



DUTCH

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TURNING TO THE PAST FOR THE PRESENT



VICTOR
SCHIFERLI

The beauty of non-fiction as a genre is that it reflects both the past and the present. In this selection of twelve stand-out books recently published in the Netherlands we can compare today's great questions with historical dilemmas.

We live in times of burgeoning fascism, just like the German relatives of Bas Von Benda-Beckmann. How they gradually ended up on the wrong side of history is a fascinating story. A great-aunt was married to one of Hitler's most trusted generals, while another had a relationship with a half-Jewish doctor and was friends with the conspirators of the Von Stauffenberg-plot. The book received five stars in the daily *NRC*, and other rave reviews.

Then there's Anna van Suchtelen, who writes in her book *Helenka* about her grandmother, a brilliant chemist born in Russian-occupied Poland, who hoped to become the Marie Curie of her day. She experienced the first women's liberation movement, the Russian Revolution, and the turbulent 1920s.

A number of titles from this selection are deeply personal accounts, dealing with unwanted abortion (Meredith Greer), chronic pain (Sanne Bloemink), burnout (Brankele Frank), and a never-ending feeling of *heimwee*, a kind of 'homesickness' (Joke J. Hermesen). All are probing, philosophical works by women following in the footsteps of past writers, while addressing the present.

For the most topical books we should turn to Marcel Haenen, a penguin expert who has written a definitive biography of these wonderful birds; to Marc Hijink, a journalist who examines the way chip manufacturing plays a role in everything we do today; and to Rob Wijnberg, who makes a spirited case for why the truth isn't dead yet – via a compelling history lesson.

And what to do about cleaning up the planet, about 'green growth'? Has dreaming about solutions come to replace real change? Philosopher Lisa Doeland has written a well-received book on the subject with the telling title *Apocalypsohy*. The final word goes to Joël Broekaert, with an amusing, eye-opening history of the world in twelve beans. It's true: we only need twelve beans to tell all of human history. And beans may even be our future, too.



Dutch title
De wereldgeschiedenis in twaalf bonen

Year of publication
2023

Page count
144

Publisher
Atlas Contact

Rights
Diana Gvozden
d.gvozden@schonbach.nl

Sample translation available

Beans have never been sexy. Throughout history, they've always been seen as a poor person's alternative to meat. And yet beans, apart from being incredibly nutritious and good for soil, have played a fundamental role in the human story. Culinary journalist Joël Broekaert brings us a playful world history, as told through twelve beans – or rather, ten plus two which we often consider beans but aren't really: coffee and cacao.

The domestication of beans during the neolithic revolution was essential to our shift from hunter-gatherers to farmers. No surprise then that lentils feature prominently in the Old Testament. Fermented soy beans powered imperial China, just as fava beans enabled a population explosion in medieval Europe. Where Mendel's experiments with peas laid the foundation for modern genetics, coffee beans turbocharged the French Revolution.

They are also connected with oppression and popular struggle: the common bean – and its many varieties (kidney, borlotti, green, white, etc.) – first made its way around the world after Columbus' 'discovery' of the Americas, and cacao beans were a major driver of the transatlantic slave trade. In the United States, black-eyed peas emerged as a proud symbol of Black identity, while chickpeas remain a point of contention for identity politics in the Middle East. Above all, perhaps, beans are our future: in these times of climate crisis, legumes such as lupin beans hold the key to juicy meat-alternatives and sustainable food systems.

- A grandiose story of humanity, as told through humble legumes
- The story of humans and beans is one that touches every continent (except Antarctica)
- Beans are our past, present and future

'The book reads like a novel, like a playful attempt to bring beans closer to people and their plates. Required reading material for those in need of a little help during these dark months – because that's what all those beans do.'

Dagblad van het Noorden

'An ode to the bean and the ultimate rehabilitation of honor to this ancient crop. Together, the stories form a delightful and original piece of world history. Superb!'

Humanistisch Verbond

Joël Broekaert (b. 1982) is a culinary journalist, writer, and reviewer for *NRC*. He also produces food-inspired television programmes and podcasts. He is a jury member of the Dutch Celebrity MasterChef. Previously he published *De alleseter* (The Omnivore, 2017), *Van honingbij tot hagelslag* (From Honeybee to Chocolate Sprinkles, 2021),

and, together with Joris Bijdendijk, the bestseller *Bij Bijdendijk thuis* (At Home with Bijdendijk, 2022). In 2022, he published *Proefles* (Trial Lesson), a culinary guide to tasting food.



Photo (© Martijn de Vré)

Lisa Doeland

Apocalypsophy



Dutch title
Apocalypsofie. Over recycling, groene groei en andere gevaarlijke fantasieën
 Year of publication
 2023
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 Publisher
 Ten Have
 Rights
 Shared Stories
 Hayo Deinum
 hayo@sharedstories.nl
 Sample translation available

For many years we've known about our collective effect on the planet and its consequences. Still, many pretend nothing is wrong. We would rather dream of carbon offsetting, circular economies, 'green growth' – of a world where everything can be cleaned, recycled or resolved with magical technology. Anything to stop us from making real change. In *Apocalypsophy*, Lisa Doeland confronts us with our various 'green dreams'.

Take, for example, the sheer scale of the climate crisis: it's too big, it's unstoppable. This fatalism is dangerous, writes Doeland, not only because there is so much to do, but because it imagines the end – of humanity, biodiversity, the planet – too simply. As though everything will finish with a bang. This too is a form of denial. When, instead, we acknowledge the catastrophe has already happened, and is going on continually around us, we can work towards a future beyond impending doom.

Rather than reassure, Doeland offers tools for living as best as we can among the ruins. Bodily engagement is necessary, as is local concrete action. We must learn to see ourselves as part of the cycle of life, death and waste, and learn to die out – perhaps the goal of all philosophy. Doeland builds her argument across nine chapters, turning to thinkers like Srečko Horvat, Timothy Morton, Anna Tsing, Val Plumwood, Donna Haraway, Bruno Latour, Jacques Derrida and Walter Benjamin, as well as works of art, film and literature from popular culture.

On recycling, green growth and other dangerous fantasies

- An empowering, clear-eyed philosophy in which the climate apocalypse has already happened
- Offers tools for living among the ruins and reimagining another future

Lisa Doeland (b. 1982) works at Radboud University and the University of Amsterdam and did her doctoral research on waste. She was previously a programme creator at Radboud Reflects. *Apocalypsophy* is her first book.

'Full of wonderful metaphors and intriguing provocations.'
De Standaard

'Doeland skillfully makes mincemeat of unrealistic ideas.'
NRC

'Doeland offers a welcome argument against overly rosy pictures and, more surprisingly, against overly gloomy expectations. Yes, a lot is being lost, but there is also something to be salvaged.'
Bazarow



Photo (© Noemí Pérez Espino)

Rob Wijnberg

Truth be Sold — On Truth in the 21st Century and Beyond



Dutch title
*Voor ieder wat waars. Hoe waarheid
ons verdeelt en ons weer kan
samenbrengen*

Year of publication
2023

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192

Publisher
De Correspondent

Rights
Channa van Dijk
channa@decorrespondent.nl

Rights sold
Beck (Germany)

Sample translation available

Anyone who reads the news and follows the discussions on social media can hardly help but conclude that nowadays we only believe in our own truth. The result: a society without solidarity and a declining trust in politics and media. In this book, philosopher Rob Wijnberg brings a powerful corrective to the information war of our time and shows us that truth is still alive and well.

Our collective understanding of truth allows us to label fake news – and to observe that in these times it appears all but meaningless. With an eye to restoring solidarity for the challenges ahead, Wijnberg examines truth's changing social functions throughout history. To reignite the progressive imagination, he reimagines progress with a concrete future based on solidarity and information, not as a commodity, but a public good.

Wijnberg charts in four stages what he calls the 'privatization of truth', or truth's transformation from a collective good to an individual commodity. The first shift occurred in the transition from premodern times to the Enlightenment, when truth no longer represented transcendent salvation but objective progress. When this progress led to the horrors of the 20th century, however, truth shifted to the realm of personal subjectivity.

Since the 1980s, driven in part by the attention economy and media, truth has been an individual commodity. With it, our ability to reimagine a progressive future has crumbled. If we are to actually make the material transition a sustainable future requires, truth must become a social consensus that reflects how the world can be fundamentally better – beyond 'de-growth'.

How the truth divides us and can reunite us

- A new book by bestselling author Rob Wijnberg, for the readers of Rutger Bregman
- On the collapse of truth as a common good, and a hopeful restoration of progress
- Combines an examination of truth's changing social function throughout history with a concrete vision for the future
- A lively and compelling argument against labelling our society as 'post-truth'

**'An enthusiastic plea
for believing in progress
and a positive view
of humanity that can
help us through the
climate crisis and other
troubles.'**

NRC

Rob Wijnberg (b. 1982) is a philosopher and the founder of the Dutch news website *De Correspondent*. He was Journalist of the Year in 2013 and has written six books, including *Nietzsche en Kant lezen de krant* (Nietzsche and Kant Read the Paper, 2009) and *En mijn tafelheer is Plato* (And My Guest Today is Plato, 2010), which

together have sold more than 125,000 copies.



Photo (© Frank Ruiter)

Bas von Benda-Beckmann



Dutch title
Het kleedje voor Hitler.
Een familiegeschiedenis
Year of publication
2023
Page count
672
Rights
Martijn Prins
m.prins@singeluitgeverijen.nl
Sample translation available

A Tablecloth for Hitler

Growing up in a German-Dutch family, historian Bas von Benda-Beckmann developed a particular interest in the Second World War. His grandmother's sister had been married to Hitler's most trusted general Alfred Jodl, who was hanged for war crimes at the Nuremberg Trials. Another sister, meanwhile, had turned away from Nazism when she fell in love with a half-Jewish doctor, and personally knew those involved in Hitler's failed assassination attempt in 1944.

At the centre of his family history was a mythical embroidered tablecloth, supposedly once gifted to Hitler for personally disqualifying a Jewish member of the Von Benda family tree, and apparently gifted in turn by the Fuhrer to General Franco on a state visit. In *A Tablecloth for Hitler*, Von Benda-Beckmann delves into the truth behind this story and the Nazi past of his grandparents and their siblings.

In charting his family's changing fortunes – from wealthy friends of Kaizer Wilhelm II before WW1, to landed gentry fallen on hard times amid political unrest, to Nazi party members and WW2's aftermath – he depicts his family's political shift from liberal conservative, to conservative socialist, to national socialist.

The Von Bendas' various functions throughout the Third Reich, and the extensive archival material they left behind, allow him to intimately reconstruct individual lives caught in the turbulent movements of History. In the end, Von Benda-Beckmann can find no evidence of there ever having been a tablecloth. Along the way, he does raise questions about family, mythology, morality and responsibility.

A rich family history of resistance and collaboration

- A Holocaust researcher examines his own family's Nazi past
- The author is from a German-Dutch family, with aristocratic roots in Germany
- On the role of myth within families
- A story of individual lives caught up in the turbulent movements of History

Bas von Benda-Beckmann (b. 1976) is a historian and currently works as a researcher at the Anne Frank House. *Na het achterhuis* (After the Annex, 2020), an attempt to reconstruct what happened to the Frank family after their 1944 discovery and arrest, has been published in ten languages.

Translated titles:
After The Annex: Anne Frank, Auschwitz and Beyond (Na het Achterhuis): Unicorn (UK), Secession (Germany), Kalandraka (Spain and Catalonia), Notes de Nuit (France), Corvina (Hungary), Replika (Poland), LeYa (Portugal), Globo (Brazil)

'Never does his compassion lapse into a blindness to his ancestors' responsibility. Never do the historian and the man writing about his family get in each other's way. Add to that Bas von Benda-Beckmann's elegantly understated pen, and you have a fascinating book.'

de Volkskrant

'Bas von Benda-Beckmann's family history reads like a something out of film.'

Trouw



Photo (© Lionne Hietberg)

Marcel Haenen

Penguins and People



Dutch title
Pinguins en de mensen. Geschiedenis van een belaagde vogel

Year of publication
2023

Page count
296

Publisher
Querido

Rights
Martijn Prins
m.prins@singeluitgeverijen.nl

Sample translation available

A labour of love from journalist Marcel Haenen, *Penguins and People* takes the reader on a gripping expedition into the very fabric of the penguin's existence. He examines our relationship with the bird, from early encounters with navigators to captive penguins as crowd-pullers at zoos, from silver screen stardom (*Happy Feet*, *March of the Penguins*) to penguin tourism and its current protected status.

There are eighteen species of penguins on earth, all of them in the southern hemisphere. In 1497, Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama documented his encounter with these peculiar birds: 'resembling ducks in size', they could be 'clubbed to death quite easily' and 'brayed like donkeys', he wrote. Since this first reported encounter penguins have suffered much harassment from humans.

The handsomest bird on the planet faces a serious threat of extinction due to our consumption of its meat and eggs, extraction of its oils, overfishing, the destruction of habitat, pollution and warming of the ocean. Following the extinction of the dodo in the seventeenth century and the great auk in the nineteenth century, an iconic walking bird – whose lineage spans over sixty million years – is once again teetering on the brink.

Haenen's global odyssey exposes the urgent need to address habitat colonisation, ocean pollution, and overfishing. The narrative not only celebrates the charm of penguins but also underscores the pressing need for conservation in the face of impending doom.

The history of a beleaguered bird

- A journey from New Zealand to Patagonia, Japan to Antarctica, Cape Town to Boston monitoring this loveable, iconic bird
- The first comprehensive penguin survey in book form of its kind
- Penguins are 60 million years old and in 60 years they will be largely extinct
- Unique photo material from penguin watchers and specialists all over the world

'Haenen's voice is infectiously cheerful, calm, and warm. His book serves as a declaration of love, with a mournful tinge. Shamelessly tapping into our collective affection for penguins, he weaves a confrontational narrative about the state of our world: shrinking biodiversity, mass tourism, pollution, and overfishing.'

De Standaard

'A book of profound beauty, movingly written, delightful, hilarious, and historically fascinating.'

De Tijd

Marcel Haenen (b. 1960) has been a reporter for the *NRC* newspaper since 1984, and is its 'penguin editor'. He has written books on serious crime, such as *The Dancer*, and *The IRT Swamp*. His book *The Boxer* (2018), a biography of lawyer and Holocaust survivor Max Moszkowicz Sr., was shortlisted for the 2019 Brussels Prize for the best

journalistic book and sold more than 25,000 copies.



Photo (© Lionne Hietberg)

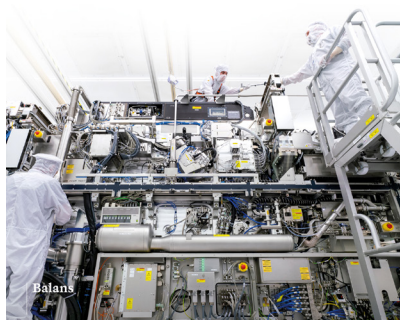
Marc Hijink

FOCUS

De wereld van ASML

HET MACHTSSPEL OM
DE MEEST COMPLEXE
MACHINE OP AARDE

Marc Hijink



Dutch title

*Focus. De wereld van ASML.
Het machtsspel om de meest
complexe machine op aarde*

Year of publication

2023

Page count

320

Publisher

Balans

Rights

Henk van Renssen

h.vanrenssen@uitgeverijbalans.nl

Sample translation available

Focus — The ASML Way

For decades the most valuable company in Europe operated in the shadows. The chips manufactured by its machines, power our smartphones and AI assistants, make our coffee and drive our cars and even guide cruise missiles. In fact, roughly 90% of all chips worldwide are made by ASML. In recent years however, the Dutch manufacturing company has found itself in the spotlight, at the centre of a geopolitical storm between the United States, China and Europe.

In *Focus – The ASML Way*, journalist Marc Hijink brings us a unique insider portrait of this global giant. Hijink not only details the company's meteoric rise from a quiet town in the Netherlands to a powerful, global monopoly position, he also makes accessible the unbelievably complex technology that has been the key to ASML's success. Its lithography machines, which spit out millions of chips around the clock, work to an accuracy of within a few atoms.

China is trying to steal the ASML technology while investing billions in its own chip-manufacturing programme to rival that of Taiwan. The US, in turn, seem to have the Dutch government on their side as they try and resuscitate their own chip manufacturing industry amid trade and cyber-warfare with China. Behind all the mind-blowing tech, Hijink discovers, ASML is a company fighting its own demons, scrambling to keep up with its success and an increasing number of security threats. This is the intimate story of the people and culture behind a business now caught in a geopolitical struggle for global might.

Inside the power struggle over the most complex machine on earth

- A story of industrial innovation and the global struggle for economic and military supremacy
- How a Dutch company conquered the chip world
- Hijink was allowed behind the scenes for three years with ASML's leadership
- A technical and complex subject made thrilling in forty brief chapters
- An inspiring story for entrepreneurs around the world

Marc Hijink (b. 1969) has over fifteen years of experience writing for the Dutch daily *NRC*, where he is a financial reporter and columnist. He writes about the semiconductor industry, technology trade wars and geopolitics, as well as cybercrime, consumer electronics, telecommunications, social media, AI and algorithms.

He is focused on translating complex concepts into compelling stories for a broad audience.

'Hijink flies through the remarkable history of chip machine-manufacturer ASML in three hundred pages. With humour and a pacy style, he makes complex subject matter digestible.'

de Volkskrant

'ASML is the most important company you may have never heard of. Marc Hijink provides the inside story of its rise to global dominance as the monopoly producer of the machines that make the chips that make artificial intelligence possible.'

Chris Miller, author
of *Chip War*



Photo (© Bob Bronshoff)

Eke Krijnen

A Real Parent — On Queer Parenthood



Dutch title
Een echte ouder. Over queer ouderschap
Year of publication
2024
Page count
288
Publisher
Atlas Contact
Rights
Hayo Deinum
hayo@sharedstories.nl
Sample translation available

Who or what is ‘family’? Who gets to be a parent? And what happens when a family deviates from the standard heterosexual norm? These questions are central to the essay collection *A Real Parent: On Queer Parenthood* by Eke Krijnen.

In part, the essays in *A Real Parent* spring from personal experience – Krijnen and her wife have two children; the father is a good friend of the couple, and the children alternate between the two households. The book is dotted with scenes from their family life, such as an old acquaintance asking Krijnen in the playground which of her two children is ‘really’ hers (she and her wife birthed one child each).

In addition, Krijnen examines representations of (queer) parenthood in film, literature and the law, and draws on the work of theorists such as Sara Ahmed and Judith Butler to argue that while queer – or ‘rainbow’ – families are increasingly common, their acceptance in culture and the law is not. And so, as queer families, ‘We still have to fight for our place. Here we are, we exist, we are a family, we are real.’

A Real Parent is a gentle, often funny and nuanced work of literary non-fiction, as well as an urgent call to action. Krijnen builds a case for the importance of the legal recognition of families with more than two parents, and argues for ‘kinship’ as a key to a new and better way to understand family relationships. With queer families under attack in some countries, and the traditional nuclear family no longer appealing to a growing number of (would-be) parents in other countries, *A Real Parent* is an incredibly timely book.

A timely book about the most timeless of experiences

- Essays examining the nature, definition and experience of parenthood today
- Reframes the concept of family from ‘nuclear’ to a more inclusive model
- Combines personal experience with a close reading of film, literature and the law

‘In her essay collection *A Real Parent*, Krijnen interrogates with a keen, witty pen the societal ideas that underlie intrusive questions asked without shame.’

De Volkskrant

‘In a fiery plea for the recognition of her multi-parent family, she meticulously picks apart the myths and realities surrounding having and raising children.’

NRC

Eke Krijnen (b. 1985) is a writer, teacher, and linguist. Her essays have been published in major Dutch and Belgian newspapers. Krijnen holds a PhD in educational linguistics and teaches linguistics at the University of Amsterdam. She lives with her family in Amsterdam where she fights for the acceptance and legal

protection of queer families. This is her first book.



Photo (© Fjodor Buis)

Joke J. Hermesen

Under a Different Sky



Dutch title
Onder een andere hemel.
Over heimwee en vertepijn
Year of publication
2023
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320
Publisher
Prometheus
Rights
Nikki Verkerk
foreignrights@pbo.nl
Sample translation available

From a young age, philosopher and writer Joke H. Hermesen has wrestled with the longing to be elsewhere – a kind of ‘farsickness’, from the German *fernweh*, which has gone paired with never quite feeling at home. When, during the pandemic, the feeling rises to a crescendo in her own house, she packs her bags. But everywhere she goes – from France to the Netherlands to Germany – memories wash over her.

As Hermesen tries to make sense of her unrest, she reaches for the thinkers and poets who have most influenced her: Hannah Arendt, Maya Angelou, Rainer Maria Rilke, Lou Salomé, bell hooks, Friedrich Hölderlin, Simone Weil and Ingeborg Bachmann. Being at home, she discovers, also means being at home in time. In the end, she must face a memory of sexual assault as a teenager – the moment she suddenly felt she had no one to speak to in her family home.

For Hermesen, *heimwee*, closest to the English word ‘homesickness’, is not *just* about having a home or not, it’s equally about how, in the development of your identity, you can be encouraged or confined by feelings of not belonging. This emotion also comprises a desire for the past and a coming to terms with memories. It can be triggered by the passage of time, and thus assail you anywhere.

Hermesen mixes these insights with reflections on Europe’s political present – the pandemic as well as the climate and refugee crisis – readily acknowledging that it’s a privilege to only feel homeless on an existential level, while enjoying a house, passport and chance at a secure future.

A meditation on homesickness and the eternal longing to be elsewhere

- A philosophical and personal exploration of our alternate longings for the familiar and the unknown
- On finding a home in literature, memory and political solidarity
- The author sold more than 150,000 copies of her work in the Netherlands

‘Hermesen draws the reader into her emotional world with many striking descriptions. They make the theoretical reflections relevant, of personal interest even.’

De Standaard

‘Hermesen links her reflections on homesickness to interludes on the climate, migration and the fates of refugees. When talking about political displacement, the question of “how to be at home in the world” suddenly becomes a very different one.’

De Groene Amsterdammer

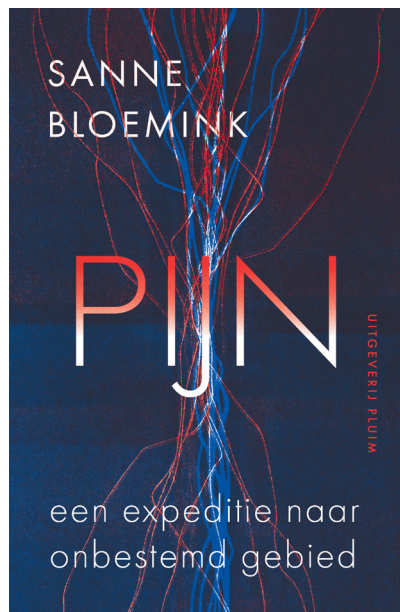
A writer and philosopher, Joke J. Hermesen (b. 1961) published several bestselling non-fiction books and novels. Her work includes titles such as *Time On Our Side* (2009, Jan Hanlo Essay Prize), *So It’s Love* (2008, Halewijn Prize), *Kairos* (2014), *A Good and Dignified Life* (2019) and *Melancholia in Uncertain Times*. Translations have appeared in several languages.

Translated Titles:
A good and dignified life. Yale University Press (UK/US), Frydenlund (Denmark), Wagenbach (Germany), Existenz (Norway), Siruela (Spain), Elles (Egypt). *Melancholia in Uncertain Times.* HarperCollins (Germany), Siruela (Spain), Quetzal (Portugal) and Queriniana (Italy) *Kairos.* HarperCollins (Germany) and Kontrateg (Servia-Kroatia)



Photo (© Maarten Delobel)

Sanne Bloemink



Dutch title
Pijn. Een expeditie naar onbestemd gebied

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2023

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288

Publisher
Pluim

Rights
Stella Rieck
rieck@cossee.com

Sample translation available

Pain — An Expedition Into Uncharted Territory

Pain causes a lot of suffering and comes with a huge price tag, yet it remains under-reported. Words often fail us. We try to measure it on a scale of 1 to 10, but have no idea what those numbers mean. Can we ever know what someone else's pain feels like?

In 2010, Sanne Bloemink made an unfortunate move during kickbox training. Since then, the slightest movement of her leg has caused shooting pains that 'seem to split her body like a lightning strike in an ancient oak tree'. Scans showed a herniated disc pinching a major nerve pathway, but because eighty per cent of herniated discs resolve themselves, the neurosurgeon decided not to operate. Years of medications, exercises, treatments, hopes and setbacks followed.

After five years, Bloemink went for an operation. Her hernia was finally cured. But the pain hammered on undisturbed, and with it, any hope of a pain-free existence was gone. Doctors suggested an overloaded nervous system, psychological stress – nothing helped. In her search for a solution, the author connects her own experiences with perspectives on pain from medicine, philosophy, literature and history.

She takes the reader back to the Middle Ages, draws on Greek mythology, explores what new technologies can mean for pain management, and what the works of Susan Sontag and Marina Abramović, among others, can teach us. She concludes that chronic pain is a combination of physical, psychological and social factors that patients cannot easily influence themselves.

A palliative investigation into the meaning(lessness) of chronic pain

- In the vein of Susan Sontag's *On Illness as a Metaphor*
- One in five people suffers from chronic pain
- Combines history, philosophy, literature and personal experience

Sanne Bloemink (b. 1973) is an essayist, and writes for the Dutch weekly *De Groene Amsterdammer*. She also worked as a lawyer and jurist in Amsterdam and New York. She has written several books, including *Happy Me* (2012) and *De wilde wereld* (The Wild World, 2020).

'A personal account, an investigation into the science of pain, a glimpse into the past, a philosophical essay and a medical-ethical appeal all in one. Too much for one book, you might think. A whirlwind of ambitions, styles and layers: hold your breath. But it works. The result is overwhelming, almost suffocating, and ultimately very impressive.'

NRC

'Engaging, entertaining and written with humour. You learn a lot from it.'

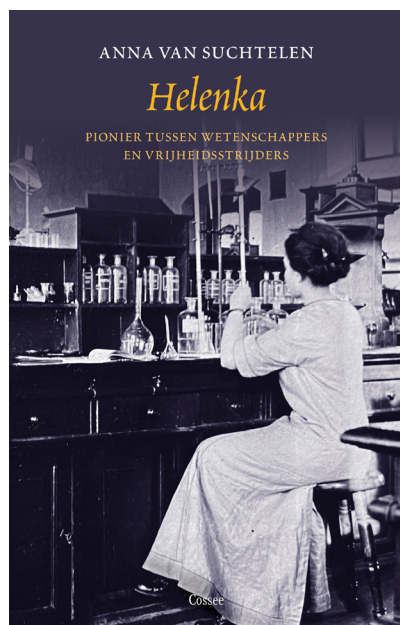
de Volkskrant



Photo (© Merlijn Doomernik)

Anna van Suchtelen

Helenka — A Pioneer Among Scientists and Freedom Fighters



Dutch title
Helenka. Pionier tussen
wetenschappers en vrijheidsstrijders

Year of publication
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300

Publisher
Cossee

Rights
Stella Rieck
rieck@cossee.com

Sample translation available

When Anna van Suchtelen sees a picture of her grandmother Helena (Helenka) Drecke seated in a laboratory, it piques her curiosity and launches her on a quest. Helenka is wearing a dress, looking defiantly into the camera, and there is a sign behind her that reads ‘Danger: 4000 volts’.

How did this woman manage to become a scientist? What was her life like? Fifty years after her death, her granddaughter decides to delve into the past and give Helenka the intellectual credit she is long due. Van Suchtelen visits archives, as well as the places of her grandmother’s youth in Eastern Europe. Where necessary, she draws on her imagination, producing a *vie romancée* about a young woman in a male, scientific environment, during a complicated period in European history.

Helenka grew up in what is now Poland and Ukraine (then Russian territory). Inspired by her hero Marie Curie she went to university in Zürich, where she met Dutch student Teddy van Suchtelen. He worked in the soap industry and she was a specialist in the process of making soap powder. They could have been the perfect career couple, but fate intervened. Teddy had to return to the Netherlands to take care of his family, and Helenka fell ill. They moved to Amsterdam, where she died at 36, long before her work could gain any recognition.

This book describes the intriguing life story of a woman who fought for her existence and her position as a woman at a tipping point of war and revolution in Europe.

The unlikely true story of a female scientist in early 20th century Europe

- A combination of European history, family history and history of science
- An inspirational story about washing powder

‘Reads like a gripping novel about the love between two people against the backdrop of the early 20th century. Yet, all of this really happened. Anna van Suchtelen describes it beautifully.’

NRC

‘An unusually subtle portrait of her Russian grandmother Helena Drecke, daughter of a sugar magnate in what is now Ukraine. A woman who dreamed of becoming the next Marie Curie. Every page is touching.’

de Volkskrant

Anna van Suchtelen (b. New York, 1961) studied Dutch language and literature in Groningen and made her name as a visual artist in the USA. In 2017 her first book was published: *Versailles aan de Schelde*, about her family in Zeeland. *Helenka* is her second book.



Meredith Greer

Reflection Time



Dutch title
Bedenktijd
Year of publication
2023
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208
Publisher
De Bezige Bij
Rights
Marijke Nagtegaal
m.nagtegaal@debezigebij.nl
Sample translation available

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, just as the world went into lockdown, Meredith Greer realized she was pregnant but couldn't keep the baby. The experience of waiting for, undergoing, and recovering from an abortion was isolated and isolating, encapsulated as it was in a larger, collective act of waiting.

In *Reflection Time*, Greer argues that terminating a pregnancy – an experience that is both very private and very public, given how controversial abortion is – and living through a pandemic can both be defined as ‘in-between times’ or ‘liminal zones.’ In such a liminal zone, the old normal has been left behind but we have yet to enter the new. Everything is in flux.

Liminality is usually associated with rituals, but when it comes to abortion, as well as the pandemic, Greer observes, we're sorely lacking in rituals to help us process loss, mourning, or new beginnings. ‘Liminality’ she writes, ‘is a phase in which the rules do not apply. But you can't make an exception for special circumstances if the rules have already been suspended until further notice.’

Weaving together personal experience with an examination of the function of silence and the silencing of women; the depiction of abortion in film, the history of the internet and its attendant dreams of connection through technology, Greer renders on the page the sensation of being in limbo. The result is a poetic, thoughtful and quietly political reminder that putting private and collective experiences of loss into words is a matter of power and of survival.

A thoughtful meditation on abortion and grief, waiting and time

- Essay on two difficult private and collective experiences: abortion and the Covid-19 pandemic
- A poetic exploration of ‘liminality’ through personal recollection and close readings of film, literature, and media history
- A stunning new voice in literary non-fiction

Meredith Greer (b. 1988) is an American-Dutch journalist and writer. Her essays, op-eds and articles have appeared in several major Dutch newspapers and magazines, including *Vrij Nederland* and *de Volkskrant*. She is a public speaker and moderator. This is her first book.

‘Meredith Greer writes about her pain, her anxieties, her doubts and her grief without becoming heavy-handed, or lapsing into navel-gazing. Her writing is erudite without being pedantic, the cultural references stem mainly from her own curiosity, and she's all too happy to take the reader along on her journey.’

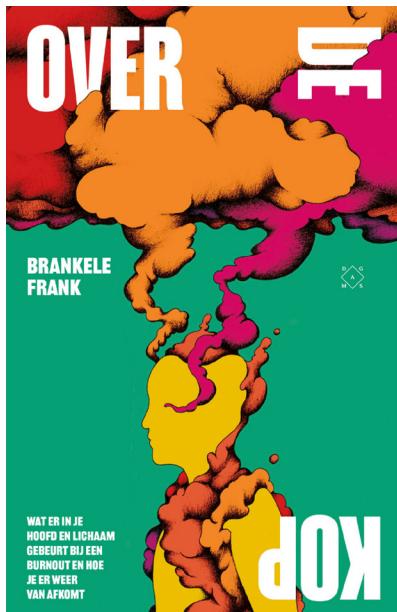
De Lage Landen



Photo (© Keke Keukelaar)

Brankele Frank

Headstrong



Brankele Frank thought she could do it all. Combining a career as a neurobiologist with a job as a strategic consultant for McKinsey? Writing for newspapers and magazines? No problem, there was still enough time for a triathlon. But when her life comes to a screeching halt her first concern is recovery. After a while, Frank begins to search for answers.

What does one experience during burnout? Frank starts thinking about her experiences from a scientific point of view. She is, after all, a neurobiologist, interested in the human brain and its limitations. The decision to write a book about her experiences turns out to be much more difficult than she thought. It is some time before she dares to admit to herself that writing the book has triggered a second collapse.

At this point, the story becomes heart-wrenching to read. Frank is still looking for scientific answers, but her search turns into something personal. The result is a lucid study of her brain, as well as an analysis of a widespread phenomenon. Frank writes with gusto and humour, though the tone is serious when she realises she may never completely recover. Not only a book about stress and the immune system, *Headstrong* is an indictment of our performance-driven society.

What happens in your body and brain during 'burnout' and how to recover

- A neurobiologist crashes and burns, not once but twice
- Deeply personal and thoroughly scientific memoir about the price of success
- Physical and mental collapse due to overwork is becoming increasingly common

'A thorough analysis of international scientific literature, written like a gripping whodunnit, in a drily humorous style.'

Het Parool

'Neurobiologist Brankele Frank finds out what burnout really means for body and mind.'

NRC

Brankele Frank (b. 1987) studied neurobiology in Amsterdam, London and Paris. She has written for Dutch newspapers and magazines including *NRC* and *Vrij Nederland*, and taught at the University of Amsterdam. She also worked for McKinsey and was a member of the management team at ARTIS Amsterdam Zoo.

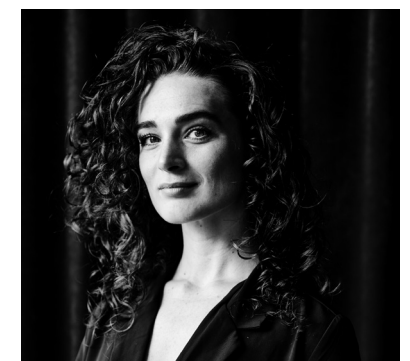
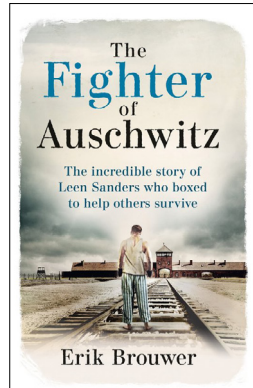


Photo (© Joris Casear)

RECENT TRANSLATIONS



Erik Brouwer

The Fighter of Auschwitz

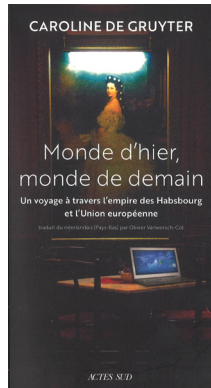
The impressive true story of a legendary boxer who saved many lives in Auschwitz

Dutch title
Leen Sanders: de bokser die levens redde in Auschwitz

Published in
English by Cassell (2023)

Translated by
Guy Shipton

Rights
Marijke Nagtegaal,
m.nagtegaal
@debezigebij.nl



Caroline de Gruyter

It Won't Get Any Better

A fresh take on dissatisfaction with the European Union and what the Habsburg Empire can teach us

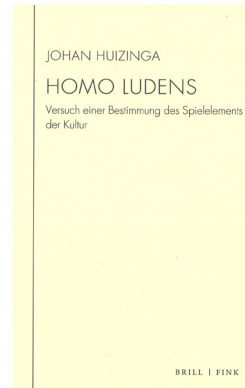
Dutch title
Beter wordt het niet

Published in
French by Actes Sud (2023)

Translated by
Olivier van Wersch-Cot

Other translations
German (Böhlau),
Hungarian (Európa),
Swedish (Lopinita)

Rights
Martijn Prins



Johan Huizinga

Homo Ludens

A classic study of playfulness as an essential human characteristic

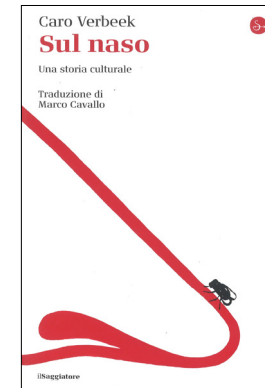
Dutch title
Homo Ludens

Published in
German by Wilhelm Fink (2023)

Translated by
Annette Wunschel

Other translations
English (Angelico Press),
Hungarian (Helikon),
Italian (Einaudi), Russian (Limbakh), Spanish (Alianza Editorial)

A selection of recently published translations from the Dutch.
For more information please go to our online database of translations:
en.vertalingendatabase.nl



Caro Verbeek

A Brief Cultural History of the (Large) Nose

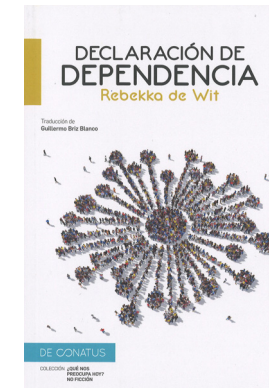
An ode to the nose, in all its shapes and sizes

Dutch title
Een kleine cultuurgeschiedenis van de (grote) neus

Published in
Italian by Il Saggiatore (2024)

Translated by
David Santoro

Rights
Hayo Deinum
h.deinum@atlascontact.nl



Rebekka de Wit

Declaration of Dependency

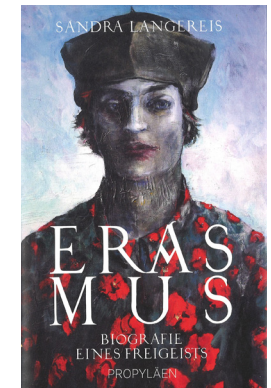
A meditative essay collection on things taken for granted, dependence, and how free we actually are

Dutch title
Afhankelijkheidsverklaring

Published in
Spanish by De Conatus (2024)

Translated by
Guillermo Briz Blanco

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h.deinum@atlascontact.nl



Sandra Langereis

Erasmus: Life of a Maverick

A rich, probing biography of Erasmus, one of Europe's greatest thinkers

Dutch title
Erasmus: Dwarsdenker

Published in
German by Propyläen (2023)

Translated by
Bärbel Jänicke

Other translations
Mondadori (Italy)

Rights
Marijke Nagtegaal,
m.nagtegaal
@debezigebij.nl

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.

Do you work with Dutch publishers and agents?

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.

Are all the books in your brochure eligible for a grant?

Yes, they are, with a maximum subsidy of 100% of the translation costs for classics and 70% for non-fiction, based on the actual fee paid by the publisher, and with a maximum of 10,000 euros per translation grant.

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

Yes. Our decision will be based on three criteria: the literary quality of the book, the status of the publishing house and the quality of the translator.

Can you help us find a translator?

Lists of experienced translators are provided by e-mail. If you wish to work with somebody who is not on our list, we require a sample translation of 20 pages and the translator's CV. If the translation is good, the translator will be added to our list. If the translation needs work, we can make suggestions. If the translation is beyond repair, you will be advised to hire somebody who is on our list.

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.

Nederlands Letterenfonds

Postbus / PO Box 16588
NL-1001 RB Amsterdam

t +31 (0)20 520 73 00
www.letterenfonds.nl

The Dutch Foundation for Literature supports writers, translators and literary festivals, and promotes Dutch literature abroad.

For more information, please see:
www.letterenfonds.nl/en/translation-subsidy.

Editors

Michele Hutchison, Haico Kaashoek,
Victor Schiferli

Translation and copy

Lynn Berger, Michele Hutchison,
Haico Kaashoek, Bertram Mourits

Advisory Board

Lynn Berger, Regine Dugardyn,
Michele Hutchison, Haico Kaashoek,
Bertram Mourits

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Turgut Coşkun

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A History of the World
in Twelve Beans 2

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Truth be Sold 6

Bas von Benda-Beckmann

A Tablecloth for Hitler 8

Marcel Haenen

Penguins and People 10

Marc Hijink

Focus — The ASML Way 12

Eke Krijnen

A Real Parent 14

Joke J. Hermesen

Under a Different Sky 16

Sanne Bloemink

Pain 18

Anna van Suchtelen

Helenka 20

Meredith Greer

Reflection Time 22

Brankele Frank

Headstrong 24