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Published in:

Proceedings of the 9th International Conference of the International Society for the Study of Argumentation

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Jansen, J. (2019). Causal patterns for justifying historical explanation. Causation in P.C. Hooft's Dutch History (1642). In B. Garssen, & E. alii (Eds.), Proceedings of the 9th International Conference of the International Society for the Study of Argumentation (pp. 583-593). Amsterdam: Sic Sat.

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Causal patterns for justifying historical explanation. Causation in P.C. Hooft's *Dutch History* (1642)

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ABSTRACT: The practice of justifying historical explanations generates causal patterns in which several types of arguments play a role. This paper is aimed at identifying some of such causal patterns on the basis of an exploration of the institutional conventions regarding the nature and the shape of historical explanations as reflected in the *Dutch History* (1642) by Pieter Hooft. Causal patterns can unveil bias, prejudice and strategic aims, as well explain why a text may be (or has been) interpreted in a specific way.

KEYWORDS: abduction, causal patterns, causation, Early Modern historiography, P.C. Hooft

1. INTRODUCTION

Causal relationships are essential to establishing historical explanations (Tapp, 1952; Carr, 1964; Keil & Wilson, 2000). These explanations are a fundamental part of historiography, as historiographers not only use linguistic tools to respond to events emotionally (cf. Broomhall, 2013), but also causation as to select and assess different explanations of historical facts. This paper aims at providing an analytical tool to identify the way in which Dutch seventeenth-century historiography supports its claims with different causal patterns. My aim is to describe the prototypical causal patterns that arise when historiographers provide such a justification for their explanation of a memorized fact or a set of facts.

It has been assumed that historical genres, such as medieval chronicle-like narrative, use causation that simplify cause-and-effect, account genres that are not specifically capable of integrating a multiplicity of simultaneously occurring factors and outcomes: “Something happened and then something else happened *because...*” (Benson, 1972, p. 82). These narratives are focused on more immediate causes neglecting long-term, background reasoning. This article explores causal patterning in an intermediate phase between medieval and eighteenth-century account, a period as well between at the one hand chronicles and annals and at the other the contribution by 18th-century empirical theorists like David Hume. It focuses on Dutch humanist historiography, of which the most important representatives are the ‘world-famous’ Neo-Latinist Hugo Grotius and the pre-eminent Dutch poet, playwright, and historian Pieter Hooft, who's *Nederlandsche Historien* (1642), the ‘Dutch History’ (DH), will be in the centre (Haitsma Mulier, 2003, p. 43). This prose text is argumentative throughout. At the beginning of his book Hooft expresses as his cardinal aim to give advices to a current generation of local and state governors, as a school for politics and state administration. He considers it valuable for the ‘instruction of princes and nations’ as well.¹ But most of all, he intends his historiography (which

¹ Hooft, 1972, p. 3. Like Grotius, Hooft regarded historiography a “direct instrument for ruling in the hands of the government itself. Crucial to the working of this instrument is the statesman-historian's sharp perception of the real

is not without reason in Dutch, not in Latin) to be read and used by his fellow-countrymen. Hooft tries to get his advices accepted by his readers. He underpins them by examples from recent history, i.e. the Dutch Revolt against Spain (argument by `example).

In section 2 of this paper, I explore the institutional conventions that shape this way of supporting historical claims and provide a causal pattern for justifying historical explanations. This analytical tool, build for historical texts from the Early Modern period, will be tested in section 3. Here, after a short introduction of Hooft's *Dutch History*, an analysis of text fragments will indicate how the causal patterns work in practice. In section 4 I will discuss and evaluate my findings and indicate which causal patterns can be identified within the historiographic domain. The importance of this finding is twofold: the design of an argumentative tool for the analysis of Early Modern historiography, as well as the application of this tool in a significant Dutch treatise, of which the analysis has been neglected for a long time.

2. JUSTIFYING HISTORICAL EXPLANATIONS

In her study *Historical Discourse. The Language of Time, Cause and Evaluation* (2006), Caroline Coffin discusses causation as a value of educational linguistics and as an important part of the learning and teaching of history in secondary schools. In her opinion, there are some important classifications to be identified: historiography distinguishes between linear cause-effect chains and non-linear (factorial or consequential) explanation. A linear cause-and-effect chain involves chronological narrative in which cause and effect have a one-to-one correspondence. The non-linear variant is a more complex, analytical model in which short- and long-term causes and consequences operate across social, political and economic domains (Coffin, 2004, p. 263). The goal of factorial explanation is to explain the (supposed) reasons leading to a particular historical outcome by the sequence identifying a historical outcome - elaborating causes of historical outcomes - emphasizing key factors. A consequential explanation explains the consequences or effects of a historical event.

Early Modern historiography may be assumed to be predominantly narrative. In a narrative model, linear cause-and-effect operates relatively simply and mechanistically, with a focus on human agency and specific historical events. The analytical form of causation, in which cause-and-effect chains are dominated by abstract, nonhuman forces (like external economic and social causal processes), is presumed to be extremely rare in historiography before the eighteenth century. As our focus is on Early Modern historiography, a more and different detailed classification of cause-and-effect is desirable. Moreover, the distinction by Coffin is not fully indicative for the way in which causal patterns can justify historical explanations. Stone has distinguished conditions that make an event possible ('preconditions') from conditions that make it probable ('precipitants') or necessary (Stone, 2002, pp. 58ff; cf. Lorenz, 2007; Froeyman, 2009). Translated into a pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation, which regards argumentation as a complex speech act that occurs as part of natural language activities and has specific communicative goals (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004) the argumentative pattern for justifying historical explanations runs like table 1. Statements of particular facts are the premises here (Wagemans, 2015; Walton, 1999, p. 243). The standpoint in factorial explanation is that we may assume that a particular historical outcome is the case, in consequential explanation that a specific effect has been established.

historical motives and causes" (Waszink, 2008, p. 97). See below.

Table 1. Causal argumentation for justifying historical explanations²

1	We may assume that a particular fact is the case (standpoint)	
1.1	It is observed that a (set of) particular fact(s) is the case	
1.1'	If it is observed that a (set of) particular fact(s) is the case, then we may assume that a particular fact is the case	
1.1'1	Y causes Z	
1.1'.1.1a	Y is a necessary cause of Z	
1.1'.1.1b	Y is a sufficient cause of Z	
1.1'.1.1b1	Y is the most likely cause of Z	
1.1'.1.1b2	Y is a probable cause of Z	
1.1'.1.1b3	Y is a possible cause of Z	

It may be a true historian's task to put an argument or justification (1.1) to the historical account, as his purpose may be “to justify a particular representation of the past against other possible representations” (Megill, 1989, p. 647). In argumentative discourse, the writer not only shows his ability to record the past by explaining and narrating events, but also includes negotiation or debate, abstracting from and reasoning about historical events in order to persuade and influence his readers of his choice (cf. Coffin, 2006, p. 77). Like in scientific communication, in historiographic discourse it is not the explanandum but the explanans that is initially doubted and need further support. After all, if the explanans contains a (set of) fact(s), this does not mean that the occurrence of the explanandum (fact F) is the direct (necessary) result of the occurrence of the fact(s) mentioned in the explanans (Wagemans, 2015, p. 7). As a third fact may be relevant here, it has to be made explicit which fact is the cause of the explanandum. As Wagemans describes, in pragma-dialectical terms, this can be translated as the need to add an argument of the form ‘Y causes Z’ (1.1'1). Within a *factorial explanation* such an argument may for instance express that without the occurrence of the reason, a particular historical outcome does not occur either (necessary cause), or that there are no other reasons needed for that historical fact to occur (sufficient cause). Within a *consequential explanation* such an argument may express that without the occurrence of the cause, the effect does not occur either (necessary cause), or that there are no other factors needed for the effect to occur (sufficient cause). In the latter case, with application of the distinction by Stone (2002), the relation between the reason and the outcome or the cause and the effect may be described in different gradations of sufficiency. In other words, in 1.1'.1.1b1-3 (table 1) Y is a sufficient cause of Z but in different degrees.

In historiography, causal explanation is often represented as (the result of) a process of choosing from different explanations that are considered and assessed. The process of weighing different possibilities in order to select the best explanation may be supported by argumentation why a specific decision has been taken. As there may be special (implicit) reasons regarding the criteria used for the selection of a sufficient cause from a number of possible explanations as the best or most suitable one, I have added 1.1'.1.1b1-3 in table 1 as gradual differences in probability. Among them 1.1'.1.1b1 is known as ‘abductive reasoning’ or ‘inference to the best explanation’, one of the most common forms of inductive argument (cf. Fogelin & Sinnott-

² The scheme is partly based on the basic argumentative patterns for justifying scientific explanations by Wagemans, 2015, p. 6.

Armstrong, 2005, p. 254; Froeyman, 2009; Wagemans, 2013). In abductive reasoning there is an implicit or explicit appeal to explanatory considerations (Douven, 2011). It “involves the consecutive process of selecting the ‘best candidate’ from the hypotheses that have been generated” (Wagemans 2013, p. 3; Campos 2011; Wagemans, 2013), with a conclusion that is plausibly true. The sub-standpoint motivating the choice is of an evaluative nature and can be formulated as “Of candidate explanations E_1 - E_n , E_i is the best explanation of F ” (cf. Wagemans 2015). This sub-standpoint may be explicitly supported by arguments in favour of E_i , or in disfavour of alternative explanations. If we consider *probability* in terms of “closeness to the truth concerning the relation between a historical fact and a possible explanation of that fact”, the following scheme may be obtained (cf. Douven, 2011):

Table 2. Extension concerning the choice of the best explanation

1. It is observed that F is the case
 - 1.1 It is observed that candidate explanations E_1, \dots, E_n are the case
 - 1.1'.1 Of candidate explanations $E_1 \dots E_n$ E_i is the best explanation of F
 - 1.1'.1.1 $E_1 \dots E_n$ meet criteria C_1 - C_n with value $V_{1,1}$ - $V_{n,n}$
 - 1.1'.1.1' If $E_1 \dots E_n$ meet criteria C_1 - C_2 with value $V_{1,1}$ - $V_{n,n}$, then of possible explanations $E_1 \dots E_n$ E_i is the best explanation of F
 - 1.1'.1.1'.1 Decision rule R applies

In other words, given historical fact F and the available candidate explanations E_1, \dots, E_n of F , if on the basis of value V E_i explains F better than any of the other explanations, infer that, after application of a decision rule R , E_i is closer to the truth than any of the other explanations.

Decision-making always implies criteria on the basis of which it is decided which explanation is the most preferable. These criteria may differ from one discipline to the other, and from person to person. In the field of scientific communication simplicity, generality, accuracy, consistency, and fruitfulness are just some of the criteria for deciding what the best explanation is (cf. Kuhn, 1998; Douven, 2011, Wagemans, 2015). For Early Modern historiography it seems reasonable to add criteria like reliability and expertise. If the choice of the decision-maker has been effected without a clear indication on the basis of which criterion the ‘best’ explanation has been chosen, it seems quite difficult to get grip on this criterion (cf. Kuhn, 1998, pp. 103-104; Wagemans, 2015), in particular when different criteria at the same time are involved.

3. HISTORIOGRAPHY ANALYSED: PIETER HOOFT'S *DUTCH HISTORY*

In this section the usefulness of the analytical patterns from section 2 with respect to seventeenth-century historiographic discourse is demonstrated. As an introduction to the analysis, in 3.1 I will give some general background information of the historiography involved: Pieter Hooft's *Dutch History*. My analysis in 3.2 is based on a small corpus of justifications of historical explanation in the *Dutch History*, both factorial and consequential explanation. This corpus will give a representative picture of humanist historiography in this period. The selection offers a fair indication of the diversity of causal patterning in this historiography, though no claim can be made to be exhaustive concerning the different concepts of causation in history.

3.1 Background of the Dutch History

As a *historian* Hooft describes the first period (1555-1587) of the Dutch Revolt against Spain (cf. Parker, 2002) in lengthy prose, consisting of more than twelve hundred folio pages. The content of the DH (*Dutch History*) is rather patriotic, albeit with a clear-sighted understanding of the enemy's motives and qualities. Hooft's sympathies were unequivocally on the Dutch side, as he regarded the Revolt as a legitimate fight against Spanish tyranny. The narrative of the DH is chronological and divided into books, which tell the history of events year by year.³

From the argumentative standpoint to give advice to his governing fellow-countrymen explanation and interpretation play an important role. Causal links are essential in all parts of his work. Though the DH appears to be a chronicle-like account of established facts at first sight, causation is not merely limited to explaining events as they unfolded over time. Hooft's history is an example of a humanistic approach, in accordance with classical conventions, and history is no longer regarded as a process of linear development (Haitsma Mulier, 2002, p. 67). Humanist historiography aims at a convincing and lively presentation of what happened, or could have happened, and of the considerations thereof, the motives and utterances of the most important figures, rather than an exact reproduction of what was found in the sources, passed down through the ages.

Factorial explanation seems to prevail. Apart from an individual style Hooft has specific ideas about what to mention of (supposed) reasons leading to a particular historical outcome and what to avoid in telling his story. Moreover, he must have had a clear picture of which aspect(s) of the examples were the most valuable for his readers. Likewise, he felt it to be of little interest for them to have any knowledge of the historical (long-term) consequences. These served 'rather as filling than as food' in his opinion, because the reasons behind the actions, thus the causes, would have been more important and useful than what it brought about or could have been brought about. Hooft described, for example, the planning of an attack (1581) on the city of Flushing in full detail, although this attack was never launched. He explains the background of the reasons that would have led to this attack (Hooft, 1972, p. 777):

However, as knowledge of the bare consequences of historical events functions rather as filling than as food to the reader's reason - after all in the matter of usefulness they cannot weigh up against reviewing the ways by which the causes are brought about - it won't grieve us to tell these actions [in the margin: 'Attack on Flushings (that did not take place)'], planned with as much bravery as craftiness, one by one.

After all, from Hooft's point of view the historiographer had to explain people's motives that were often hidden (*arcana imperii*), fact and judgment, as Tacitus had done, laying open a truth that transcended mere factual truth and offered insight into the real and deeper causes of events (Jansen, 1995, pp. 184-185). As Waszink (2008, p. 97) has stated with regard to Grotius - and the same goes for Hooft -, the usefulness of the ways by which the causes are brought about, was 'revealing the real causes and motives in history' and in actual politics. It enabled the historiographer to directly steer and correct the present. By way of consequential and factorial explanations Hooft uses causal argumentation as a means to order and make history into a

3. Hooft's DH shows all the characteristics of a chronicle, in the sense that it recalls events as arranged in a rather strict chronological order; the mutual connection between the events may be under discussion, but evidently Hooft did not venture a lot of digressions across the time boundary of each year, in accordance with his most important source of inspiration, Tacitus, who mentioned any deviation of time sequence. Hooft apologizes for interrupting chronology as well (Haitsma Mulier, 1985, p. 65; cf. Breen, 1894, pp. 236-237).

reliable and comprehensible account, creating an impression of a considered and 'well-documented' argument.

3.2 Analysis

The *Dutch History* is a historical account, in which linear causation is most common. Causation, as such, may be characterized as a judgment made that A causes B, as a process between A and B in which a necessity, force or causal power is transmitted (Ahn & Kalish, 2000). A linear causal narrative has the following structure:

event A → [causes] event B → [causes] event C, etc.

The facts are described in a coherent way, with a certain direction and meaning (Froeyman, 2009, pp. 13ff). Causal connectives that indicate this structure are for example 'as a result of', 'led to', and 'resulted in' (cf. Coffin, 2004, pp. 263-264). The following case will illustrate this.

In 1587 the eastern provinces of the Netherlands remained the theatre of war, a fight between the Spanish troops of Parma and those of the United Provinces, in collaboration with English troops. One day the leader of the Dutch (and English) soldiers, Maarten Schenk, sees an opportunity to open the gates of Nijmegen, in order to take the city. That is why he makes his way to Elten, with his troops, most of them English ones, and from there to the other side of the Rhine. His journey starts at night with the aim to arrive in Elten at the crack of dawn. But when he has almost arrived there, he is forced to rest his English troops, who are at the forefront. He is unable to quickly mobilize them again.

- (1) That's why [consequence] he [Schenk] started to drive the Dutch troupes forward, fearing [cause] that the daybreak would betray him. But the English troops, not willing to allow them the way through [cause], opposed them [consequence and cause] in such a way, with spears put forward, that [consequence] the plan [to arrive in the village of Elten] was a total disaster. (Hooft, 1972, p. 1096)

This description is an example of (mostly) consequential explanation in which the focus is on the effects of a specific event (the plan being a disaster as a result of the opposing English troops, the English troops opposing as a result of the Dutch troops being driven forward, the Dutch being driven forward as a result of the fearing by Schenk that the daybreak would betray him). All the causes mentioned are sufficient causes, to be valued as *probable* causes.

Factorial explanation may have a multi-layered character, as seen in example (2) with arguments from different places, however, without a clear internal evaluation of them by the writer:

- (2) After Charles the Fifth (either due to his health, to which he himself put it down, or because his normal luck gave out), tired with reigning and not standing up to his problems, has drummed knowledge of governance [...] into his son, and appointed him as head of the Golden Fleece, he turned up [...] in the assembly of the States General. (Hooft, 1972, p. 3)

The argumentation structure runs as follows:

1 Charles drummed knowledge of governance into his son, and appointed his son as head of the Golden Fleece.

1.1 he could not stand up to his problems

1.1.2 he was tired with reigning

1.1.2.1 his normal luck let him down [reason given by Hooft]

1.1.2.2 his health let him down [reason given by Charles]

The text does not make completely clear how the different causes have to be arranged and which premise belongs to which voice. Only 1.1.2.2 is explicitly linked by the writer with the judgment of Charles himself. All causes seem to be probable causes except for the reason given by Hooft himself (1.1.2.1) that Charles' normal luck let him down, which is a possible cause of 1.1.2. The gradual difference between these causes is based on an 'initial condition'. Charles declared himself that health was the reason for his fatigue, and the reason given by Hooft (1.1.2.1) is another, possible, reason from someone judging the relation between 1.1.2.1 and 1.1.2. The cause is a *possible* one, as more than just 'real-world'-knowledge is involved. After all, according to Sweetser (1990), the relation of sentences with causal connectives can be based on three types of causation: 1. real-world causation, 2. epistemic causation, and 3. speech-act causation. In this example there is a 'real-world' or factual relation between the two discourse segments. Both the standpoint 1 and argument 1.1 contain a factual proposition. It is characteristically for an emperor (Charles V) to appoint someone else (his son) to be his successor if he cannot stand up to his problems, due to tiredness with reigning, as it is real-world-knowledge that being tired with reigning may be caused by insufficient health (1.1.2.2). Argumentation based on this kind of factual relationship leads to coherent utterances, and furthers that the reader can understand the relation between both. But the coherence concerning the other reason given here (1.1.2.1) asks for more than 'real-world'-knowledge. That 'it is considered a sign of luck if someone keeps his health' may be obvious, but an analysis of the context is needed to test the acceptability of the opinion that 'Charles was normally lucky'.

The analytical form of causation, in which cause-and-effect chains are dominated by abstract, non-linear and non-human forces, is rare in the DH. This may be partly explained by the fact that in general seventeenth-century historiography has a more narrative, chronicle-like character. It focuses on historical facts and individual human acts rather than on abstract, long-term or coordinating forces and trends. Moreover, the DH has a dramatized literary style, which goes hand in hand with episodic narrative. An example though of analytical causation may be the passage in which Hooft evaluates the view of 'several chroniclers' about the causes of a shortage of grain in the Southern Netherlands in 1587. The 'non-human force' is the stagnation of agriculture. Indeed, the harbors and rivers in the Southern Netherlands were blockaded by the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, and the farmers lived on the verge of disaster, due to the burden of soldiers passing through, as Hooft describes. According to him, one historiographer explained the high cost of grain by stating that greedy traders only delivered grain when the prices of it have soared. The passage takes the form of a refutation with a conclusion on the basis of probability:

- (3) One writer from this period claims that the high cost did not arise from the grain shortage, but from the greed of the traders [...]. When the market was sluggish, these traders swore, in his opinion, that they had nothing in stock, but when demand for these goods increased, they could provide enough from their lofts, which were packed with grain. But, except that this has only been mentioned by one person, it can be easily refuted. For surely, the magistrate or the population would in all likelihood have heard about this despicable misuse and would have settled it by way of an order or revolt. Moreover, several chroniclers unanimously testify about this year [1587] that the earlier mentioned blockade of the waterways and the stagnation of agriculture cause the shortage [of grain]. For the achievement of this effect [the shortage] these factors [the blockade and the stagnation] were certainly sufficient. That's why I think it is more plausible that by proclaiming it this man

[the aforementioned writer], perhaps incited by the Spanish governors, may have tried to dissuade the people from the idea that it was in the power of the United Provinces [i.e. Holland and Zeeland] to take the other provinces [in the South] by the throat. (Hooft, 1972, p. 1160)

Hooft's own conclusion, after mentioning the insights of the different chroniclers, is based on a kind of abductive reasoning that “involves the consecutive process of selecting the ‘best candidate’ from the hypotheses that have been generated” (Wagemans, 2013, p. 3; Campos, 2011), with a conclusion that is plausibly true.

1 It is observed that the shortage is the case

1.1 It is observed that greed by traders, blockade of the waterways, and stagnation of agriculture are the case

1.1'.1 Of all possible explanations the blockade and stagnation is the best explanation of the shortage

The standpoint is supported by causal argumentation

1.1'.1.1 The shortage can be explained by the blockade/stagnation

1.1'.1.1.1 Several chroniclers unanimously testify this

1.1'.1.1.2 The blockade/stagnation are a sufficient explanation

The refutation of an alternative explanation (the greed of the traders) is also supported:

1 The high cost is not likely to be explained by the greed of the traders

1.1 This explanation is mentioned by only one writer

1.2 The population would in all likelihood have heard about the misuse and would have settled it by way of an order or revolt [which didn't happen]

Decision-making always implies criteria on the basis of which it is decided which explanation is the most preferable one. Which ones are involved here? Due to a scarcity of factual evidence, Hooft selected the most probable possibility by logical reasoning and common sense. The decision is valued by words that on the one hand indicate determination like ‘easily refuted’, ‘surely’, ‘certainly’, and on the other probability: ‘in all likelihood’, ‘more plausible’, ‘perhaps’. Moreover, his choice is supported by explaining why one of the explanations is less probable. It was in his opinion “intended to dissuade the people from the idea that it was in the power of the United Provinces to take the other provinces by the throat”. This claim has been substantiated by reference to the Spanish governors, who ‘perhaps’ incited this.

Although reasons or consequences are selected and sometimes evaluated, they are mostly presented as categorical, objective facts, rather than as a set of propositions that have to be argued for (Coffin, 2006, p. 71). Solidarity between writer and reader may therefore be assumed. The same goes for the evaluation of the decision-making process. For the smooth functioning of this kind of historical narrative, common feeling and shared values seem to be essential conditions. The argumentation takes place in the context of a process of joint dispute resolution, aimed at persuading the readers of the way in which the reasoning has been made, elucidating the collaborative way in which the protagonist and the antagonist respond to each other's (i.e. assumed) doubts and objections. As in example (3), Hooft often delivers argumentation for the choice he made between different explanations. By using lexical choices

like 'surely', 'easily', 'certainly', 'main' and 'important', he seems to construe a degree of causal impact in the DH but mostly refrains from further explanation of why it is classified in this or that way, implicitly referring to shared values.

4. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have given a description of the prototypical causal patterns that arise when historiographers provide a justification for their explanation of a memorized fact or a set of facts, and when underpinning their choice for the selection of arguments. Causal argumentation has been described, in which a specific (historical) fact is supported by a (set of) particular fact(s). This argumentative pattern has been extended in a version that is focused on the quality of the explanation. It sets a necessary cause apart from a sufficient cause, and divides the latter into three different gradations: 'the most likely', 'probable' and 'possible' cause.

The first one of these three has been identified as 'abduction' and described as an extension concerning the choice of the best explanation. The extended version of causal argumentation concerning the choice of the best explanation (table 2) has made clear that on the basis of a valuation from the available candidate explanations one explanation is to be selected as the best one to explain a specific historical fact F, after application of a decision rule. For DH abductive reasoning seems to be highly relevant, as in several cases Hooft tries to reconstruct the historical process on the basis of available (and in some way conflicting) sources.

The analysis of causation in Hooft's DH seeks to provide further insight into the application of the argumentative tool. The author often delivers argumentation for the choice made between different explanations. By using lexical choices like 'surely', 'easily', 'certainly', 'main' and 'important', he seems to construe a degree of causal impact, though mostly refraining from further explanation of the decision made. Decision-making always implies criteria on the basis of which it is decided which explanation is the most preferable. Example (3) shows some of the motives for selection: one of them is the opinion of only one writer against the explanation unanimously made by several chroniclers. The criterion involved will have been 'reliability'. Another criterion for selection of the best explanation is here that the proposed explanation is a sufficient explanation, while an alternative would have caused an effect (order or revolt) that did not happen. The criterion is here supposed to be 'simplicity' or 'sufficiency'.

In Early Modern historiography not only historical facts as (sub)standpoints need (sub)argumentation, but also the decision which of the available explanations is the best to be supported by (sub)argumentation. On the basis of the latter it can be decided not only which are the criteria for good explanations but also on the basis of which criterion a decision has been made.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The author would like to thank dr. Jean Wagemans (University of Amsterdam) and the participants of the Research Colloquia (Department of Speech Communication, Argumentation Theory and Rhetoric, University of Amsterdam) for their valuable comments.

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