

## Editorial

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Regular readers will have noticed gradual changes in the editorial board of *Dutch Crossing: Journal of Low Countries Studies* over the past couple of issues. Partly necessitated by generational change we have started to restructure the board to give additional weight to the global aspects of Dutch Studies as reflected in *Dutch Crossing* and the manifold exchanges between the Dutch-speaking and Anglophone worlds in particular.

In a first step we would like to welcome Jeroen Dewulf (Berkeley), who is a renowned expert (not exclusively but also) in colonial and postcolonial Dutch studies, in the editorial team as well as Raingard Esser, newly appointed Chair for Early Modern history at the University of Groningen, and Benjamin Kaplan (London), current incumbent of the longest-established Chair for Dutch history in the Anglophone world (1919), on the editorial board of the journal. Without wanting to blur the distinction between Afrikaans and Dutch (the two closely related languages went separate ways for at least a century now) we are also aiming to include more South-African studies in the future. Rather than abrupt the change will be a gradual one. While *Dutch Crossing* has occasionally published occasional Afrikaans literary studies in the past we aim to develop this area more systematically in the future. Please watch this space for further changes.

Where better to start than in the present issue? This summer issue of *Dutch Crossing* again demonstrates the breadth of historical and literary Dutch studies as such on the one hand and cultural exchanges between the Low Countries and the Anglophone world on the other. Dirk Schoenaers (London) opens the issue by investigating Gerard Potter's translation of Jean Froissart's late-medieval chronicle (c. 1450) into Middle Dutch and its relationship to the ruling elite of late medieval Holland. In his article, which was awarded the 2011 ACLS Essay Prize for early careers researchers, Schoenaers argues that Potter's previously little-noticed version in the vernacular of Holland was directed at an audience of regional administrators after the incorporation of the principality in the Burgundian lands (1425–1436). Adducing evidence from the provenance of the translation's exemplar, Potter's biography, his linguistic identity and translation technique he demonstrates how the text may have served these elites as an introduction to the continuing Anglo-French conflict and/or as a collection of examples of both good and bad governmental practice.

Suze Zijlstra (Amsterdam) turns her intention to trade correspondence between 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch merchants and the crucial issue of trust, a pre-requisite for the extension of credit, for the functioning of early modern long-distance trade. In her article she demonstrates how business correspondence contributed to the establishment and continuance of trust relations, in which, contrary to what might be expected, family ties

turn out to be much less significant than values like dedication, reliability, openness and dependability.

Christopher Joby (Leeds) brings the early modern immigrant scene from the Low Countries in Norwich and environs alive by surveying and analysing records in Dutch language from the time kept at the Norfolk Record Office. At one point in the 1570s accounting for more than a third of the town's population, the immigrants and their descendants gradually integrated into the local population, but continued to use the Dutch language in oral and written form for some time. Joby provides an overview of the surviving documents in the NRO as well as of other Dutch writings produced in early-modern Norfolk, such as the poetry of Jan Cruso, all of which provide valuable insights into the use of the Dutch language and the life of the Dutch life in Norwich, Norfolk and East Anglia more generally.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Michael J. Douma (Springfield) traces the life-story of Siras Sill, the only black Dutchman living in the Dutch-American immigrant community of Holland, Michigan, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning 20<sup>th</sup> century against the backdrop of racial discourse of the Dutch in America. Douma shows how Siras, although respected by locals, could not escape the racial stereotypes and prejudices of the Midwest in this time. His highly illuminating micro-history of Siras, worked from primary sources, sheds light on a larger discourse of Dutch-American ethnic and national identity.

On the literary side of things, Augustinus P. Dierick (Toronto) looks at Dutch Modernism at the turn of the century through the prism of Hendrik Marsman's literary critical writings from 1926, published under the title *De anatomische les*. Analysing the main topics of Marsman's poetic programme as the relation between life and art (in this case poetry); a definition of the work of art; and the effect of art on the reader, Dierick shows how Marsman regarded lyric poetry as a symptom of the all-pervasive individualism of modern times against which contemporary poetry, starting with the *Tachtigers* movement of 1880, provided a much-needed, although not unambivalent, antidote and corrective, and how he eventually changed his poetic practice, moving from an at times shrill 'expressionism' or 'vitalism' to a symbolist organic style, whilst continuing his defence of poetry against those who would question art's autonomy.

Phil van Schalkwyk (Potchefstroom) analyses J. M. Coetzee's *Landscape with Rowers: Poetry from the Netherlands* (2004) in which the 2003 Nobel Prize for Literature winner from South Africa has collected his own translations of poetic cycles and sequences by six poets: Gerrit Achterberg, Sybren Polet, Hugo Claus, Cees Nooteboom, Hans Faverey, and Rutger Kopland. Van Schalkwyk argues that with this rather anachronistic collection of poems, all predating the 1990s and to a greater or lesser extent associated with the artistic drive during the third and part of the fourth quarter of the twentieth century toward exploring more 'objective' compositional methods and in several instances also the 'hyperreal', Coetzee has not attempted to introduce the world to a representative set of modern Dutch poems – much rather, he has utilised a very specific selection of poems to produce, in Peircean terms, a 'higher translation'. Drawing on Amit Pinchevski, Slavoj Žižek and other theorists, he demonstrates that *Landscape with Rowers* can be seen as a conscious and conscientious interruption tailor-made for the time following the historic interruption that "Nine Eleven" constituted.

As in most issues of *Dutch Crossing*, a review section closes the issue. Best wishes for good reading!