

Theme 4 : Changing modes of linguistic communication

4. R. Vismans (Sheffield)

Dutch between English and German: Some Reflections

This paper offers some reflections on contrastive linguistics research about the relation between Dutch and its Germanic neighbours, English and German. For Dutch linguists Van Haeringen (1956) provides perhaps not the first, but certainly the most seminal study that considers the position of Dutch between its two bigger Germanic neighbours. Therefore, the paper begins with a brief outline of Van Haeringen (1956) for those not familiar with his work, before picking out some subsequent highlights. In light of earlier work it then considers recent contributions and concludes with a number of reflections on the future of English – Dutch – German contrastive linguistics. In doing so, it will suggest widening the scope of such work by setting it more clearly in the context of other contrastive Germanic studies, most notably Hawkins (1986) and more recently König & Gast (2007) and Harbert (2007) for English and German.

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5. E. Strietman (Cambridge) and A. Armstrong (Manchester)

Transcultural Critical Editing: Transmitting the Literary Heritage of

Valois/Hapsburg Burgundy, 1460-1530

The Burgundian Netherlands in the 15th and early 16th centuries was host to a prolific and multivalent literary culture, embracing both court and urban milieux, and active in both French and Dutch. Increasing scholarly attention has been devoted to this culture in recent years. Yet research is hampered by a lack of appropriate critical editions. Many Burgundian literary texts are unedited. Moreover, existing editions are often obsolete, either because they are not properly critical or because important further witnesses and materials have come to light.

This paper showcases a prospective way of solving the problem: *Transcultural Critical Editing (TCE)*, a team-based project to be located in Manchester and Cambridge, with collaborators from various universities in the Low Countries. *TCE* seeks to assemble a team of specialists in both literary traditions of the region, who will pool their expertise to produce scholarly editions of poetry and theatre. Together with further publications and activities, the editions will show how far the region's poetry is *transcultural*, i.e. based on exchange and communication across communities. They will squarely address the linguistic, literary, and cultural impact of the other language community on the texts they present. Hence *TCE* promises to further our understanding of processes of transcultural exchange in Burgundian poetry, by engaging in unprecedentedly detailed and comprehensive fashion with the philological and contextual evidence for these processes. The editions' apparatus will address the needs of researchers working on both Dutch- and French-language cultures, in literary, linguistic, and historical studies. Ultimately, *TCE* will enhance our understanding of the more general phenomenon of transcultural exchange, theories of which are normally predicated on more recent historical phenomena such as globalization and postcoloniality. By providing a set of fine-grained case studies, *TCE* will enable current theories of transcultural communication to be nuanced and revised from a broader historical perspective.

The paper will outline the project's aims, corpus, and methodology, and its implications both for editorial practice and for an understanding of *transcultural* communication in the

region. Examples from Dutch- and French-language texts will illustrate different aspects of exchange across communities: linguistic, stylistic, thematic, and commercial.

6. J. Sterckx (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland)

[English]

The changed perception of the troublesome relation between the Flemish and French-speaking communities in Belgium

In a period of thirty years, Belgium has evolved from a unitary to a federal state with three official languages, consisting of three Regions and three Communities, six Parliaments and six Governments. This long-lasting and continuous state reform process is characterized by numerous conflicts between the linguistic communities and political negotiations which attempted to keep the balance between the Dutch-speaking and French-speaking populations. In the second half of the twentieth century, the conflict between the linguistic communities and their relation with the bilingual capital, Brussels, has received extensive political attention, has been disputed in a very hostile atmosphere, caused major electoral shifts, created completely new political parties, has been accompanied by all forms of protest, caused numerous and sometimes dramatic crises during negotiation processes and triggered the fall of several governments.

After the June 2007 elections, 194 days passed until a federal government was formed and a coalition agreement was drafted. The main subject for debate between the winning Flemish and Francophone parties, which were supposed to form a joint government, was the reform of the Belgian state structure and the federal institutions. While Flemish representatives were striving for more autonomy for the Regions and Communities, the French-speaking politicians did not want to change the existing state structure. This period was characterized by ominous reporting in the domestic and international news media, in which the future of Belgium as a nation state was continually questioned. Furthermore, the domestic and international public opinion was pessimistic about the country's prospects. However, the crisis period between the

June 2007 elections and the 2008 government formation is definitely not a unique event in the Belgian post-war history, a viewpoint also claimed by Huyse (2009).

This paper will compare the different post-war crises between the linguistic communities with the 2007-2008 period, without determining the exact end date of the current deadlock. The author will treat the *Koningskwestie*, the controversy over the role of King Leopold III during World War II and his post-war position, and the amnesty and retaliation towards the actions of civilians during the German occupation, all causing conflicts between the linguistic communities. In the fifties and sixties differences of opinion between the linguistic communities had a great impact on the mass protests against educational and economic government policies. In 1968, the scission of the KUL (Catholic University of Louvain), in a Dutch-speaking and Francophone university, turned out to be the boost for the federalization of the Belgian state, a process which is still in the works today.

In this essay the author intends to illustrate that Belgium has been confronted continuously with frictions between the linguistic communities and that the most recent crisis may not be perceived as a once-only phenomenon, although this perception exists among the majority of the population and in the media. To what extent can the current deadlock be considered to be dangerous for the future of the country? Which similarities and differences are to be found between the current crisis and past frictions?

[Nederlands]

Jo Sterckx (Vakgroep Nederlandse en Zuid-Afrikaanse Studies – Adam Mickiewicz Universiteit Poznań, Polen)

De veranderde perceptie van de troebele relatie tussen de Vlaamse en Franstalige gemeenschap in België

In een tijdspanne van dertig jaar is België geëvolueerd van een unitaire naar een federale staat, bestaande uit drie Gewesten en drie Gemeenschappen, zes parlementen en zes regeringen en telt het drie officiële talen. Tijdens dit langdurige en continue proces van staats Hervorming kende het land verschillende communautaire conflicten

en politieke onderhandelingen die het evenwicht tussen de Vlaamse en Franstalige gemeenschap trachtten te bewaren. De verhouding tussen de taalgemeenschappen en hun relaties met de tweetalige hoofdstad, Brussel, kreeg in de tweede helft van de twintigste eeuw buitengewoon veel politieke aandacht, werd in een zeer vijandige sfeer uitgestreden, gaf aanleiding tot grote electorale verschuivingen, creëerde geheel nieuwe partijen, werd begeleid door alle mogelijke vormen van demonstraties, veroorzaakte talrijke soms dramatische crisismomenten in het onderhandelingsproces en deed ettelijke regeringen vallen.

Na de federale verkiezingen in juni 2007 nam de vorming van een federale regering en de opstelling van een regeerakkoord 194 dagen in beslag. Het grootste twistpunt tussen de winnende Vlaamse en Franstalige politieke partijen, die verondersteld werden samen een regering te vormen, was de hervorming van de Belgische staatsstructuur en de federale staatsinstellingen, waarbij de Vlaamse vertegenwoordigers streefden naar meer autonomie voor de deelstaten en de Franstalige politici niet wilden raken aan de bestaande staatsstructuur. De periode werd gekenmerkt door een onheilspellende berichtgeving in de Belgische en buitenlandse pers, waarbij de toekomst van België als natiestaat voortdurend in vraag werd gesteld. Bovendien vertoonde de binnenlandse en internationale publieke opinie een pessimistische kijk op de toekomst van het land. De crisisperiode tussen de verkiezingen van juni 2007 en de regeringsvorming van 2008 is echter geen unicum in de Belgische naoorlogse geschiedenis, een stelling die eveneens wordt ingenomen door Professor Huyse (2009).

Deze paper zal een vergelijking maken van de naoorlogse communautaire crisissen met de crisisperiode in 2007 en 2008, zonder een exacte einddatum van de huidige impasse te willen bepalen. Er zal onder meer aandacht besteed worden aan de Koningskwestie en de amnestie en repressie jegens de houding van de burgers tijdens de Duitse bezetting, die voor scherpe communautaire tegenstellingen zorgden. Tijdens de jaren vijftig en zestig werden massaprotesten tegen het onderwijs- en economische overheidsbeleid gekenschetst door een sterk geladen communautaire dimensie. In 1968 bracht de splitsing van de Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in een Nederlandstalige en een Franstalige universiteit de communautaire tegenstellingen in een stroomversnelling en bleek uiteindelijk het duwtje in de rug te zijn voor de start van de federalisering van de Belgische staat, een proces waaraan vandaag nog altijd gesleuteld wordt.

De auteur tracht via deze verhandeling te verduidelijken dat België voortdurend geconfronteerd is geweest met tegenstellingen tussen de Nederlandstalige en Franstalige gemeenschappen en dat de meest recente crisis niet als een eenmalig fenomeen mag aanzien worden, alhoewel deze perceptie bij de meerderheid van de bevolking en de media leeft. In welke mate kan de huidige impasse als gevaarlijk voor de toekomst van het land beschouwd worden? Welke gelijkenissen en verschillen vertoont de huidige crisis met communautaire strubbelingen uit het verleden?

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