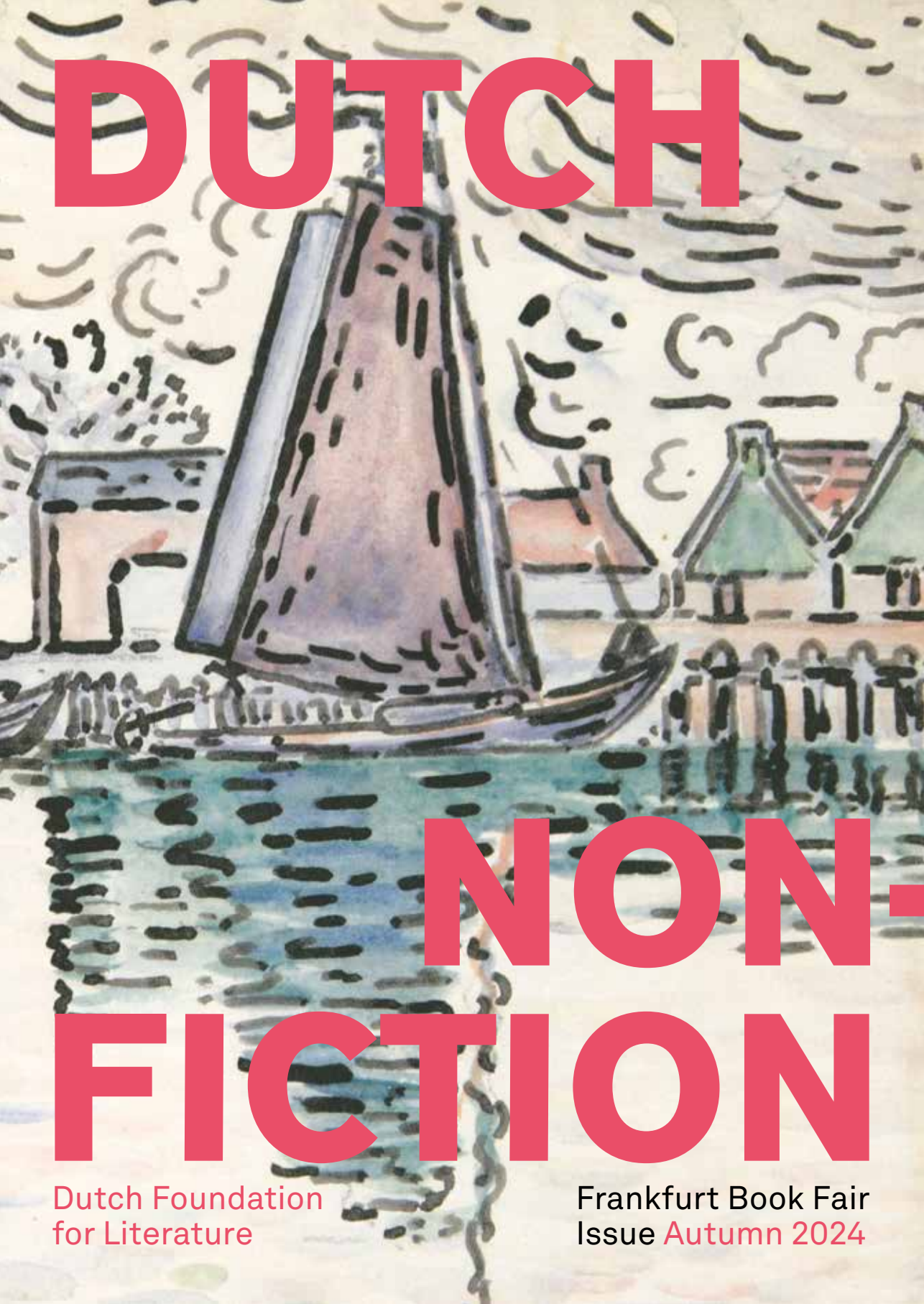




DUTCH

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The Dutch Foundation for Literature has the task of supporting writers and translators, and of promoting Dutch literature abroad. It invests in the quality and diversity of literature through grants for writers, translators, publishers and festivals, and contributes to the production and distribution of Dutch and Frisian literature at home and abroad. With the support of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, it aims to promote a thriving literary climate, embedded in literary history and attuned to the latest developments in the publishing industry.

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LEONoor
BROEDER

ACTING NON-FICTION
SPECIALIST

INTRODUCTION

Long ago, in my first editing job, I mapped out a number of requirements for good narrative non-fiction. Regardless of the subject matter, the style should be original, clear, accessible, and above all personal. The prose should demonstrate curiosity, an intense interest in people, animals, the world, in the present, past and future, and be written with imagination, passion and commitment, but also respect for the facts. Over the years, these criteria have proven invaluable.

These stylistic elements are ever present in the titles selected for this brochure from the wealth of new non-fiction. The themes may be diverse: cultural history, contemporary politics, philosophy, nature conservation and more, but each title has national and international dimensions, showing how the Netherlands is intertwined with the rest of the world. Take Jan Brokken's book on the turn-of-the-century colony of international artists in Volendam. Or Frank Westerman's journey in the wake of Willem Barentsz, where he meets seven magnificent animals. Adwin de Kluyver and Marlisa den Hartog's narratives are driven by a deep interest in people and historical context, and an eye for detail that allows the reader to identify with their central characters.

The same intensity applies to titles with a focus on socio-politics. Marijn Kruk's study of the rise of populism in Europe – chilling, instructive but never gloomy – is written so vividly, it's a page-turner. Miriam Rasch impresses with her discussion of an underexposed aspect of human behaviour: the ability to listen. Anne Broeksma's love affair with the pangolin and Dore van Duivenbode's journey through Europe's last primal forest, manage to convey both their message about the future of our planet and their passion for nature conservation in an empathetic manner.

At the heart of the brochure are two books on the Dutch history of slavery, one by young historians Camilla de Koning and Karwan Fatah Black, the other a modern classic by anthropologist Waldo Heilbron. Colonial history is viewed in a different light and slavery is considered from the perspective of the enslaved, allowing the reality of that past to become part of our collective memory.

I highly recommend the titles in this brochure, and would be happy to give further advice on new and noteworthy books for your list.

Jan Brokken

The Discovery of Holland



Dutch title
De ontdekking van Holland
Year of publication
2024
Page count
320
Publisher
Atlas Contact
Rights
Shared Stories
Hayo Deinum
hayo@sharedstories.nl
Rights sold
Iperborea (Italy)
Sample translation available

Each year thousands of tourists flock to the Dutch town of Volendam for its traditional fishing past. Few people know that around the turn of the twentieth century, when only accessible by boat, it was a bustling artist's colony which inspired the likes of Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Ivar Kamke, Elizabeth Nourse, Georg Hering, Marianne Stokes, and even Japan's Crown Prince Hirohito and the writer Marcel Proust.

When Jan Brokken was brought to Hotel Spaander by a poet friend in 1981, he knew he'd stumbled on a literary gold mine. Its walls were crammed with artworks from the thousands of artists who had passed through its doors, drawn by the unique light, voluminous Dutch skies and village scenes, but perhaps most of all, the welcoming atmosphere encouraged by its worldly, entrepreneurial owners Leendert and Alida Spaander. Unlike artist cafés in Paris at the time, the hotel was open to women and would see many visit from as far away as the United States.

Hotel Spaander's heyday was brief and would last from 1881 until 1920, when the owners retired. Nevertheless, it continued to draw painters throughout the following decade. In 1932 the construction of the Afsluitdijk, a causeway dam which blocked off access to the North Sea, effectively ended much of Volendam's seafaring life. During the corona pandemic the hotel finally went out of business. With the gifted eye for detail and atmosphere of a novelist, Brokken gathers twenty-four stories of visiting artists and their art, with colour reproductions of many of the works mentioned. Through their lives, he

On a little-known artist's colony frequented by world-famous painters

reconstructs the hotel's story around the turn of the twentieth century and brings a bygone world, in all its joy, pain, camaraderie and violence, lovingly to life.

- Immersive narrative non-fiction that combines a moving literary style with art history made personal
- Hotel Spaander has remained largely unknown as an artist's colony until only recently
- In 2023 Jan Brokken was awarded the Gouden Ganzenveer (the Golden Quill) for his 'astounding, broad oeuvre'

Jan Brokken (b. 1949) is a writer of novels, travel stories and literary non-fiction. He has garnered international fame with, among other books, *The Blind Passengers*, *My Little Madness*, *Baltic Souls*, *In the Poet's House*, *The Reprisal*, *The Cossack's Garden*, *The Just*, *City Pilgrim* and *The Camp Painters*. His work has been translated into

Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Czech, Portuguese, Spanish and many more.

'Jan Brokken has written a wonderful book about the Volendammers and the eccentric characters they hosted. [...] A beautifully illustrated and delightfully readable book.'

Historisch Nieuwsblad

'Jan Brokken's pen enchants the reader: especially with his captivating outpourings and memories. [...] Magnificent intimate portrait.'

Nederlands Dagblad

'Writing is Brokken's calling: he is a story seeker, a treasure hunter.'

de Volkskrant



Photo (©Jelmer de Haas)

Marlisa den Hartog

Sex in the Renaissance — Intimate Positions in Da Vinci's Time and What We Can Learn from Them Now



Dutch title
Seks in de Renaissance. Standjes en standpunten in de tijd van Da Vinci (en wat we daar nu van kunnen leren)

Year of publication
2024

Page count
336

Publisher
Atlas Contact

Rights
Shared Stories

Hayo Deinum
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Sample translation available

From double standards to appropriate dress: discussions of sexuality are timeless. We may talk about the orgasm gap, consent and gender but even during the Renaissance, people were fascinated by erotic needs. This book takes the reader on a sometimes shocking, always surprising journey to prove once again that history can help us better understand our behaviour today.

Sex in the Renaissance charts the sexual codes of conduct in Michelangelo and Da Vinci's age. In this macho culture, the ability to please a woman in bed raised a man's status, her pleasure wasn't the goal but proof of his manliness and potency. Fortunately, even then, there were feminist thinkers among the elite and the clergy, who propagated a more progressive ideology.

Men lived in dread of impotence since marital sex was a Christian duty. Unconsummated marriages could be dissolved by the church. For some potential grooms, this meant having their erections inspected and even tested with weights, or virgins, as happened to the Duke of Mantova. From the late fifteenth century, the courtesan became popular, a posh sex worker. These fancy ladies accepted only the richest, most prominent men as lovers.

Some ideas might sound strange to us now, like eating starling brains as an aphrodisiac, the belief that visualisation techniques during intercourse could improve a baby's looks, or that men *and* women released sperm. Some ideas were atrocious: rape as a deserved punishment for a woman's lusty feelings. Others are familiar: Renaissance folks also indulged in slut-shaming

A unique perspective on European history in the age of rakes, courtesans and syphilis

and laughed at *small dick energy*. Marlisa den Hartog shows how history is both entertaining and highly relevant to better understand our own times and sexuality.

- Debut by a promising young historian
- If David was 6 foot his 8.7 cm un-erect penis would only be half a centimeter smaller than the world average. Size was a thing then too. Renaissance men wore large codpieces to suggest large genitals (big balls were valued)
- The *boys will be boys* argument was already prevalent in the Courtly Novel, as was the idea that a woman who dressed provocatively was 'asking for it'
- Many female illnesses were ascribed to 'suffocation of the womb' due to lack of sex

Marlisa den Hartog (b. 1992) is a writer and historian. In 2022, she obtained her PhD on Sexual Rules of Conduct in Renaissance Italy. She teaches at Leiden University, where she is committed to making history accessible to a wide audience.

'Marlisa den Hartog has written an entertaining history of sexual intercourse in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.'

Historisch Nieuwsblad

'Astutely sketches how some of the amazing ideas and customs of the period are far removed from us today. [...] What Den Hartog does cleverly is to stay away from metaphors, ambiguities and double entendre. [...] *Sex in the Renaissance* doesn't need that. The book combines thoroughness with a light tone and makes for pleasant reading.'

Trouw



Photo (© Fjodor Buis)

Adwin de Kluyver

Islands of Good and Evil — A Journey of Discovery

Islands hold up a mirror to humankind
and society in this thrilling exploration



The Scottish define an island as a piece of rock with a year's grazing for a sheep, but however you define it, an island is the world in miniature. It is the ideal place to start a utopian society, a conduit to dreams of perfection, a clearly-defined space, and the prospect of an undisturbed life, away from the flock.

Many writers and filmmakers have built on this concept, think of *Robinson Crusoe* or *Jurassic Park*. Atlantis was a fictional island invented by Plato as an allegory and Thomas More's *Utopia* was also a famous thought experiment. For scientists, islands offer a simplified version of the natural world and the ideal site for experiments. Yet they also invite abuse: where else to trial megalomaniac plans or unleash poisonous concoctions? This book brings together the two extremes, both good and evil.

In *The Islands of Good and Evil*, Adwin de Kluyver brings history alive: from Aristotle who was banished from Athens and lived on Lesbos, studying its plants and animals, to Alfred Russell Wallace who developed his theory of evolution on Ternate in 1858. And from a German couple's plans which famously ended in tragedy in the Galapagos Islands in the 1930s, to Richard Stanley's film adaptation of HG Well's *The Island of Dr. Moreau* on Cape Tribulation in Australia, beset by disaster, ended with an ironic twist.

In an infectious mix of travelogue and history, De Kluyver tells of philosophers and fantasists, scientists, tricksters, and dreamers turned murderers. He takes the reader to 63 islands, one temporary island and one notational one,

all of scientific, political or cultural importance. A compelling journey, from Pitcairn to Paradise Island, filled with sweeping vistas and visions of the future and the past.

- The author employs a different narrative technique in each chapter
- Rave reviews in all the main press and magazines
- Islands featured from all corners of the globe, from Great Britain, to Italy, Taiwan, Japan, Argentina, Norway and North America
- There's a non-existent island called Null Island at 0 degrees longitude and latitude which is essential for our geolocation systems

'Everything in the book is fascinating: the explorers, the idealists dreaming of a new society, the millionaires who want their own little world, convicts, scholars who want to experiment undisturbed, and of course the original inhabitants: everyone is given a place, a voice and a meaning. Everything is wondrous, everything is exciting.'

Het Parool

Dutch title
De eilanden van goed en kwaad: een ontdekkingsreis
Year of publication
2024
Page count
368 pages, (black and white) illustrations and maps
Publisher
Spectrum
Rights
Orli Naamani
orli.naamani@lannoomeulenhoff.nl

Adwin de Kluyver (b. 1968) is a writer, historian and part-time islander who lives and works on Vlieland, Terschelling and the mainland. In 2016, he earned his PhD with a cultural history of polar travel. The diptych *The Dreamed North* (2019) and *No Man's Land* (2021) received rave reviews and the latter was nominated

for the Jan Wolkers Prize, the award for the best Dutch nature book. The translation rights of these last two books have been sold to Germany.



Photo (© Tryntsje Nauta)

Anne Broeksma

A Scaly Story — In Search Of The Strangest And Most Threatened Animal On Earth



Dutch title
*Een verhaal met schubben. Zoektocht
naar het vreemdste en meest
bedreigde zoogdier op aarde*
Year of publication
2024
Page count
272
Publisher
Atlas Contact
Rights
Shared stories
Hayo Deinum
hayo@sharedstories.nl

'Stories are instruments of power, just like maps of a territory. People who colour in the universe with roads and borders, characters and scenes are the creators of culture, and soon afterwards, the guardians of a desired order. Pangolins often arrive on the scene in a story when a community needs to be held together.'

Anne Broeksma has been fascinated by unspoilt nature, jungles and wildlife ever since she was a small girl. During a jungle ritual with a hallucinogenic leaf-drink, she meets not herself, but the pangolin. This marks the beginning of an obsession that leads to a sensational journey of discovery. The pangolin, a mysterious 'tree dragon', becomes her guide in a year-long quest that takes her from the rainforests of Cambodia to the savannahs of Tanzania. When the COVID virus is found in pangolins in China, Broeksma's once obscure favourite animal becomes world-famous overnight.

The pangolin, a cute, toothless creature with a long tongue and scales, whose various species populate Africa and Asia, provides the ingress to stories of colonial history, Chinese traditional medicine, evolution, anthropology, ecotourism, and the illegal wildlife trade. This evolutionary miracle is the most poached mammal in the world, supporting a massive illegal trade network. While a poacher in Nigeria can earn 5-10 dollars for a kilo of scales, the same amount is worth 500-1000 dollars at the end of the chain in China. In 2019 in Singapore, a record-breaking freight of 14,000 kilos was intercepted, equivalent to approximately 36,000 pangolins. Yet with the right intervention, this endearing mammal can be

A heart-warming account of a writer's fascination with the pangolin

brought back from the brink of extinction.

A Scaly Story is an inspiring and poetic ode to the wild world that still exists. It urges you to follow your fascination, even when the future looks bleak.

- A fascinating, poetically-written travelogue that has received excellent reviews
- Each of the 12 chapters opens with a charming pencil drawing
- The trade in wildlife is the fourth largest illegal activity in the world, after arms, drugs and human trafficking
- Long confused by Europeans with the armadillo, the pangolin was popularised by Georges-Louis Lerclerc in his 1749 *Histoire Naturelle*, and became a coveted symbol of colonial power

Anne Broeksma (b. 1987) is a poet and journalist. Her debut collection *Regen kosmos kamerplant* ('Rain Cosmos Houseplant') was awarded the C.C.S. Crone Stipendium and her second collection *Vesper* ('Evensong') was nominated for the Herman de Coninck Prize and the J.C. Bloem Poetry Prize. She often gives readings of her poems

and short stories, and writes about nature and conservation.

'It is mind-boggling to read how an animal I will probably never see in real life is so connected to the beauty and tragedy of our age.'

De Morgen

'A compelling travelogue. [...] The book is a unique portrait of an animal that doesn't fit any pigeonhole. [...] Broeksma's fascination with the pangolin is infectious, and her use of language is wonderful. A touch of dry humour and a critical view of our own species complete the book.'

New Scientist



Photo (© Koos Breukel)

Karwan Fatah-Black & Camilla de Koning

Eyewitnesses to Dutch Slavery — From Passage to Uprising



Dutch Title
Ooggetuigen van de Nederlandse slavernij. Van overtocht tot opstand
Year of publication
2024
Page count
224
Publisher
Querido
Rights
Martijn Prins
m.prins@singeluitgeverijen.nl

'We must guard against the temptation to let colonial sources speak for themselves. We must not allow the wool to be pulled over our eyes by the powerful of yore, but rather try to uncover how things really worked in the past.'

The Netherlands is unique among the colonising countries for its wealth of archival material on the transatlantic slave trade. However, testimonials by the enslaved remain glaringly absent, which has resulted in a skewed image of the past. Though difficult, researchers Karwan Fatah-Black and Camilla de Koning attempt to access the reality behind the colonisers' vision by putting the diverse realities of life in slavery in focus.

To recreate the everyday experiences of the enslaved, about whom we often miss the most basic information, requires reading between the lines, filling the gaps in the documents we do have, and rethinking which facts are important. Following historical lives of enslaved men, women and children, the authors reconstruct the journey from abduction and sale in West Africa, through the harrowing passage and life on the plantations in the Caribbean, to the fates of those who fled into the jungle or rebelled, and finally the fraught road to freedom through manumission. In the process, we see how the enslaved carved out worlds of their own. Smaller individual and greater collective acts of resistance return time and again, testifying to courage in the face of horrific oppression.

Fatah-Black and De Koning bring new facts to light and provide historical context where needed. Far from discounting the archival material we

A history of slavery, from the perspective of the enslaved

do have, *Eyewitness of Dutch Slavery* powerfully brings us one step closer to telling the *whole* story of transatlantic slavery.

- Through personal stories, the facts are made all the more powerful
- Hones in on the role of women, and especially midwives, on the plantations
- Authors present the complex historical and economic circumstances accessibly, depicting with empathy the reality of slavery for a broad audience
- Highlights the autonomy of people trapped in slavery

Karwan Fatah-Black (b. 1981) is assistant professor of colonial history at the University of Leiden. He has published various books on slavery and colonial administration, and in 2020 he helped enrich the Dutch Canon. He is regularly consulted in the media on the Netherlands' colonial past in today's context.

Camilla de Koning (b. 1994) studied the social aspect of the Dutch slavery at the University of Leiden, where she completed research on the manumission in eighteenth-century Suriname. She is currently undertaking PhD research on Crown Engagement in Britain's Emerging Empire (1660-1775) at the University of Manchester & Historic Royal Palaces.

'Astonishing stories about subjects you don't often read about when it comes to slavery: about giving birth on slave ships, the role of midwives and about branding.'

NRC

'It tells the woeful story of their fate, from in Africa to their hard lives on the plantations. The abuse, the hunger, but also the uprisings and attempts to free themselves.'

de Volkskrant



Photo (@ Jitske Schols/Lumen)

Waldo Heilbron

The Future of The Past — Reflections on the Netherlands' History and Heritage of Slavery



Dutch title
De toekomst van het verleden.
Reflecties over Nederlands
slavernijverleden en -erfgoed

Year of publication
2006, 2024

Page count
144

Publisher
Atlas Contact

Rights
Shared Stories
hayo@sharedstories.nl

Waldo Heilbron was one of the most important proponents for the decolonisation of the Netherlands' history of slavery. His pioneering final book remains an essential intervention in the national thinking about colonialism's ongoing legacy. And while much has changed in the conversation about slavery in the Netherlands and beyond, there remains much work to be done.

Originally published in 2006, *The Future of the Past* links the Netherlands' history of slavery with modern racial attitudes through what Heilbron calls slavery's *mental heritage*. To break this continuity, we must challenge the eighteenth-century frame informing our interpretation of the past. Rather than reproduce the perspective of the coloniser, we must reinterpret historical documents, allow for new research techniques, search for what has been forgotten, to uncover the *silenced past* in Black perspectives.

In four connected essays, Heilbron provides a framework for this research direction. Building on ideas like identity, heritage and the invention of race, he demonstrates how a skewed version of history, as reproduced in schools and museums, produces a sense of superiority and inferiority in white and Black people. He challenges dominant approaches to 'uncovering' historical truth for silencing the experiential worlds of enslaved people. Examining colonial and Marron forts in Suriname, he demonstrates how the decision to commemorate certain places while forgetting others cannot be separated from our view of the past. Finally he argues for interdisciplinary research to access marginalised perspectives,

A reprinted modern classic of enduring relevance

such as studying oral history and reading existing colonial documents for the multiple voices they contain. In doing so, we might give the past a new future.

- An elegant meditation on power in historiography, urgently relevant then and now
- With forewords by professor Gloria Wekker, anthropologist Mitchell Esajas and Miguel Heilbron, the author's son
- An early and important critique of the dominant national self-image

Born and raised in Suriname, Waldo Heilbron (1936-2009) was a sociologist at the University of Amsterdam and an active member of the Our Suriname Society. He helped establish NiNsee (the National Institute for the Study of Dutch Slavery and Its Legacy) and the national slavery monument. His personal library is a foundational part of The

Black Archives collection, a unique historical archive of Black emancipation movements and under-exposed perspectives in the Netherlands.

'An influential book about [the] decolonisation of the Netherlands' history of slavery.'

NBD Biblion

'The book is a bold intervention in the dominant narrative on history, culture and heritage within Dutch society, in which the colonisers' heirs have selected, described and interpreted the "facts" of "history", while the perspective of the enslaved and their ancestors has been systematically silenced.'

Gloria Wekker, author of *White Innocence*



Marijn Kruk

Uprising — The Populist Revolt and Battle for the Soul of the West



Dutch title
De opstand. De populistische revolutie en de strijd om de ziel van het Westen
Year of publication
2024
Page count
224
Publisher
Prometheus
Rights
Job Lisman
j.lisman@pbo.nl

In recent years the far-right's growing mainstream acceptance has come to feel unstoppable. On a platform of identity, family, nationalism and anti-immigration, populist parties have seen electoral wins throughout the West. Underlying their valorisation of what is 'natural' and 'realistic', however, is a broader counterrevolutionary movement against the left-liberal globalist elite and what is perceived as the undermining of Western identity.

In *Uprising*, journalist Marijn Kruk uncovers the beginnings of this populist wave in the 1968 protests, when many of the individual rights and trends that typify the world today began to take shape. He charts the movement's rise, from its intellectual roots with Edmund Burke and Roger Scruton, through the radical right's international political breakthrough in 2015. After the European migrant crisis and Brexit, the far-right has only spread.

Travelling to England, Austria, France, Turkey and Hungary, Kruk attends rallies and speaks with everyday far-right voters and political main players. In Budapest he finds a conservative ecosystem, intended as intellectual incubator and international model. Mixing interview and history, Kruk also tracks the ascendancy of political figures like Victor Orban, Giorgia Meloni and Matteo Salvini, and with novelistic flourish reconstructs acts of politically inspired violence and martyrdom.

And while these parties can cause great damage and must be resisted politically, Kruk remains hopeful. Ultimately the general trend

A journalist's absorbing deep-dive into the far-right counterrevolution

throughout history is towards individual rights, secularisation, progress and migration. Kruk wonders whether the far-right's attempts to turn the tide of history are exactly as 'natural' and 'realistic' as they claim.

- An investigation into the rise of populism in multiple European countries, as well as Turkey and Tunisia
- A stylishly written, accessible mix of interview, political history and travelogue
- A clear look at the power behind the far-right movement, from fear and paranoia about the loss of national identity to the way these feelings are stoked by populist leaders

Marijn Kruk (b. 1971) studied history in Utrecht and political philosophy in Paris. He worked as a correspondent in France, from where he covered the Arab Spring in North Africa, and later as a correspondent in Istanbul. He has travelled extensively throughout Europe for his reporting. Among other outlets, he writes for *De*

Groene Amsterdammer and *NRC*. Previously he published *Parijs denkt* (Paris Thinks), about French intellectual life.

'Marijn Kruk is an astute analyst and reporter who gains extensive access to radical-right circles. [...] He turns out a whole book case of writings by historians and philosophers, though his story never slows and remains very accessible, mostly thanks to the lively descriptions of meetings with reactionary old hands, "bow-tie conservatives" and hardened activists.'

de Volkskrant

'An indispensable book, one that's brilliantly written.'

Roxane van Iperen, author



Photo (© Bob Bronshoff)

Frank Westerman

When Humans Stray — Seven Animals Bite Back



Dutch title
Zeven dieren bijten terug
Year of publication
2024
Page count
288 incl. rights-free maps
Publisher
Querido Fosfor
Rights
The Susijn Agency Ltd
laura@thesusijnagency.com
Rights sold
Italian (Iperborea), Slovenian (UMco)

For 400 years, European seafarers attempted to sail over the top of the globe for a shorter trading route. The famous polar explorer William Barentsz, who lent his name to the Barents Sea, died a hero, after becoming stranded in Novaya Zemlya in northern Russia. Today, however, he would have been able to complete his route in the summer.

Ostensibly leaving the ‘inhabited world’ behind, but encountering tourists along the way, Westerman retraces this journey, drawing on historical accounts and a seaman’s journal. More than the human quest, he focuses on the animals the ship’s crew encountered on their travels: from polar bears fought, to eels eaten and lemmings spotted. Westerman’s adventure spins the reader across time to the fate of the seven species today and their clashes with humans. These are animals on the move in an ever-changing landscape, confronted by human trespasses: dikes, overfishing, border conflicts and more. Westerman draws on contemporary thought like *The Parliament of Things* to ponder what rights animals should have and how we can co-exist in harmony.

Each chapter, cross-cut with the 1596 epic journey through arctic wastelands, becomes both a clever allegory and a rip-roaring tale. A narwhal tusk is used to allay a 2019 terrorist attack in London; Walt Disney buys up pet lemmings from Inuit children to chase over a cliff; Russia and Norway play out their new cold war using reindeer as pawns; a 1932 cold case concerning the mass death of brent geese is solved; and Frank risks his own life and that of his daughter

Venturing towards the North Pole, Westerman lends his ear to seven creatures of the arctic

camping in Svalbard on the site of a deadly polar bear attack. *When Humans Stray* is a thrilling literary read that contains an urgent message.

- Westerman’s bestiary comprises seven magnificent creatures: the lemming, the narwhal, the eel, the polar bear, the brent goose, the reindeer and the king crab
- Placing animals on an equal footing with humans, it explores the historical relationship and what our treatment of animals (and the planet) says about us
- Westerman tracks not just the migration routes of these wild animals but humankind’s movements in the north and the geopolitics of today

Frank Westerman (b. 1964) studied tropical agricultural engineering at Wageningen University before working as a foreign correspondent in Belgrade in Moscow. He is one of the Netherlands’ most popular non-fiction writers. Works include *The Republic of Grain* (1999), *Engineers of the Soul* (2002), *Ararat* (2007), *Brother Mendel’s Perfect*

Horse (2011), *Choke Valley* (2013), *We, Hominids* (2018) and *The Cosmic Comedy* (2021). His books have been translated into 17 languages and have won many prizes. *When Humans Stray – Seven Animals Bite Back* is nominated for the Boekenbon Literature Prize 2024.

‘An epic adventure serves throughout the book as a stepping stone for animal stories. That epic itself provides all the story elements you could wish for: hardships, dangers, discoveries, heroism and poignant human interest.’

NRC Handelsblad

‘In everything, you feel the virtuosity. With a deceptively simple, Mozartian lightness, Westerman strings together diverse narrators, eras and biotopes in harmonious elegance.’

De Standaard



Photo (© Lionne Hietberg)

Miriam Rasch

Listening Practice



Dutch title
Luisteroefeningen
Year of publication
2024
Page count
224
Publisher
De Bezige Bij
Rights
De Bezige Bij
Marijke Nagtegaal
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Initially, the emancipating power of internet technology was warmly embraced: the marginalised could finally influence political debate, new voices could shake up the dominant world order. But constant scrolling has led to a ‘dizzying swirl of current events’, overstimulation leads to mental shut down. Can we learn to listen again?

Miriam Rasch’s engaging philosophical essay takes as its inception bell hooks’s question ‘Who is talking? Who is listening? And why?’ and dissects the act of listening, layer by layer, complication by complication. With a lightness of touch, she takes the reader through concepts such as deep listening, active listening, performative listening and receptive generosity, drawing on the work of philosophers, writers, filmmakers, composers and anthropologists along the way.

First, Rasch delves into our technological experience where, according to Byung-Chul Han, we are invited to ‘produce’ ourselves, while technology listens in. Social media has monetarised opinion and real-time reflection on breaking news, leading to a constant state of fragmented attention. Next, two major challenges of our time play a leading role in the book: polarisation and climate change. Polarisation, and what you can do about it, drives chapters on dialogue and bearing witness. Finally, Rasch explores listening to the non-human (animals, plants, rivers, stones) as an alternative to domination. Paying attention to your unconscious desires and drives can bring you back into balance with the world around you.

Do we only have a choice between broadcasting loudly and retreating into silence, or is there an alternative?

This up-and-coming philosopher explores the ethics of listening with a generous, undogmatic approach. She advocates radical openness, person-to-person listening as a boundless and unconditional act.

NRC about *Friction*:

‘Astonishing, comprehensive and poetic.’

- *Friction: Ethics in Times of Dataism* (2020), was nominated for the Jan Hanlo Essay Prize and won the Socrates Cup for best philosophy book
- Talented young philosopher with a literary pen
- Written as an active listening exercise – the author invited input via social media
- References Michael Sandal, Emmanuel Levinas, Michael Bakhtin, Giorgio Agamben, Wisława Szymborska, Virginia Woolf, Jim Jarmusch and many more

Miriam Rasch (b. 1978) is a philosopher and essayist. She studied literary theory and philosophy and is attached to the Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam. She writes on ethics, technology and literature for *NRC* and *De Nederlandse Boekengids* and has a regular column in *Filosofie Magazine*. In 2015, she won the Jan Hanlo

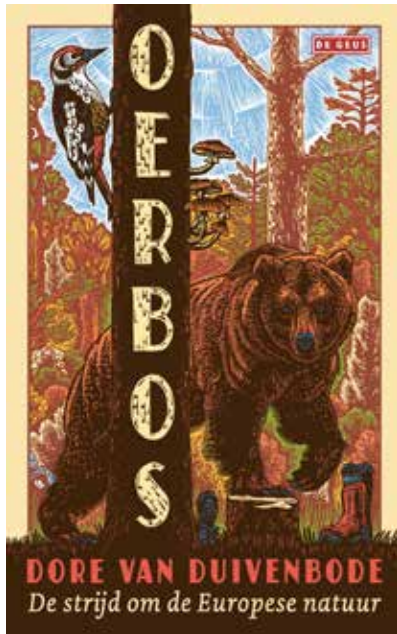
Essay Prize. Her collection of essays *Swimming in the Ocean: Messages from a Post-digital World* (2017) and her pamphlet *Autonomy: A Self-help Guide* (2022) were nominated for the Socrates Cup.



Photo (© Merlijn Doornik)

Dore van Duivenbode

Old Growth — The Fight for Europe's Wilderness



Dutch title
Oerbos. De strijd om de Europese natuur

Year of publication
2024

Page count
256

Publisher
De Geus

Rights
Martijn Prins
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Central and Eastern Europe are home to the continent's oldest forests and much of its last true wilderness. There, wild bison, wolves, deer and even bears still roam and families have foraged for mushrooms for generations. But these UNESCO-heritage forests are under increasing threat from logging, fed by our insatiable demand for cheap furniture.

Polish-Dutch journalist Dore van Duivenbode travels through Poland, Ukraine and Romania to understand first-hand the clash between conservation and logging. She attends a boarding school for foresters in Białowieża, studies wolf scat and bison prints as a volunteer in a national park, and speaks with countless people connected to the forests: from environmental activists to forest rangers, hunters and residents. The situation is complex, when not dangerous. Corrupt local officials profit from the *wood mafia*, and in Romania forest rangers have been murdered. It's a region where since the fall of the Soviet Union, many residents have felt themselves the unwilling pawns of Western powers – businesses, conservation NGOs, the EU.

Van Duivenbode's months-long intellectual journey is our own. Again and again she finds her Western views challenged, the Netherlands having felled the last of its old-growth forests in 1871 but now pushing for conservation. Combining reportage, history and travelogue, she describes a messy though absorbing knot of conservation, economics and politics. *Old Growth* is an urgent warning and a damning indictment of Western consumerism, as well as a passionate ode to nature and eye-opening plea for its conservation.

A timely journey through Europe's oldest forests and most hideous blights

- Few people know about Europe's old-growth forests, let alone their own implication in illegal logging
- Written in an immersive, page-turning style with a colourful array of local residents and a diverse range of stances on conservation
- An up-and-coming young journalist explores the forest and region's history, as well as local customs

'Old Growth fizzles with interesting conversations, history lessons, philosophical interpretations and anecdotes. The book doesn't offer us a clear conclusion about how to proceed, but it doesn't need to. The knowledge and nuance is valuable enough. Van Duivenbode's haunting journey is an absolute must for every nature lover.'

New Scientist

Dore van Duivenbode (b. 1985) writes literary non-fiction and makes documentary films. She studied history at Utrecht University and has worked for various Dutch media, including the daily newspaper *NRC* and public broadcasters KRO-NCRV and VPRO. Her book *Mijn Poolse huis. Vakanties naar Auschwitz*

(My Polish House: Holidays in Auschwitz, 2018) was published to critical acclaim and awarded the Bob Den Uyl Prize 2019.



Photo (© Marc Haers)

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Mainly Women

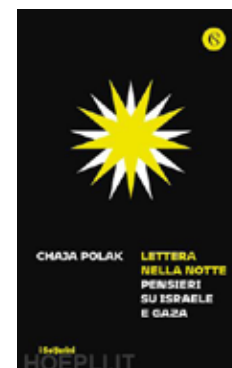
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Dutch title
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FAQ

Who makes the selection?

Our aim is to showcase the best non-fiction from the Netherlands. Most titles will have been published recently and will have done very well in terms of reviews, sales and awards or nominations. Equally important is the question: 'Does it travel?' We work with an advisory panel, which gives us recommendations and input on new non-fiction.

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We keep each other informed about interest in titles and rights sales. When we commission a sample translation, we usually share the costs. However, we always make our own decisions, and remain completely independent.

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Are books that aren't included in your brochure eligible, too?

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How do we apply for a translation subsidy?

We need copies of the contracts with the rights holders and the translator, plus the application form. You can submit these digitally through our website: www.letterenfonds.nl/en/translation-subsidy. Board meetings are held six times a year.

Can we invite a Dutch author for a promotional visit?

If you organise a good programme and offer the author accommodation, we can cover the travel costs: www.letterenfonds.nl/en/travel-costs

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