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In- & Export

The Study of Dutch Language and Literature and the Outside World

On the occasion of the 125th year of publication of *TNTL* in 2009, the editorial board has decided to prepare a special issue on the relationship of the study of Dutch language and literature with the outside world.[1]

A journal will always focus on a specific field of research. This may primarily be on practical grounds rather than on principal ones, but that does not diminish the importance of the focus. Nowadays, it is hardly self-evident to concentrate on the cross roads of Dutch language and literature, as anyone who takes into account the academic developments of the last decades will have to admit. It might be just as valid to concentrate on a specific period, or on any other mixture of (sub) disciplines, enabling specialists from various language areas or fields of expertise to collaborate.

The editorial board of *TNTL* thinks that the focus on Dutch language and literature still is valuable, and not only so because after 125 volumes, *TNTL* has reached the status of a 'grande dame' among academic journals. Yet, it does seem wise to reflect upon our relationship to the outside world. How viable is our commercial balance? What do we import, what are our export articles? Or do we live in 'splendid isolation'?

These questions may be applied to the traffic within academic research: in what way does the outcome of the study of Dutch language and literature influence the agenda of other disciplines, and vice versa? Or are Dutch language and literature studied regardless of other influences? Can we be satisfied with the *status quo*, or is it time for some change? It is also necessary to take into account the import and export within the object of research itself. What commercial traffic exists within Dutch language and literature? In what ways are they interrelated with other languages and literatures, or do they stand alone?

The editorial board invited linguistic scholars as well as literary scholars from the Netherlands and abroad to reflect upon the issues that have been mentioned above. The members of the board themselves each wrote a contribution as well. This resulted in nineteen essays addressing a wide variety of topics within the given theme.

In this issue, you will find articles about the place of foreign literature in Dutch literary history (Buelens, Van Kalmthout, Koppenol, Oosterholt), on a (renewed) bond between linguistics and literary studies, especially when it comes to stilistics (De Geest, Van Dalen-Oskam, Hoeksema), on crossing boundaries both geographically and interdisciplinary (Elffers, Warnar, Weerman), on unique and

1 The history of *TNTL* until 1999 has been described in: Wim van Anrooij en Els Ruijsendaal, 'Honderdvijftien delen *Tijdschrift voor Nederlands(ch)e Taal- en Letterkunde* (1881-1999)'. In: *TNTL* 116 (1999) 4, pp. 295 e.v.

meaningful aspects of Dutch language, such as spelling (Neijt) and phonology (Zonneveld), on Dutch words in other languages (Van der Sijs), on the relationship between the study of Dutch literature and modern day society (Heynders, Meijer), on the impact and the importance of physical exchange of individual researchers *intra* and *extra muros* (Howell) and on the presentation of (the study of) Dutch literature to an international audience (Besamusca, Joldersma, Moser).

May they serve as an inspiration to all who wish to maintain a healthy commercial balance of Dutch language and literature!