

Boiling chickens and burning cats: witchcraft in the western Netherlands, 1850–1925

Willem de Blécourt

Towards the end of the nineteenth century The Hague newspapers reported that in a village between Gouda and Rotterdam a child was bewitched. The parents consulted an unwitcher who advised that they boil a live black chicken. This would draw the witch to the house of the bewitched. That evening, as the spell was enacted, it so happened that an old woman walked by. She was pulled inside and forced to unwitch the child, that is to say, to bless it. At the time this was certainly not an extraordinary account. Neither did it concern a 'single narrow-minded individual'. To the horror of the newspaper editors the whole village population participated in the 'witchcraft story' and this even 'in the centre of our fatherland'.¹ Yet today's historians pay attention to this and other cases of witchcraft in inverse proportion to the zeal with which such 'superstition' was combated at the time. In the historiography of the western Netherlands one searches in vain for discussion on witchcraft in this period.² The end of the nineteenth century is rather associated with a renewal of industrialization and improving communications than with witchcraft. This can at least partly be ascribed to the concept of culture that is current among historians who deal with this period. This concept is barely coloured by anthropology and therefore offers hardly any room for what has come to be called the history of everyday life.³

In this chapter I will apply an anthropological perspective. This way I will show what thinking and acting in terms of witchcraft, in short the witchcraft discourse, implied for the way people dealt with space and to a lesser extent with time, as well as for what they thought about the body. This analysis is embedded in an discussion about the bewitched, the people they suspected of bewitchments, and the people they called in to help them. The prevention of witchcraft will figure, too. It should also be clear from the outset that I do not consider manifestations of witchcraft as 'remains of magical thinking' mixed up with Christian elements, and which would be labelled as 'emotional' in contrast to 'rational' or 'sober-minded'.⁴ Witchcraft, I will argue here, has its own logic that is neither more nor less rational than

other ways of thinking.⁵ This becomes especially evident when considering the underlying ideas about the 'second body'. In everyday life there is also no contradiction between witchcraft and religion since the former is strongly interwoven with religious opinions.

The geographical boundaries applied here have been derived from the work of Jozien Jobse-van Putten about self-support in the Netherlands. By the 'western' Netherlands she understands 'a continuous area ... which included almost the whole of the provinces of North- and South-Holland and the western part of the province of Utrecht'. Compared to the other regions that can be discerned within the Netherlands, this area is characterized by a high degree of urbanization, a market economy and therefore a very low level of self-support. This kind of regional categorization is imbued with cultural relevance.⁶ Since witchcraft serves to ascribe individual misfortune to others, it may also be considered as an expression of dependence within a community. It seems therefore reasonable to study it within a relatively homogeneous area where this dependence was less pronounced than elsewhere in the Netherlands.

Documentation and occurrence

Another reason for the neglect of witchcraft in the western Netherlands during the decades around 1900 can be found in Hans de Waardt's thesis on the subject. Although it is primarily concerned with the period up to 1800, the author thought research into manifestations beyond the eighteenth century was hardly fruitful. 'The witchcraft histories from this period can be characterized as isolated incidents,' he remarked. Furthermore, 'The belief in witchcraft was restricted to a fairly small group of people and it was no longer a social issue.'⁷ These conclusions hardly invite further attention. They are not based on substantial research, however, and are part and parcel of the author's hypothesis about witchcraft's steady decline since the end of the sixteenth century.⁸ In the supplements to his book, De Waardt refers to nine reports from the newspapers the *Nieuwe Gorinchemse Courant* and the *Schiedamsche Courant*, without informing his readers much about their content. Yet seven of the reports are dated between 1873 and 1882 and such a concentration of cases would, had it been found in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, easily have led us to call it an accusational peak. Moreover, newspapers actually reported many more cases. An indication of this can be found in the *Monthly* of the Society for the Repression of Quackery, which between 1893 and 1897 copied several reports from the *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*, one of the main Dutch newspapers. But since newspapers from the western Netherlands have not yet been systematically searched for information on the subject of witchcraft, I will mainly draw on newspapers from the province of Drenthe.⁹ They reported about fifty cases from the western Netherlands,

mainly in the second half of the nineteenth century. Editors from the eastern Netherlands liked to print reports on witchcraft from the west of the country, if only to relativize the image that 'superstition' was mainly rampant in the east. 'A striking example of superstition is reported, not from Drente or the Achterhoek [in the east of the province of Gelderland], but from Sliedrecht, one of the most prosperous villages in our country', the *Dordtsche Courant* wrote in 1894.¹⁰ This prepared the reader to have his expectations dashed and at the same time it showed that these expectations were realistic. If witchcraft was of such little social importance at the time why was there so much journalistic attention?

To counter the notion of 'incidental' cases, it can be suggested that around 1900 witchcraft was still an integral part of people's experience, especially in the countryside. Intellectuals may have been sceptical, though some nevertheless eagerly participated in new 'superstitions' like spiritism and magnetism,¹¹ but this does not mean that today's historians have to emulate them. For it was a contemporary conclusion that witchcraft was still prevalent. For example the Dutch specialist Enklaar stated in his leaflet on 'superstition', after having discussed fortune-tellers: 'The medical practitioners in the countryside would be able to tell us a lot about a form of superstition which exceeds in importance all those mentioned earlier. I mean the belief in witches, which still reveals itself in many ways.'¹² This does not imply that the documentation of the witchcraft discourse becomes less fragmentary and anecdotal. This is especially the case with criminal justice material. Certainly, witchcraft may no longer have been persecuted, but the police could get involved when violence was employed to remove witchcraft or when an unwitchment specialist broke the law regarding the unlicensed practice of medicine. Only occasionally, however, did such events end up in court. Witchcraft was a subject 'which one often hears mentioned in the countryside, but which seldom leads to a criminal trial'.¹³ When cases were tried, they are mainly to be found through newspaper reports.

Next to the newspaper reports, the responses to a survey carried out by the Bureau of Folklore in the 1930s offer the most complete overview of witchcraft's distribution, although this is not totally reliable. Questions focused primarily on how to recognize witches. For the western Netherlands positive answers were returned from (small) places such as Bergen, Halfweg, Laren, Wilnis, Maassluis, Hoogvliet, Oud-Beierland and Schoonhoven.¹⁴ Since the question presumed an active witchcraft discourse, this indicates that witchcraft was still reasonably widespread outside the big cities. Moreover, there are reasons to overvalue rather than to undervalue the responses. The Germanist Jan de Vries, who supervised the folklore research, found at the time that the folklorist was offered few chances to discover anything about witches: 'the minister and the teacher will tell him with indignation that these kinds of medieval practices have not occurred in his community within living

memory. If he asked a farmer about it, then he will think that the stranger had come to make a fool of him.’¹⁵ The number of positive responses could thus have been larger. Comparison with the newspaper reports underlines the diffidence that lies hidden in the negative responses. For the town of Hoorn, for instance, the answer was simply: ‘People don’t believe in witches’, while reports from around 1860 nevertheless point to the contrary, and complaints about ‘superstitious’ ‘backwardness’ were still expressed in the early twentieth century.¹⁶ Even affirmative answers may well have been distorted, for example when witchcraft was placed too far back into the past. The taboos surrounding witchcraft made it into a ‘superstition’ that, when discussed at all, was ascribed to others. It concerned the inhabitants of another village, or another province, or members of the ‘lower classes of the populace’ or the ‘rabble’.¹⁷ It was therefore rarely possible to collect the expressions of the very believers themselves. Cornelis Bakker, a general practitioner in Broek in Waterland, just north of Amsterdam, and a student of ‘folk medicine’ and related matters, began to collect stories and information at the end of the nineteenth century. He made the following observation: ‘People who know witchcraft stories, do not like to tell them to more educated people, since they are often derided for their stupid superstition.’¹⁸ Only intensive research could yield results. ‘Because we have been here very long, we got to know the stories which were anxiously concealed,’ a dialectologist wrote about Volendam and Marken.¹⁹

Not only the accusers but also those who were considered to be witches could have their reasons for reticence. Thus in 1886 a judge in the court of Dordrecht asked a man from ’s-Gravendeel, whose house had been invaded and whose wife had been compelled to carry out an unwitchment, whether he did not belittle the matter ‘because he was afraid of new upsurges of violence’? But the couple maintained that the accused who had forced his way into their house ‘was a good boy who did not want to harm them’. This led to an acquittal for lack of evidence.²⁰ As late as the 1960s people on the island of Goeree, south of Rotterdam, were afraid to tell ‘witch stories’.²¹ And when people were willing to discuss witchcraft it still did not imply that they would tell everything. The reports that survive are often superficial.

After Bakker, systematic oral research into all kinds of ‘folk belief’ was only taken up again in the 1960s. The informants interrogated at this time had come to consider witchcraft as a thing of the past – at least this is what they conveyed to their interviewers. ‘With us in Lopik there used to live three witches,’ said a factory worker from Haastrecht, south of Gouda; ‘My aunt also lived next to one.’ Others expressed themselves likewise: ‘Some time ago people said, that there lived a witch in Ameide along the dyke.’ ‘There used to be old women in Sliedrecht who were able to bewitch.’ Occasionally it was explained that ‘some time ago’ meant ‘a long time ago’, but mostly it probably concerned the period around 1900. ‘We were only

school kids,' said a cattle farmer, born in Stolwijk in 1893, while talking about a local witch.²² These expressions, collected by Henk Kooijman in the river area east of Rotterdam can be supplemented by the research of Engelbert Heupers which covered the region of Het Gooi, east of Amsterdam. A woman from Huizen, for instance, told the collector about her parents' experiences with the members of a witch family. A man from the same place, born in 1880, could remember stories from the time when his mother had still been a girl.²³ This may have been a strategy to avoid discussing later cases. It does show that the folklore texts refer to the same period as the newspaper reports, roughly between 1850 and 1925. Later cases have not been found.

The oral research conducted by folklorists only covered the edges of the provinces of North and South Holland. This had more to do with where fieldworkers enrolled by the Folklore Bureau lived than with a possible absence of the witchcraft discourse north of the Northsea Channel, which ran from Amsterdam westwards, or in the countryside between Leiden and Rotterdam. Scattered local publications fill the gaps in the other sources to some extent.²⁴ At Wieringen, in the Rijnland and in the Westland witchcraft was certainly known. The intensity of the phenomenon, however, is more difficult to ascertain. The reports vary from a few half-remembered stories, a remark about a local witch, to a case of bewitchment.²⁵ It could have concerned different phases in the decline of witchcraft, but for the time being it primarily shows that one place was more thoroughly researched than another. For the cities we have to rely again on newspaper reports; on the whole folklorists refrained from interviewing the urban population.

The bewitched and the witches

The newspaper reports show that the diagnosis of a bewitchment and an unwitchment ritual were not individual events; family members and neighbours were actively consulted. In 1851 in Hoorn it was recorded that the parents of a sick child, 'called the neighbours together and there was general agreement that the child was bewitched'. In Delft in 1866 'experienced female neighbours' were consulted for the same reason. In Dalem in 1896 it was said of an ill woman that, 'Neighbours and good friends convinced the patient that she had been bewitched. Immediately a witch doctor from Rotterdam was called in'.²⁶ In some cases we may even surmise that witchcraft was still a reality for most of the population. An old woman of Oud-Beerland referring to a time around 1890 observed, 'All ordinary people still believed in witchcraft then'.²⁷ In the same period it was reported from Utrecht: 'Who would ever have thought that in our enlightened century the belief in witches and the like was still rooted so strongly among a large part of the people?'²⁸ In Ameide it was usual to draw a little cross in the earth when people passed the house of the local witch. According to a building worker

there, interviewed in 1962, 'Practically everyone in Ameide did this, certainly ninety percent'.²⁹

The newspaper reports also allow a more precise description of the group of the bewitched, although mainly by age and gender. Occupations were only mentioned in exceptional cases: a 'simple labourer' in Gorinchem, a peat bargeman in Oude Wetering and a labourer in Charlois.³⁰ But bewitchment did not only concern the lower classes, since a farmer was also mentioned and 'well-to-do agriculturists'.³¹ Small children made up the largest group of the bewitched (44 per cent), then adolescent girls (23 per cent). The same number of adult men and women thought themselves to have been the victim of a bewitchment (both 16 per cent). Since ill children were cared for by their mothers, this implies that the witchcraft discourse was for a large part situated within the female domain. The family members and neighbours who were consulted would also have primarily been women.³² However, men were not missing from the discourse altogether. Apart from the fact that they occasionally felt themselves bewitched, like the man in Lopikerkapel whose, 'body was full of frogs' after he had drunk coffee with a certain woman,³³ they could also occupy several other positions. Once witchcraft had been diagnosed and the perpetrator had been identified, she had to be convinced to take away the bewitchment. Usually this called for forceful persuasion and most of the time men were the ones who carried out this action.³⁴ Men were also sent to witch doctors to obtain remedies and advice. Moreover, witchcraft was not restricted to the private sphere governed by women. A standard story, often related by men, was that a witch had stopped horses or had caused accidents when people passed her house.³⁵ In this case her influence transgressed the boundaries of her house and premises.

The witches themselves were predominantly women. In the newspaper reports only three men (6 per cent) were identified as witches. In the decades around 1900, as in the early modern period, every woman could be considered a potential witch.³⁶ This is sometimes apparent, for example, from the expressions about the number of witches in a certain region. 'Formerly Langerak was in such a bad way with witchcraft, that some people did not dare to admit that they came from Langerak when they were living elsewhere', the wife of a milk inspector related in 1963; 'that meant that you were involved in the free [magical] arts'.³⁷ In Sliedrecht it was discovered after a chicken test that 'all women in the neighbourhood of the so-called Bosch as far as the Spuithuis (at least seventy) had taken part in the bewitchment'. In Lexmond there were eighty-seven witches 'according to popular rumour'; in Arkel there were sixty-three. Half of the inhabitants of Hornaar were capable of bewitching, it was thought, and it was said that Noordeloos swarmed with witches. In Schoonhoven there also used to be 'many witches' and in Utrecht at the road to Jutphaas between the railroad bridge and the Biesbosch lived seventeen witches.³⁸ This kind of information

may often have originated with a witch doctor; the point is that it could be passed on and was believed by people.

There was an increased risk of being branded a witch if one's descendants had accrued a similar reputation. In the stories noted down by Bakker and by Heupers this is apparent from the motif of the girl who learns how to witch from her mother or her granny.³⁹ This was also one of the ways in which men came to be suspected of witchcraft. The man, who was said to have bewitched to death a fifteen-year-old girl in a little village near Dordrecht, had a great-grandmother, a grandmother and a mother, who were 'known as witches'.⁴⁰ The witchcraft that ran within the Keijer family in the fishing village of Huizen was also defined through the female line and among the most important were Aaltje (1843–1914) and Willem Keijer (1845–1929).⁴¹ According to a local herring skewer, her granny Grietje Keijer had been a witch and Grietje was a sister of Willem and Aaltje. She also related: 'Father's sister and one of his nieces were capable of making mice. Just like that. It was told in our family. The whole of Huizen knew about it ... It concerned Gerritje and Lammetje and those women were always sitting together. People were really scared of these two witches.'⁴² A number of the stories about Willem concerned his teasing and his power over horses. The bewitchments he was accused of occurred within the male domain: he bewitched milk at a bakery and a cow belonging to a small farmer. His sisters Aaltje and Grietje could stop horses as well, but they also bewitched children.⁴³

In patriarchal Holland province the boundaries between men and women were also well defined in the case of witchcraft. Men experienced bewitchments and dealt with local witches differently from women. When a boundary was occasionally crossed and a man was accused of having bewitched children, this was because witchcraft in his family was already defined in the female line. Male witchcraft was on the whole more about a display of power. Well-known male witches in Waterland, in the region of the river Zaan and in Hoorn (all in the province of North-Holland) were capable, so it was said, of immobilizing people and animals, and could perform tricks such as sending the jack of clubs to fetch a bottle of brandy.⁴⁴ In their turn women had to learn to deal with that. An example of this can be found in stories from Oud-Beierland, south of Rotterdam, which showed that women were not afraid of a male witch, that 'they kept their gaze fixed on him' and made him stop his whims.⁴⁵

Unwitchment experts

Doctors could do little against bewitchments. 'We called the doctor, but he did not know what it was', a woman from Hilversum said. The remedies of the doctors did not help. And when the bewitched themselves had not already placed physicians outside the witchcraft discourse, then witch doctors would put them in an unfavourable light.⁴⁶ In Ransdorp a doctor was said to have

been taken for a witch and beaten black and blue because he paid a visit in the middle of the night.⁴⁷ When the suspicion of a bewitchment had arisen, there were specialists who did react satisfactorily, be it a blesser (in the countryside), a fortune-teller (in the town), a priest or a member of the regular clergy, or a specialist unwitcher or witch doctor. We can see the actions of these specialists and especially the extent to which they were specialized as another sign of the scope of witchcraft. Intensive research reveals, for example, that the unwitchment specialists in the region Het Gooi had only a localized sphere of influence. Within this region a blesser could occasionally give advice in witchcraft cases in places such as Laren and Hilversum, though female witch doctors were also practising in Hilversum and Bussum.⁴⁸ At the most they were consulted from a neighbouring village. Female fortune-tellers were visited because of bewitchments from further away, but only sporadically. Newspapers report a fortune-teller in Amsterdam who was visited from Oude Wetering (near Leiden), and one in Maassluis (west of Rotterdam) who received visitors from Sliedrecht.⁴⁹

Just as with female fortune-tellers, unwitching formed only a small part of the activities of Catholic clergy. Each instance is only mentioned once. People in Bovenkerk who felt bewitched went to the *Paterskerk* at the *Keizersgracht* in Amsterdam. Around 1900 there was an unwitching priest in Kortenhoef and a monk in Hilversum was also consulted.⁵⁰ Moreover, not every Catholic clergyman wanted to provide help. A certain Father van D. in Haarlem only reluctantly agreed to bless a house in which a six-year-old bewitched boy lived: 'he had, of course, not said that it was true, but did not deny anything either and the only advice he gave was to pray'. The boy's mother, however, had been convinced that the blessing would draw the witch to the house.⁵¹ In 1879 a priest in Rotterdam was most unwilling to unwitch. One morning he had given a woman the last rites and in the evening of the same day he was called back. The brother of the woman had arrived in the meantime and was convinced that she 'had been touched by an evil hand' and that the priest could remove the spell. The latter refused because he found the idea superstitious, whereupon the brother started to threaten the priest: he became angry and took him hostage. But the priest said 'that he would rather die than to give in to this superstition'. This lasted for five hours until the priest devised a trick and escaped. In 1882, in the same town a cleric was asked to unwitch and when he declined and failed to change the mind of the parents and the bystanders regarding witchcraft, a horse doctor was consulted instead.⁵²

In the region along the big rivers several unwitchers were active and they were also more specialized than their northern colleagues. Around 1860 a scrap-metal merchant in Delft, Jan Boogaarts, sold iron filings to bewitched people from Rhoon. To impress them with the power of his remedy he told his clients that the filings would become hot to touch and they should not show them to anyone else because otherwise the bewitched would die.⁵³ In

1896 'several witch doctors' were consulted from Zevenhuizen, among whom at least one was from Rotterdam.⁵⁴ In Streefkerk a well-known witch doctor from Beesd used to pay visits. This was Anthonie Mulheim, who was also consulted by people from Lexmond.⁵⁵ Informants of Kooijman mentioned witch doctors in Vianen and Giessen-Nieuwkerk. The last was once asked: 'I have heard that you can ride a broomstick through the air'. The witch doctor acknowledged this and added, 'but I am not doing it now. I find the weather too bad'.⁵⁶ This anecdote indicates the tall tales that circulated about witch doctors.

In Gorinchem the bewitched could obtain advice and remedies against bewitchments over the whole period under discussion here. Reports about this can be found in a range of sources. Only rarely, however, is the name of the specialist mentioned. One that is identifiable is Lelie the saddler.⁵⁷ He was from a long line of saddlers of whom particular members performed unwitching as a sideline. 'Gorinchem again possesses a famous witch doctor,' the *Schoonhovensche Courant* wrote in 1872. 'Many in the Alblasserwaard already have to thank their unwitchment to this noble man.'⁵⁸ Originally this family of saddlers was called Lille, but this soon turned into the more Dutch Lelie (Lilly). All three brothers Hermanus, Egidius and Anthonie were born around 1800 and were Catholics. So far we only know that the last two featured as unwitchment specialists. In 1857 Egidius (1804–59) had been indicted by the local court for practising medicine without a licence. He had provided bottles of 'medicine' to a woman in Meerkerk who had been affected by the 'evil hand'.⁵⁹ In 1876 Anthonie (1808–1885) was accused of a similar crime. He had supplied bottles with a certain liquid to men from Hellouw and Haasteren for their children. Both brothers were acquitted for lack of evidence, in Anthonie's case because the witnesses said that they did not know him and because he also said that he had never seen any of the witnesses either.⁶⁰ These incidents indicate little regarding judicial incompetence and say rather a lot about the considerable influence healers exercised over their clients.

It is plausible, although not certain, that one of the family specialized in unwitchments and that upon his death this task was taken over by a successor.⁶¹ But although this allows us to identify a pause in the performances of the family, it does not explain individual approaches. Remedies and advice are likely to have been transmitted within the family. According to the writer of a letter in the *Nieuwe Gorinchemse Courant* the drink that was administered in the 1870s consisted of an extract of dried cherry stalks made into 'a kind of weak hot brandy toddy'. In 1882 white wine was prescribed, and a herbal extract in 1889. In 1926 Egidius's grandson provided blessed wine. This was not meant for the bewitched but for the witch herself. It 'tasted quite sour and I felt my lips withdrawing', she explained to a reporter. 'As soon as I finished it, they wanted me to bless the girl.' But the practices of the Lelies went beyond unwitching. They recommended a 'kind of poultice of fig leaves' for wounds and ruptures, for example. Furthermore, every remedy was

accompanied by an instruction.⁶² When it concerned bewitchments, it was strongly advised to prevent the witch seeing the jug to stop it from bursting, and to discuss witches after sunset was not permitted.⁶³

The sphere of influence of the Lelies extended over a wide area around Gorinchem. In the course of time this area possibly diminished. At any rate, the oldest relevant sources, the newspaper accounts, indicate the furthest reach towards the west and the south. The replies to the 1934 survey show a somewhat smaller sphere of influence, especially to the north and east, and in the 1960s Kooijman's folklore notes suggest similar boundaries. Yet as late as 1926 a newspaper reported that, 'patients arrived almost daily who think that they are bewitched by someone or other'.⁶⁴

Proxemics and kinesics

The witch doctor's advice contributed to the way in which the bewitched acted towards witches. In the first instance this was mainly a matter of keeping a distance, which could cause the suspected witch to become almost totally socially isolated. When the suspect was self-employed this could have severe financial ramifications. In a village in North-Holland a woman who sold haberdashery was boycotted after she had been identified as a witch. Similarly a saleswoman from The Betuwe was avoided by everyone. A wet nurse in Gorinchem had her income drastically reduced, and a seller of peat in Vlaardingingen lost most of her clients.⁶⁵

At a local level all kinds of warnings circulated to restrict a witch's influence. Thus one should not sit next to a witch in church, or accept food from her. It was also not very sensible to come close to a witch, or, according to a cattle farmer in Nieuwland, be near to a place where she had been. Bodily contact was to be avoided at all costs. It was said in Noordeloos: 'Don't touch or eat anything that belongs to her. Don't let your hair be stroked.' When she put her hand on your head, you had to hold your hand over hers, said a pig castrator at Haastrecht. This advice applied in Het Gooi as well.⁶⁶ For touching could result in a bewitchment. In Zuid-Beierland a girl had become unwell after a woman had shaken her hand. In Rijnsburg a woman had soothed a child, in Weesp and in Alkmaar she had even kissed it. In Utrecht a girl had become bewitched after she had been tapped on her shoulder by a woman and been asked for the way.⁶⁷ In Maartensdijk a woman had been punched in her back by a woman who was known as a witch. Since then she had become unwell, 'tired and always miserable'.⁶⁸ Being touched by some woman who was not supposed to do so, it appears from all these examples, affected people's bodily integrity and led to illness.

In the area of the great rivers people spoke about the 'evil hand'. Occasionally this could be prevented by a manual gesture. In the words of a farmer's wife of Haastrecht: 'When you wonder whether a woman had bewitched your

child, then the best thing to do, is to quickly put your hand above the woman's head, then the evil returns to that woman.' Another counter-measure, used in Naarden, was to keep your thumb inside your hand. 'That little woman always stroke little children over their heads, along the face and then that child became bewitched, of course. They all said so here.'⁶⁹ It was rare, though, to become bewitched by means of looking, by the evil eye.⁷⁰

In the various texts the precise picture of a bewitchment remains unclear. A young girl was suffering from 'heavy tightness of the chest and from an unknown illness'. Another girl was 'already suffering for some time, without anybody knowing the nature of her ailment'. Still another girl was also 'suffering'. A family was plagued by 'illnesses against which the doctors could not prevail'. A man was feeling 'unwell and depressed especially at night'.⁷¹ Often less was known about her own condition than about the state of the mattress or the pillow on which the bewitched had been lying, in which all kinds of objects and feathers lumped into strange shapes were found. This combination of bodily vagueness and extra somatic certainty was typical of bewitchment. The experience of most of the men also differed in this respect from that of the women. Not only had they less to fear from being touched, when they did get bewitched because they had eaten something given by a witch, they felt beasts in their body. As one man told a doctor, 'My stomach is full of toads. I am bewitched'. His doctor ascribed this to bad teeth, however, which had prevented the man from chewing well.⁷² These sorts of opinions were supported by the witch doctors in Gorinchem who told male clients that they had a stoat, a toad, or even a whole family of toads inside them.⁷³

To repair the affected body the witch was required to pronounce a blessing over it. Occasionally she would come on her own accord 'to see the effect'. More often she had to be lured, with an excuse such as 'Come and have a look', or with violence.⁷⁴ In most cases the bewitched resorted to a ritual. It was possible to boil herbs which would burn the witch's face,⁷⁵ or to perform the chicken test. According to De Waardt the low frequency of this ritual in the seventeenth century was one of the examples of a declining 'witchcraft belief'.⁷⁶ This would have been correct if it rarely occurred later, but this is not the case. In the nineteenth century boiling a black chicken alive was, in fact, rather popular, especially in mid and western areas of the Netherlands. Not only can this be seen on the map which was drawn for the *Folklore-Atlas*, based on the 1934 witchcraft survey, but is also evident from newspaper reports from Delfshaven, Delft, Hoorn, Maartensdijk, Muiderberg, Oude Wetering, Rotterdam, Schiedam and Sliedrecht.⁷⁷ This ritual required a special screening-off of the boundaries of the house: the 'house was closed and the chimney filled up', 'all cracks and slits in the room and even the key hole' were filled. The meaning of this must surely be found within the ritual context, but there was also a practical aspect. In 1873 in Lexmond, for instance, the windows were covered with material to prevent people looking in.⁷⁸

In some way the boiling chicken was connected to the witch and would draw her to the house. Numerous stories show a similar connection between witches and cats. When a cat was wounded, the same wound would also appear on a witch. In Rotterdam this was put into practice by rubbing a cat's head with oil and setting it alight. Consequently people would go to see whether the suspected woman had a 'burn sign' on her face.⁷⁹ This expected effect from a distance also appears in one of the Lelies' rituals: when a witch's face showed in the water they let a woman cut it with a coin. This would give the witch a cut on her face.⁸⁰ In all these cases the distance between bewitched and witch was bridged, but now the boundaries were maintained which had previously been broken.

This relation between the witch and animals can be understood from the concept of the witch's double that lies behind it, a second shape that could operate next to her actual body but that stayed connected to it. This was made explicit only in a few cases. A woman in Woerden, for instance, lured one of her neighbours to her house, saying: 'No ugly witch, you have bewitched my child, you crawl through the keyhole at night and you put the evil hand on my child.'⁸¹ The witch doctor in Delft asked whether his patients would not have seen someone standing in front of them. The double could reach places that were normally inaccessible. Why cats and chickens were especially associated with witches is not totally clear. They are of course both domesticated animals. But while this may explain the cat, which was associated with witches all over Europe, the chicken remains specific to the central Netherlands in Western Europe. The concept of the double also explains why when a chicken was boiled every hole had to be closed. For only then the witch had to come herself. It was easier to manipulate the double than the witch's own body. The latter had to be kept at a distance as much as possible, and only with bodily violence could the witch be forced to express the words that would counter her evil influence: 'God bless you'.

Continuation or decline?

Although the material presented here covers a period of about seventy-five years, taken together it does not offer much more than a synchronic picture. Only with the necessary caution is it possible to draw conclusions about continuity or decline of the witchcraft discourse. This is especially the case in view of the insufficient research carried out in parts of the geographical area that has been described. The characterization of nineteenth- and twentieth-century witchcraft cases as 'isolated incidents' nevertheless appears to be false. Not only was the witchcraft discourse still firmly embedded in the local culture of a number of places, but so many cases can be pointed out that a wide distribution becomes visible. This certainly applied to the eastern part of the western Netherlands, roughly south-east of a line from Amsterdam to Delft.

As to the coastal area and North-Holland north of the North Sea Channel, at least in some places we have to acknowledge a lack of material rather than a total absence of witchcraft. This conclusion can be strengthened by considering the taboos that surrounded the discourse. Bakker's notes about Waterland certainly indicate a lively memory of witchcraft in the years around 1900, and there is no reason whatsoever not to suspect the possibility of bewitchment discourses in the Amsterdam quarter of the Jordaan at the time.⁸²

In the coastal area witchcraft seems to have flourished in the Catholic context. The folklorist Tjaard de Haan did not find any traces of it in Zandvoort, but he did in the old Catholic Egmond aan Zee with its 'reminiscence of witch and witch expeller'. He also connected the continuation of witchcraft stories in Spaarndam with the local Catholic belief.⁸³ In the folklore survey of 1934 a respondent of Leiderdorp made a similar observation: the Roman Catholic part of the population still believed in the evil eye; the Protestant part did not.⁸⁴ In the area of the Kromme Rijn, where accusations certainly occurred till 1940, a relation between the local 'superstitions' and Catholic customs was likewise noticed.⁸⁵ Together with the Catholic unwitchment experts in Haarlem and Amsterdam, these accounts may indicate a certain predisposition for witchcraft among conservative Catholics.

This is not to say that Protestants had left the witchcraft discourse altogether. The eastern part of the western Netherlands, where both folklore investigations and my newspaper research found a fair amount of witchcraft cases, includes the orthodox Calvinist regions for which a preoccupation with witchcraft has already been determined before.⁸⁶ The strong indignation regarding members of the Keijer family in the orthodox Huizen was not without reasons: 'Such a dirty fellow'; 'a dangerous woman'; 'a very evil bitch'. Among these Calvinists witchcraft was defended on 'scriptural grounds'. A peat bargeman in Oude Wetering, whose children had been bewitched, was also 'of more than strict Christian persuasion'.⁸⁷ This image is even more strongly supported by remarks like those from Hilversum about the pharaoh's wizards in the Bible: 'who may not have been able to do everything, but who, when you read it, together did witch quite a cool bit'. This was a biblical justification for the existence of witchcraft, for the Bible 'does not lie'.⁸⁸ In 1887 a member of the Reformed Church in Giessendam asked for a day of prayer and fasting because his household had been hit by a bewitchment. More detailed investigation confirms the activities of a witch doctor from Oudewater, a Catholic and a 'seventh son' who had furnished the house with Catholic medals, statues of Maria and palms, and moreover had sprayed it with holy water.⁸⁹ Here the Calvinist susceptibility for witchcraft met with the unwitchment facilities from the Catholic repertoire. As a matter of fact, this was also the case with the Catholic Lelies and, in view of their region of origin, their mostly Protestant clients.

In general, however, Catholics and Protestants reacted differently to

bewitchments. While Protestants often resorted to violence, both against the presumed witch and the animal that represented her, Catholics took a somewhat easier and conciliatory stand. After all, they had a clergy at their disposal who, whether willingly or not, supplied unwitchments and moreover possessed a collection of appropriate paraphernalia. This difference is well observed in Het Gooi. In Catholic Laren, a blesser named Calis could break a bewitchment by putting a scapulary in the pillow of the bewitched, or a simple blessing sufficed, or the power of the local priest could be employed.⁹⁰ Neighbouring Protestants boiled chickens and beat up witches.

The witchcraft discourse thus survived longer in conservative religious circles. Outside those it became presumably more and more marginalized and the expression 'witch' lost its substance. The man who had taken the priest hostage in Rotterdam was 'from elsewhere', and the family who in 1873 in Lexmond maltreated a woman had only lived there (according to the burgo-master) since 1862. These were partly the usual attempts to situate witchcraft outside one's own place of living. The particular descriptions of origin in these cases are thus not totally credible; both because in Rotterdam later cases were also recorded and because the family in Lexmond had only temporarily lived a few kilometres away. But it is nevertheless possible that witchcraft was sometimes more strange than normal. In a case in Alkmaar in 1910 a woman who suggested to a neighbour that her children had been bewitched, originated from Kampen, at the other side of the Zuiderzee.⁹¹ Yet her ideas did not prove too exotic to be adopted.

The weakening of the content of the witchcraft discourse manifested itself through the disappearance of bewitchments and the distortion of stories about male and female witches. This may well have been the case in The Hague, where 'street urchins' took a woman for a witch and smashed her windows only because she had numerous and various pets. An actual bewitchment was never mentioned. Likewise a single woman at the border between The Hague and Wassenaar was branded as a witch, which some inhabitants found 'too ridiculous to consider, let alone to discuss it'.⁹²

The cases in the western Netherlands that are available are for the most part situated at the eastern and southern edges of an area marked out by Jobse-Van Putten as only minimally self-supporting. Although there is too little material to conclude anything about the households of the bewitched, and thus about a possible direct link between witchcraft and a certain degree of self-support, such a link may nevertheless be plausible. The warning not to take any food from a witch at least indicates an exchange of primary provisions outside the market. It can also be of importance here that the part of the witchcraft discourse that concerned the household was mainly preserved by women. Whatever the case may have been, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witchcraft was certainly of social and moreover of cultural importance in large parts of the western Netherlands.

It may not be possible to indicate relations with economic or demographic developments, but enough people were thinking and acting in terms of witchcraft to call it a widely accepted phenomenon.

Notes

- 1 *Het toekomstig leven* 3 (1899) 217, taken from the *Haagsche Courant*.
- 2 Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra, 'Witchcraft After the Witch-Trials', in Stuart Clark and Bengt Ankarloo (eds), *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (London, 1999), pp. 95–189, especially p. 106.
- 3 See Alf Lüdtke, *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life* (Princeton, 1995); Richard van Dülmen, *Historische Anthropologie. Entwicklung. Probleme. Aufgaben* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 2000).
- 4 C. de Gast, *Afscheiding en dolantie in het Land van Heusden en Altena* (Tilburg, 1989), p. 60; Jo Daan, *Wieringer land en leven in de taal* (Amsterdam, 1950), p. 106.
- 5 See Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra, *Vragen bij een onttoverde wereld* (Amsterdam, 1997), p. 10, about the difference between science and magic.
- 6 Jozien Jobse-van Putten, 'De zelfvoorziening in ruimtelijk perspectief. Een cultuur-historische vergelijking van regionale indelingen van Nederland', *Volkkundig bulletin* 16 (1990) 21–48.
- 7 Hans de Waardt, *Toverij en samenleving* (The Hague, 1991), p. 291.
- 8 See Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *Bevochten eendracht. Nederlandse cultuur in Europese context, 1650* (The Hague, 1999), p. 426; J. C. Price, *Dutch Society, 1588–1713* (Harlow, 2000), p. 129.
- 9 See Willem de Blécourt, *Termen van toverij. De veranderende betekenis van toverij in Noordoost-Nederland tussen de 16de en 20ste eeuw* (Nijmegen, 1990), pp. 91–3.
- 10 *Maandblad tegen de Kwakzalverij* (hereafter *MtK*), 14 May 1894.
- 11 J. E. Enklaar, *Het bijgeloof in vroegeren en lateren tijd en de middelen om het te bestrijden* (Amsterdam, 1889), p. 30. See Roy Porter, 'Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment, Romantic and Liberal Thought', in Clark and Ankarloo, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*, pp. 189–282, especially p. 273.
- 12 Enklaar, *Het bijgeloof*, p. 12.
- 13 *Hoogeveensche Courant*, 12 May 1886.
- 14 A. J. Dekker and J. J. Schell, *De Volkskunde-vragenlijsten 1–58 (1934–1988) van het P. J. Meertens-Instituut* (Amsterdam, 1989), pp. 29–30; P. J. Meertens and Maurits de Meyer, *Volkskunde-Atlas voor Nederland en Vlaams-België. Commentaar*, vol. 1 (Antwerp, 1959).
- 15 Jan de Vries, *De wetenschap der volkskunde* (Amsterdam, 1941), p. 29.
- 16 J. M. M. Leenders, *Benauwde verdraagzaamheid, hachelijk fatsoen. Families, standen en kerken te Hoorn in het midden van de negentiende eeuw* (The Hague, 1991), p. 138; *Provinciale Drentsche & Asser Courant* (hereafter *PD&AC*), 27 Apr. 1861. See also K. Kooiman, 'Een praatje over kollen', *De Navorscher* 21 (1871) 524–9.
- 17 *PD&AC*, 4 July 1896, 4 July 1878.
- 18 C. Bakker, 'Iets over kollen en belezen', *Nederlandsch Tijdschrift voor Geneeskunde* 39 (1903) 680. His life and fieldwork are discussed and partly published in Theo Meder, *Vertelcultuur in Waterland. De volksverhalen uit de collectie Bakker in hun context* (ca. 1900) (Amsterdam, 2001).
- 19 Jac. van Ginniken, *Drie Waterlandse dialecten*, vol. 2 (Alphen a/d Rijn, 1954), p. 766.
- 20 RAZH, archief arrondissementsrechtbank Dordrecht, inv. no. 116, no. 132; *Hoogeveensche Courant*, 12 May 1886.

- 21 F. den Eerzamen, 'Het eiland Goeree: geschiedenis, volksleven, taal', *Neerlands volksleven* 16 (1966) 156.
- 22 Henk Kooijman, *Volksverhalen uit het grensgebied van Zuid-Holland, Utrecht, Gelderland en Noord-Brabant* (Amsterdam, 1988), nos 47, 109, 338, 591, 665.
- 23 Engelbert Heupers, *Volksverhalen uit Gooi- en Eemland en van de westelijke Veluwe* (Amsterdam, 1979, 1981 and 1984), nos 911–14, 1162.
- 24 For an overview of these kinds of publication up to 1989 see Fred Matter *et al.* (eds), *Toverij in Nederland. Bibliografie* (Amsterdam, 1990).
- 25 J. R. W. Sinninghe, *Hollandsch sagenboek. Legendes en sagen uit Noord- en Zuid-Holland* ('s-Gravenhage, 1943), pp. 67–100, 111–24; A. Bicker Caarten, 'Rijnlandse volksverhalen', *Jaarboekje voor de geschiedenis en oudheidkunde van Leiden en omstreken* 51 (1959) 135–7; 53 (1961) 139–44, especially 142–3; Arie Olsthoorn, 'De heks van Zouteveen', *Midden-Delfkrant* 6, 3/4 (1982) 38–9.
- 26 *PD&AC*, 22 Aug. 1851; 27 March 1866; *MtK*, 16 June 1896, from *NRC*.
- 27 L. Verhoeff, 'Volkskunde van Oud-Beierland (II)', *Neerlands volksleven* 16 (1966) 142.
- 28 *Nieuwe Provinciale Drentsche & Asser Courant* (hereafter *NPD&AC*), 9 Oct. 1889, from the *Werkmansbode*.
- 29 Kooijman, *Volksverhalen*, no. 109.
- 30 *Nieuwe Gorinchemsche Courant* (hereafter *NGC*), 15 Feb. 1873; *PD&AC*, 14 June 1877; *NPD&AC*, 1 Aug. 1890; *MtK*, 15 Feb. 1895, respectively.
- 31 In Muiderberg, Sliedrecht and Hornaar: *PD&AC*, 8 Oct. 1859, 27 Nov. 1860 and 4 July 1863.
- 32 See De Waardt, *Toverij en samenleving*, pp. 144, 208. From the end of the sixteenth century men's participation in the witchcraft discourse declined and the discourse subsequently became concentrated within the household.
- 33 *PD&AC*, 10 Feb. 1886.
- 34 *PD&AC*, 28 July 1860 (Sleeuwijk), 27 Apr. 1861 (Hoorn), 29 Sep. 1877 (Sliedrecht), 13 July 1893 (Hellouw) and 6 May 1897 (Oud-Beierland); *NPD&AC*, 25 Apr. 1890 (Zuid-Beierland); *Schiedamsche Courant*, 21 Aug. 1875 (Ammerstol).
- 35 Daan, *Wieringerland*, p. 107; *PD&AC*, 14 Feb. 1884; Kooijman, *Volksverhalen*, nos 21, 289, 293, 427, 505, 532, 551, 591, 992, 1085, 1285; Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, no. 2826.
- 36 Willem de Blécourt, 'The Making of the Female Witch. Reflections on Witchcraft and Gender in the Early Modern Period', *Gender & History* 12 (2000) 287–309.
- 37 Kooijman, *Volksverhalen*, no. 875. According to a fruit grower it was told that all old women in Langerak were capable of bewitching: see nos 262 and 297.
- 38 *PD&AC*, 29 Sep. 1877; Volkskundevragenlijst 1934, K34; *NGC*, 23 Oct. 1873; Sinninghe, *Hollandsch sagenboek*, p. 97; *NPD&AC*, 9 Oct. 1889. See 'Eene reisontmoeting', *Geldersche volks-almanak* (1842) 164, about the infamous dyke between Tiel and Bommel, 'about which an old grandmother recently told her doctor that, when one included the part from Bommel to Gorinchem, there were 73 witches at it'.
- 39 Bakker, nos 387, 473; Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, no. 3580. See also *PD&AC*, 27 Sep. 1873.
- 40 *PD&AC*, 8 Sep. 1910. See also Willem Geldof, *Volksverhalen uit Zeeland en de Zuid-hollandse eilanden* (Utrecht and Antwerp, 1979), p. 159, about a man in 's-Gravendeel whose mother and sister were taken for witches.
- 41 Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, nos 911–14, 1162, 1164, 1165, 1214, 1236, 2152; Everard Gewin, *Neerlands volksgeloof* (Arnhem, 1925), p. 87.
- 42 Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, nos 1560, 1563. The informant used 'father' to indicate her husband and 'granny' for the grandmother of her children. Her own father was unknown; she grew up with her mother and grandmother and she had a child in wedlock herself, too. See *Bevolkingsregister Huizen* (1888–1919), vol. 2, p. 361.
- 43 Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, nos 911, 1561, 1720, 1721, 2118.

- 44 Bakker, nos 173, 177–80, 201, 264–5, 276–7, 279, 281–2, 296, 396. See also Ton Dekker, 'Witches and Sorcerers in Twentieth-Century Legends', in Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra and Willem Frijhoff (eds), *Witchcraft in the Netherlands from the Fourteenth to the Twentieth Century* (Rijswijk, 1991), pp. 181–95. These kinds of story seem to be primarily told by men.
- 45 Verhoef, 'Volkskunde', 143.
- 46 Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, no. 1775, see also nos 345, 2657; *PD&AC*, 29 July 1872; 26 Nov. 1887; 19 Apr. 1882.
- 47 Bakker, nos 11, 35.
- 48 *PD&AC*, 18 Feb. 1896; *MtK*, 16 March 1896; Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, nos 148, 352, 1702, 1751, 1815, 2203.
- 49 *PD&AC*, 14 June 1877; *MtK*, 14 Apr. 1894; *PD&AC*, 7 July 1910. I have discussed these women in Willem de Blécourt, *Het Amazonenleger. Irreguliere genezeressen in Nederland 1850–1930* (Amsterdam, 1999), especially pp. 68–9, 120–1.
- 50 R. J. C. Cornegoor, 'Heksenverhalen uit de buurt van Amsterdam', *Neerlands volksleven* 8 (1958) 165–7; *Volkskundevragenlijst* 1937, E124; Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, no. 3580.
- 51 *MtK*, 13 Nov. 1893. This article was found offensive by some Catholic readers.
- 52 *PD&AC*, 26 Apr. 1879, from *Maasbode*; *PD&AC*, 19 Apr. 1882. For the activities of Roman Catholic clergyman in Delft in 1851 see, L. E. Bosch, 'Tooverij', *Utrechtsche volks-almanak* 17 (1853) 163–4.
- 53 RAZH, archief arrondissementsrechtbank 's-Gravenhage, inv. no. 175, no. 216.
- 54 W. Paul, 'Toverij in Zevenhuizen', *Verleden tijdschrift* 5 (1986) 27–8. See also Kooijman, *Volksverhalen*, no. 1342.
- 55 *Volkskundevragenlijst* 1934, K56; K39; RAZH, archief arrondissementsrechtbank Gorinchem, inv. no. 55, no. 114 (1866). The influence of this man can also be recognized in an account about a bewitchment in Buren against which *Haarlemmer* oil was prescribed: *NGC*, 26 Apr. 1873.
- 56 Kooijman, *Volksverhalen*, nos 201, 315.
- 57 *Vragenlijst* 1954, K65. See also *Het Leven* 16 (1921) 1368–9.
- 58 *NGC*, 4 Sep. 1872.
- 59 RAZH, archief arrondissementsrechtbank Gorinchem, inv. no. 46, no. 114. The judicial considerations in the verdict cannot be consulted anymore. According to a note on the contemporary index he was acquitted.
- 60 RAZH, archief arrondissementsrechtbank Gorinchem, inv. no. 102, no. 86; *NGC*, 21 June 1876.
- 61 See De Blécourt, *Termen van toverij*, pp. 174–7, 218, about the witch doctors Brouwer and Rusken.
- 62 *NGC*, 19 March 1879; *PD&AC*, 3 Jan. 1882; 10 July 1889; *MtK*, 4 June 1924; *De Telegraaf*, 7 July 1926. See also *Het leven* 16 (1921) 1369, concerning medicines 'which tasted and looked like berry juice'. The 1924 case is more extensively described in Willem de Blécourt, 'The Witch, her Victim, the Unwitcher and the Researcher: The Continued Existence of Traditional Witchcraft', in Willem de Blécourt, Ronald Hutton and Jean La Fontaine, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Twentieth Century* (London, 1999), pp. 162–5.
- 63 Kooijman, *Volksverhalen*, no. 2102; *NGC*, 4 Sep. 1872.
- 64 *De Telegraaf*, 8 July 1926.
- 65 M. Kramer, 'Bijgeloof op het land', *Buiten* 4 (1910) 488–9; *PD&AC*, 29 July 1872; *NGC*, 15 Feb. 1873; *PD&AC*, 4 July 1878.
- 66 Verhoeff, 'Volkskunde', 142–3; Kooijman, *Volksverhalen*, nos 421, 361, 506; Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, nos 1578, 1751.
- 67 *NPD&AC*, 25 Apr. 1890; *PD&AC*, 28 Aug. 1890; 20 Aug. 1901; 7 Aug. 1910; 9 Sep. 1898.

- 68 Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, no. 3580.
- 69 Kooijman, *Volksverhalen*, no. 506. See also Sinninghe, *Hollandsch sagenboek*, p. 89; Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, no. 2576.
- 70 For instance Loosdrecht, where a woman had been looked at by a gypsy woman in a shop; Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, no. 2087.
- 71 *PD&AC*, 22 Aug. 1851 (Hoor); 28 July 1860 (Sleeuwijk); 27 March 1866 (Delft); 6 Dec. 1876 (Delft); 29 Sep. 1877 (Slidrecht); 3 Jan. 1882 (Meeuwen).
- 72 Kooijman, *Volksverhalen*, no. 1363.
- 73 Vragenlijst 1934, K35; *Het leven* 16 (1921) 1369; *PD&AC*, 3 Jan. 1882.
- 74 Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, no. 2079 (Loosdrecht); 1926 (Slidrecht); 1873 (Lexmond).
- 75 Verhoeff, 'Volkskunde', 142.
- 76 De Waardt, *Toverij en samenleving*, p. 216.
- 77 *PD&AC*, 16 Nov. 1850; 22 Aug. 1851; 8 Oct. 1859; 27 March 1866; 11 Nov. 1874; 6 Dec. 1876; 14 July 1877; 29 Sept. 1877; 16 Sep. 1879. See also Willem de Blécourt, 'Heksengeloof: toverij en religie in Nederland tussen 1890 en 1940', *Sociologische gids* 26 (1989) 245–66, particularly 256–7; Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, nos 2078, 2084, 2211, 2830 (Loosdrecht, Naarden, Muiderberg); Bakker, nos 13, 44, 304, 350, 454.
- 78 *PD&AC*, 19 March and 28 Apr. 1873. On this case see also *Paleis van justitie* (1873) 21, 3–4; RAZH, archief arrondissementsrechtbank Gorinchem, inv. no. 62, no. 51.
- 79 See, for example, Sinninghe, *Hollandsch sagenboek*, pp. 92–6; Bakker, no. 22; *PD&AC*, 16 Sep. 1879.
- 80 Vragenlijst K148b.
- 81 *HC*, 25 Feb. 1891. For another 'keyhole' example see, Kooijman, *Volksverhalen*, no. 136. See also Bakker, nos 20, 442, 474.
- 82 For example, the bewitchment of an eel-seller's car in Amsterdam, which took place near the ferry behind the Central Station around 1952; Herman Pieter de Boer, *Waar gebeurd. Meer dan 60 verhalen die niemand geloven wil maar die waar gebeurd zijn* (Naarden, 1974), pp. 89–90.
- 83 Tjaard W. R. de Haan, 'Het vroegere volksleven', in Tjaard W. R. de Haan (ed.), *Gort met stroop. Over geschiedenis en volksleven van Zandvoort aan Zee* (The Hague, 1968), p. 122; de Haan, 'Volksleven van Spaarndam', in Tjaard W. R. de Haan (ed.), *Drie baarsjes en een ham. Over geschiedenis en volksleven van Spaarndam en zijn naaste omgeving* (The Hague, 1967), p. 68.
- 84 E171.
- 85 K. Vernooij, 'Bijgelovigheden en religieuze praktijken in het Kromme-Rijngebied', in H. Scholtmeijer, *Zuidutrechts woordenboek. Dialecten en volksleven in Kromme-Rijnstreek en Lopikerwaard* (Utrecht, 1993), pp. 160, 163.
- 86 de Blécourt, 'Heksengeloof', 258–60. See also de Blécourt, *Termen*, pp. 204–5, 251; de Blécourt, 'On the Continuation of Witchcraft', in Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester and Gareth Roberts (eds), *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 335–52; Gijswijt-Hofstra, 'Witchcraft after the Witch-Trials', p. 180.
- 87 *PD&AC*, 3 Jan. 1882; 14 June 1887.
- 88 G. van Bokhorst, *Het leven in Oud-Hilversum* (Zaltbommel, 1974), p. 91.
- 89 J. A. van Houwelingen, 'Kerkelijk leven in de jaren 1869–1910', in H. K. Bouwkamp, *'k Zal gedenken. Fragmenten uit de geschiedenis van de gereformeerde kerk te Giessendam en Neder-Hardinxveld* (Giessendam, 1985), pp. 98–9.
- 90 Heupers, *Volksverhalen*, nos 345, 352, 1485.
- 91 *PD&AC*, 7 July 1910.
- 92 *PD&AC*, 28 Aug. 1897; W. van Noord, 'Ons oude buurtje. Herinneringen aan de Witte Brug en omgeving', *Jaarboekje Vereniging die Haghe* (1967) 163.