

# Editorial

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In 2019, Dutch Studies in Britain celebrated its centenary. Hundred years earlier, the later famous historian Pieter Geyl had been appointed as first professor for Dutch Studies at the University of London, the first such university chair in the Anglophone world (1919). To mark the occasion appropriately, a year-long series of Dutch academic events was held at UCL, amongst the highlights of which were an honorary doctorate bestowed on Cees Nooteboom in the summer and the 13<sup>th</sup> biennial ALCS conference held at UCL in the autumn of 2019. The papers in this issue of *Dutch Crossing* are selected papers from this conference.

Two papers from the Bristol-based *North Sea Crossings* project on the literary heritage of Anglo-Dutch relations from 1066 to 1688 open the issue. Ad Putter begins by looking at the earliest evidence for the use of the Dutch language in Britain. By choosing three case studies from Wales, Scotland, and England for his social historical analysis, he demonstrates that spoken and written Dutch was present throughout medieval Britain. While the existence of a Dutch-speaking colony in Pembrokeshire is well known, Putter also identifies Dutch words in the medieval writings of Gerald of Wales as well as in the modern dialects spoken there. In Scotland he focuses on a letter in Dutch by Wouter Michiels and discusses the language and the identity of Michiels. In England, he points to the remarkable multilingual manuscript of the *Book of Privileges*, before concluding by surveying other fascinating sources for the social history of Dutch in medieval Britain. Sjoerd Levelt then turns his attention to the arrival of Dutch 'strangers', religious refugees from the Southern Netherlands, in London, Norwich and various other cities in England, which marked a new stage in the history of Dutch in Britain. Netherlandic-speaking churches were founded, and English printers became involved in printing texts in Dutch. The ease with which these new communities managed to establish themselves, however, depended on a pre-existing presence of communities of speakers of the language as well as on a long history of Anglo-Dutch cultural, mercantile and political interactions. Levelt's paper examines evidence for the existence in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century of an Anglo-Dutch infrastructure along which people moved, and on which communities were built.

From the literary strand of the conference stems Elke Brems' investigation of retranslations as sites of negotiations. Starting from the premise that contemporary reading culture in the Dutch language area is so international, that foreign texts translated into Dutch can almost be considered part of Dutch literature, she looks at the pitfalls of literary translation 'into

Dutch', where often diverging linguistic norms in the Dutch language become visible, and investigates retranslation as a means to negotiate these complex norms in the target culture. Using the examples of Richard Scarry's *ABC-books* and several consecutive translations of Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Books*, Brems demonstrates how the unity or heterogeneity of the literary field in Dutch, from a cultural-political angle, is negotiated and how these retranslations can serve as negotiations between not only source and target culture but even within the target culture itself. In a related vein, Claudia Zeller investigates 'pseudo-translations' in Dutch literature, a recurring phenomenon within the literary history of the Low Countries. Her study closely examines three Dutch authors who, towards the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, opted for Russian pseudonyms. Using Jérôme Meizoz's notion of *posture*, her analysis charts the trajectory of these literary swindles and explores the rules of this imitation game through contextual, paratextual and textual evidence while also looking on the impact of these mystifications on the career of the respective authors. Finally, the works of the three fake-Russians and their reception can also shed light on the place and prestige Russian literature held in the literary field of the Netherlands during a period in which Russian literature was less accessible than today.

From the socio-linguistic strand of the conference stems Andreas Krogull's paper on historical multilingualism and language contact 'from below'. Taking a historical-sociolinguistic perspective, his paper focuses on the Dutch-German borderlands in the long nineteenth century as an intriguing case to investigate historical multilingualism and language contact 'from below'. Despite the growing importance of nation-states and their standard languages, he demonstrates that multilingual practices and contact phenomena can still be traced in handwritten archival documents from the private sphere. Using examples from various family archives in the Dutch-German border area as well as from a collection of letters by Low-German labour migrants to the Netherlands, Krogull analyses the Dutch-German borderlands as a multi-faceted sociolinguistic space well into the nineteenth century. Moreover, as he demonstrates, established theories of multilingualism and language contact may require rethinking in order to account for less clear-cut and more fluid practices in the past. Also from a linguistic point of view, Adri Breed and Daniël van Olmen investigate impersonalisation strategies in Afrikaans and Dutch. Although a lot of research in Germanic languages focuses on the use of pronouns to express impersonal meaning, relatively little is known about the use of other possible impersonalisation strategies. Using a corpus-linguistic approach, Breed and Van Olmen examine the agentless passive as a possible alternative in both Afrikaans and Dutch and demonstrate that it is indeed being used in the entire range of impersonal contexts. However, the agentless passive is more typically employed in corporate contexts and existential contexts where the subject is vague and number-neutral.

As usual, a review section concludes the issue, with Reinier Salverda's review of Christopher Joby's book on the Dutch Language in Japan from 1600-1900 and Floris Cohen of a Rudolf Dekker's book on the 'grey turn' in the history of the German occupation of the Netherlands in World War II.

As always best wishes for good reading.

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