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Doppelgänger Dilemmas? AngloDutch relations in the early modern period, as viewed through the prism of print, theatre and language

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Published in:
Journal of the Northern Renaissance

Publication date:
2017

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Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

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Citation for published version (APA):
Van Ittersum, M. (2017). Doppelgänger Dilemmas? AngloDutch relations in the early modern period, as viewed through the prism of print, theatre and language. *Journal of the Northern Renaissance*, 7(2), 1-12.
<http://www.northernrenaissance.org/review-article-doppelganger-dilemmas-anglo-dutch-relations-in-the-early-modern-period/>

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JOURNAL of the NORTHERN RENAISSANCE

<http://northernrenaissance.org> | ISSN: 1759-3085



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Issue 7.2 (2017) - review supplement**Doppelgänger Dilemmas? Anglo-Dutch relations in the early modern period, as viewed through the prism of print, theatre and language****Martine Julia van Ittersum**

Helmer J. Helmers, *The Royalist Republic: Literature, Politics and Religion in the Anglo-Dutch Public Sphere, 1639-1660* (Cambridge University Press, 2015) xvi + 326pp., £65, hardback. ISBN: 978-1-1070-8761-3

Christopher Joby, *The Dutch Language in Britain (1550-1772): A Social History of the Use of Dutch in Early Modern Britain* (Brill Academic Publishers, 2015) 452pp., €115 or \$149, ISBN: 978-9-0042-8518-7

Marjorie Rubright, *Doppelgänger Dilemmas: Anglo-Dutch Relations in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014) 352pp., £60 Cloth (ISBN 978-0-8122-4623-0) or £45.50 Ebook (ISBN 978-0-8122-9006-6)

[1] While historiographical fashions come and go, Anglo-Dutch relations in the early modern period have been the subject of scholarly inquiry for a very long time. Military and maritime historians on both sides of the North Sea have studied the flashpoints of Anglo-Dutch imperial competition. Thanks to the recent turn towards ‘global history’, these now receive sustained attention as well from economic historians, colonial historians and regional studies specialists and even from historians of political thought. For example, it was Kenneth Pomeranz’ *The Great Divergence* (2000) — a magisterial inquiry into the reasons why the West, rather than China, became the first to experience modern economic growth — which induced Jan Luiten van Zanden and his team of Ph.D. students to do comparative research on the nature of Dutch and English economic modernization in the pre-modern period, and the possible connections with marriage patterns, literacy rates and manuscript and book production in Northwestern Europe. This has proven to be an extremely fruitful field of study. Similarly, colonial historians and regional studies specialists have started to pay more attention to the interrelationship between European imperial rivalries and political, economic and cultural change in pre-modern Asia, Africa, Australasia and the Americas, including, of course, changing constellations of regional ‘world orders’ (see, for example, Clulow 2014). Since we live in an age when every historian worth her or his salt claims to be a global historian, we can safely conclude that Anglo-Dutch relations will remain a hot topic in the historiography for many years to come.

[2] The three books under review here do not speak directly to Anglo-Dutch imperial competition, however, nor do they discuss Anglo-Dutch relations in a global context. Rather, they emphasize the close relations of two countries on either side of the North Sea. Christopher Joby examines the uses of the Dutch language in the British Isles between 1550 and 1702, mainly among refugees and immigrants from the Low Countries, who entered the British Isles in large numbers at the time of the Dutch Revolt, and, of course, among the descendants of these refugees and immigrants. Marjorie Rubright draws our attention to the use of ‘stage Dutch’ in plays performed in London, mainly at the turn of the sixteenth century, and the roles played by ‘Dutch’ characters in these productions. Helmer J. Helmers discusses how various groups involved in the British civil wars flogged their wares in the most sophisticated media market in early modern Europe, and how their pamphleteering efforts changed public perceptions of the British civil wars in the Dutch Republic. Printed materials are the source documents of choice for both Helmers and Rubright. Joby excels in his use of archival materials, particularly the records of the Dutch ‘stranger churches’ in England.

[3] Questions of identity are never far away in these three monographs. What were the (perceived) similarities and differences between Dutch-speakers and English-speakers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? To whom or to what did speakers and writers discussed in these studies owe their allegiance? Who did they think they were? And how did they define ‘the other’? Identity politics can be a tricky business, however. Protestant

internationalism is an important ingredient of Helmers' study, for example, but virtually absent in Rubright's monograph. Nor is it at all clear what the reactions were of Dutch and English audiences (plural!) to the plays and pamphlets discussed by Rubright and Helmers. Granted, the study of readers' responses is a relatively new field in book history (see, for example, Blair 2003, 2004, 2011; Grafton 1992, 1996; Grafton & Jardine 1990; Jackson 2002; Sherman 2008). Relevant materials are usually hidden in dusty archives. However, literary theory tells us that readers construe at least 50% of the meaning of any given text. So it would seem important to analyze the reactions of early modern audiences, rather than just plays or pamphlets *an sich*. Nor should our definition of early modern audiences be limited to a small circle of fellow-authors or fellow-playwrights. Yes, the extant archival evidence heavily favors the reactions of the early modern elites that produced printed texts in the first place. But there are ways of determining a) important divisions within these elites, and b) whether appeals to compatriots or co-religionists further down the social scale were successful or not. Political decision-makers in both the Dutch Republic and the British Isles were vulnerable to crowd violence, for example, which never went unreported in either manuscript or printed newsletters.

[4] Undoubtedly the most ambitious study of the three is Helmers' *The Royalist Republic*, which analyses the pamphlets which the various groups involved in the British civil wars (and their Dutch supporters) published in the Dutch Republic, and discusses how these media wars may (or may not) have changed public perceptions in the Dutch Republic of the unprecedented developments across the North Sea between 1639 and 1660. The book is divided into two parts: 'Public Spheres and Discursive Communities' (part I), covering the time period 1639-1649, and 'Maps of Meaning' (part II), covering the time period 1649-1660. Part I discusses British civil war polemics in the Dutch Republic (chapter 1), the First Civil War and the Anglo-Scoto-Dutch Puritan community (chapter 2), and Anti-Puritanism and Anglo-Scoto-Dutch history (chapter 3). Part II focuses on the cult of Charles I as martyr king in the Dutch Republic (chapter 4), on war and regicide in estate poetry (chapter 5), on revenge tragedy and the Stuart cause in the Dutch Republic (chapter 6), on demonology and the First Anglo-Dutch war (chapter 7), and on politics, providence and theatricality in Vondel and Milton (chapter 8). An introduction and conclusion are to be found at the start and end of the book, respectively.

[5] As Helmers explains in his introduction, he adopts the methodological premises of the new cultural history, 'as developed by scholars of English political culture such as Kevin Sharpe, Peter Lake, Blair Worden and Steven Zwicker' (14). Focusing on representation and discourse, he seeks to investigate 'the relationship between literature and politics, between ideological and aesthetic frameworks and political experience, between the represented and the real' (15). Moreover, his aim is to be sensitive throughout to the 'politics of publication,' i.e. to 'the meaning of a (literary) text at one specific historical moment – the moment it came off the press or appeared on the stage' (17). He recognizes, however, that there is a real and present danger of creating a circular argument. 'In the absence of any documentary evidence of how a text was read, in the form of marginalia, responses or paratexts, the "politics of publication" are liable to become a self-fulfilling prophecy' (18). Helmers contends that a historian is less likely to fall into the trap if he/she examines a large enough corpus of (literary) texts. In that case, the historian is able to analyze documents 'as part of a larger cultural-political discourse, in which larger processes of "reoccupation" and appropriation can be demonstrated' (18).

[6] This seems wishful thinking on Helmers' part. The elegant methodological nostrums of Stephen Greenblatt *et al.* do not change the fact that historians are just as likely to over-interpret a large corpus of texts as they are to read their preferred meanings into a single document. In order to counteract what I call the 'hall-of-mirrors' or 'echo-chamber' effect, a historian should be willing to cross-check his/her evidence, preferably by comparing and contrasting different types of sources. What is most regrettable about Helmer's ambitious study is his total disinterest in archival source materials – none are listed in the bibliography. Perhaps he attaches too much importance to the new cultural history's denunciations of revisionist historians, faulted for their heavy reliance on manuscript sources. Allegedly, revisionist historians viewed history 'through the keyhole of archival material,' creating interpretive worlds in which, as Sharpe and Lake put it, "the line between the real and the represented was sharply drawn and well policed" (15). The criticism of Sharpe and Lake – whether justified or not – was primarily aimed at the

revisionist historian's *modus operandi*, i.e. her/his approach to sources. Yet archival records can tell us just as much about representation as pamphlets can. More importantly, they reveal what happened before and after publication.

[7] We have to look at a wide variety of sources if we want to gauge the connection between printed support for the Stuart cause in the Dutch Republic and the responses of Dutch government and religious authorities to the ever-deepening political and religious crises across the North Sea. Controversial pamphlets were routinely discussed in meetings of town governments, provincial States and the Dutch States General, for example. We have minutes of these meetings, none of which are consulted by Helmers (see, for example, Huysman et al., 1987-2006). Nor does he pay any attention to church records, a particularly rich source. For example, various forms of support (i.e. prayer days, collections, etc.) for either the Puritan brethren in the British Isles or Charles I and his descendants (or both!) would have been discussed at the Provincial Synods of the Dutch Reformed Church, or in meetings at classis- or parish-level. Again, these materials are available, but not used by Helmers. Due to his narrow focus on print culture, we only get half the story. It is clear that inhabitants of the Dutch Republic, including temporary migrants of various political and religious hues, were sufficiently concerned about the British civil wars that they participated in the pamphlet wars in substantial numbers (as writers, printers, buyers, readers, discussants, etc.) However, Helmers does not tell us who the pamphlet writers were, why they decided to have materials printed or circulated in manuscript, what they hoped to achieve by their actions, which audiences they intended to reach, and what the responses were of various readers, including the secular and religious authorities in the Dutch Republic. Crucial pieces of the puzzle are missing here.

[8] Helmers' conceptualization of 'royalism' – a rather important analytical category in his study – seems equally problematic. The title of his book, *Royalist Republic*, is meant to emphasize 'the frictions between domestic and international political discourses' (9), which certainly existed. Yet it does little to explain why sympathy for either the Puritan brethren or for Charles I and his supporters trumped other concerns for certain Dutch audiences at certain moments in time, and why, in other cases, a stream of pamphlets commenting on the British civil wars had no measurable effect whatsoever. It is undoubtedly true that historians of the British civil wars no longer consider royalism a 'monolithic ideology,' but now see it as 'inherently multifarious and dynamic' and 'essentially international.' Allegedly, allegiance to the Stuart monarchy was so unstable that individuals might 'opt into and out of royalism depending on the circumstances' (8). Yet how new and insightful is this really? It has long been known that the Parliamentary cause consisted of ever-shifting alliances between different groups with different agendas. As David Underdown argued back in 1971, the trial and execution of Charles I only became possible after Pride's Purge of early December 1648 (o.s.), which removed Presbyterian MPs eager to reach an agreement with Charles I, leaving a Rump of approximately 150 MPs willing to do the bidding of the New Model Army. This goes a long way to explain why Presbyterian fellow travelers in the Dutch Republic switched sides during the trial of Charles I, and made their abhorrence at Parliament's execution of a Protestant prince abundantly clear in print. (From the Presbyterian point of view, the English regicides could not claim any parallels with Dutch history. The Eighty Years War had been fought to liberate the Low Countries from a tyrannical Catholic ruler and establish the 'true Protestant religion' – meaning Presbyterianism.) The endless political manoeuvring in Parliament in the 1640s had revolved around the question on which terms an agreement would be reached with Charles I. Nobody had proposed the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic. That was different at the time of the Commonwealth, when principled republicans such as James Harrington came to the fore. Helmers' capacious use of the term 'royalism' simply serves to obscure these important distinctions.

[9] Similarly, the existence of an Anglo-Scoto-Dutch public sphere is posited by Helmers, rather than proven. What struck the present reviewer was how pamphlet debates in the Dutch Republic in the 1640s were routinely edited for domestic consumption in England, and how little effort the rulers in London expended on winning the media wars in the Dutch Republic in the 1650s. None of this points to the open, rational debate among equals that Jürgen Habermas considered one of the hallmarks of the public sphere in eighteenth-century France. Since the Dutch Republic was a crazy quilt of jurisdictions, the secular and religious authorities had few means at their disposal to clamp down on pamphlet debates –

hence they worried about these a great deal. However, the Commonwealth authorities in London seem to have kept a tight lid on news imported from the Continent. Again, this suggests that there were notable differences and imbalances between the Low Countries and the British Isles in terms of print production and consumption.

[10] It is a shame that Helmers' study makes no reference to print culture in the southern half of the Low Countries. As Violet Soen and others have shown, there were important centers of print production in the Spanish Netherlands catering to the English market, including St. Omers, which, not coincidentally, was also the location of a Jesuit-run English College. As an exile on the Continent, Charles II held court in both Paris and Breda, i.e. two places not far away from the Spanish Netherlands. Did his supporters try to publish materials there favourable to Charles II's cause? If so, what was the intended audience? Which responses did these materials elicit? And how similar or different was 'royalist' print production in North and South? There is, then, still much to be learned about print cultures in the Low Countries in the 1640s and 1650s, and about the precise connections with the Civil War(s) and Interregnum in the British Isles.

[11] In *Doppelgänger Dilemmas*, Marjorie Rubright examines Anglo-Dutch relations in English literature and culture in the seventeenth century, focusing primarily on plays performed on the London stage. Apart from an introduction and coda, her book consists of six chapters, which analyze 'Dutch' characters in London comedies (chapter 1), the debates about the Teutonic origins of the English language (chapter 2), the language lessons of the stage (chapter 3), the printing of 'stage Dutch' in black letter (chapter 4), the Royal Exchange as a mirror image of Antwerp's Nieuwe Beurs, and the (alleged) crisis of Anglo-Dutch interchangeability in the East Indies (chapter 6). Rubright rightly points out that Dutch immigrants and refugees from the Low Countries constituted the largest foreign community in London at the turn of the seventeenth century. Consequently, we should not be surprised to encounter 'Dutch' characters in the comedies and dramas produced by many of the period's most popular playwrights, including Thomas Dekker, Thomas Heywood, Ben Jonson, William Haughton, John Marston, Thomas Middleton and John Webster.

[12] However, Rubright makes it clear in her introduction that her focus is not representations of the Dutch as such. Instead, the author wishes to emphasize 'the ways in which ideas about Dutchness in the English cultural imagination far exceeded any real or imagined presence of Dutch people on the streets or characters on the stage' (19). Her real subject, then, is English ethnicity-in-the-making. *Doppelgänger Dilemmas* directs our attention to the way English identity was shaped by 'desirable and disquieting similarities to one's neighbors' (19). The author seeks to intervene in debates on early modern English ethnic identity 'by reading with a double vision — a heuristic that attempts to trace and to keep in play the movement between differentiation and similitude in the construction of English identity' (25). In other words, studying 'the other' in seventeenth-century English plays is nothing more than a means to an end for Rubright. The subtext throughout *Doppelgänger Dilemmas* is the very modern obsession with identity politics, projected onto the past.

[13] Rubright is aware of Colin Kidd's word of caution in this respect. Kidd points out that the word 'identity' has undergone striking semantic shifts since the seventeenth century. "Whereas now identity has come to signify that which divides humanity into nations, ethnicities, and other minorities of one sort or another, it once stood for the underlying unity of human kind" (27). Rubright's 'double vision' — a term bandied about a great deal in *Doppelgänger Dilemmas* — is meant to address this inconvenient truth. As far as this reviewer can make out, the term implies that Englishmen were always (uncomfortably) aware of both the similarities and differences between inhabitants of the Low Countries and themselves. That may be so. But it does little to explain why, at one moment, armed conflict could and did break out between Dutch-speakers and English-speakers, or why, at another moment, Oliver Cromwell could seriously propose a union of the Dutch and English Republics. Why do situations occur in which differences of one kind or another trump the ties that bind? In order to answer those kinds of questions, we need to put identity politics to one side for a moment, and delve into old-fashioned political, religious, economic, military and maritime history. Sadly, Rubright has little to say about the possible connections between what happens on stage and in real life, other than scattered observations on, for example, the presence of Dutch merchants and prostitutes in

seventeenth-century London. But then again, ‘the other’ was never the subject of this monograph anyway. Englishness is all that counts.

[14] Unfortunately, both the introduction and individual chapters are cluttered with excess theoretical baggage, which does nothing to clarify Rubright’s argument and makes her prose unreadable at times. For example, the present reviewer would be grateful if somebody could explain to her what the author means by the following:

[*Doppelgänger Dilemmas*] reanimates the semiotics of Dutchness in early modern English culture by recovering literary and cultural operations whereby identifications with one’s proximate other emerge in the form of vexed identifications as approximated kinds. (19)

Doppelgänger Dilemmas could do without such displays of pseudo-learning.

[15] What do we find when we turn to the individual chapters? In chapter 1, Rubright examines the fictive presence of the ‘Dutch’ on London stages in comedies such as William Haughton’s *Englishmen for My Money* (1598), Thomas Dekker’s *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* (1599), John Marston’s *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605), and *Northward Hoe* (1607) by Thomas Dekker and John Webster. Rubright shows that ‘stage Dutch’ *an sich* is little more than a jumbling of Dutch- and English-sounding words, often with the intention of making people laugh. ‘Stage Dutch’ consists of Dutch-accented English interlarded with a relatively limited, well-worn theatrical lexicon of Dutch words and phrases, such as ‘*Ick* (I), *vro* or *frow* (woman, maid or girl), *bedanck* (thanks), *vader* (father), *vater* (water) *heb* (have), *niet* (not), and *met* (with)’ (44). But there is more. The exchanges between Franceschina and Freevill in *The Dutch Courtesan* make clear that the Dutch prostitute both unsettles linguistic boundaries (i.e. “Oh mine aderliver love, vat sall me do to requite dis your mush affection” – 46) and cuts across Freevill’s ‘opposing sexual geographies’ (47). Whereas Freevill visits ‘Dutch’ brothels in the suburbs of Southwark, Lambeth and East Smithfield in order to keep his London marriage bed undefiled, Franceschina is ‘the neighbor whose presence threatens to depreciate the value of the home(land) precisely because she challenges the cultural fantasy of fixed, impermeable geographic and linguistic borders’ (47).

[16] In chapter 2, Rubright turns to two influential English texts, both published in 1605, asserting the Teutonic origins of the English people: William Camden’s *Remaines of a Greater Worke, Concerning Britain* and Richard Verstegan’s *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence*. Camden borrowed heavily from Tacitus’ *Germania* (98 CE), translated into English in the late sixteenth century. We hear a clear echo of both Camden and Tacitus in a 1636 English translation of Gerhard Mercator’s *Atlas*, which notes “[t]hat English men from Saxons drew descent / Their color white and tongue make evident” (69). An exile in Antwerp, Verstegan dedicated his work to James I of England, whom he designated “the chieftest Blood-Royal of our ancient English-Saxon Kings” (69). Sadly, Rubright fails to discuss whether, and to what extent, constructions of ethnic similarities overlapped with or counterbalanced religious allegiances. Did Verstegan propagate the alleged Teutonic origins of the English precisely because he was an English Catholic of Dutch ancestry?

[17] Chapter 3 returns to the issue of ‘stage Dutch’ and ‘Dutch’ characters in English drama, focusing in particular on Thomas Middleton’s play *No Wit, [No] Help like a Woman’s*, first performed in 1611, but only published in 1657. It is unclear to the present reviewer why Middleton’s play is discussed in a separate chapter, rather than in conjunction with the materials examined in chapter 1. Middleton’s play is an extended triangular exchange between an English gentleman (Sir Oliver), a Dutch merchant, and an English servant (Savourwit), who pretends to speak Dutch. According to Rubright, the play enjoins the audience ‘to identify and distinguish between authentic and inauthentic stage Dutch’ (95). Unlike the comic ‘Dutch’ characters in many other plays of the period, the Dutch merchant in *No Wit, [No] Help like a Woman’s* emerges as ‘the only character with the combined moral constitution and linguistic ability to set matters straight’ (107-108). While other English playwrights regularly exploited the monolingualism of strangers on stage, Middleton turned this dramatic convention on its head. It is the multilingual Dutch merchant who comes to the rescue of Sir Oliver, a man taken in by Savourwit’s cozening as a result of his ignorance of any other language apart from English. The audience is excited to

laughter by the bumbling, totally ignorant use of ‘stage Dutch’ by these two English characters.

[18] Chapter 4 draws our attention to the fact that ‘stage Dutch’ is printed in Gothic type in seventeenth-century editions of English plays. There is an obvious link with the use of different fonts for different languages in the dictionaries, word lists and grammars printed in seventeenth-century London. Gothic type was typically reserved for words in Dutch and German. Roman type was the preferred choice for words in English, French and Italian. Curiously, Rubright does not relate her important observations on the materiality of texts to the history of printing in Europe. Already in the days of the incunabula, printers distinguished between Latin and vernacular texts by using Roman font for the former and Gothic font for the latter. Gothic font became even more closely associated with German-language printing at the time of the Protestant Reformation. It is a notable characteristic of the pamphlets produced by Martin Luther and his supporters, for example. This is the European context of the presentation of ‘stage Dutch’ on the pages of seventeenth-century English plays.

[19] Chapter 5 looks at the Royal Exchange’s affinities with the Nieuwe Beurs in Antwerp. The Royal Exchange, completed in 1568, was not just an architectural copy of the Nieuwe Beurs, but also served as the site of a spectacular triumphal arch commissioned by the Dutch and Walloon merchant communities in London upon the accession of James I of England. Indeed, the new monarch passed through the wood-and-plasterwork structure during his ceremonial entry into London on 15 March 1604 (o.s.). We have an account of James’ royal progress by Thomas Dekker. Rubright focuses on Dekker’s detailed description of both the text and images displayed on the triumphal arch. The Dutch and Walloon merchant communities in London emphasized what they had in common with James I of England: like him, the ruler ‘of so many Kingdomes’ (181), they were strangers in England. They also brought into play the powerful metaphor of the monarch as parent to his/her people. They paid tribute to James’ predecessor, “‘Princely Mother, Eliza,”” who had nourished them at her “‘tender boosome”” (181), while entreating the new “‘Sovereigne and Father”” (181) to shelter his Dutch and Walloon ‘children’ under his wings. According to Dekker’s account, the display was a great success. It would have been nice to know if other Londoners felt the same.

[20] In the sixth and final chapter, Rubright examines John Dryden’s *Amboyna* (1673), an adaptation for the stage of various English East India Company (EIC) pamphlets denouncing the so-called ‘Amboyna Massacre’, i.e. the execution of 10 EIC merchants in 1623, at the orders of Herman van Speult, the Dutch governor of the island of Ambon. The chapter’s chronological jump from the reign of James I to the reign of his grandson is rather puzzling. What happened in between? Were ‘Dutch’ characters totally absent from English plays written in the half century that separated Dryden from the likes of Dekker? In order to contextualize Dryden’s *Amboyna*, Rubright examines Anglo-Dutch relations in the East Indies in the 1600s and 1610s. She relies exclusively on source materials and secondary literature in English. One of her primary sources are letters written by personnel of the Dutch East India Company (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie or VOC) available in the I-series at the British Library, i.e. ‘Records Relating to Other Europeans in India, 1475-1824’ (294-295, note 25). The I-series contains early nineteenth-century translations of Dutch documents kept at the Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia (ANRI) in Jakarta. The translations were prepared for Thomas Stamford Raffles, who governed Java on the EIC’s behalf from 1811 until 1814 (when the island was returned to Dutch rule). Rubright does not seem to realize that she is looking at Raffles’ selection of materials, nor does she make any effort to crosscheck with Dutch originals. Indeed, her analysis of *Amboyna* suggests that her own knowledge of Dutch is rather limited. This is unfortunate. She clearly misunderstands the role of ‘the Dutchman Fiscal’ (217), who announces in the play’s opening scene that “[t]his now gives encouragement to a certain Plot, which I have long been brewing, against these Skellum English [i.e. *Engelse schelmen*]....to cut all their Throats, and seize all their Effects within this Island” (217). In Dutch, the word *fiscaal* is not a personal name, but the term referring to a public prosecutor. The fact that the character ‘Fiscal’ is a judicial official – charged with upholding the law, but, in fact, grossly abusing it – makes the Dutch plot against the English in *Amboyna* even more dastardly than the EIC pamphlets ever suggested it was in reality. Dryden, who clearly knew his Dutch, hit upon an important dramatic device here.

[21] The present reviewer commends Rubright for counterbalancing Dryden's conspiracy theories with source materials that testify to instances of Anglo-Dutch amity in the East Indies in the 1600s and 1610s. As Edmund Scott put it in his *Exact Discourse* (1606), "though wee were mortall enemies in our trade, yet in all other matters wee were friends, and would have lived and dyed one for the other" (208). Still, Rubright is so busy reading 'double vision' into her sources that she forgets to explain how the pendulum of Anglo-Dutch relations in the East Indies could have swung so decidedly to the side of armed conflict in the years 1616-1621. The so-called 'Amboyna Massacre' was, in many ways, a corollary of an undeclared war for the Spice Islands (see, for example, van Ittersum 2016). More importantly, Rubright never discusses the role of Dryden's play in the war propaganda of Charles II of England during the Third Dutch War (1672-1674). Who sponsored Dryden, in fact? What were the playwright's intentions? How often was the play performed in London? What were the reactions of the audience? In order to tell a new, properly interconnected story of Anglo-Dutch relations in the seventeenth century, these are the kinds of questions that require answers.

[22] In *The Dutch Language in Britain* (1550-1702), Christopher Joby takes an in-depth look at the various 'Dutches' spoken and written in the British Isles in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The author completed his Ph.D. at the University of Durham in 2006, and is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Dutch at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul. This splendid study suggests that he will be promoted to an Associate Professorship before long. Hunting a sometimes elusive quarry, Joby avails himself of a wonderful array of both printed materials – poems, grammars, catechisms and other religious tracts, etc. – and archival sources – letters, minutes of church and city council meetings, church registers, guild regulations, tax records, etc. The establishment of the Dutch Church at Austin Friars (in London) in 1550 and the death of William III, the Stadtholder-King, in 1702 represent the chronological boundaries of this study. In terms of the topic under discussion, the author distinguishes between three groups of Dutch speakers and writers in the British Isles:

- 1) language users who were migrants, particularly the Dutch communities in London, Surrey, Kent, Essex and Norfolk and Suffolk,
- 2) language users who were temporary visitors, such as fishermen, traders and merchants, scholars and students, artists, craftsmen and architects, and diplomats, soldiers and seamen.
- 3) English people who had learnt Dutch, such as merchants, schoolmasters, playwrights (Thomas Dekker again), sailors who had worked on Dutch ships and the scientist Robert Hooke.

[23] *The Dutch Language in Britain* is mercifully free of excess theoretical baggage. The author does discuss problems of terminology in chapter 1. *Nederlands* or 'Dutch' is hardly an unproblematic analytical category. The term only gained currency in the nineteenth century. It obscures the fact that many speakers came from the Southern Netherlands, 'a problem created by the association of the term "Dutch" with the Northern Netherlands in late modern English' (15). Joby takes on board Peter Burke's suggestion that it might be better to use the term 'Dutches' (plural) in order to avoid an "imagined notion of homogeneity" (15). The sixteenth-century migrants who exchanged the Low Countries for the British Isles usually hailed from the provinces of Flanders and Brabant. Joby points out that these 'stranger' communities were sometimes called Flemish or *Vlaams*, but at other times Dutch or (*Neder*)*duytsch*. According to Joby, there are occasions when it can be difficult to establish whether writers who used the term *Duytsch* referred to *Hooghduytsch* ('High German') or *Nederduytsch* ('Low German' or 'Dutch'). Nor did they always consider it important to draw neat distinctions. For example, [t]he playwright Thomas Dekker (c. 1572-1632) has a character named Hans (not Jan) from Augsburg in Bavaria speaking a mixture of English and Dutch, not High German, in his play "Northward Ho!" (1607) (16). None of this should surprise those of us specialized in the history of the pre-modern Low Countries. As Alistair Duke illustrates so beautifully in his 2004 article, 'The Elusive Netherlands', the rich, yet problematic nomenclature for this geographical area suggests that nobody really knew whether it belonged to 'Gallia' or 'Germania', or how, exactly, it related to an entity as vague as 'Nider teutschelant'. In referring to it, Englishmen could choose from at least seven options: 'Burgundy', 'Belgia', 'Nether Germany', 'XVII landes', 'Flanders' (as *pars pro toto*), 'Netherlands' and 'Low Countries'. Clearly, this confusion over

nomenclature also affected the way English- and Dutch-speakers perceived the language(s) of the Low Countries. Rather than invent any clear, narrowly circumscribed definitions of our own, we are best advised, then, to acknowledge the complexities of the past, and throw our conceptual nets as wide as possible. This is exactly what Joby has done in his research.

[24] In chapter 2, Joby analyzes the language(s) used in no less than eighteen Dutch church communities in pre-modern England, ranging from the Dutch Church at Austin Friars and the Dutch Chapel Royal in London (instituted by William and Mary) to the short-lived ‘stranger’ churches at Coventry, Halstead, Ipswich, Stamford and Thetford, flourishing for just a few years in the 1570s and 1580s. We learn about the membership of these Dutch Reformed Churches, particularly about the members’ socioeconomic background and its implications for their linguistic abilities (could they speak more than one language, for example?), and about relations with the Church of England and other reformed congregations in the British Isles. Austin Friars quickly gained the oversight of the other Dutch church communities in pre-modern England and served as an intermediary in their relations with the English secular and religious authorities. For example, Austin Friars berated other Dutch church communities if the latter dared to use languages other than Dutch in their sermons and liturgies. This was not simply a concern for linguistic purity. In 1635, Archbishop William Laud (1573-1645) demanded that members of ‘stranger churches’ born in England attend their local parish churches instead. The Dutch ‘stranger churches’ managed to deflect Laud’s attack by claiming that even members born in England still did not know sufficient English in order to understand “‘English prayers and sermons’” (125). Needless to say, this episode only served to reinforce the identity of ‘stranger churches’ as separate religious, linguistic and ethnic communities. It goes a long way to explain the continued use of Dutch grammars and catechisms in seventeenth-century England, and the constant flow of Dutch schoolmasters and preachers across the North Sea. It would have been useful for Joby to compare and contrast these developments in England with those in the Hudson Valley, where the Dutch Reformed Church flourished as a separate ethnic and linguistic community following the English take-over of New Amsterdam in 1664 (see, for example, Jacobs 2009).

[25] In chapter 3, we learn about the various employments of Dutch-speaking migrants in England, ranging from merchants, fishermen, and sailors to weavers specialized in the New Draperies and to engineers such as Cornelis Vermuyden, whose drainage projects in the Fens and elsewhere required skilled workers from the Low Countries. Joby discusses in some detail the role of the *politieke mannen* (‘political men’) in the Dutch communities in England. Their task was to regulate the communities’ social and economic life (including the guardianship of orphans), and to liaise with the English authorities. Unlike the records of the Dutch Reformed congregations, which also contain materials in French and Latin (the languages of communication with other ‘stranger churches’ in England, and religious authorities overseas), the records kept by the *politieke mannen* are all in Dutch. Joby draws our attention to an extensive list of Dutch-derived words in the Norfolk and other East Anglian dialects related to the world of work, such as ‘the sea-faring terms brabble, dabby, luff, lubber, rack, swabber, and woulders; the fishery terms corf, coy (from “decoy”), kiplins, scud, waver, went; and the draining and embanking phrases breck, crammatting, delph, gull, plash, scradge and stow’ (160).

[26] Chapter 4 focuses on ‘Learning and the Home’. Joby first discusses the teaching of Dutch to children of migrants from the Low Countries. There is ample evidence that Dutch reformed congregations went to great lengths to hire schoolmasters from ‘back home’. The *Corpus Disciplinae* published under the aegis of Austin Friars in 1645 tasked schoolmasters and parents with teaching the catechism to children:

A serious exhortation that the parents and schoolmasters be diligent in educating the children at home, so that they answer appropriately in front of the community (175 –Joby’s translation).

No wonder that primers (including tips on Dutch pronunciation), grammars, word lists and dictionaries continued to be produced for these communities well into the seventeenth century. Dutch students and scholars enrolled and taught at English universities –in the case of theology students often with financial support from Austin Friars. The Dutch polymath Cornelis Drebbel was attached intermittently to the court of James I of England. In the second half of the century, several Dutch scientists corresponded with the Royal

Society in London. Usually, they did so in Latin or French. However, the communications of Anthoni van Leeuwenhoek (1632-1723) were translated from Dutch into English for publication in the *Philosophical Transactions*. Robert Hooke taught himself Dutch in order to be able to read the works of the Dutch mathematicians Snellius and Simon Stevin.

[27] In order to reconstruct Dutch spoken in the domestic domain, Joby examines various sets of letters written to and by members of the Dutch communities in England, and other relevant archival materials, such as last wills and testaments and probate inventories. These sources provide evidence for the relative popularity among different groups of Dutch migrants of two competing forms of address: ‘the *d*-form of address (subject: *du*; object: *di*) and the *g*-form of address (subject: *gij*; object: *u*)’ (204). From the twelfth century onwards, there had been a gradual increase in the use of the *g*-form among Dutch speakers, the *g*-form becoming dominant in the sixteenth century. Yet there are examples of the use of the *d*-form in sixteenth-century texts from the southwest regions of Low Countries, mostly in expressions of strong emotions. One of the striking features of the so-called ‘Norwich Ieper corpus’ (i.e. private letters written in Norwich by migrants from Ieper) is that ‘none of the authors uses the *d*-form of address’ (205). When Joby compares the ‘Norwich Ieper corpus’ with extant letter-books of the Norwich Dutch church, he finds ‘a T-V (*Tu/Vos*) distinction between *ghy* and what we might call *u*-form subject pronouns amongst the Dutch Strangers in Norwich’ (210). Further research is needed to determine whether a similarly sharp distinction between these two forms of address can be found in texts from the Southern Netherlands in the second half of the sixteenth century.

[28] In chapter 5, Doby examines the use of Dutch at court, in diplomacy and in the military and the navy. There are few examples of English diplomats being proficient in Dutch. For the likes of George Downing and Sir William Temple, it was sufficient to know French in order to get things done in The Hague. A notable exception is George Gilpin (1514-1612), who studied law at Mechelen and subsequently worked as secretary to the Merchant Adventurers in Antwerp. In the 1580s, Gilpin became the linchpin of Queen Elizabeth I’s negotiations with the rebel state in the Northern Netherlands. He was appointed the English Secretary to the rebels’ Council of State in 1586, and as Councilor in 1593, a role that he fulfilled until his death in 1612. The correspondence of Dutch diplomats in England tends to contain long, complex sentences, made possible by the ample use of participles. The letters written by William III reveal a predilection ‘for using verbs ending in *-e(e)ren*, derived from French verbs’ (262). When the Stadtholder-King wrote to Michiel ten Hove from Hampton Court in March 1689, he included in his prose such French-derived verbs as ‘*consideren*, *recommanderen*, *depescheren*, *mentionneren*, *souteneren* and *fomenteren*’ (262).

[29] In chapter 6, Doby analyzes a wide variety of Dutch poems and prose texts produced in the British Isles. Dutch travelers, including diplomats, tended to record their experiences and their (private) emotions in Dutch –to combat homesickness, for example. Lodewijk Huygens, the third son of Constantijn Huygens, visited England as a member of a Dutch diplomatic mission in 1651-52 and kept a journal at his father’s advice. While in London, he wrote in Dutch. When he journeyed on to West England and Wales, however, he switched to French and continued to write in that language on his return to London. Joby cites from Lodewijk Huygens’ journal a revealing linguistic encounter with the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes. On this occasion, the author of *Leviathan* showed himself quite the monolingualist. When the Dutch delegation visited him in February 1652,

[h]e spoke nothing but English. Whenever we wanted to interrupt him in Latin, he begged us to speak English again as he had lost the habit of speaking Latin (331 – as translated by Joby)

Lodewijk’s father, Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687), was absolutely fluent in English. Still, he wrote mostly in Dutch during his stays in England, both in official and private letters. The poems that he addressed to female relatives, friends and love interests were invariably written in Dutch, for example. Joby also discusses Dutch literary texts produced by members of Dutch communities in England, particularly in Norwich by the likes of Jan Cruso, whose parents hailed from Hondschoote, and in London by the likes of Jan van der Noot (1540-1595), a Calvinist rebel who fled to England in 1567, the *mercator sapiens* Emanuel van Meteren (1535-1612), the silk-merchant Jacobus Colius (1563-1628), and, of

course, Thomas Dekker, about whose life few details are known, but who was probably of Dutch parentage.

[30] In chapter 6, Joby also explores the use of Dutch in seventeenth-century Wales, where it was rather minimal, and in Scotland, where it was surprisingly widespread. For example, Scottish officers in the army of the Dutch States General wrote to each other in Dutch while pursuing Jacobite forces in the Highlands in 1690. The inhabitants of the Shetland Isles knew on which side their bread was buttered. They spoke just enough Dutch to be able to sell their wares to the 30,000 fishermen from Holland and Zeeland who ‘invaded’ the Isles every June and spent the rest of the summer following the herring shoals down Britain’s east coast.

[31] Is there nothing to criticize in Joby’s wide-ranging monograph on the ‘Dutches’ written and spoken in the British Isles in the period 1550-1702? Yes, of course, there is. At times, the author seems to present us with an interesting set of anecdotes, rather than with a tight argument. However, the sheer amount of archival research that has gone into his monograph, the author’s superb command of the Dutch language, and the way in which he has successfully contextualized his linguistic research make this a far more stimulating study of Anglo-Dutch relations before 1800 than the other two books under review here. As Joby notes, William III created his own little Holland at Hampton Court, where he surrounded himself with Dutch-speaking personnel –from his favorite Hans Willem Bentinck (1649-1709), 1st Earl of Portland, down to the cooks and gardeners. Though born of an English mother, William III felt much more comfortable speaking Dutch or French. Nor could his complicated life as a British monarch compare with the innocent pleasures of adolescence in The Hague. In May 1689, he shared with his Dutch secretary Constantijn Huygens Jr. his great longing for those days:

The weather is warm: it is now the time of the fair in The Hague. Oh, that we could just fly over there, like a bird through the air! I would give 100,000 guilders for that (265 – translation by Joby and myself).

Quite clearly, there is an important linguistic dimension to Anglo-Dutch relations before 1800, which deserves all the attention lavished on it by Joby. Political historians, take note! Should we not give more thought to the fact that neither the Stadtholder-King nor his Hanoverian successor, George I, was proficient in the English language, and that both rulers preferred the company of their countrymen to that of their English and British subjects?

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