

HUYGENS ON TRANSLATION

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The tercentenary of the death of Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687) presents a convenient occasion to trace the views held by this versatile and multilingual writer on the subject of translation. A first inventory of Huygens' pronouncements on the matter is all that will be attempted here. The choice of Huygens is not dictated by commemorative considerations alone. Both the contemporary appreciation of his work as a translator – notably of John Donne – and the fact that, as in Vondel's case, some of Huygens' comments on translation are echoed and occasionally challenged by other translators, indicate that his approach to the subject is sufficiently central to be treated as a point of reference.

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Huygens' extraordinary gifts as a linguist are well known, as is the fact that he began to write poems in Latin at the age of 11 and in French at 16, two years before he tried his hand at Dutch verse. It has been calculated that of the more than 75,000 lines of verse in Worp's edition of Huygens' Collected Poems, 64.3% are in Dutch, 26.4% in Latin and 8.7% in French, with Italian, Greek, German and Spanish making up the remaining 0.6% (Van Seggelen 1987:72). His skill as a multilingual versifier can be breathtaking: in one of his more playful polyglot moods he presents his friend Jacob van der Burgh with an "Olla podrida" poem, dated 11 March 1625, with lines in Dutch, Latin, Greek, Italian, French, Spanish, German and English (Ged. II: 111-13).¹ His voluminous correspondence, too, contains letters in half a dozen languages and shifts effortlessly from one language into another, sometimes within one and the same letter. Although as a reader Huygens would seem to have had less need of translations than virtually anyone else in seventeenth-century Holland, his personal library is known to have held a variety of translations, among them two Dutch versions of Virgil (Vondel's prose translation of 1646 and Westerbaen's *Aeneid* of 1662), Martial's epigrams in English, and Vitruvius, Catullus and Tibullus in French (Van Gemert 1973: 320).

As an active translator Huygens displays a similar versatility across languages, not only in the number of languages from which he translates - Latin, French, Italian, Spanish and English among them - but also in the range of languages into which he renders both his own and other people's work. If, as a translator, he is perhaps best remembered today for his Dutch versions of a handful of John Donne's poems (1630 and 1633) and some fragments from Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido* (1623), it may be worth recalling that his Collected Poems also contain such diverse and sometimes virtuoso items as a 200-page collection of proverbs translated from the Spanish, a madrigal by Guarini rendered twice into Dutch and twice into French over several decades (in 1624, 1654, 1657 and 1686, probably done from memory on all four occasions; cf. Verkuyll 1961: 317-18), and a sonnet by Petrarch translated into Dutch, French and Latin in the space of five days in February 1664 (Ged. VII: 30-31; Angelini 1974). Translations into languages other than Dutch are not uncommon. In 1621, for instance, he translates a Latin ode by Horace and some Dutch stanzas by Starter into French (Ged. I: 209-10; Smit 1980: 90), and in 1653 he renders some English prose passages by Francis Quarles into Latin verse - which Jacob Westerbaen will subsequently translate into Dutch (Van Gemert 1973: 325; cf. Bw. V: 172-176).

As could be expected, given the nature of his talents and the type of education he received, Huygens' earliest poetic efforts are steeped in translation. His first French poem, in 1612, is a version of a Latin epitaph (Ged. I: 41), and his first Dutch verses closely translate a passage from Du Bartas' biblical epic *La Première Semaine* - lines modelled in turn on the Latin of Horace (Leerintveld 1987: 174). Decades later he will introduce Book XVII, 'Langdicht en Vertaelingen,' of his *Korenbloemen* (1658) with a quotation from the Younger Pliny, stressing the formative value of translation for the student and aspiring writer.² The oldest Dutch poem that he deems worthy of inclusion in his first published collection, *Otia* (1625), is a rhyming version of Psalm 114, dated 20 April 1619 (Strengholt 1987: 255). The Latin ode which he writes about the theological disputes in Holland in 1617 is soon followed by his own translation of it into Dutch (Ged. I: 103-07). Self-translations of this kind will spring up a number of times during his long career. As early as 1614 he produces a French epithalamium which he then renders into Dutch (ibid.: 60-68). When in 1644 Vondel publishes a Dutch translation of one of Huygens' Latin funerary poems of 1641 on the execution of Sir Thomas Wentworth, Huygens promptly comes up with his own Dutch version of it to demonstrate precisely what it is he finds objectionable in Vondel's rather more rhetorical verse (Ged. III: 162; IV: 6-7; Damsteegt 1987). And as late as 1670 he renders into Dutch the long Latin poem he had written for Anna Maria van Schurman shortly before (Ged. VII: 298-300,

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As far as Huygens' comments on translation are concerned, in some cases they amount to no more than polite restatements of familiar points and positions in the Renaissance discourse on the subject (Hermans 1985a).

His laudatory poems on other translators essentially rehearse two well-worn topoi of praise. The first of these complimentary verses (October 1621; Ged. I: 213-14), on the translation of Du Bartas' *Première Sepmaine* by Wessel van Boetselaer, lord of Asperen, stresses the practical usefulness of translation, which renders a service to those who are unable to read the foreign language. The metaphor Huygens uses is a spatial one: we no longer need to go and visit Du Bartas on his home ground ("Loopt niet so willigh meer / Besoecken op syn erff den franschen Lelij-Heer") for the translator has shown us a shorter route ("een naerder padt"), and "des Werelts baeckermatt" - the Garden of Eden, presumably, since the poem describes the first week of Creation - may now be seen in Asperen. The poem of 1637 in praise of Volker van Oosterwyck's translation of a book by Joseph Hall (1659) makes the same point: why take the difficult road to the source text when the translation provides direct access to it (Ged. VI: 223).

The three poems commending the work of other translators in the 1660s - two for Westerbaen's Virgil (1662) and one for Thaddeus de Landman's translation of François Turretini (1666) - fall in with another convention of the laudatory genre in matters of translation, claiming equal qualitative status and merit for the translator and the original author. Of Westerbaen's first six books of the *Aeneid* it is said that if Virgil could read this version, he would want to translate it back into Latin, and "Wat een' Virgilius, denckt leser, had men dan!" (Ged. VI: 288). In the case of Landman's translation the topos of equivalent merit is stated in terms of the reader owing equal thanks to the translator and the foreign writer (Ged. VII: 96). This type of emphatic praise, placing author and translator on an equal footing, is also used occasionally in the correspondence between Huygens and his friends, as in Casper Barlaeus' letter of 1634 congratulating Huygens on his versions of Donne, of which Barlaeus says that "you have translated so well that they seem to be your own creations" ("Et tanta tu felicitate transtulisti, ut videantur apud te nata," Bw I: 452). In one instance praise of this kind is voiced outside the context of polite compliment, when Huygens declares in a letter of 30 December 1660 to Westerbaen that the English translation of "El Picaro" (i.e. Mateo Alemán's picaresque novel *Guzmán de Alfarache*) was "so elegant, so well attuned to the time, language, country and customs [of the translator] that anyone reading both of them would find it hard to decide which one was the translator".³

Among the conventional images and metaphors which Huygens employs elsewhere in his pronouncements on translation - in prefaces, poems and letters - there is one, the characterization of translations as 'shadows', which he elaborates in some detail; it will be discussed separately. Of the other images, some emphasize the secondary status of translations, as "dreams re-dreamt" ("overdroomde dromen", 1654; Ged. V: 122) or, with a clearer reference to the derived nature of the translated text, as "borrowed joy" ("een' geleende vreughd", 1650; Ged. IV: 206). Most, however, focus on the notion that, in essence, translation is able to convey the substance of the original message while changing only its outward form, even though as a rule the new form is regarded as inferior to that of the original. This is generally the import of the description of a translated poem or poet as wearing a "Nederlandsch kleedsel" (1634; Bw. I: 446) and as being "een oud lijf met een nieuwe huijd" (1654; Ged. V:122). The poem of 10 March 1654 on his Donne translations revolves around a series of such images, stressing the difference in quality between the substance that is being transmitted and the new form in which this is done by contrasting the value of the treasured 'inside' with the worthlessness or at least unimportance of the vessel containing it: the "mergh en pit" can be reached through "mijn' schraele schellen", it is not the skin and bones that matter but the "kostelicke ziel" within, not the casket but the jewels in it ("En wie dan lett op die juweelen / Maeckt weinigh wercks meer van de kas"), and in conclusion: "Past op de kern, niet op de schellen./ Dat's all dat ick te seggen had" (Ged. V: 122-23). When a few years later Huygens refers to his efforts to translate Donne as merely "stammering after" the great man ("soo grooten Man nagestamert te hebben", Ged. VI: 338), the implication of qualitative inferiority is clear enough, as it is also in the short poem 'Vertalingh' of 1662, where he presents the more striking image of a translation as the reverse side of a beautiful tapestry (Ged. VII: 8) - another image familiar to Renaissance translators (Hermans 1985a: 114-15).

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Huygens' more extensive and more personal observations on various aspects of translation stretch from the early 1620s into the 1660s. The most important texts are the following: the two versions of the 'Voor-maning' preceding 'Yet overgesetts' (1623/25), the translation in question being the Pastor Fido fragments from Guarini (Ged. II: 284-85); the

poem of 1633 to Tesselschade, accompanying the translations from Donne (Ged. II: 267-68); the two poems 'Aenden Leser' and 'Aen Ioff.^w Luchtenburgh...' of 1650 and 1654, respectively (Ged. IV: 206-07 and V: 122-23), to which may be added the prose prefaces to the translations from Donne and the Spanish proverbs as first published in *Korenbloemen* of 1658 (Ged. VI: 337-39); and finally the various references to translation in the correspondence with Westerbaen in the 1650s and '60s (Bw V: 172-76, 345-48; V: 183).

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The 'Voor-maning' to the fragments from Guarini translated in 1623, whether in its unpublished longer version (dated 9 March 1625) or in the shorter published one, is a statement of considerable significance. Its tenor may be more readily grasped, however, if we consider it in the context of Huygens' practice as a translator until then.

There is little doubt that the formal demands which Huygens imposes on his translations of Du Bartas (1614) and Guarini are unusually strict, and strongly source-oriented. As P.E.L. Verkuyl has demonstrated with reference to the *Pastor Fido* passages, Huygens' version is formally virtually identical with the Italian text, down to the number of syllables per line and the rhyme scheme - a translation principle Verkuyl regards as exceptional (1971: 479-81). However, Huygens had attempted a similar type of wholesale transposition almost ten years before, when in 1614 he translated some fragments from the *Première Sepmaine* of Du Bartas. It has recently been shown that here too Huygens had opted for retaining the formal structure of the original, even if this forced him into metrical irregularities in the Dutch verses (Leerintveld 1987; Streekstra 1987: 26). Huygens never published his Du Bartas fragments. L. Strengholt (1987: 255-56) has surmised that they were rejected as a result of the much stricter norms concerning metrical regularity which Huygens proclaims from about 1623 onwards. Following the *Pastor Fido* experiment he may well have come to recognize the impossibility of achieving, within the limits of 'faithful' translation as he saw it, a smooth and technically faultless target text modelled entirely on the source text's formal structure. At any rate, in a note dated 8 January (or June) 1625 attached to his French translation made four years earlier of an Ode by Horace (II, 10), he criticizes translations which in order to preserve a foreign metre would go so far as to violate the natural stress pattern of the target language - admitting in the same breath that in the Ode in question he fell into precisely this error.⁴ The translations of Donne's poems done around 1630 certainly abandon the exclusively source-oriented formal principle in favour of greater liberty in terms of number of lines, metrical patterns and rhyme schemes in the target text (Streekstra 1987: 30-35).

The 'Voor-maning' accompanying the translations from Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, then, is still largely in line with Huygens' translational principle, at that time, of striving for a high degree of formal similarity between original and translation. The unpublished version of the 'Voor-maning' begins on a blunt and paradoxical note: "Men kent mij voor een stout wederspreker van alle Oversettingen" - a blanket condemnation which he even extends, with perhaps a touch of irony, to those translations that are of evident practical value ("Selfs van de ghene die ick bekenne dat nutticheits halven niet en behoren wedersproken te worden"). The latter point, a reference to the social function of translations as instruments in the dissemination of knowledge, is taken up again a little later when he observes that "de all-begeerlickeid deser tijden" has apparently created such a demand for translations that they can no longer be resisted anyway. (Incidentally: we do not really know who is meant by "men" in "Men kent mij voor een stout wederspreker...", and why Huygens should assume that they know him to be skeptical of translations.)

Huygens' skepticism with regard to translation, however, stems from the impossibility, as he sees it, of doing justice both to "de waerheit" of the source text and to "die eigene aengenaemheid, oft beter, die aengename eigenschapp vanden voor-seggers woorden". The only way to preserve this latter feature of the original's expression is by means of paraphrases ("ten zij bij omspraken"), but since in Huygens's view they tend to lead the translator down "treacherous byways" ("bedrieghelicke bywegen") and thus away from the original's meaning ("de waerheit"), he gives as his opinion that it may ultimately be preferable to put up with the "honest rawness" ("oprechte rouwicheid") of literal translation. It is this fundamental dilemma between 'free' and 'literal' translation which is stated, rather more succinctly and memorably, in the opening sentence of the published version of the 'Voor-maning':

Neemtmen de ruymte in 't Oversetten, soo kan de waerheit niet vrij van geweld gaen: Staetmen scherp op de woorden, soo verdwijnt de geest vande uytspraeck. (Ged. I: 284-85)

When the 'Voor-maning' was reprinted in *Korenbloemen* in 1658, it was followed by a Latin quotation from St Jerome's preface to his translation of the Chronicles of Eusebius, a preface from which Jerome himself subsequently quoted in his famous Letter to Pammachius ('De optimo genere interpretandi'). The last sentence of the quotation from Jerome as

given in *Korenbloemen* is very similar to the opening of the 'Voor-maning':

Si ad verbum interpretor, absurde resonat, si ob necessitatem aliquid in ordine & in sermone mutavero, ab interpretis videbor officio recessisse. [If I translate word for word, the result sounds absurd; if of necessity I change anything in the order of words and the manner of expression, I will seem to have renounced the duty of a translator] (Huygens ed. 1892: 208)

Whether Huygens already knew of Jerome's comments on translation in 1623, remains unclear.

Both versions of the 'Voor-maning' then go on to advocate a rhymeless rendering of the *Pastor Fido* passages as the least unsatisfactory solution to the translator's problem. The unpublished text mentions explicitly that this method of translating poetry is new ("dese te voren ongebruyckte maniere van doen") and justifies the experiment with reference to two undesirable alternatives: the existing French prose version of the play is described as absurd,⁵ and the recent translation in rhyming verse, by another Frenchman, as "mediocre" and "untrue" to the original, i.e. straying too far from the original words. However, the rhymeless verse of the Italians ("Het Rijmeloos ongebonden dicht vande Italianen"), as Guarini often uses it in the *Pastor Fido*, has suggested the possibility of a more acceptable middle course, a form of poetic translation which, as the published version of the 'Voor-maning' has it, "den minsten afbreuck van aerd ende van waerheid lijden [sou]", or, in the unpublished text, "in 'vertalen van Gedichten soo de geesticheid vande uytspake naertracht, dat sij sich minst vande waerheid af geeft". It is then the hope of being able to steer such a middle course between too much ungainly literalism and too much unwarranted invention which, he says, has finally overcome his "bitsen vooroordeel" against translation. Huygens seals the argument with the observation that if the source text permits itself a certain freedom in its verse form, the translation may avail itself of the same liberty ("... dewijl sich die stercke Pennen die ruymte geven, wat reden dwingt ons tot scherperen dwang?").

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It may well be rash to assume, on the basis of the foregoing, that Huygens is recommending the use of unrhymed verse as a vehicle for the translation of poetry in general. Even though both versions of the 'Voor-maning' speak of translation, viz. poetic translation, in general terms ("in geval van vertalinge", "in gevalle van Oversettingen", "in 'vertalen van Gedichten"), Huygens' practice is different, and at least the unpublished text of the 'Voor-maning' seems to take back with one hand what it has just given with the other, creating the impression that in fact Huygens is thinking primarily of unrhymed Dutch verse as the translational equivalent of unrhymed Italian verse. In those parts of the *Pastor Fido*, he observes, where Guarini did use rhyme, whether by design or accident ("daer ick merckte den Auteur sulx oft ernst geweest te hebben oft onverhoedts ontvallen te zijn"), the Dutch rendering has followed its model in every respect ("hebbe ick mij ... aen alle de selve maten en weerslagen verplicht"). Given the tenor of Huygens' argumentation so far, it is only natural that he should sound more apologetic about the degree of 'faithfulness' he managed to attain in these rhyming passages, with their additional formal constraints, even though he stresses that he worked as hard on them as Guarini must have done on the originals ("... die hij met soo veel moeytens niet ontworpen en heeft, oft sij en hebbens bijnaer wel soo veel in 'taerbooten gekost, daer ick gaern bekenne de waerheit somtijds vrij wat krachts geleden te hebben, emmers vrij wat vercierings, so 'tgeen verkleiningh heeten moet").

For our understanding of Huygens' position regarding poetic translation, therefore, it is important to recognize that his advocacy of rhymeless verse as a suitable vehicle is definitely problematical. The unpublished text of the 'Voor-maning' is oddly inconsistent in this respect, nowhere more so than when Huygens says, with reference to the rhymed passages in the *Pastor Fido*, that he has retained not only those rhymes which were intentionally placed - and thus, one imagines, functional - but also those that, as he puts it, appear purely accidental ("den Auteur ... onverhoedts ontvallen"). Moreover, insofar as both versions of the 'Voor-maning' recommend the use of rhymeless verse for the translation of poetry generally, Huygens' practice conforms with this principle only in those passages which already were without rhyme in the original. In other words, although Huygens' proposal to employ unrhymed verse for poetic translation is undoubtedly new when we compare it with the conventional reliance on locally accepted or canonized verse forms - be it the accentuated verse of the 16th-century Rhetoricians or the decasyllables and alexandrines of the more modern poets - his own demonstration of the new method is partial at best. It might even be argued that, in spite of what Huygens is preaching in theory, what he is advocating through his practice is not a middle course between crude literalism and impermissible embellishment but a strongly source-oriented principle that would translate rhyme with rhyme and absence of rhyme with absence of rhyme. In that sense also his *Pastor Fido* translations are perfectly in harmony with the strict formal method adopted ten years earlier for the fragments from Du Bartas. In any case, if it really was Huygens'

intention in the 'Voor-maning' to present a novel approach to the translation of poetry, the experiment was short-lived. To my knowledge, he made no attempt, either in those years or later, to translate rhyming verse into unrhymed lines.

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Whatever the case may be, Huygens' 'Voor-maning' as first published in *Otia* in 1625 did not go unnoticed, not even unchallenged. When Hendrik Bruno published his translation of Virgil's *Eclogues* in 1658, he quoted the uncompromising opening sentence of the 'Voor-maning' in his preface ('Aen den bescheydenen Leser', dated 1653), together with an extract from Vondel's preface to the 1646 prose translation of Virgil's complete work (Bruno 1658: 4); both statements were obviously intended to underline the difficulty of translation, and of poetic translation in particular.⁶ When a year later Bruno published assorted translations from Ovid and Horace, he inserted four poems at the back of the little 34-page book, the last one of which is a sonnet stating, in essence, that he is proud to follow Huygens' example as set out in the 'Voor-maning' more than thirty years before; but although Bruno refers to Huygens' use of unrhymed verse in the *Pastor Fido* renditions, his own bilingual text has Dutch alexandrines facing the Latin lines.⁷

By far the most interesting response to the 'Voor-maning', however, appeared in 1655, in Jacob Westerbaen's extensive preface ('Voor-reden') to his translations of the Psalms. Westerbaen here discusses and criticizes a sizeable number of Dutch Psalm translations, including two successive versions by Johan de Brune. The first of these, from 1644, is a word-for-word rendering, in verse but unrhymed and lacking any discernible rhythm or metre, according to Westerbaen (1655: n.p.). De Brune's reworking of the translation in 1650 is metrical but still without rhyme. Now this manner of translating, Westerbaen continues, is what Huygens advocated in his 'Voor-maning', from which indeed he quotes. Westerbaen then declares that he too once put the rhymeless method to the test in a translation of a substantial part of the *Pastor Fido*, and although he found it relatively easy to do,⁸ he was unhappy with the result because, he says, a rendering that clings to the original's words tends to sacrifice "den geest van den uyt spraek, ende wat is doch een gedicht daer geen geest in is?" (*ibid.*). As Westerbaen elaborates his point, he advances several more arguments to counter Huygens case for rhymeless verse. A certain liberty, he claims, is possible in translation without violating the original meaning; rhyme is an integral part of Dutch poetry and contributes to its pleasing effect; and since word-for-word transpositions go against the grain of the language and its idiomatic structure, the translator's task is to grasp the original's sense and express it in the target language in the most natural and appropriate way.⁹

It is evident that Westerbaen does not regard Huygens' 'Voor-maning' as an apologia for a viable middle course between literalism and liberty in translation, but as an attempt to reconcile literalism with a poetic form of sorts. The approach he favours is markedly more free and more target-oriented in its wish to give due consideration to the nature of the receptor language and in its desire to make the translated text conform to the poetic conventions of the target literature.

8

The 'Voor-maning', both in its unpublished and in its published version, ends with an image that leaves no doubt as to Huygens' view of the nature of translation:

Want, sonder ons te vleyen, zijn de vertalingen van fraeye Schriften veel meer als schaduwen van schoone lichamen? ende zijn die niet menighmael de ongelijkste, de slimste, de mismaeckste? (Ged. I: 285)

The image itself goes back a long way. It already occurs in Quintilian's discussion of imitation in the *Institutio Oratoria*,¹⁰ and becomes a stock metaphor among Renaissance translators to suggest both the derivative and the qualitatively inferior status of the translated work vis-a`-vis its original. The image must have appealed to Huygens, for in subsequent years he returns to it several times. In a letter dated 17 August 1630 he offers two of his Donne translations to Hooft, "slaende dese dichter [i.e. Donne] ganschelick op U.E. manieren van invall ende uyt spraek," adding that these verse renderings are like "schaduwen van schoone lichamen, bij - dat ergher is - belemmerden sonneschijn" (Bw. I: 289) - the latter a reference to his many professional duties. But it is in the first part of the poem of 1633 'Aen Ioff.^w Tesselschade Crombalch met mijne vertalingen uyt het Engelsche dichten van D^f. Donne' that he elaborates the image into an elegant and carefully balanced characterization of the relation between the translated and the original poem. Today it is perhaps Huygens' best-known statement on translation. The relevant stanzas are worth quoting:

'T vertaelde scheelt soo veel van 't onvertaelde dicht,
Als lijf en schaduwen: en schaduwen zijn nachten.
Maer uw' bescheidenheit en maghse niet verachten;
Tzijn edel' Iofferen, 'tzijn dochteren van 'tlicht.

En schaduwen zijn scheef, als 'taensicht inde Maen:
Soo dese dichten oock: maer, magh ick 'tselver seggen,
Gelyck aen schaduwen die lamm ter aerde leggen,
Men sieter noch wat trecks van 'trechte wesen aen.

En schaduwen zijn swart en duijster in te sien:
Soo dese dichten oock: Maer 'tzijn gemeene ooghen
Die door het swacke swart van schad'wen niet en moghen:
Wat schaduw soud' den dagh aen Tessels oogh verbien?

En schaduwen zijn koel, en op haer heetste lauw:
Soo dese dichten oock: maer 'tkoel en is maer korst-koelt';
'Tvier schuyt'er in, gelijk't in 's minnaers koele borst woelt,
En peper is niet heet voor datme'r 'tvier uyt knauw'.

En schaduwen zijn, niet; dat's droomen bij den dagh:
Soo dese dichten oock: maer 'tzijn gelijfde Nietten:
En slaet ghij 'tvoetsel gae daer uijt mijn' droomen schieten,
'K hadd pitt en mergh geslockt eer ickse droomd' en sagh. (Ged. II: 267-68)

Each stanza begins by admitting the inferior quality of the translated work, but each time the charge is countered by a modest reevaluation. Translations, as shadows, are like the night, yet they owe their existence to light; they distort their model, but still retain something of it; they are obscure and hard to penetrate, yet a good reader can see through them; they appear to lack warmth, but their warmth is within; they are nothings, daydreams, yet they derive from reality. Insofar as Huygens does sound a positive note about translation, it is a cautious one, and in a minor key. The implication is always that whatever merit the translated text may possess is due to the original, which remains visible through the translation. As a translator critical of his own practice and skeptical of the very possibility of translating anything adequately, Huygens appears to have been pleased with his finely tuned judgement. His letter of 19 August 1642 to J.A. Bannius speaks of the poem of 1633 as (in Worp's paraphrase) "een kleine voorrede ... waarover ik, o wonder, nog nooit berouw heb gehad" (Bw. III: 335).

The image of translations as shadows occurs yet again in the poem 'Aenden Leser', dated 18 January 1650, and used to preface the epigrams 'Uyt Engelsch OnDicht' in Korenbloemen (Ged. IV: 206-07). The echoes from the poem for Tesselschade are unmistakable: the translations he is presenting are "a borrowed joy" ("een' geleende vreughd"), but they are borrowed from noble spirits ("dit's een leen van edel' menschen geesten"); and even if his versions are "darker" than their models, "noch is mij danck te weten / Dat ick mijn' schaduwen haer' luyster hebb geleent." The lines which follow, however, highlight another practical consideration in favour of translation. A 'dark' rendering may obscure ("decken") the original, but for those who are dazzled by bright sunlight this shade is beneficial:

Of, dunckt u 'tHollandsch swart het Engelsch witt te decken,
Noch komt u 'tswart te baet. 'Khebb lamper-doeck sien trecken
Voor ooghen die 'tgeweld van somer-sonne-schijn
Niet uijt en konden staen.

This image constitutes a somewhat paradoxical variant of those vindications of translation which speak in terms of opening doors, providing access, making available what was hidden or locked away in foreign tongues, but Huygens makes his point by means of a cleverly inverted metaphor. A few lines further on, the pun on "verlichten" as both 'alleviate' and 'illuminate' fully reveals the beneficial aspect of these 'dark' translations:

... verdonck'ren is verlichten,

Daer 'toogh bij werdt verlicht, en met gemack door siet.

After the poem 'Aenden Leser' of 1650 Huygens writes another two poems - apart from laudatory verses - on the subject of translation ('Aen Ioff.^w Luchtenburgh...', 10 March 1654, Ged. VI: 122-23; and the short 'Vertalingh', 4 January 1662, Ged. VII: 8), but as they play upon the conventional metaphors mentioned in section 3 above (the container and its valuable contents, the reverse side of a tapestry), they need not be discussed again.

9

In the course of the 1650s, several new elements can be seen to enter into Huygens' conception of translation. One notion, which bears on his views on translation into Dutch in particular, first surfaces much earlier, in his autobiography, written in Latin between 1629 and 1631. Here Huygens claims that for all general purposes, and in spite of idiomatic differences, all languages are in principle equally resourceful.¹¹ Specific new concepts and objects, though, may call for an appropriate term to be imported from another language, and by way of illustration he refers to Seneca's reliance on Greek for certain philosophical terms that needed to be coined in Latin. The Dutch language, he goes on, now faces the same problem, even though in general there is no reason to complain about its limitations, especially since Dutch is comparable to Greek in its rich capacity to form compound words (Huygens ed. 1946: 44-45).

Some of these points come up again in the 1650s, with Huygens' translations from Donne providing the immediate context. In a Latin letter to Huygens, dated 14 December 1653, Westerbaen recalls a little anecdote Huygens must have told him at one time or another about "a certain English poet" who King James had apparently claimed was untranslatable; Westerbaen wants to know that poet's name.¹² The reference, of course, is to John Donne. This becomes evident from the short prose preface 'Tot den Leser' which, together with the two poems of 1633 and 1654, precedes the Donne translations in Book XVII of *Korenbloemen*. Here Huygens repeats the story he once told Westerbaen (though attributing it to Charles I rather than James I), adding that, had the King known "the rich properties of our Tongue," he would not have been so rash about Donne's untranslatability, for Dutch can express virtually anything "easily and gracefully".¹³ Yet English, he admits, presents particular difficulties for the translator into Dutch, because the Dutch language resists the intrusion of foreign loanwords, whereas English adopts them without any problem:

... want haer Taele [i.e. English] is alle Taelen, en als 't haer belieft, Griecsch en Latijn zijn plat Engelsch. Waer tegen dewijl wy niet uytheemsch onder ons en gedoogen, staet te dencken, hoe wy ons beset vinden, wanneer wy in suyer Duyts hebben uyt te spreken Ecstasis, Atomi, Influentiae, Legatum, Alloy, ende diergelijcke. (Ged. VI: 338)

Huygens regrets the effect of this form of purism, which he regards as restrictive ("Houdt ons vry van sulcke benautheden, die rest en kost ons geen handverdray"), but as it has become a general linguistic norm, he feels obliged to respect it all the same ("Maer met sulcke benautheden heb ick hier moeten worstelen; daer op de Leser acht will' slaen"). The term "benautheden" suggests that he is viewing the Dutch language of his own day as a parallel case to Classical Latin, as he did in the autobiography. The corresponding Latin word 'angustiae' also crops up in a letter of 24 March 1653 to Westerbaen, where he speaks of his Latin translations from the English of Francis Quarles, saying that he has selected for translation "only those passages whose impact could not possibly be stifled by the limitations ["angustijs"] of Latin - which were a cause for complaint even in Rome."¹⁴

Apart from providing us with an impression of his view of English and Dutch and their differing degrees of receptivity to loanwords, Huygens' willingness to accept the purist constraints then governing Dutch usage in literature is also of interest as evidence of the considerable relaxation of his earlier, strongly source-oriented approach to translation. This more liberal attitude had first manifested itself in the translations from Donne (1630 and 1633), but the accompanying discourse on translation does not appear to catch up with the shift of emphasis until a number of years later. In the course of the 1650s and '60s, however, we can point to several instances.

10

In his letter of 24 March 1653 to Westerbaen, in which he mentions his Latin verse renderings of Francis Quarles' English prose (cf. above, Note 14), Huygens observes that, although there are many passages in the English text which he did not attempt, he has "left out few of the better ones, whose wit or charm can be satisfactorily conveyed in Latin words" ("Fateor multa superesse, quae non attigi; assero tamen pauca de melioribus ommissa, quorum aut acumen aut

gratia satis Latinis verbis explicari posset"; Bw. V: 172).

The same double criterion for selection - picking only those items which he thinks are good in themselves and will translate well - is also invoked in the prose preface to the translations of Spanish proverbs ('Spaensche Wysheit, Vertaelde Spreekwoorden') which make up Book XVIII of *Korenbloemen*:

Een' goede handvol Spaensche Spreekwoorden heb ick uyt groeter hoop gelesen; naerse my in haer' Tael bevielen, ende inde mijne bevallijck schenen uytgesproken te kunnen werden. Daer een van beide gebrack, sagh ick geen voordeel te doen. (Ged. VI: 339)

As these are proverbs and thus intended for common use, he has decided to put them to rhyme, using full rhyme where the Spanish had only assonance ("sekeren wilden byklanck"); metre is thrown in as an extra mnemonic device: "Emmers slot van geluyt is het oor aengenaem, en de Maet daer by de Memorie niet ondienstigh" (*ibid.*). If the imposition of metre and especially rhyme on the Dutch texts seems to run counter to the method proposed for poetic translation in the 'Voor-maning' of 1623/25, the reason is obviously that proverbs constitute a very different genre, and Huygens makes it clear that he is using rhyme to help the sayings he has selected gain popular acceptance: "Om voorts the uytgesifte soo veel gangbaerer te maecken, ende aenden man te helpen, heb ickse in Rijn gekleedt; gelijkmen Pillen verguldt, en bittere schellen in suycker backt" (*ibid.*). In other words, text type and intended function are relevant factors in determining the method of translation and the shape of the target text. Nevertheless, an echo from the 'Voor-maning' and its central concern for "de waerheit" can still be heard in Huygens' admission that the adoption of metre and rhyme has resulted, inevitably, in certain liberties regarding source text content: "Staende dan soo nauw op de waerheit als my doenlick is geweest, heb icker nochtans wat aen moeten klampen, daer ick al te korte woorden gevonden hebbe, ende die ongepaert ende ongerijmt" (*ibid.*).

11

Finally, it is in some letters to Westerbaen in 1660 and 1666 that Huygens sums up, and neatly delimits, his views on translation in this period. The letter of 30 December 1660 in which he praises the English translation of the Spanish picaresque novel *Guzmán de Alfarache* (cf. above, Section 3 and Note 3), contains advice to Westerbaen concerning the latter's rendering into Dutch of the comedies of Terence (Bw. V: 345- 47). Having urged Westerbaen to translate with a freer rein if he wants to do justice to the dramatic qualities of the Latin plays,¹⁵ he invokes the English translation of *Guzmán de Alfarache*, stressing its stylistic elegance ("tam concinne") and the way the translator has adapted the novel to its new environment ("tam ad aevum, linguam, patriam et mores suos"). He continues:

If the Englishman had set out to translate word for word ["κατα πόδα"], it is obvious that all those sparks of native charm would have collapsed into a heap of ashes. Of course, that writer was translating prose into prose, but I do not see why it could not be done equally well in verse, especially if someone as good as you would undertake the task. And I have no doubt that if you were to attempt it in a light-hearted manner, the result would please learned and unlearned people alike, and yourself as well.¹⁶

Given the earlier criticism of Huygens' 'Voor-maning' in the preface to his Psalm translations of 1655 and his statement, in the same preface, of how in his opinion a good translator ought to proceed (cf above, Section 7 and Note 9), it is hardly surprising that Westerbaen's reply, in a letter dated 2 January 1661, should contain an emphatic denial that he had been translating too literally, followed by an explicit restatement of his view that the idiomatic and figurative qualities of the original text should be replaced with words and expressions having equivalent force in the receptor language.¹⁷

In the end, the question of whether to translate as closely to the original words as possible or to attempt to recreate their stylistic charm and force by concentrating on the resources of the target language, remains unresolved. When, in a postscript to another Latin letter to Westerbaen, 12 March 1666, Huygens speaks of a "little poem" ("poematium") by Petrarch which he liked so much that he translated it into several languages, he gives both translation principles their due - and adds an intriguing final observation:

I translated this from the Italian word for word ["κατα πόδα"], as I usually do, as far as this can be done while retaining the elegance of the original expression. For I would not want to be brought down with the charge which a friend jokingly directed at d'Ablancourt, the celebrated French translator of Tacitus and other ancient writers, to this effect: your version, my lord, he said, is very much like the woman I love: very beautiful, for

sure, but unfaithful.¹⁸

Once again, as in the Latin texts of the two previous quotations, the Greek term "κατα πόδα," "on the heels [of the source text]," i.e. word-for-word, is contrasted with the concern for the "charm" and "elegance" of the original ("aut acumen, aut gratia," 1653; "illas elegantiae nativae flammulas," 1660; "salvâ dictionis elegantîâ", 1666). But whereas in the letter of 30 December 1660 Huygens implies that literalism and elegance in translation cannot be reconciled and that a translation will only be successful if it takes certain liberties, in the letter just quoted he opts once more for a stricter approach, yet leaving sufficient leeway to end up, ideally, with the best of both worlds.

It is hard to assess whether this renewed suspicion of the freer type of translation is a purely personal matter or has a further polemical edge to it. The latter possibility arises because the reference in the letter's concluding sentence is to Nicolas Perrot d'Ablancourt, the chief exponent and spokesman of the new school of 'free' translators in France, whose highly polished versions of the Classics had become the dominant mode of translation into French towards the middle of the seventeenth century. D'Ablancourt himself spent nearly a year in Leyden in 1634-35, and may have met Huygens there.¹⁹ In his letters to Conrart in later years Huygens occasionally inquires about him, but it remains impossible to determine how well informed he was about d'Ablancourt's attitude to translation and the impact of his work, or indeed whether Huygens' own emphasis on the need to safeguard the 'elegance' and 'charm' of a literary text in translation in the letters of 1653 and 1660 owes anything at all to the Frenchman's outspoken and influential views on the subject. In France, the 'free' translators had their critics, too, among them Pierre-Daniel Huet (*De interpretatione*, 1661) and Gilles Ménage. The well-known term 'belles infidèles' to designate the translations by d'Ablancourt and his followers was coined as a witty critical remark by Ménage, probably around 1654, to the effect that d'Ablancourt's versions reminded him of a woman he once loved "et qui était belle mais infidèle" (Horguelin 1981: 76; Zuber 1968: 202). It is this anecdote Huygens is referring to in his letter of 12 March 1666. His words "Pulcherrima nimirum, sed infida" ("very beautiful, for sure, but unfaithful") also happen to be the first occurrence of the term 'belles infidèles' outside France (Zuber 1968: 203).

Huygens, of course, retells the anecdote to make it clear that he is not prepared to adopt for himself the 'belle infidèle' approach to poetic translation. Looking back at his various pronouncements on the matter of translation in general, the refusal is not surprising. What remains less clear is whether he is merely citing a casual remark by way of illustration or consciously defining his own position with respect to the influential French school. That question, though, can only be fully answered when we know more about 17th-century conceptions of translation in the Low Countries and the extent to which developments abroad, such as the rise of the 'belles infidèles' in France, affected the Dutch translators of the period. It may seem a mere point of detail, but it is not. If we remember that even during Huygens' lifetime the men of Nil Volentibus Arduum began to impose the ideas of French Classicism on the Amsterdam theatre and that the 'belle infidèle' model was to dominate the history of literary translation in France and elsewhere for well over a hundred years, the wider issues raised by Huygens' reference to the famous witticism are worth exploring.

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NOTES

¹ The following abbreviations are used in this essay:

Ged.: *De gedichten van Constantijn Huygens...* Ed. J.A. Worp. 9 vols. Groningen, J.B. Wolters, 1892-1899.

Bw.: *De briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens (1608-1687)*. Ed. J.A. Worp. 6 vols. 's-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1911-1917.

² "Hoc genere exercitationis proprietates splendorque verborum, copia figurarum, vis explicandi, praeterea imitatione optimorum similia inveniendi facultas paratur. Simul quae legentem fefelissent, transferentem fugere non possunt: intelligentia ex hoc et iudicium acquiritur. Plin. Sec. Ep. l. 7" (Ged. VI: 337-38).

The quotation, from the letters of Pliny the Younger (Plinius Secundus), Book VII, Letter 9, to Fuscus Salinator, concerns translation from Greek into Latin and vice versa as a form of study: "This kind of exercise develops in one a precision and richness of vocabulary, a wide range of metaphor and power of exposition, and, moreover, imitation of the best models leads to a like aptitude for original composition. At the same time, any point which might have been overlooked by a reader cannot escape the eye of a translator. All this cultivates perception and critical sense" (Transl. Betty Radice; Pliny ed. 1972: 502).

³ "Nebulonem Hispanicum - cui libro titulus est El Picaro - Anglus quidam olim tam concinne, tam ad aevum, linguam, patriam et mores suos apposite transtulit, ut, qui utrumque legerit, vix decidat, uter alterius fuerit interpret" (Bw. V: 346). The reference is probably to James Mabbe's translation, *The Rogue, or the Life of Guzma'n de Alfarache*, first published in 1622 and often reprinted. Unless stated otherwise, all translations from the Latin are my own.

⁴ "Je me jouay un jour exprès sur les mesures de cette Ode, pour débattre l'usage commun de cette sorte de Vers; en laquelle tres mal, à mon aduis, s'oblige on à la Prosodie Latine, sans auoir esgard a` l'accent de la langue mesme Car ij a il apparence qu'à cause qu'en Latin l'Accent se gouuerne par la Quantité, on doibue aussij l'y attacher en François, Flamen, Italien, Angloiz, etc? Ces Langues ne sachant à parler d'autre quantité que de celle qui naist de la prononciation? ... Resteroit, à mon opinion, que quiconque auroit enuie de s'esgayer en ceste nouueauté estrangere, eust soing de satisfaire sur tout au Lecteur naturel de la langue, qui par mesme droict de pretension demande qu'en vers on la luy donne chantable, autant qu'intelligible en prose ... Confessant d'ailleurs qu'en l'Ode mesme que je viens de mettre par essaij, je trouve tout plein à me reprendre, ce seroit par trop presumer de la patience de mon lecteur, de vouloir donner à autruy la loij qui me rendist coupable deuant tous." (Ged. I: 209)

⁵ It is clear from the examples he then gives that Huygens is thinking of a crib so literal as to be thoroughly unidiomatic. The instances he cites, however, are Latin phrases (e.g. "Pedibus celer Achilles. Dea albas-habens-ulnas Iuno. Hunc vero. Hanc autem") modelled on Greek compounds and idioms taken from Homer. According to Verkuyl (1971: 115-16, 481), the only French prose translation of the *Pastor Fido* to which Huygens' comments can possibly refer is not at all of this type. The conclusion must be that either Huygens' judgement or his memory failed him on this occasion.

⁶ Having quoted Huygens and Vondel, Bruno goes on: "Te gheloooven dat dese reden-rijcke Mannen niet sonder reden spreecken, is niet meer als reden; Maer onredelijck was het, mijns oordeels, my over den heeckel te willen halen, om dat ick in dese gherijmde vertalinghe van de Harders-kouten den Poët niet alles, ofte niet soo wel ('t gheen beyde onmoghelijck is) in mijn Moeders tael doe seggen, als hy in de sijne gesejdt heeft" (Bruno 1658: 4). It is not clear to me exactly what kind of criticism, and by whom, Bruno is referring to.

⁷ The little-known poem by Bruno, on the last page of his *Ovidii Wapen-twist van Ajax en Ulysses...*, may be worth quoting in full:

Klinck-dicht.

Die d'Heer van Zuylichems Voor-maning' heeft gelesen,
Van 't geen hy rijmeloos eens over heeft geset,
By Ledigh-uyren tijdt, en op sijn kunst dan let,
Getuyght, dat Huygens kunst noyt en kan zijn vol-presen.

Laet hem Hoofd-ketter, en laet my de tweede wesen.
Ick volgh' mijn Oude Heer op d'oude-nieuwe voet;
't Zy men sijn voor-gangh nu wil keuren quaedt of goed,
'k Wil dichten na mijn sin, als ick houd' 't spoor van
desen.

Uyt *Pastor Fido heeft hy dit voor my bestaen;
Heeft 't ongerijmd' gedicht, yets ongerijmdts begaen?
Soo sal ick achter die Sons schaduw' veyligh schuylen.

Die hem we^er-staet, die staet te laet op, ofte vroegh;
En dien zy voor dit-mael, voor alle tijdt genoegh,
Dat ick bet-weters, dan hy is, houdt voor Nacht-uylen.

*Ziet des wel-gemelten Heers

⁸ "Dit dichten met rymeloose regelen is den Thoneel-stijl der Italianen, ende dese maniere in geval van vertaelinge seyt de Heer van Zuylichem (in zijne Vermaninge voor yets overgesets uyt Pastor fido aen het eynde sijner Ledige Vuren) den minsten afbreuck van aert ende waerheyd te doen. Ick heb het mede wel eer in een goed gedeelte van den selven Pastor besocht ende vond het licht dien sleur te volgen ende ick behoefde mijne nagelen niet veel te byten om sodaenigh rymeloos gedicht te vinden, dat met wat schicken en herschicken der woorden haest op sijn maet gebraght werdt, doch had mijne redenen die my sulx niet smaecten deen" (Westerbaen 1655: n.p.). This translation appears to have remained unpublished, and is presumably lost. Verkuyl's study (1971) of the *Pastor Fido* in Dutch, which also lists translations known only indirectly, makes no mention of it.

⁹ "Oock dunckt my datmen de ruymte wel wat nemen kan in yets over te setten sonder dat de waerheyd geweld lyde als mede, dat dit zang-werck niet en behoort te bestaen in een eenvoudige vertaeling op toon en maet gebracht sonder rymen (welck rymen nochtans de stijl van de Nederlantsche dicht- kunst is ende veel tot de bevalligheden van de gedichten aen de ooren geven kan) maer in een aerdige welgerymde Navolginge in onse taele van 't geene de Psalmist in de sijne op seeckere zanghen gestelt of door sijne Zangh-Meesters doen stellen heeft; Ende gelijk alle taelen haer eygenscapen van woorden en spreekken hebben, die hare kracht ende bevalligheden verliesen als sy in een andere (daer die ongebruyckelijck ende in onse taele als onduytisch sijn) van woord tot woord werden overgeset: So moet oock die geene, die sodaenige navolginge voorneemt, den sin en de meyninge van 'tgeen hy navolgen wil wel soecken te verstaen ende die verstaen hebbende so is het sijn werck den selven klaer ende cierlijck in sijne taele uyt te drucken door sodanighe woorden en manieren van spreekken als in deselve naturelijckste ende de gevoeghelijcxste na de stoffe sijn, ende moet sich niet al te superstitieuselijck ontsien het selve oock hier en daer door een paraphrase of wat breeder uytbreyinge of omschrijvinge te doen" (Westerbaen 1655: n.p.).

¹⁰ "Whatever is like another object must necessarily be inferior to the object of its imitation, just as the shadow is inferior to the substance [and] the portrait to the features it portrays" (Transl. H.E. Butler; Quintilian ed. 1922: 81).

¹¹ "Erkend moet worden, als men de talen vergelijkt, dat de een de ander in verschillend opzicht overtreft. Maar deze voorrang is wederkeerig. Ieder op zich zelf heeft iets bijzonders, waardoor zij boven de overige talen uitmunt. Dit beweert ik, dat er op aarde geen volk bestaat, dat lijdt onder de armoede van zijn taal, als men het den minderen man, het de kinderen, het de vrouwen vraagt. Met de geleterden of met de wijsgeeren is het anders gesteld; zij moeten zich met iets barbaarsch's behelpen." (Transl. A.H. Kan; Huygens ed. 1946: 44).

¹² "Dixisti mihi, si bene memini, de poeta quodam Anglicano, quem Jacobus Rex tanti faciebat, ut neminem alia linguâ exprimere posse putaret illius aut mentem, aut figmenta, aut stylum. Velim, si placet, scire hominis nomen..." (Bw V: 192).

¹³ "Een doorluchtigh Martelaer, die met sijn gesalfde Hooft drie Kroonen op 't Schavot neder heeft geleght, hoorende voor vele Iaren, dat ick de hand geslagen hadde aen 't vertaelen van de diepsinnigheden van sijnen D^r. Donne ... verklaerde niet te konnen gelooven, dat yemant sulx met eeren te wege soude brengen. Ick en schrijve my geensins toe dat hem dese Proef-stucken van dat gevoelen af geleit souden hebben: maer voor gewis houd ick, dat hy geen soo algemeynen Vonnis gestreken soude hebben, had hy de rijcke eigenschap van onse Tael gekent; die ick voor soodanigh uytgeve, dat een middelmatigh beleit der selve machtigh is de gedachten van allerhande Landslieden uyt te brengen met gemack ende bevalligheit" (Ged. VI; 338).

¹⁴ "Interpreti, quem nosti, facile condonabis, si de optimis ea pauca selegit, quorum forte sententia in angustijs linguæ Romanae - de quibus etiam Romae expostulatum fuit - videbatur posse non suffocari." (Bw. V: 172)

¹⁵ "Adde quod hae versiones, ut ad dramatis Latini genium quam proxime assurgant, imo quod nec arbitror desperandum, ipsa cum antiquitate paria faciant, mea quidem opinione, longe laxiore fraeno opus habent quam te tibi video indulgere" (Bw. V: 346).

¹⁶) "Cui coepto si Anglus institisset *κατα πόδα*, quis non videt, omnes illas elegantiae nativae flammulas futuras fuisse collapsam in cineres facem. Certe is autor prosam prosâ reddidit, at ego nihil obstare sentio, quin idem carmine quam felicissime praestetur, utique si tu, quantus es, manum operi digneris admovere. Neque ambigo, si periculum ludibundus feceris, quin et tibi tute et doctis pariter atque indoctis impensa placueris" (Bw. V: 346).

¹⁷ "Tantum hoc dicam, quod omnino tecum sentio, huiusmodi versionibus, si sunt *ῥα?α` π?ῶα?* et de verbo ad verbum a fido nimium interprete, multum nativae elegantiae archetypis decedere, et hoc addam, me in istis meis, nisi me fallo ... ad hoc non omnino supine attendere, ut pro flammulis illis et flosculis et loquendi modis, quos quaelibet lingua sibi habet peculiare, reponam aut rependam eam dictionem, verba ac phrases, quae apud nos illis respondeant aut equivalent, ut versioni Belgicae etiam aliquod ex naturali pulchritudine constet decus."

["I entirely agree with you that in versions of this kind, if they follow the original step by step and are done word for word by too faithful a translator, much of the native charm of the original is lost; let me add that, unless I am mistaken ... I have not in these versions of mine attached myself too slavishly to the original, so that for those sparks and flowers and turns of phrase which are peculiar to every language I substitute or exchange that manner of speaking and those words or phrases which correspond to them and have the same value in our language, in order that the Dutch version too may have a certain charm deriving from natural beauty."] (Bw. V: 347).

¹⁸ "Transtuli autem haec Italica *κατα πόδα*, qui meus est mos, quantum eius fieri potest salvâ dictionis elegantia. Neque enim vitio mihi verti amem, quod Ablancurtio, celeberrimo inter Gallos Taciti et aliorum veterum traductori, lepide objectum fuit ab amico, in hunc sensum: versio, inquit, tua, domine, meae perquam similis est, pulcherrima nimirum, sed infida" (Bw. VI: 183).

¹⁹ Zuber (1968: 202) thinks that they met, and that d'Ablancourt subsequently put Conrart in touch with Huygens. According to Brenninkmeyer (1973: 56) it was Conrart who in his letters to Huygens drew the latter's attention to d'Ablancourt. The translations of d'Ablancourt span the years from 1637 to 1662.