienia Ossolińskich and Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1970), 29–46. The book was reissued in Leiden in 1642, in Gdańsk in 1651, in Amsterdam in 1664, and in Gdańsk-Frankfurt in 1679. Kubik, *Joachim Pastorius*, 204 furthermore mentions editions printed in Leiden in 1648 and Gdańsk in 1669, but I have been unable to trace these versions. Moreover, Pastorius had at least one other book published in the United Provinces: Eustache de Refuge, *Aulicus Inculpatus*, trans. Joachim Pastorius (Amsterdam: Apud Lud. Elzevirium, 1644). A second edition of this Latin translation of an originally French courtier book was issued in 1649. A work on politics, also translated by Pastorius from French to Latin, has a title page hinting at an edition from Amsterdam, but its place of publication has been disputed: *Differentiae inter politicen genuinam ac diabolicam*, trans. Joachim Pastorius (Juxta Exemplar Amsterodami, 1659). Kubik, *Joachim Pastorius*, 208, 210 mentions two other titles published in the United Provinces, which I have not been able to verify.

17 Kubik, *Joachim Pastorius*, 115–87; Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg, *Frühneuzeitliche Nationen im östlichen Europa. Das polnische Geschichtsdenken und die Reichweite einer humanistischen Nationalgeschichte (1500–1700)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 207–11.

18 Pastorius's poems are discussed globally in Kubik, *Joachim Pastorius*, 46–55; Edmund Kotarski, *Gdańska poezja okolicznościowa XVII wieku* (Gdańsk: Instytut Bałtycki, 1993), passim.

medieval Hanseatic League. From c. 1590 onwards, Baltic commerce was dominated by Dutch merchants, particularly by tradesmen from Amsterdam. Gdańsk at that time formed the central commercial hub of the Baltic, as well as the largest and wealthiest city in Royal Prussia. It was also a highly cosmopolitan city, drawing in Germans, Poles, Silesians, Scandinavians, Dutchmen, and many others. The main commodities which the Dutch imported via Gdańsk were grain and timber. Conversely, traders in Gdańsk chiefly bought luxury wares from the Dutch, such as wines, fine linens, exotic fruits, and spices.¹⁹ In the second half of the seventeenth century, the Baltic grain trade went into decline, but relations between the Dutch Republic and Gdańsk remained strong. The United Provinces on several occasions worked hard to secure their trade with Gdańsk, most ostensibly so when they sent a war fleet to repel a Swedish force which threatened the port in 1656.²⁰ Symbolising the dependency of the young Dutch Republic on Baltic commerce – and hence especially on Gdańsk – is the phrase ‘the mother trade’, which the Grand Pensionary of Holland Johan de Witt (1625–1672) used to underline its importance in 1671.²¹

The close commercial ties between the United Provinces and Gdańsk, and the presence of Dutchmen in the city, went hand in hand with a flourishing cultural exchange, which lasted hundreds of years. The historical centre of Gdańsk has often been compared with Amsterdam, for example, due to the many houses with ‘Dutch’ façades. In fact, a number of architects and artists from the Low Countries designed and decorated several eye-catching buildings, such as the city’s Town Hall (Fig. 2.3). Various studies – mostly art historical – have focused on Dutch architects, engineers, painters, and

19 Literature on the Dutch Baltic trade is extensive. Historian Maria Bogucka has devoted numerous publications to the topic, with an emphasis on the commercial ties between Gdańsk and the United Provinces, particularly Amsterdam. See, for example, Maria Bogucka, ‘Amsterdam and the Baltic in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century’, *The Economic History Review* 2nd ser., 26: 3 (1973), 433–47; Maria Bogucka, ‘Dutch Merchants’ Activities in Gdańsk [sic] in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century’, in J.Ph.S. Lemmink and J.S.A.M. van Koningsbrugge (eds), *Baltic Affairs. Relations between the Netherlands and North-Eastern Europe, 1500–1800. Essays* (Nijmegen: INOS, 1990), 19–32.

20 Nicolaas Frans Noordam, *De Republiek en de Noordse Oorlog 1655–1660* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1940), 25–43. On the presence of the Dutch in the Baltic during the (long) seventeenth century more broadly, see Francis J. Bowman, ‘Dutch Diplomacy and the Baltic Grain Trade, 1600–1660’, *Pacific Historical Review* 5: 4 (1936), 337–48; Anja Tjaden, ‘The Dutch in the Baltic, 1544–1721’, in Göran Rystad, Klaus-R. Böhme, and Wilhelm M. Carlgren (eds), *In Quest of Trade and Security. The Baltic in Power Politics, 1500–1990* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1994), 61–136.

21 Milja van Tielhof, *The ‘Mother of all Trades’. The Baltic Grain Trade in Amsterdam from the Late 16th to the Early 19th Century* (Leiden, Cologne, and Boston, MA: Brill, 2002), 5.



Figure 2.3 The Town Hall in Gdańsk, engraving in Jan Lodewijk Schuer, *Beknopte Beschryving Van de Stadt Dantzic* (Amsterdam: Janssoons van Waesberge, 1735). Warsaw University Library, S.8.152

engravers who were active in Gdańsk.²² Other areas of cultural interaction, for instance those relating to book production or diplomatic practices, constitute equally promising yet largely untouched fields of research. Similarly, scholars have barely scratched the surface of the early modern literary relations between Gdańsk and the United Provinces.

Seventeenth-century Gdańsk was a thriving centre of literature and learning. The city boasted a *Gymnasium Academicum*, founded in 1558, as well as several printing companies. Moreover, the City Council was an active patron of poetry.²³ Throughout the century, therefore, local authors wrote an abundance of (mostly occasional) poems. The richness of their literary productivity can be viewed in the PAN Biblioteka Gdańska (Polish Academy of Sciences Library in Gdańsk), which houses a wealth of occasional compositions, both printed and handwritten. Older German studies of this material have mainly focused on its presumed 'Germanness', while Polish scholarship has brought to the fore works with a strong Polish connection.²⁴ However, the collection in the PAN Biblioteka Gdańska contains numerous poems on international relations and foreign topics, such as royal marriages, the deaths of monarchs, or wars and peace treaties. This rich poetical heritage should invite scholars to examine the cosmopolitan outlook of seventeenth-century Gdańsk.²⁵

The city's ties with the Northern Netherlands are particularly well-represented: a comparatively high number of poems in the PAN Biblioteka Gdańska – mostly written in Latin, but also German and Dutch – relate to the United Provinces. For example, local authors eulogised Dutch diplomats

22 See, for example, Teresa Sulerzyska, 'Ryciny Cornelisa van Dalen w siedemnastowiecznych drukach gdańskich', *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 39: 4 (1977), 325–55; Teresa Grzybkowska, 'Niderlandyzm w sztuce gdańskiej', in Teresa Hrankowska (ed.), *Niderlandyzm w sztuce polskiej* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1995), 11–18; Juliette Roding, 'Dutch Architects and Engineers in Danzig and the Southern Baltic in the 16th and 17th centuries', in J.J. van Baak (ed.), *The Baltic. Languages and Cultures in Interaction. Proceedings NOMES-Conference, 19 & 20 May, 1994* (= *Tijdschrift voor Skandinavistiek* 16: 2 (1995)), 223–35.

23 See Edmund Kizik, 'Remuneration for Works Dedicated or Donated to the City Council of Gdańsk in the 17th century', *Polish Libraries* 2 (2014), 167–79.

24 The principal German example, which was plainly guided by nationalist sympathies, is Heinz Kindermann, *Danziger Barockdichtung* (Leipzig: Philipp Reclam, 1939). The seminal Polish work on seventeenth-century occasional poetry from Gdańsk is Kotarski, *Gdańska poezja*. Kotarski's study mostly deals with Latin and German poems in honour of Polish royalty, as well as local magistrates, soldiers, and scholars.

25 For a helpful overview of Gdańsk's seventeenth-century literary culture, see Astrid Dröse, *Georg Greflinger und das weltliche Lied im 17. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 50–77. Dröse acknowledges that a full examination of the matter is still lacking. A valuable case study is provided by Dick van Stekelenburg, *Michael Albinus 'Dantiscanus' (1610–1653)* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987).

and admirals, bewailed the deaths of Dutch soldiers, and responded in horror to the so-called 'Disaster Year' of 1672. Many of these verses were original to Gdańsk, while others were republished or copied by hand from other sources. All this testifies to a considerable local interest in and literary engagement with the Northern Netherlands. Pastorius's composition about the Delft Thunderclap not only forms part of the history of Silesian-Dutch literary relations, but it also fits into a rich context of internationally oriented and specifically Dutch-themed poetry from Gdańsk.

Such poems could have diverse functions. For instance, if they were recited during banquets or handed to foreign ambassadors as tokens of friendship, they acted as diplomatic tools stressing mutual relations.²⁶ This chapter reveals how poetry from Gdańsk could serve yet another purpose: to express feelings of international solidarity and thus shape an emotional community which transgressed state borders, specifically those between the Dutch Republic and Poland. Pastorius was a central figure in this development. Indeed, his poem about the Delft Thunderclap is not the only one in his oeuvre to have a Dutch connection, as he wrote numerous verses which directly concern the United Provinces.

Pastorius regularly engaged with Dutch topics throughout his literary career. To begin with, he authored a series of flattering (and at times humorous) Latin compositions about interesting sights and travel destinations in the Northern Netherlands, based on his own sojourns in the 1630s, as well as poems in honour of several Dutch men of letters and Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678), one of the most renowned female scholars of her time. These verses were first published in 1644 by Daniel Vetter (1592–1669) in Leszno (Lissa), a stronghold of Polish Protestantism.²⁷ Subsequently, Pastorius composed a number of Latin poems about the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665–67), which were published in Gdańsk. They lament the death of the Dutch admiral Jacob van Wassenaer Obdam (1610–1665), for instance, and celebrate the eventual peace.²⁸ Chronologically speaking, the piece

26 On the role played by poetry in diplomatic encounters between the Dutch Republic and Gdańsk, see Paul Hulsenboom, 'Diplomats as Poets, Poets as Diplomats. Poetic Gifts and Literary Reflections on the Dutch Mediations between Poland-Lithuania and Sweden in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century', *Legatio* 3 (2019), 63–110, at 74–76, 97–100.

27 Joachim Pastorius, *Heroes Sacri, Musa Peregrinans, Flos Poloniae, & Epigrammata Varia* (Leszno: Ex Typogr. Danielis Vetteri, 1644). The poems in this edition were partly republished in Gdańsk in 1653. Several of these compositions are discussed in Hulsenboom and Moss, 'Tracing the Sites', 285–90. The poems also feature prominently in my forthcoming dissertation.

28 These are preserved in Gdańsk: Joachim Pastorius, *In luctuosum Illustris Viri, Baronis Wassenarii Dni. de Opdam Prothalassiarchi Batavi fatum* [1665], kept in the PAN Biblioteka

about the Delft Thunderclap is nestled between these two clusters of verses, as it dates from after Pastorius's international travels but before the Second Anglo-Dutch War. Thematically, too, the poem obviously differs from the rest. It is a relatively stand-alone occasional composition, but it ties in neatly with the literary interest Pastorius displayed for the United Provinces from the 1630s onwards.²⁹ In short, the poem forms a potent example of the literary side of 'the mother trade', which has thus far remained unstudied and in which Pastorius held a key position.

Published in Poland, Inspired by Dutch Sources

The poem can be found in Pastorius's *Sylvarum Pars Secunda*, published in Gdańsk in 1657. This is the second part of the author's *Sylvae*, a two-volume collection of Latin verses on all manner of subjects, divided into seven 'books'. According to the title page of part one, which is dated 1656, the tomes were printed at the author's own expense. The piece on the Delft Thunderclap features in book four, which mainly contains poems dedicated to Polish nobles and dignitaries from Gdańsk. It also comprises a number of compositions in honour of the author's Dutch acquaintances, which had previously been published in the 1644 edition from Leszno. The verses about the disaster in Delft thus align with book four's partly Dutch theme and further strengthen Pastorius's relationship with the United Provinces. This section offers a close reading of the poem and considers its possible sources of inspiration.

The piece is entitled 'On the City of Delft, which has been sadly scorched by gunpowder':

The Citizen who shone most beautifully amongst the Batavian Cities,
 Nourished by a calm bay of the tranquil sea –
 Oh! – now lies scattered by the flames of a sulphur storm,
 And burnt, she searches for herself in her own ruins.
 And she hardly finds herself remaining in any part,
 [But] – alas! – she has become her own burial, funeral pyre, and pile.

Gdańska, Oe 13, 216; Joachim Pastorius, *In Pacem Bredanam inter Magna Britanniae Regem et Foederati Belgii Ordines* [1667], kept in the PAN Biblioteka Gdańska, Oe 7, 245.

²⁹ Another example is a Latin poem by Pastorius in honour of the Dutch diplomat and classicist Nicolaas Heinsius. See Nicolaas Heinsius, *Poematum Nova Editio, Prioribus Longe Auctior* (Amsterdam: Apud Danielelem Elzevirium, 1666), 'Adoptivorum carminum libri duo', 37–38.

The tower-bearing monuments groaned under the polluted sky,
 And the approaching flame terrified the Gods themselves.
 Houses rushed against houses, bodies which were entirely
 Parched by murderous alkali flew through the air.
 Together with a host of students, the afflicted Lyceums burned,
 And the entire scorched City already bewails her sons.
 And while she laments that her people's sweet hope has been cut down,
 She says that she has perished here twice on one funeral pile.
 Learn, mortals, to confide in arms more carefully,
 And may your own weapons inspire you with fear.
 For if fate will so decide, that with which we used to strike our enemy,
 Will itself become our death-dealing foe.³⁰

As Pastorius personified the city, the poem constitutes a fitting parallel with the book's verses addressed to specific Dutchmen. The composition has a clear structure. First, Pastorius highlights the supposedly exceptional beauty and calmness of Delft prior to the explosion. Although the city does not actually border the sea, it does lie relatively close to it, leading Pastorius to imagine Delft in a peaceful bay. This tranquil scene is immediately shattered, however, as the poem suddenly describes the ruinous state of the city after the catastrophe. Indeed, the detonation even appears to have erased Delft off the map in its entirety. This contrast between serene beauty and total devastation intensifies the sense of tragedy. Next, Pastorius discusses the explosion itself, highlighting the threat posed to the 'tower-bearing monuments' (i.e. the Old and New Churches), the fires which scorched the city, and the blast which demolished houses and sent corpses flying. The poem then concentrates on the destruction of local schools and the death of young students – facts which are represented as particularly lamentable. Furthermore, the verse about the repeated perishing of Delft 'on one funeral pile' probably refers to the fire which consumed the city

30 *'De Urbe Delphensi pulvere pyrio miserè ustulatâ, / Quae Batavas inter pulcherrima splenduit Urbes / Tranquilli placido Civis Alumna sinu, / Nunc ah sulphureae facibus jacet icta procellae, / Seq[ue] in ruderibus quaerit adusta suis. / Vixq[ue] aliquâ sese reperit sibi parte relictam, / Funus, & heu! bustum facta roqusq[ue] sibi. / Turrigeræ vapido crepuère sub aethere moles, / Attonuitq[ue] ipsos flamma propinqua Deos. / Concurrere domus domibus: per inane volarunt / Corpora, fulmineo torrida tota nitro. / Cum grege discentum correpta arsere Lycea, / Totaq[ue] jam natos Urbs gemit usta suos. / Spemq[ue] sibi dulcem generis cecidisse quiritans, / Sese, ait, hîc uno bis periisse rogo. / Discite mortales confidere cautiùs armis, / Incutiantq[ue] animis propria tela metum. / Nam si fata volent, quo pellere suevimus hostem, / Hoc ipsum nobis lethifer hostis erit.'* Joachim Pastorius, *Sylvarum Pars Secunda* (Gdańsk: 1657), 33–34. Translation from Latin is mine. I thank Michiel Sauter for his valuable comments.

in 1536. This accentuates the author's knowledge of Delft's tragic history. Finally, Pastorius uses the Dutch calamity to formulate a lesson aimed at 'mortals' in general, urging them to consider the fickleness of fate and take care with their own weaponry. On the one hand, therefore, the poem bewails the doom of Delft specifically, while on the other, it bears a more universal message.

Pastorius did not fashion his response to the Delft Thunderclap out of nowhere. Instead, Dutch sources – which could reach Poland in a matter of weeks – guided his imagination and his pen. Considering his longstanding ties with and interest in the Northern Netherlands, it is safe to assume that Pastorius had mastered the Dutch language. Perhaps he received word of the disaster via one or more of his Dutch contacts. In fact, I would argue that it is particularly likely that Pastorius was sent news about the Thunderclap by one of his closest Dutch friends: Joannes Naeranus (1608–1679). Naeranus was a Dutch Remonstrant and publisher active in Rotterdam, who had lived and travelled in Poland for several years and corresponded with various members of the Polish Brethren (also known as Socinians/Arians), to which Pastorius himself also for some time belonged.³¹

Extant letters reveal that Pastorius and Naeranus corresponded from the 1630s until at least 1650 and regularly sent each other books.³² In addition, Pastorius had published a Latin poem in honour of Naeranus in 1644, which he also included in the *Sylvarum Pars Secunda*, several pages after his reaction to the Delft Thunderclap.³³ Importantly, Naeranus was the publisher of a five-page Dutch letter dated 13 October 1654 – i.e. a day after the explosion.³⁴ The anonymous letter addresses an unnamed 'good friend' and dramatically discusses the tragedy of Delft, mourning the immense destruction of the city and loss of human life. The text also draws attention to the ruin of two local schools and the deaths of forty-eight pupils and a teacher. It is possible that this information provoked Pastorius's verse about the unfortunate students and 'afflicted Lyceums' of Delft. Considering the companionship between the two men and the letter Naeranus published

31 On the correspondence between Pastorius and Naeranus, see Sibbe Jan Visser, *Samuel Naeranus (1582–1641) en Johannes Naeranus (1608–1679). Twee remonstrantse theologen op de bres voor godsdienstige verdraagzaamheid* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2011), 171–73.

32 Visser, *Samuel Naeranus*, 173, 511–12.

33 Pastorius, *Sylvarum Pars Secunda*, 47.

34 *Brief Uyt Delft Verhalende de Gruwelijke en Verschrikkelijke Ruine van een groot gedeelte der zelve Stad, door het op-springen van het Kruid-huys aldaar. Geschied op den 12. October 1654* (Rotterdam: By Joannes Naeranus, 1654).

shortly after the Thunderclap, it seems likely that Pastorius learned about the disaster via his Dutch friend. Perhaps Pastorius received a copy of the letter, which may have motivated him to write his poem.

However, he probably found concrete inspiration in another source. As stated in this chapter's introduction, multiple Dutch authors responded to the catastrophe, offering a variety of interpretations in both prose and poetry.³⁵ The best-known testimony about the Delft Thunderclap is a Dutch composition by the renowned poet Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679), in which he considered three either mythical or historical disasters, before turning to the calamity of Delft itself. The poem was published as a broadsheet, addressed to the mayor of Amsterdam. It was also included in other publications, for example in a pamphlet about the Thunderclap, issued in Amsterdam in 1654.³⁶ The poems by Vondel and Pastorius show a number of noteworthy similarities.

First, both pieces echo Virgil's *Aeneid*. Vondel's poem does so most clearly, carrying verse II.368 as its motto: 'plurima mortis imago' ('death in multiple guises'), which occurs in a passage narrating the destruction of ancient Troy. Pastorius's comments about the engagement of 'the Gods' and the scattering of dead bodies throughout Delft are reminiscent of the same passage. In addition, several details in both poems are similar. Vondel described the Thunderclap as follows:

In Delft, where against style and order,
Our powder, turned into the country's enemy,
Spares neither town hall nor church,
And delves a citizens' grave for Delft,
Dug in rouble, human flesh, and waves
Of smouldering ash and glass.³⁷

35 On Dutch literary reactions to the Delft Thunderclap, see G.C. Kunz and D.P. Oosterbaan (with G.G. Kunz), 'Buskruitram was "straf op de zonden"', in Houtzager et al., *Kruit en krijg*, 53–64; Timna Hacquebord, 'Herinnering aan De Delftse Donderslag', unpublished student thesis, Universiteit van Groningen, 2014; Meijer Drees, "Providential Discourse" Reconsidered'.

36 Joost van den Vondel, *Op het Onweder van 's Lants Bussekruit te Delft* (Amsterdam: Voor de weduwe van Abraham de Wees, 1654); Jan Philipsz. Schabaelje, *Historisch Verhael / Van het wonderlick en schrickelick opspringen van 't Magasyn-Huys, Voor-gevallen op den 12. October, 1654. Binnen Delft* (Amsterdam: Gedrukt by Tymon Houthaeck, 1654), fols 14v–[15r]. The poem was also reprinted in editions of Vondel's oeuvre, as well as in a 1667 description of Delft.

37 'Te Delf, daer, tegens styl en orden, / Ons kruit, 's lants vyandin geworden, / Stadthuis ontziet, noch kerckgewelf, / En delft een burgergraf voor Delf, / In puin, en mensevleesch, en golven / Van gloejende assche en glas gedolven'. Joost van den Vondel, *De werken van Vondel*, ed. J.F.M. Sterck, H.W.E. Moller, C.G.N. de Vooyts et al., 10 vols, vol. 5: 1645–1656 (Amsterdam:

Much like Pastorius, Vondel depicted the exploded gunpowder as its owners' enemy.³⁸ Moreover, Vondel also mentioned some of the characteristic buildings of the city, and in a manner resembling Pastorius conjured up an image of Delft as a grave – something which results in a play on words in both Dutch ('delft ... Delf') and English ('delves ... Delft'). Lastly, whereas some observers represented the tragedy as God's punishment for the sinfulness of Delft's inhabitants, Vondel refrained from any references to divine retribution and ended by saying that '[one may] build for a century and [spend] Croesus's treasure, / [but] one spark, one moment destroys a city'.³⁹ Vondel thus voiced a universal message about the unpredictability of fate, comparable to the idea defined by Pastorius. In my opinion, all of these parallels together convincingly suggest that Pastorius knew and was directly inspired by Vondel's poem.

Disaster Poetry as a Transnational Community Builder

This leaves one final question: Why did Pastorius write a poem about the Delft Thunderclap? To begin with, the event may have struck a personal chord with Pastorius. Not only had he written about the Dutch Republic before, but he also had an interest in Delft specifically. His 1644 collection of travel verses contains a flattering epigram about the funerary monument of William (1533–1584) and Maurice of Orange (1567–1625) in the town's New Church, hinting that Pastorius had visited the city himself.⁴⁰ Delft was not a distant, abstract location for Pastorius, therefore, but rather a city with which he had a personal history and previous literary attachment. Additionally, his connection with the New Church informs the focus in the poem about the Thunderclap on the 'tower-bearing monuments'. To Pastorius, the churches were probably the most familiar sights of Delft. This may be why he gave them pride of place in his description of the explosion. Similarly, the losses suffered by the schools of Delft may have moved Pastorius in particular because of his own background as a teacher and tutor, leading him to emphasise the sad fate of the town's young population. Therefore,

De Maatschappij voor goede en goedkoope lectuur, 1931), 822. Translation from Dutch is mine.

38 The Dutch poet Jeremias de Decker applied the same motif. See his *Gedichten* (Amsterdam: Gedrukt by Jacob Colom, 1656), 74.

39 'Verbouw een eeuw, en Krezus schat: / Een vonck, een blick verwoest een stadt'. Vondel, *De werken van Vondel*, vol. 5: 1645–1656, 823.

40 Pastorius, *Heroes Sacri*, 17.

one of the reasons Pastorius wrote about the tragedy of Delft may have been to personally cope with the disaster.

Pastorius also had more ambitious goals, however, aimed at an international readership. There is no evidence that he had his poem published in 1654, but he undoubtedly composed and disseminated it either in printed or manuscript form soon after the disaster, when it was still newsworthy. Considering his use of Latin, it is likely that Pastorius's main audience consisted of fellow men of letters, both in Poland and abroad. For example, he probably sent one or more copies of the poem to Joannes Naeranus. When he published the piece in Gdańsk in 1657, furthermore, he obviously believed that there was a market for it – though the volume's print run is unknown. The topic of the poem aligns with the aforementioned cosmopolitan character of Gdańsk and the city's strong relations with the United Provinces in particular. Pastorius must have hoped that his literary skills and knowledge of Dutch history and news would impress learned audiences in Poland and the Northern Netherlands alike. The poem about the Delft Thunderclap was one of the ways in which Pastorius participated in the transnational Republic of Letters, linking the United Provinces and Poland specifically.

While doing so, moreover, Pastorius showed a strong emotional commitment. This is evidenced by the contents of the poem itself. Marijke Meijer Drees has argued that Dutch responses to the Delft Thunderclap applied a so-called rhetoric of emotions.⁴¹ As explained in this chapter's introduction, Meijer Drees has taken Rosenwein's concept of emotional communities and expanded it with a textual component. Following the time's literary theories, authors often used a common set of narratological tools when lamenting disasters. For example, writers elaborated on the horrors of catastrophes and filled their readers' hearts with fear for their own lives. One of their primary aims was to arouse feelings of compassion in their audiences. Pastorius did just that. He focused on several terrible details, such as scorched bodies and burned-down schools, and warned his readers to avoid sharing this tragic fate. Furthermore, he used a number of emotionally charged words and images: even the Gods were 'terrified', and the destroyed city – trying in vain to recover herself – 'bewails' and 'laments' the death of her children. The author also added two outcries of despair ('ah' and 'ehéu!'), thus expressing his own anguish. Through these rhetorical devices, Pastorius engaged in emotional persuasion. As had many Dutch observers, he urged his readers to feel compassion with Delft and its population.

41 Meijer Drees, "Providential Discourse" Reconsidered', 115–18.

Pastorius thus inspired a sense of transnational solidarity and social cohesion: an emotional community of authors and readers in the United Provinces and Poland. Herein lies the uniqueness of Pastorius's contribution: not only did he fashion an emotional community via a written text, but he also transcended political, cultural, and linguistic borders across Northern Europe. Through his poem, written nearly a thousand kilometres from the scene of tragedy, Pastorius inscribed himself into the same emotional community to which Naeranus, Vondel, and other Dutch authors belonged. Using familiar rhetorical tools, he entered their mournful narrative about Delft and joined their appeal for compassion with the victims. Indeed, he even personified the city, thereby giving his poem an additional personal level: Delft is effectively placed on the same plane as Pastorius's Dutch friends and acquaintances. His verses about the disaster in Delft constituted both a sign and a building block of a transnational emotional community of men of letters, which stretched from the Dutch Republic to Poland and vice versa. Tragic though it was, the Delft Thunderclap provided Pastorius with the ideal opportunity to reinforce this emotional community by means of his literary toolkit.

Conclusion

This chapter contributes to the study of early modern Dutch–Polish literary relations by bringing into focus the Silesian-Polish polymath Joachim Pastorius, whose career path and vast oeuvre made him a key figure in a community of intellectuals living in Holland and Gdańsk. His poem about the Delft Thunderclap offers a potent case study hereof. Even though his indebtedness to Naeranus cannot be proven beyond all doubt, it is likely that Pastorius's personal contacts with Dutch men of letters were instrumental for spreading news and literature from the United Provinces to Poland. Additionally, the parallels with Vondel almost certainly form a rare example of this Dutch literary giant's imprint on the Polish Baltic shore. In turn, Pastorius's verses demonstrate that these Dutch–Polish literary relations were not a one-way street, but could also inspire a response.

The poem by Pastorius is a unique testimony, moreover, as it reveals how the Delft Thunderclap of 1654 left a mark far beyond the Northern Netherlands. The piece exemplifies the value of expanding our perspective across the Dutch borders. Much can be gained by asking how and why people in other parts of the world engaged with disasters in the United Provinces, and what effects their reactions had, both locally and abroad. The case of

Pastorius and the Delft Thunderclap shows that large and terrible calamities carried the potential to manifest and construct transnational emotional communities via written texts. The poem was composed by an author with a powerful personal attachment to the Dutch Republic and published in a city with a similarly strong connection. Pastorius further emphasised these bonds by including his address to Delft amongst his poems to learned friends and acquaintances in the Northern Netherlands. What is more, by applying a well-known rhetorical framework, Pastorius was able to use the disaster to deepen a transnational sense of solidarity and social cohesion between the United Provinces and Poland, and between Delft and Gdańsk in particular. It seems that a dramatic event like the Delft Thunderclap was pre-eminently suited to forge an emotional community – even if its members were separated by a considerable distance. Pastorius helped shape an emotional community of intellectuals living in Northern Europe, bridging Poland and the Dutch Republic.

The case study discussed in this chapter illustrates the possibilities and payoffs of research into the literary side of ‘the mother trade’. It has been made clear that a ‘Dutch reading’ greatly benefits our understanding of Gdańsk’s early modern literary heritage. Scholarship devoted to the production, circulation, and uses of literature in seventeenth-century Gdańsk should take into account the city’s cosmopolitan character and its cultural interwovenness with the Northern Netherlands in particular. Conversely, a focus on Gdańsk would enhance our knowledge of the early modern transnational impact of Dutch textual culture, especially in Poland. In addition, it would inform our awareness of Poland’s place within the early modern Republic of Letters, the study of which tends to concentrate on countries in present-day Western Europe. The intricate workings of the seventeenth-century literary interaction between Holland and Gdańsk thus offer new and promising lines of inquiry within the rich field of Dutch–Polish historical relations.

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Het doorbreken van de Rhyne-en-Yssel-Dyken
in't begin des Jaers 1754.

Figure 3.1 Simon Fokke, *Breaching of the Rhine and IJssel Dykes*, 1754, etching, 16.5 × 10.7 cm, published in *Nederlandsche jaerboeken*, vol. 4 (Amsterdam: Frans Houttuyn, 1754). Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1960-400