

A new Dutch Crossing

With this first issue in a new form Dutch Crossing is entering its 33rd year of publication. While a third of a century might not be as customary an occasion to look back and take stock as a quarter or half a century we would like to take the opportunity to revisit the journal's history and to explain 'the Whys and Wherefores', its purpose and vision for the years to come. Initiated by the cessation of external funding for the journal in 2008, the changes in the journal's external appearance, a new typographical layout and cover design, are only the most visible expressions of this turning point. One of the more fundamental developments is that Dutch Crossing from this year onwards will also become available online, via IngentaConnect, one of the large journal databases. Thus, Dutch Crossing has, albeit somewhat belatedly, entered the digital age of publication. Another change concerns the publication cycle. While we continue to publish the journal semi-annually in 2009, from 2010 onwards, Dutch Crossing will be issued three times per year.

Since 1977 the journal has been edited at the Department of Dutch, first at Bedford College, regent's Park, since 1982 at University College London. From modest beginnings as a departmental magazine it soon developed into one of the main English language journals of interdisciplinary Low Countries Studies and in 1997, it became the journal of the Association for Low Countries Studies. A substantial body of high quality research articles and book reviews on all aspects of Low Countries Studies has been published over the years, the main strands being history and art history of the Low Countries, not only focussing on the traditional area of interest in the Low Countries in the English-speaking world, the Dutch Revolt of the 16th century and the subsequent 'Golden Age' of the Netherlands, but on all periods from the late Middle Ages to the present day, Dutch and Flemish (and occasionally Afrikaans) literary and cultural studies, linguistics of Dutch and Dutch as a foreign language, and intercultural and transnational studies. Apart from scholarly articles and book and exhibition reviews, Dutch Crossing from time to time has also published original work and translations of literary writing by classical and contemporary Dutch authors like Joost van den Vondel, Anthonis de Roovere, Hafid Bouazza or Kader Abdolah to name but a few recent publications. Special issues have been produced on topics as diverse as Translation (1980), Lexicography (1982), Medieval Drama (1984), Landscape Painting (1987), Constantijn Huygens (1987), the Low Countries and the World (1989), environmental issues in the Netherlands (1993), Rembrandt van Rijn (2001), Williamite Scotland and the Republic of the United Provinces (2005), Contemporary Dutch women writers (2006), and Anglo-Dutch relations in the 17th century (2007).

In order to make this substantial body of literature accessible, printed cumulative indexes have been compiled and published in print in 1987 (for nos. 1–30) and 1994 (for nos. 1–50) which in 2006 have been turned into a constantly updated web database facilitating searches in table of contents, keywords and abstracts of all articles and reviews published since 1977. In the course of this year, Maney is going to start digitising the back issues, so that Dutch Crossing in due course will have fully become what librarians call a 'hybrid journal', available in print and online, potentially on every scholar's desktop. We hope and expect that this move will increase the visibility not only of our journal and its contributions but also of Dutch Studies as academic subject in the English-speaking world considerably.

While the journal's subtitle is self-explaining, the question we are asked most frequently concerns the meaning of the journal's main title. Having been accustomed to it for a very long time we had to go back to the editorial of the very first issue from March 1977 for an explanation. The founding editors, then back at Bedford College London, quoted a dictionary entry 'Dutch Crossing, an unauthorised crossing; jay-walking' and elaborated:

Neither the origin of our title nor its precise application are entirely clear; we are informed that it is a mainly transatlantic usage, though it does not appear in any of the standard handbooks of American English that we have consulted (...) However, the loss in precision is a gain in suggestiveness: 'Dutch Crossing' evokes an adventurous, risky enterprise (sometimes even one of doubtful 'respectability'), but it also holds the promise of excitement, and of discovery 'on the other side'. To shift the metaphor slightly, we hope the title will serve, as Dutch has it, as a flag to cover a cargo as diverse as the interests and talents of its readers and contributors.¹

Little has to be added to this, apart from the fact that an American folk-dance, apparently referring to certain diagonal dance figures, shares the name of our journal whose origin, like other English expressions with 'Dutch', could also stem from the time of the Anglo-Dutch wars in the 17th century and was probably not meant to be too favourably for the Dutch in its original form. Be this as it may, the metaphor and explanation from 1977 still apply to a large extent today. They reflect the intentions of the journal's founders to let Dutch Crossing become something like a 'showcase' of Dutch and Flemish culture and to focus on the allegorical bridges and connections between the Dutch- and English-speaking worlds

The journal's scope and geographical coverage have been extended since to include all aspects of 'Global Dutch', not only the Netherlands and the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium but also other places where Dutch historically had or continues to have an impact, including parts of the Americas, Southern Africa and South-East Asia. It is a truly international journal, published in English in the United Kingdom, but with a worldwide cohort of contributors and readership. Although it is the journal of the Association for Low Countries Studies in the United Kingdom and Ireland, more than two thirds of Dutch Crossing's contributions come from outside of the 'domestic' research community, mainly from the Netherlands, Belgium, the

United States, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand but, in recent years (2005–2008), also from countries as diverse as France, Israel, Jamaica, Romania, Suriname etc. Despite its ‘global’ orientation the journal’s special focus concerning relations between the Low Countries and the Anglophone world in all periods from early modern times to the present day, however, remains in place.

Nowhere is this reflected better than in the present issue. While Susan Broomhall and Jennifer Spinks use Rembrandt’s 400th anniversary in 2006 to investigate the relationship between historical scholarship and the tourism industry’s use of heritage sites and history to attract visitors from all over the world, shedding light on the so far under-researched role of tourism as a source of identity formation both in the past and today, Marjorie Rubright’s article on the Anglo-Dutch exchange urges a reconsideration of the focus on the proximate cultural relations between the English and Dutch *across* geographic borders. Her article, focussing on the Anglo-Dutch Royal Exchange from 1565, attends to the various ways in which London’s early-modern Dutch expatriate community and its material culture shaped notions of Anglo-Dutch cultural exchange from *within* England’s borders instead. Maarten Hell’s and Peter Illing’s contributions address previously under-researched areas of diplomatic history from very different angles. Whereas Maarten Hell approaches Franco-Dutch relations from the perspective of a new field of diplomatic history which incorporates the study of ‘otherness’ and cultural transfer as factors in diplomacy – his account of the embassy of Charles Faye, French ambassador to the Hague from 1624–1628, carefully unfolds the role of personality, intellectual and national background for the success or failure of individual diplomatic missions, contrasting Faye with his English counterpart, Dudley Carlton –, Peter Illing concentrates on neglected aspects of late 18th century European diplomacy. His article challenges the conventional notion that the continent was split into two largely unconnected spheres, east and west. Using the example of the short-lived Brabant Revolution in the Southern Netherlands of 1789/90, he explains how European diplomacy regarding Belgian independence turned upon the connections between the ‘Eastern’ and the ‘Western Question’, two so far supposedly separate spheres, particularly visible in the case of Prussia whose role as a regional hegemon in the Low Countries in this decade has frequently been overlooked compared to the part it played in the partitions of Poland.

We hope to have produced an exciting first issue 2009 and invite the submission of original scholarly articles from all disciplines for publication in upcoming issues via the journal’s submissions tracking system. All articles are blindly peer-reviewed and modifications may be required. Contributions should be in English, be accompanied by an abstract and provide translations of quotations in Dutch. The journal’s styleguide (MHRA), full editorial policy and a cumulative index of all articles since 1977 are available on the journal’s website.²

We would like to take the opportunity to thank our previous publisher, Troubador, for the good cooperation in the previous nine years, and look forward to a similarly fruitful relationship with our new publisher from 2009 onwards, Maney. We would further like to draw the attention of our readers to *Crossways*, an occasional book series published in parallel with *Dutch Crossing*. In 2007, after a 7 year break, volume 6 was published, a survey of Low Countries imprints in Scottish research libraries by William Kelly, providing valuable information on sources on which future Low Countries research can be based.³

ULRICH TIEDAU

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

¹ ‘The Whys and Wherefores’, *Dutch Crossing* 1 (March 1977), p. 2.

² *Dutch Crossing*, cumulative index (1977–present) and submission tracking system <<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dutch/crossing/>>.

³ William A. Kelly, *Low Countries imprints in Scottish research libraries* (Crossways, vol. 6), Münster/New York 2007.