were Jewish. When Hendrik and his father go fishing, they cast rods and put worms on hooks. Commercial fishermen fish with nets, not rods. Another problem relating to the fishing is the question of how realistic it is that there would be much fishing going on in North Sea waters during the war. The Germans controlled the North Sea and did not let anyone near the coast.

Then there are the names, or at least their spellings. Hendrik's last name is "Vandinther" and one of his friends is called "Vandussan". These names would certainly be spelled "van Dinther" and "van Dussen" (with an -e-, not an -a-), unless they were Flemish. Another of his friends is called "Goodman", which is simply not a Dutch name; it sounds far too English.

In conclusion, this is a not very well researched book, which, while tackling an interesting subject, avoids the crucial period of the war by stopping the narrative half-way through the war, and leaves the reader unsatisfied with its abrupt ending and unrealistic detail. For a historical novel claiming to be based on real events it contains too many inaccuracies. Whoever wants to introduce their young readers to literature about the Second World War in The Netherlands would do better to give them Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl* or English translations of Dutch books such as Terlouw's *Winter in War Time*.

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Ton J. Broos, Margriet Bruyn Lacy and Thomas F. Shannon, eds.: *The Low Countries: Crossroads of Cultures*. Münster: Nodus Publikationen, 2006. (Studies in Dutch Language and Culture, 1).

This volume contains selected papers from the ICNS conference held in 2002 in Ann Arbor. It is the first in the new series of such publications, which replaces the old PAANS series. The new format is compact; quotations are set in on the left but not on the right; the type is small, especially the footnotes and lists of references, but it is readable. There is an index of names mentioned in the papers, but not the usual mini-biography of the contributors, which it is always interesting to have. The volume's striking cover no doubt represents convergence; it suggests icicles or a broken window, to my mind, rather than a crossroads, but no matter.

The opening section, on art history - the papers selected are arranged by field - keeps very well to the theme of the Netherlands as a cultural crossroads, which that country certainly has always been. Shelley Karen Perlove examines the portrait (1642) by Salom Italia of the great Jewish rabbi of Amsterdam, Menasseh ben Israel, who sought to build a relationship of understanding with Protestant leaders throughout Europe, in the hope of bringing about a millennium of tolerance which could save the world. Cécile Tainturier restores the reputation of *Light [sic] der Teken en Schilder konst* (1643), the drawing manual in which Crispijn van de Passe combined the German concern with measurement and proportion, the French concern with perspective, and the Italian insistence on copying models. So far from being out of date when it appeared, as has been claimed,

this manual combined approaches hitherto kept separate; it provided the model for the rest of the century. And Theo van Doesburg intervened in Italian literary debate in 1921-24 by publishing, in his review *De Stijl*, essays under the pseudonym Aldo Camini, urging a return to the Futurist vision of a new "electrical" rational mankind. (Italian writers had abandoned this prewar vision and plumped for conservative values which paved the way for fascism). Be it said that these essays were also a plea to his wife to accept "rationally" the fact that he had taken a young mistress...

The section of four papers devoted to history opens with an account of a major popular entertainment in Holland in the 16th century, which continued till the Synod of Dordt forbade it in 1618-19: the lottery drawing. Every ticket had to be drawn even if very few won prizes, there were thousands of tickets, the drawing took days, and it became customary to write on one's ticket(s) some lines of poetry, whether morally elevated or scabrous, patriotic or anti-church, or just hopeful. The festival drew on the old Dutch tradition of expressing sentiments in rhyme, and your own poem was bound to have an audience.

Claire de Jaeger's paper on the exhibition held in Ottawa in 2002 of "Maps, atlases [and] engravings" made in the southern Netherlands in the 16th and 17th centuries, is substantially the same as her article on the subject published in our Journal (Fall 2002 p.15-27), and of course it could not have the colour illustrations. Even so, it is a pleasure to see her work made known to a wider audience. Mark Meuwese relates the visit to Holland in 1654 of two Tupi (Brazilian Indian) leaders. They had commanded local troops in the long war between Dutch and Portuguese colonists, which had ended with the Dutch abandoning their colony, and they came to ask for continued help against Portuguese oppression. However, neither the West India Company nor the States General could afford to help them. It is interesting that the Indians had status in Dutch eyes and negotiated as equals. Even after being refused help, they were made senior officers in the Dutch cavalry, and one became a colonial officer on Guadeloupe (the widow of the other also appears to have gone to the West Indies).

Hubert P. van Tuyll tells the story of Belgium's attempt to gain territory from the Netherlands during the Versailles treaty negotiations in 1919. The border was a compromise arrived at after the 1830 secession, and since the Netherlands had been neutral in World War I, Belgium thought it could take advantage of the resultant Dutch unpopularity with the Allies to acquire Luxembourg, Limburg and the Scheldt estuary. However, the Allies had not been impressed with the Belgian war effort, the populations affected did not want to change nationalities, Belgian ruling circles were themselves divided, and Belgian negotiators proved incapable of compromise and no match for the Dutch diplomatic counter-offensive.

Turning to the literature section, we find first two papers on South Africa. Luc Renders gives us a survey of literature in Afrikaans since the elections of 1994 brought Nelson Mandela to power. Writers in Afrikaans had always opposed apartheid and were overjoyed with the election results, but there was inevitably a reaction. Some of them portrayed their people as bereft of identity and purpose; others show them learning to co-operate with other

groups. Eep Francken and Olf Praamstra remind us that Dutch and not Afrikaans was the official language of South Africa till 1925, and that a now neglected body of South African literature in Dutch exists alongside the Afrikaans one. They are preparing an anthology of it, and here they introduce us to four of its major figures: Charles Etienne Boniface (1787-1853), a Parisian by birth; D. P. M. Huet (1827-95); Jan van Melle (1887-1953); and Henk van Woerden (b. 1947).

Alexander Zweers opens the section on "Literature of the Low Countries" by comparing "Two innovators of the theater: Anton Chekhov and Herman Heijermans." The comparison may surprise us, but both wrote plays in which the point is not to establish characters - let alone show them developing, for almost nothing happens - but to reveal them as influenced by the social conditions they are caught in. Indeed, we may take both playwrights to mean that under a reactionary government, nobody's character can develop. Kris Steyaert discusses the importance of Shelley for Willem Kloos, who claimed that they were kindred spirits. Steyaert is not sure they were: young Shelley was a revolutionary, and Kloos (who studied his early work in depth but never wrote an article about it) wished to remake him into a pure aesthete. He used Shelley again in later years (when his talent had seriously declined), claiming to have introduced Shelley to the Netherlands and thus attempting to re-establish his own importance as a critic.

Jacqueline Bel compares Couperus' *De stille kracht* and Conrad's *Heart of darkness* to see if they are what Edward Said called orientalist, i.e. racist. They are and they are not. Couperus develops fully the stereotypes of the colonist, the Javanese aristocracy and the Eurasian, but comes to the the non-stereotypical conclusion that the Dutch cannot justify being in the East Indies. Conrad barely describes the Africans, resorting likewise to stereotype when he does, but he clearly sympathizes with them and utterly condemns European activity in the Congo. Hugo Bousset finds the key to Stefan Hertmans' novel in nine stories *Als op de eerste dag* (2002) in Julia Kristeva's ideas on the semiotic chora (the blissful chaos embracing mother and child), the symbolic law (the everyday, in which we are defined and limited, associated with seeing ourselves in a mirror), and the abject (destruction of this rational order by every means possible, including unbridled sex and behaviour that could be called disgusting, and death, in order to experience moments of the sublime).

Anne Frank, naturally, has her own section. Gerrold van der Stroom discusses the contents of her 43-page *mooie-zinnen boek*, in which she copied passages from the books she read. Mostly serious books for mature minds, they provided her with ideas on war and peace, misery, duty and self-sacrifice and the need to live intensely, and especially on justice and death. Frida de Clercq Zubli's *De blijde stilte/Het eeuwig lied* (1937-39), which tells how its author began to write in order to express herself after going deaf, inspired Anne to start writing. Lauren Nussbaum compares Anne with Gerhard Durlacher, born in the same period, who survived Auschwitz - alone of his family - and kept his memories bottled up until 1982, when they burst out in a series of autobiographical books. The title of *Strepen aan de hemel*, the first of them, refers to the contrails of Allied bombers which

passed over Auschwitz but didn't bother to drop a bomb on the gas chambers and crematoria. Other books recall his childhood, being a refugee in the Netherlands in 1937, and people's indifference after 1945 to what he had been through. Yet - like Anne - he dwells on the people who showed him kindness.

The volume ends with sections called "Translating and Teaching Literature" (two articles) and "Social Science" (one article). Hester Velmans' paper "Translation, or the Forger's Art" discusses the stylistic challenges she encountered in translating Renate Dorrestein's *A heart of stone*. Dutch favours different sentence syntaxes from English, and an equivalent had to be found for Dorrestein's familiar style with its copious use of adverbs and modal particles. (Astrid van Winden, a graduate student in linguistics at Leiden, devoted her thesis to comparing the original with Velmans' prizewinning translation). Ton van Kalmthout traces the development from 1880 to 1940 of a method of teaching comparative literature in secondary schools. It evolved into a plan to teach world literature, but the curriculum never allowed time for it, even if the teachers had been given the vast training needed. And lastly, Joan Doughty compares the Dutch and US system of handling child abuse, as they were in 1990. The Dutch aimed to help the parents improve their behaviour, not expecting miracles; Health, Justice and Welfare authorities co-operated, and rules were flexible. The US approach was to condemn the parents as criminals, to keep the matter in the hands of social workers and not doctors, and to devise endless laws and rules for the social workers to follow.

It will be clear from this account that the papers given at Ann Arbor were of great variety and very interesting. And that indeed is how I remember that conference.

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