

# MULTILINGUALISM AND PLURILINGUALISM: LANGUAGE USE AND EDUCATION, TEACHING AND PROFICIENCY AS SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASSETS IN THE DUTCH GOLDEN AGE\*

*Multilingüismo y plurilingüismo: uso y educación del lenguaje, enseñanza y competencias como activos sociales y culturales en la Edad de Oro holandesa*

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**ABSTRACT:** Plurilingualism and multilingualism are terms that are often indifferently used. Yet they reflect two distinct practices and dimensions of social and cultural life, i.e.: the individual ability to master and use several languages at the same time, and the coexistence of different languages at a variety of levels and in various settings in a given society. Both reflect different forms of elasticity of the social fabric, and flourish in times of economic prosperity, mass migration and global cultural contacts, whereas they decline in times of contraction and nationalism. As a period of growth, mass migration and cultural flourishing, and of expansion of the educational institutions and opportunities, the Dutch Golden Age (c. 1580-1750) is an excellent observatory for these phenomena, of which I shall sketch a picture, insisting in particular on the cultural aspects of language, such as language acquisition and teaching, language use, and the social meanings of language.

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KEY WORDS: plurilingualism; multilingualism; language teaching; language hegemony; universal language.

RESUMEN: Plurilingüismo y multilingüismo son términos que a menudo se usan indiferentemente. Sin embargo, reflejan dos prácticas y dimensiones distintas de la vida social y cultural, es decir: la capacidad individual de dominar y utilizar varios idiomas al mismo tiempo, y la coexistencia de diferentes idiomas en una variedad de niveles y en varios entornos de una sociedad determinada. Ambos reflejan diferentes formas de elasticidad del tejido social y florecen en tiempos de prosperidad económica, migración masiva y contactos culturales globales, mientras que disminuyen en tiempos de contracción y nacionalismo. Como período de crecimiento, migración masiva y florecimiento cultural, y de expansión de las instituciones y oportunidades educativas, la Edad de Oro holandesa (c. 1580-1750) es un excelente observatorio de estos fenómenos, de los cuales esbozaré un cuadro, insistiendo en particular sobre los aspectos culturales del lenguaje, como la adquisición y enseñanza del lenguaje, el uso del lenguaje y sus significados sociales.

PALABRAS CLAVE: plurilingüismo; multilingüismo; enseñanza de idiomas; hegemonía del lenguaje; lenguaje universal.

## 1. Language pride or language pessimism?

**P**LURILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM are terms that are often indifferently used.<sup>1</sup> Yet they reflect two distinct practices and dimensions of social and cultural life. Although authors may differ in their definitions, I shall take **plurilingualism** here for the *individual* ability to master and use several languages in a sequence of situations or at the same time, such as diglossia or co-linguism, whereas **multilingualism** refers to the coexistence of different linguistics

<sup>1</sup> For a synthetic approach see ZARATE, Geneviève; LÉVY, Danielle & KRAMSCH, Claire (eds.): *Précis du plurilinguisme et du pluriculturalisme*, Paris, Éditions des Archives Contemporaines, 2008, also as online publication: <http://precis.berkeley.edu/> (with English trans.). Furthermore: BURKE, Peter: *Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004; HASKINS GONTHIER, Ursula & SANDRIER, Alain: *Multilingualism and Multiculturalism in Enlightened Europe*, Paris, Champion, 2007; KAPPLER, Claire & THIOLIER-MÉJEAN, Suzanne (eds.): *Le plurilinguisme au Moyen Age: Orient-Occident, de Babel à la langue une*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2009; FRIJHOFF, Willem; KOK-ESCALLE, Marie-Christine & SANCHEZ-SUMMERER, Karène (eds.): *Multilingualism, Nationhood, and Cultural Identity. Northern Europe 16th-19th Centuries*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2017; SANCHEZ-SUMMERER, Karène & FRIJHOFF, Willem (eds.): *Linguistic and Cultural Foreign Policies of European States, 18th-20th Centuries*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2017; KANG, Mathilde: *Francophonie and the Orient. French-Asian Transcultural Crossings (1848-1940)*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2018; RJÉOUTSKI, Vladislav & FRIJHOFF, Willem (eds.): *Language choice in Enlightenment Europe. Education, Sociability, and Governance*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2018; LOMBARDO CAPARRÓS, Alberto: *Two Centuries of English Language Teaching and Learning in Spain*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2019.

tic packages at a variety of levels and in various settings in a given *society*, *group* or *community* and to their common use by a coherent number of its members. Both reflect forms of elasticity of the social fabric, but differently. They flourish in times of economic prosperity, mass migration and global cultural contacts, whereas they decline in times of contraction and nationalism. Periods of economic growth, mass migration and cultural flourishing stimulate the expansion of educational institutions, individual supply and social opportunities for the appropriation of languages. The Dutch Golden Age (c. 1580-1750) is therefore an excellent observatory for these phenomena.

On June 10, 1805, the French national Gazette *Le Moniteur universel* published an anonymous report, written in The Hague during the Batavian Republic. I translate from the French:

The use of the French language is becoming more and more common in this country. Most of the Dutch, who stand out through their wealth or their education, prefer French to Dutch as their family language, so that the use of the latter is slowly being relegated to the lower levels of society. Fifty years from now little may well remain of it, other than a dialect that people, who know what is right, leave for servants, workers, and sailors. Yet, Dutch is a fairly rich language. Unfortunately, its use is being limited to a territory that is too small for foreigners to make it worth-while to learn the language. [...] And because the stronger one wins and the weaker loses, we are forced to learn the language of others.<sup>2</sup>

As early as 1731, another anonymous author had asserted in the journal *Hollandsche Spectator* (probably its editor Justus van Effen) that the children of the French Huguenots in England had adapted themselves to the language and the culture of their host country, whereas, on the contrary, the French refugees in the Netherlands had done «everything possible to be French and remain so», showing there a remarkable contempt or neglect of the Dutch language and culture.<sup>3</sup>

Such eighteenth-century language pessimism of the immigrants with regard to Dutch contrasts sharply with the language pride demonstrated two centuries earlier. Around 1600, in the first decades of the Dutch Golden Age, the Amsterdam Chamber of Rhetoric *d'Eglantier* also called *In Liefde Bloeyende* [Flourishing

<sup>2</sup> *Gazette nationale ou Le Moniteur universel* (Bibl. Nat. de France: Gr. Fol. Lc2 113, microfilm D 71), June 17<sup>th</sup> 1805: « On remarquera que la langue française devient de jour en jour plus habituel dans ce pays-ci. La plupart des Hollandais distingués par leur fortune ou leur éducation la parlent entr'eux dans l'intérieur de leurs familles, de préférence à la langue du pays; de sorte que celle-ci s'en va tout doucement se reléguer dans les basses classes du peuple; et il n'en restera peut-être, dans cinquante ans, qu'un patois que les gens comme il faut abandonneront à leurs domestiques, aux ouvriers et aux matelots. Cependant, la langue hollandaise est assez riche; mais elle a l'inconvénient d'être renfermée dans une trop petite étendue de pays, pour que les étrangers veuillent se donner la peine de l'apprendre; comme nous nous trouvons nécessairement en relations avec des nations beaucoup plus considérables que la nôtre, le fort emporte le faible; et c'est nous qui sommes obligés d'apprendre la langue des autres ».

<sup>3</sup> *De Hollandsche Spectator*, no. 8 (October 8, 1731).

in Love] repeatedly held a fiery plea to «help, embellish and enrich» Low German (*Nederduyts*), the basis of present-day Dutch. As early as 1586, five years after the declaration of independence of the Dutch Republic, the engineer and linguistic purist Simon Stevin (1548-1620), born in Bruges (Flanders) but established in the Northern Netherlands, had sung the praises of «the dignity of the *duytsche* [i.e., Dutch] language». He followed the convictions of the humanist scholar Johannes Goropius Becanus (Jan van Gorp from Hilvarenbeek in the duchy of Brabant, 1518/19-1572).<sup>4</sup> In his book about the origin of Antwerp (1569), Goropius had proudly identified «Cimbrisch» or «Duyts», that is to say what we now call Dutch, as the oldest and most perfect language of the world, the language of paradise itself, the *lingua adamica*.<sup>5</sup> In agreement with him, Abraham van der Myl (or Mylius, 1563-1637) in his academic treatise *Lingua Belgica* (Leiden, 1612) placed the Dutch language for its richness on an equal footing with Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Persian, classical languages from which in his opinion Dutch had been directly derived.<sup>6</sup>

There were, of course, counter voices. In 1598 the philologist Justus Lipsius (1547-1606), one of the most respected academics of his time, who taught in Leiden and in Louvain (Leuven), started a debate with advocates of the Becanus thesis. In his opinion, it would not be any longer possible to recognize the original language, because this was contaminated and irreparably altered by processes of colonization and waves of migration. Becanus' etymological speculations, he thought, were simply ludicrous. According to Lipsius, language was not fixed; it was a historical product, in constant flux.<sup>7</sup> Lipsius, in other words, did not consider language from an essentialist perspective, as so many of his intellectual contemporaries did, but from a historical one.

The *rederijkers*, i.e. members of the Chambers of Rhetoric, in the major cities of the prosperous maritime provinces of Holland and Zeeland, had also pointed out that their vernacular language had degenerated, but they did so precisely for the opposite reason, because of their pride in the Dutch language. They cultivated linguistic purism and wished to cleanse Dutch of all its foreign influences. The growing quantities of loan words and bastardized words from Latin, French,

<sup>4</sup> BRANDEN, LODE van den: *Het streven naar verheerlijking, zuivering en opbouw van het Nederlands in de zestiende eeuw*, Ghent, Kon. Vlaamsche Academie voor Taal- en letterkunde, 1956; DER WAL, Marijke van & BREE, Cor van: *Geschiedenis van het Nederlands*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Houten, Het Spectrum, 2008, pp. 186-190; DER WAL, Marijke van: *De moedertaal centraal. Standaardisatieaspecten in de Nederlanden omstreeks 1650*, The Hague, Sdu Publishers, 1995, pp. 23-34.

<sup>5</sup> About the *lingua adamica* see ECO, Umberto: *Ricerca della lingua perfetta nella cultura europea*, Rome & Bari, Laterza, 1993 [English trans. by James Fentress: *The Search for the Perfect Language* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1995)]; COUDERT, Allison P. (ed.): *The Language of Adam/Die Sprache Adams*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1999.

<sup>6</sup> About him: METCALF, George J.: «Abraham Mylius in Historical Linguistics», *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 68 (1953), pp. 535-554.

<sup>7</sup> DEINERE, Tom B. & HAAL, Toon van: *Lipsius tegen Becanus: over het Nederlands als oertaal. Editie, vertaling en interpretatie van zijn brief aan Hendrik Schotti (19 december 1598)*, Amsterdam: Florivallis, 2006.

or Italian had to be pushed back, and the older, correct grammatical structures had to be restored. The pronunciation of the mother tongue by those who spoke in an undesirable regional dialect or, on the contrary, in an overly pretentious way had also to be corrected because these speakers placed themselves beyond the supra-regional community that increasingly identified itself as authentically «Dutch». Language reveals itself here as a core element of group belonging and as a basic characteristic of a developing national identity. In the same spirit, half a century later, in 1668, the physician Adriaen Koerbagh (c. 1632-1669) published his *Bloembhof* [Flower garden], an encyclopedic dictionary of «foreign bastardized words». He applied there the idea of a severe and systematic language purification not only at its linguistic aspects, but also at its content. In fact, his attack on bastardized (Latinized) philosophical and theological terms barely concealed a sharp critique of the religion and society of his time.<sup>8</sup>

The advancement of the Dutch language in the society of the Low Countries took some clear steps. As soon as 1582, three years after the Union of Utrecht (1579) and with the separation of the Northern regions from the Southern, partly French-speaking provinces not yet achieved, the States General at The Hague replaced the language of their outgoing communications, borrowed from their former Burgundian rulers, from French into Dutch. Simultaneously, the provincial authorities encouraged the separation between the Latin schools, which became the first step of the higher education system under the supervision of the local authorities, and the lower level of common schools for the general youth, mostly in private hands. In the latter, the teaching language was Dutch, occasionally augmented with French. Schoolmasters like Noël de Berlaimont (*Vocabulaire*, ?1511) and Gabriel Meurier (*Deviz familiers, propres à tous marchands, désireux d'entendre bien lire, et naïvement parler françois et flamen*, 1564), or, for mathematics, Willem Bartjens (*De Cyfferinghe, inhoudende meest alle de grondregelen van de Cypherkonst*, Amsterdam, 1604), laid the foundations for a general structure of elementary schooling in the vernacular language. The *Vocabulaire* of Berlaimont, initially Franco-Dutch, included in its 1598 version next to Latin no less than seven modern languages and was re-edited many times during the seventeenth century.<sup>9</sup> Important bilingual textbooks for elementary language learning were written by Peeter and Zacharie Heyns (1595), Nathanael Duez (1639), Jean-Nicolas de Parival (1645), Thomas La Grue (1654), François de Fenne (1670), and Barthélemy Piélat (1673), mostly immigrants from France or the Southern Netherlands, the most famous and long-living being the *Nouvelle méthode pour apprendre les principes et l'usage de la langue françoise et hollandoise* (1694) of Pierre Marin, still in use in 1834!

The next step in imposing a standardized version of the Dutch language in the public space was the publication of the first official Bible translation in Dutch

<sup>8</sup> ISRAEL, Jonathan A.: *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 185-196.

<sup>9</sup> The title of the 1623 version: *Colloquia et dictionariolum octo linguarum, Latinae, Gallicae, Belgicae, Teutonicae, Hispanicae, Italicae, Anglicae et Portugallicae*.

from the original Greek and Hebrew versions, in 1637, on behalf of the States General who financed the operation. While translating the Bible, from 1626 to 1635, scholars of Southern and Northern Netherlandic origin explicitly attempted to reach a compromise between the linguistic varieties of North and South. During their debates, the pressure from what has been referred to in German as *Exulanten-theologie* became the decisive factor.<sup>10</sup> The immigrants often unconsciously valued this new trend in Reformed theology, tending toward extremism, in order to justify their choice for fleeing or resisting the repression by the Catholic authorities, or they employed it as an emancipation ideology. The translation published in 1637 and called the *Statenbijbel*, which ever since has deeply influenced standard Dutch, therefore carries many traces of the religious convictions of their community.

Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679), the most celebrated Dutch-speaking poet in his time and a trend-setting intellectual, rejected the urban dialect of the city of Amsterdam where he had settled his shop. Initially an Anabaptist, he converted to Catholicism and influenced Catholic poetry by his linguistic preferences. Moreover, in his *ars poetica* (known as the *Aenleidinge ter Nederduitsche Dichtkunst*, 1650) he formulated the linguistic rules which have been observed ever since: the standard for civilized Dutch had to be the language spoken at the Stadtholder's Court in The Hague (including the States General) and among the merchant-regents of the Amsterdam metropolis, in fact the Western, Holland variant of the Low German dialect.<sup>11</sup> The seventeenth century was therefore the period of the standardization of Dutch, its elevation to the standard of a fully-fledged and self-conscious language, and its recognition as a national tongue, indeed the instrument par excellence for the development of the slowly unifying culture of the Dutch Republic, starting with its general diffusion through the elementary school system.<sup>12</sup>

Why did Dutch language pride from 1600 contrast so sharply with language pessimism from 1800? What had happened in the meantime? The country itself had changed, of course, but we may better focus on language, in particular on the appropriation and *use* of the language, the historical forms of sociolinguistics. From this particular point of view, the hallmark of the seventeenth century is a heightened awareness that the *confusio linguarum* symbolized at Babel (Gen. 11:1-9) was detrimental to the development of culture and of the human mind. Chaotic multilingualism, the unbridled multiplication of languages in use, without any formal or clear hierarchy, had to be channeled into an orderly and well-considered use of the available means of communication. That is why the great language pedagogue Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670), the

<sup>10</sup> See lately SCHILLING, Heinz: «Peregrini und Schiffchen Gottes: Flüchtlingserfahrung und Exulanten-theologie des frühneuzeitlichen Calvinismus», in REISS, Ansgar & WITT, Sabine (eds.): *Calvinismus: Die Reformierten in Deutschland und Europa*, Dresden, Sandstein, 2009, pp. 160-168.

<sup>11</sup> VAN DER WAL: *De moedertaal centraal*, p. 33.

<sup>12</sup> For the standardization process see VAN DER WAL & VAN BREE: *Geschiedenis van het Nederlands*, pp. 200-255.

Moravian bishop who in 1656 fled to Amsterdam, published his efficient language methods, spread throughout Europe, such as the *Janua linguarum* (1631) and the *Orbis sensualium pictus* (1658), the first visual, multilingual method for language education.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. Fictions of language harmony

Imbued with language nationalism, we now take it for granted that a language is connected to a country, or at least to a specific national or cultural community. The rhetorical convention that all players in the social field speak the same language and understand each other without any real problem is a commonplace in the written media, in literary texts, in films, on the web, and even in historical productions. However, is this apparent unity of language in line with historical reality? Originally, economic expansion and international trade made the Dutch language a serious player on the European language market. At the same time, this language was slowly but surely taking shape as the standard language of the whole Dutch Republic, in a process of purification and codification itself embedded in the broader process of state building throughout Europe and the connecting process of linguistic hierarchization. But was standard Dutch also common in daily life? In order to answer this question, we should examine the different forms and levels of linguistic communication as well as the social functions of language. It is, of course, very difficult to measure linguistic practices in daily life in the past, since there are no direct audio- or video-recordings available from those days. *Oral history* has also taught us that all forms of indirect recording or transcribing suffer from a high degree of intervention, interpretation and adaptation by those registering the text. However, we can detect its contours and coordinates, and roughly sketch its main points with the help of systematic research into a multitude of sources, such as popular literature, pamphlets, library inventories, transcripts of correspondences, and reports of legal discussions.

As the purification and standardization of the national language moved along, the presence of other languages in the Northern Netherlands increased as well and with it the necessity to learn how to function in several languages at once without causing damage to the developing national language or the mother tongue. Besides the explicitly linguistic element, we therefore can also detect a *socio-*

<sup>13</sup> COMENIUS, Jan Amos: *Novissima linguarum methodus / La toute nouvelle methode des langues*, Trad. Honoré Jean, sous la dir. de Gilles Babeau, Jean Caravolas & Claire Le Brun Gouanvic, Geneva & Paris, Droz, 2005. For more information about the life and work of Comenius see: BLEKASTAD, Milada: *Comenius. Versuche eines Umrisses von Leben, Werk und Schicksal des Jan Amos Komenský*, Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1969; ČAPKOVÁ, Dagmar & FRIJHOFF, Willem (eds.): *Jan Amos Comenius 1592-1670*. Special issue on the occasion of the Quartercentenary of J.A. Comenius's birth of *Paedagogica historica. International Journal of the History of Education*, 28: 2 (1992), pp. 175-333; VLIET, P. van & VANDERJAGT, A. J. (eds.): *Johannes Amos Comenius (1592-1670), Exponent of European Culture?* [KNAW, Verhandelingen, afd. Letterkunde, NR, 160], Amsterdam, Edita, 1994.

*linguistic* dimension in this development, namely, the different uses of the languages for targeted communication and ordinary interactions, not to forget the sonic or auditory diversity, the multitude of sounds and accents.<sup>14</sup> Pronunciation was an important element in the valuation of the language variants: the pronunciation of the Eastern Low German dialects, close to High German, had a clearly negative value; that of the Southern ones, originating in Flanders and Brabant, was considered as positive.<sup>15</sup>

Sometimes the author himself gives us a clue. Consider the autobiographical notes that Willem Baudartius senior (1565-1640) wrote down in 1628 for his then sixteen-year old son, Willem junior.<sup>16</sup> Baudartius senior was a Reformed minister at Zutphen, district capital in the province of Gelderland, but also a historian and one of the translators of the *Statenbijbel*. He narrates how his parents fled for religious reasons, before his second birthday, from the Flemish town of Deinse to Sandwich in England. In Canterbury, he attended the French school of Master Paul Le Pipere, and after that two Latin schools, first the grammar school in Sandwich, then, after their return to Flanders, within the city of Ghent. However, «since my childhood I have had the great opportunity to learn three languages at the same time, because inside the house I also learned to speak Dutch, and also French since my father, mother and older sisters spoke this with each other, and remember to this day.» Later in his notes he returns once more to his language skills:

In my early years I learned English in England and practiced and perfected it in Zutphen through conversations with English captains and officers, whose garrison was stationed there, and by reading good books from which I preached every Sunday in 1617, 1618 and 1619 and, if I had been given the opportunity or if it had been necessary, I would have been able to preach in German and in French after I moved from Heidelberg to the Netherlands as well.

As vice-principal of the grammar school at Sneek in Friesland (where the common people probably still spoke Frisian, closer to English than to Dutch), Baudartius had taught himself Greek and at one of the universities where he had studied theology –in Leiden (1586), Franeker (1588) or Heidelberg (1591)– he must have learned Hebrew as well. However, in his biography he does not describe this language acquisition process. It is only implied here, since he later translated

<sup>14</sup> For an overview of this topic see the stimulating volumes edited by BURKE, Peter & PORTER, Roy: *The Social History of Language*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987; *Language, Self, Society*, *ib.*, 1991, and *Languages and Jargons*, *ib.*, 1995.

<sup>15</sup> VAN DER WAL & VAN BREE: *Geschiedenis van het Nederlands*, pp. 201-205. For a first approach to the seventeenth-century city as a «melting-pot of sounds» see the special issue on «The sound of the city» of *De Zeventiende Eeuw*, 24:1 (2008), pp. 2-109.

<sup>16</sup> MOLHUIJSEN, P. C. (ed.): «Leven van Willem Baudaert door hem zelve beschreven», *Kronijk van het Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht*, 5 (1849), pp. 226-249. About this author: BROEK ROELOFS, O. C.: *Wilhelmus Baudartius*, Kampen, Kok 1947; *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek* [NNBW], III, Leiden, Sijthoff, 1914, pp. 71-73.



the Old Testament from its source language Hebrew. From his *Memoryen*, a vast historical chronicle in two volumes, we can see that he also had a good grasp of High German. He worked as a Reformed minister from 1598 until his death in 1640 in the city of Zutphen. Knowledge of German, close to the regional vernacular of that county, must have been so self-evident in the Eastern Netherlands that there was no need to document it explicitly. The message that Baudartius wanted to transmit to his son is obvious: learn «Latin, Greek and Hebrew (and related languages),» and, additionally, French, German, English and Scottish English in order to be able to travel through the Reformed countries in a productive manner before taking up the position of minister or professor, but avoid Spain and Italy because «of the widespread idolatry and papal superstitions.» Spanish and Italian were not required; it sufficed to know Latin to refute the work of the papal opponents.

This text offers us all the elements for a valuation of multilingualism in the Golden Age. The role of family home, school, church, and local communities (including the garrisons of the army) clearly comes to the fore, as well as the balance between formal language learning processes and self-study.<sup>17</sup> The classical languages are important for *academia*, but also for the realm of the church and for controversies with opponents. In addition, knowledge of modern languages is essential but one learns these in other ways: French in the French school, English and German from a teacher, through active self-study, through reading books in these languages, or by interacting with native speakers. Therefore, the early modern Netherlands started out as a multilingual landscape in the various spheres of private and public life. Multilingualism was due to commerce and migration; to the urban garrisons with regiments from Germany, France, Switzerland, England and Scotland; and to the exchanges between foreign-speaking religious communities. But it corresponded also to the well-understood self-interest of the Dutch who wanted to move forward in a world that did not end at the borders of their country, and were eager to learn the appropriate languages to do so.

Of course, there are blind spots in Baudartius' text as well. He was a Reformed ultra, not a friend of the Spanish, whose language had been important in the country during the reign of King Philip II (1555-1598) and his son and successor Philip III (1598-1621). The Spanish army remained stationed in the borderlands of the Dutch Republic until 1630 and Spanish troops made frequent incursions into the new Dutch Republic. In Baudartius' hometown Zutphen, a Spanish military manual was even reprinted in those years, presumably for the enemy only a few miles away. In the Southern Netherlands, under Spanish authority, Spanish was an active presence in various realms and in the Dutch Republic itself, the first Spanish textbook was published in 1630.<sup>18</sup> Italian is lacking too. Once the lan-

<sup>17</sup> For the learning process of self-study see: FRIJHOFF, Willem (ed.): *Autodidaxies, XVII-XIXe siècles*, Paris, INRP, Service d'histoire de l'éducation, 1996 [special issue of *Histoire de l'éducation*, no. 70].

<sup>18</sup> MOLERIUS, Carolus: *Linguae Hispanicae compendiosa institutio*, Leiden, Elzevier, 1630; later he wrote an Italian textbook: *Linguae Italicae compendiosa institutio*, Leiden, Elzevier, 1641. That

guage of the most refined courts, Italian continued to be a model for Dutch high culture, and still belonged to the standard package of the *honnête homme*: literature in Italian, brought back from the *grand tour*, was at the time still found in practically all private libraries of any importance. Italian remained the language of music, of architecture, finance and accounting. It is thus not surprising that multilingual textbooks usually also included Italian.

### 3. Failure of the universal unified language

The multitude of tongues, confusing for many, must have stimulated the desire for a single, unified language. However, the increased teaching of modern contact languages and of the growing polyglot stance in public life went against this trend. In the seventeenth century, with a prelude in the sixteenth and a long aftermath in the eighteenth century, the idea, indeed the dream, of a universal, transnational everyday language for all finally failed in the minds of the Europeans. This failure was the result of a quadruple process. First of all, the loss of belief in Latin as a universal access language to culture. The quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns that divided the writers of early modern Western Europe into two camps, against and in favor of linguistic modernization, is a telling example.<sup>19</sup> Not to speak of the practical, quite compelling reasons that discredited Latin as the language of universal communication, such as its incomprehensible pronunciation by the English.

A second reason was the (re)discovery of other classical languages, besides Latin, as a source for knowledge and culture. The humanists had already added Greek and Hebrew to Latin: as a result, the *eruditio trilinguis* became the core of philology; for almost a century, it remained the foundation of the innovated university system, starting at Wittenberg in 1502, and soon including Erfurt and other universities. *Collegia trilingua* were founded at the universities that were at the forefront of innovation, such as Alcalá, Louvain, Oxford, and Cambridge.<sup>20</sup> The tone for whole Europe was set in particular by the *Collège des Lecteurs*

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same year Nathanael Duez published *Le guidon de la langue italienne* with the same publisher (Leiden, Elsevier, 1641), a further indication of a market demand.

<sup>19</sup> GILLOT, Hubert: *La Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes: De la Défense et Illustration de la langue française aux Parallèles des anciens et des modernes*, Paris, Champion, 1914; LECOQ, Anne-Marie: *La Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes: xvii<sup>e</sup>-xviii<sup>e</sup> siècles*. Précédé d'un essai de Marc FUMAROLI, suivi d'une postface de Jean-Robert Armogathe, Paris, Gallimard, 2001; Fumaroli, Marc: *La Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, Paris, Gallimard-Folio, 2001.

<sup>20</sup> ALLEN, P. S.: «The Trilingual Colleges of the Early Sixteenth Century», in ALLEN, P. S. (ed.): *Erasmus. Lectures and Wayfaring Sketches*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1934, pp. 138-163; VOCHT, Henry de: *History of the Foundation and the Rise of the Collegium Trilingue Lovaniense 1517-1550* (4 vols.), Leuven, Bibliothèque de l'Université, 1951-1955. For further background information about this development see RIDDER-SYMOENS, Hilde de (ed.): *A History of the University in Europe, Vol. II: Universities in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996 [trans. into German, Spanish and Portuguese].

*Royaux*, the present-day *Collège de France* in Paris, founded in 1529/30 by King Francis I as an alternative to the conservative university of Paris, on the initiative of Guillaume Budé (1468-1540).<sup>21</sup> When Pierre de La Ramée (Petrus Ramus, 1515-1572) was appointed there in 1551, it soon became clear that the education in other ancient languages was embedded in a new philosophical and theological culture. Ramus was an outspoken opponent of Aristotelian philosophy and a militant Huguenot, but he was also an innovator of dialectics and logic as pedagogical methods, wherein he emphasized practical application and demonstration. As such, his work became vastly popular in the seventeenth century, especially in Calvinist countries like the Dutch Republic where not only university teachers but also a great number of rectors and *praeceptores* (teachers) of Latin schools were attracted to Ramism.<sup>22</sup>

Soon thereafter, Aramaic was added to the university curriculum and other classical or living languages such as Arabic, Persian and Chinese soon followed suit. In the faculty of arts at the newly founded University of Leiden, for instance, Greek and Hebrew were taught next to Latin since 1575; in 1577 Chaldean and Syrian were added, and from 1599 onward Arabic and the Slavonic languages as well. Under the celebrated linguist Thomas Erpenius (1584-1624), who unfortunately died at Leiden of the plague at an early age, the knowledge of Eastern languages, particularly of Arabic, reached from 1613 onwards an unmatched level of excellence.<sup>23</sup>

The third factor was the rise of the national, modern languages itself, as a cultural medium with some degree of social prestige and well suited not only for commerce but also for the transmission of culture. The fourth factor, and not the least important one in this process, was the discovery, in the newly mapped continents, of a great number of languages that were not related to Western tongues. These linguistic discoveries and the scientific question about the origins of the people who spoke them went hand in hand. Both questions had been answered in principle in the first book of the Bible, in the narratives about the sons of Noah (Gen. 9-10) and the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11: 1-9), but these stories in the end created more problems than solutions. The question was resumed in the academic dispute about the origins of the newly discovered peoples in the

<sup>21</sup> LEFRANC, Abel: *Histoire du Collège de France: depuis ses origines jusqu'à la fin du Premier Empire*, Paris, Hachette, 1893.

<sup>22</sup> ONG, Walter J.: *Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1958; reissued with a new foreword by Adrian Johns, University of Chicago Press, 2004; BERKEL, K. VAN: «Franeker als centrum van ramisme», in JENSMA, G. Th.; SMIT, F. R. H. & WESTRA, F. (eds.): *Universiteit te Franeker 1585-1811. Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van de Friese Hogeschool*, Leeuwarden, Fryske Akademy, 1985, pp. 424-437; BERKEL, K. van: «Ramus, précurseur de Descartes aux Pays-Bas», *Septentrion. Revue de culture néerlandaise*, 16:2 (1987), pp. 30-36; HOTSON, Howard: *Commonplace Learning: Ramism and its German Ramifications, 1543-1630*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.

<sup>23</sup> JUYNBOLL, W. M. C.: *Zeventiende-eeuwse beoefenaars van het Arabisch in Nederland*, Utrecht, Kemink, 1931; OTTERSPEER, Willem: *Groepsportret met Dame. I: Het bolwerk van de vrijheid. De Leidse universiteit, 1575-1672*, Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 2000, pp. 253, 343-348.

Americas, between Hugo de Groot or Grotius (1583-1645), a linguistic prodigy and a liberal theologian in Holland, and Johan de Laet (1581-1649), a director of the Dutch West India Company and, as a private scholar, one of the founders of comparative linguistics. Despite being a convinced Calvinist, De Laet followed the ideas of the Spanish Jesuit José de Acosta (1540-1600) in his *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (Sevilla, 1580), where he stipulated that the Indians in a far remote past had come from Asia. De Groot, on the contrary, had contended in his *Dissertatio de origine gentium Americanarum* (1642) their Germanic and indeed Nordic origin, as well as their recent arrival from Europe and Africa via the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>24</sup> De Laet won the case, and the East and West India Companies henceforth showed a keen interest in the description of the non-European languages in their territories.

The demise of Latin's central position as the transnational and universal cultural language considered superior to others, as Desiderius Erasmus still had defended it, had far-reaching consequences for linguistic practices overall. Of course, Latin, as such, did not suddenly disappear from the language circuit but, besides being the vernacular of international Catholicism, Latin, or more precisely Neo-Latin, increasingly became the community language of scholars – in other words, a sociolect.<sup>25</sup> Instead of broadening the functional range of Latin, as had repeatedly happened to the French language, its scope was gradually limited to the world of scholarship and religion. The scientific publications of the scholars, their correspondences and note collections, but also the notes of their students, collections of truisms, proverbs, quotes and emblems offer us an insight into the altered usefulness of Latin for the creation of a personal culture, as well as its instrumental function for cultural transmission and moral education of the political elite. Until well into the eighteenth century, scholarly libraries in the Dutch border province of Overijssel, for instance, contained almost exclusively works in Latin but, over time, works in French were added as well.<sup>26</sup> Latin was still useful but no longer vital when for a particular segment of science and scholarship a better practical language was available.

The crucial development of the early modern era, however, was more political than cultural in nature. This included the gradual linking of a specific language to

<sup>24</sup> JACOBS, J. A.: «Johannes de Laet en de Nieuwe Wereld», *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie*, 50 (1996), pp. 109-130; SCHMIDT, Benjamin: «Space, Time, Travel: Hugo de Groot, Johannes de Laet, and the Advancement of Geographic Learning», *Lias*, 25 (1998), pp. 177-199; NELLEEN, Henk: *Hugo de Groot. Een leven in strijd om de vrede, 1583-1645*, Amsterdam, Balans, 2007, pp. 550-555 [trans. by J. C. Grayson: *Hugo Grotius. A Lifelong Struggle for Peace in Church and State, 1583-1645* (Leiden & Boston, Brill, 2014)]. For De Groot's ideas on language see also VAN DER WAL, Marijke: «Grotius' taalbeschouwingen in contemporaine context», *Nederlandse taalkunde*, 2 (1997), pp. 14-34. For the texts see <http://tuin-der-talen.wik.is>, as publication program presented in *De Zeventiende Eeuw*, 25:1 (2009), pp. 137-139.

<sup>25</sup> For more about early modern scientific language use, see CHARTIER, Roger & CORSI, Pietro (eds.): *Sciences et langues en Europe*, Paris, EHESS, 1996.

<sup>26</sup> STRENG, J. C.: *Kweekster van verstand en hart. Boekcultuur en leescultuur in Overijssel tussen 1650 en 1850*, Epe: self published, 2008, p. 17.

a country — or, to be more precise, to a cultural community that was being given a political form in a sense of nationality. Similarly, national specificities became responsible for the language hegemony in certain professional or cultural domains. Dutch, for example, inspired the sailors' idiom of many countries. Italian first became the language of finance and then of opera. In France as well as in the Dutch Republic, lawyers created within the standard language another professional jargon that was much copied on French court use and closely resembled the Latin terminology of Roman Law. Because of its string of bastardized words, this jargon was in the Dutch Republic considered incomprehensible to such a degree that in the second half of the eighteenth century no less than five specialized dictionaries, explaining the peculiarities of bastardized, mostly Gallicized or Latinized legal Dutch were printed in succession.

#### 4. Language hegemony

Yet, the most important sociolinguistic fact of early modern Western Europe, and in particular in the Dutch Republic, is probably the change in the cultural *lingua franca*. A modern language, French, now was overturning classical Latin, previously the universal reference language for culture and science.<sup>27</sup> In its late medieval version, Latin was certainly not a dead language in daily life. It was still developing, and all kinds of derived, often simplified, language uses such as Church Latin, scholastic Latin, or medical Latin came into existence.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, this development was embedded in the fixed patterns that Latin had adopted in Antiquity. The humanists had brought them back to a more or less artificial life. From this revival during the Renaissance, a new living Latin developed amidst a small, highly educated elite, as cultural language of a Christian-humanist community. The humanist ideal of the use of Latin was the *imitatio*, the attempt to attain the perfection achieved by written Latin at the zenith of classical Antiquity.

French, on the other hand, was not only very much alive, but also still fully developing, despite the increasing codification of the literary language in the variant that was being cultivated and codified in the northern half of France around the royal court, Paris, and the cultural elite. Those using the French language could consider themselves part of a living and creative language community, reinforced through active contacts with France, by far the most populous and

<sup>27</sup> WAQUET, Françoise: *Le Latin, ou l'empire d'un signe, XVII-XXI siècle*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1998 [English trans.: *Latin, or, The Empire of a Sign: from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries* (London, Verso, 2001)]. See also the essays in SOMERSET, Fiona & WATSON, Nicholas (eds.): *The Vulgar Tongue: Medieval and Postmedieval Vernacularity*, University Park, PA, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003.

<sup>28</sup> See for instance RÖSSING-HAGER, Monica: «Küchenlatein und Sprachpurismus im frühen 16. Jahrhundert», in HENKEL, Nikolaus & PALMER, Nigel F. (eds.): *Latein und Volkssprache im deutschen Mittelalter 1100-1500*, Tübingen, Niemeyer, 1992, pp. 360-386.

largest country of Europe at the time, and through the increasing prestige of French as a language of distinction for the elite. As Hugo Grotius remarked in his time, the daughters of the elite were already being taught in French, while the sons were still taught in Latin.<sup>29</sup> This clearly changed in the middle of the seventeenth century. Latin did not disappear, but its function was increasingly restricted to academic education, while French became the general language of culture for those interested in what was happening outside of their country, or even around the world, but also within the social elites.

From the moment that the French language, in addition to functioning as the modern language of the most powerful political country in Europe, became also the international language of reference, its native speakers were given an added cultural value, an increase in status and an advantage in communication that soon would be exploited in the realm of politics as well. French started to play a special role in a new process of hierarchizing the languages that unfolded according to the mechanism described by Pierre Bourdieu in the terms of *distinction* and *symbolic power*.<sup>30</sup> French, in other words, acquired a hegemonic position in public transactions, which meant that status seekers now chose French as their language of prestige.<sup>31</sup> A stay in France, in particular in the Northern half around Paris and the royal court and along the Loire river (Orléans, Anjou) where the French language reputedly was spoken in its purest form, became a prerequisite of a gentleman's education and motivated the immense success of the Grand Tour.

Language has always a symbolic, identifying significance for a specific group whether we are talking about a professional group (a jargon or a specific profession-related idiom), a social group (youth language, pidgin, the language of the elite, or a sociolect), a city or regional community (regional language, regiolect, city or regional dialect), or an entire nation (standard language). Next to the national standard language, closely linked to the process of unification of the state, bastardized or mixed language variants can acquire a distinguishing meaning as well, such as Yiddish or the sociolect *Bargoens*, a Dutch form of slang used in the criminal community. Their symbolic value as a socially distinctive instrument is often just as important as their strictly utilitarian character.

Symbolic value starts playing a role as soon as cultural intermediaries, who take care of transmitting and teaching such languages, appear on the social scene. Such intermediaries can be objects, such as (self-) study books or other media tools; or institutions, such as schools and other formal ways of education; or persons, such as private language teachers. The function of these languages and

<sup>29</sup> GROOT, Hugo de: *Parallelon rerumpublicarum liber tertius* [1602], ed. Johannes Meerman (4 vols.), Haarlem, Loosjes, 1801-1803, III, pp. 77-78.

<sup>30</sup> BOURDIEU, Pierre: *La distinction: critique sociale du jugement*, Paris, Minuit, 1979 [English trans.: *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (London, Routledge, 1984)]; *Ce que parler veut dire*, Paris, Minuit, 1982 [English trans.: *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1992)].

<sup>31</sup> For an understanding of this process see BERTELLI, Sergio: «Egemonia linguistica come egemonia culturale», *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et Renaissance*, 38 (1976), pp. 249-281.

their variants shifts, depending on how the group distinguishes itself from other groups – professional groups, for instance, regional, or national, as well as rival social or cultural groups with a lower or a higher status. Smaller and qualitatively lesser-valued languages will be placed at a disadvantage or pushed aside. This can happen to a *lingua franca* as well, as was first experienced with Latin and in the twentieth century with French. The same is true for the relationship between regional languages and the standard language within the borders of a state. The more language proves to be able to function as a powerful characteristic of social and national cohesion, the more arguments are being developed to justify the hierarchy of languages: the usefulness of such a language, of course, but also its political significance, its linguistic and cultural meaning, and finally even its ethical added value.

## 5. Practical multilingualism

Quite early, the large merchant cities in Flanders, Brabant, Holland and Zeeland were reputed for their practical multilingualism. The corporative order of early modern society strengthened the durability of language diversity under ethnical, religious and professional groups and therewith the importance of multilingualism in daily life. A well-known testimony is found in the *Descrittione di tutti i Paesi Bassi* (1567), of the Florentine merchant settled at Antwerp, Lodovico Guicciardini (1521-1589). It was reprinted, retranslated and reworked no less than 33 times in one century. In a chapter entitled «Qualities and customs of men and women», Guicciardini praises the language proficiency of the Dutch, especially their knowledge of French, a «language with which they are very familiar,» but also German, English, Italian, Spanish, as well as some lesser-known languages.<sup>32</sup> This statement must be understood in context, of course. Guicciardini mostly interacted with the merchants and the city council of Antwerp and this milieu will have predominantly determined his perceptions. Yet, he generally was an excellent observer of the broader culture in the Dutch provinces.

In fact, other sources reinforce the picture that he had painted. The *alba amicorum* of traveling students, academics and regents, created by the cultural elite of the Low Countries as early as the second half of the sixteenth century, fall into this category.<sup>33</sup> Especially the friendship albums of noblewomen, who had

<sup>32</sup> The complete original quote reads as follows: «Hanno altro cio questa scienza delle lingue vulgari tanto familiare, che è cosa degna e ammiranda: perche ci sono infinite persone, le quali oltre alla lor' lingua maternal, quantunque non sieno stati fuora del paese, sanno ancor' parlare parecchi linguaggi forestieri, & specialmente il Franzese, il qual linguaggio hanno familiarissimo, & molti parlano Tedesco, Inghilese, Italiano, Spagnuolo, & altri altre lingue piu remote.» GUICCIARDINI, Lodovico: *Descrittione di tutti i Paesi Bassi*, Antwerp, Guglielmo Silvio, 1567, p. 27. About Guicciardini's work see JODOGNE, Pierre (ed.): *Lodovico Guicciardini (Florence 1521-Antwerp 1589). Actes du Colloque international des 28, 29 et 30 mars 1990*, Leuven, Peeters Press, 1991.

<sup>33</sup> DELEN, Marie-Ange: «Vrouwenalba in de zestiende en vroege zeventiende eeuw», in THOMASSEN, K. (ed.): *Alba Amicorum, Vijf eeuwen vriendschap op papier gezet*, Maarssen, Gary

considerable fewer opportunities to learn foreign languages abroad than their husbands, are suitable witnesses of the languages that were actually circulating in their milieu. In the album of Rutghera van Eck, for instance, a noblewoman from Zutphen in Gelderland, who was twice married to English officers from the local garrison, no less than 472 inscriptions in Dutch, French, German and English are collected, in addition to a few sayings in Latin or Italian. The German inscriptions were often written by locals whose family maintained close ties with Germany; the English texts came from army officers. In addition to Dutch, French seems to have been the language with which such women were familiar, it might by then even have been the preferred language for mutual interaction among the cultural elite and the nobility. There existed in fact a great number of private French Schools for girls from the elite, the commercial bourgeoisie. For these women, French was not only an important group language of daily use, but also insured her of her own position in the world of culture and science, and in some cases quite evidently of a certain cultural autonomy.

## 6. The languages of scholars

Depending on the structure of the community, of its ties with external groups, and of the social functions that must be fulfilled within a particular society, multilingualism can become more or less required for its smooth operation, without damaging per se the primacy of the basic language. Ever since the Renaissance, which in Holland brought forth influential and inventive writers in Dutch, such as Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert (1522-1590) or Hendrick Laurensz Spiegel (1549-1612) from booming Amsterdam, and Simon Stevin from Bruges, there had been a strong undercurrent among the scholars that had been pushing for research to be conducted in the mother tongue, Dutch, instead of Latin. In 1585, Spiegel unsuccessfully asked the curators of Leiden University to make the language of the province, Dutch, the teaching language of the university.<sup>34</sup> Latin still won the case as the universal language of scholarship. Nevertheless, Dutch did become the language of the engineering school, known as the *Duytsche* [=Low German, Dutch] *Mathematycke*. Established after Stevin's design in 1600, it was formally linked to the University of Leiden. In 1617, Samuel Coster created in Amsterdam a *Nederduytsche Akademie* [a Low Dutch Academy], but the combined pressure of the Reformed Church and the academic establishment in the town forced its initiators to close down that academy in the mother tongue already the next year. The Athenaeum illustre (a semi-university) founded in Amsterdam a decade later, and inaugurated in 1632, went back to the use of Latin, in spite of its modern orientation.

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Schwartz/The Hague, Sdu, 1990, pp. 129-139; OOSTERMAN, Johan: «Die ik mijn hart wil geven. Het album van Joanna Bentinck en de zestiende-eeuwse vrouwenalba», *Literatuur*, 19 (2002), pp. 194-202.

<sup>34</sup> DIBBETS, G. R. W. (ed.): *Twe-spraeck vande Nederduytsche Letterkonst* [1584], Assen, Van Gorcum, 1985, p. 11.



The personal mother tongue of the academic scholars in the Republic was, by the way, not always Dutch. Almost one third of the university professors had been raised in a foreign language, mostly in the Lower Saxon variant of German, and quite a few in French.<sup>35</sup> Because academic life mostly took place in Latin, many of these professors never learned much Dutch, if any at all, during their career. The French refugee and philosopher Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), for instance, who in 1681 had been appointed professor at the illustrious school of Rotterdam, mentally remained locked up in French and Latin, and was completely incapable of buying even a pretzel at the local bakery in Dutch.<sup>36</sup> There was a de facto caesura between the French- and Latin-speaking world of academic scholars, on the one side, and on the other side the Dutch-speaking and sometimes also French-speaking world of technicians, engineers, inventors and discoverers, the geniuses and virtuosi, who were often autodidacts. They benefited from the scientific idiom that Stevin developed in Dutch with neologisms and technical terms, which is partially still in use today.

As a rule, a Dutch scholar was at least trilingual however.<sup>37</sup> He had learned Dutch at home, Latin in grammar school, and French from a language teacher, during his *grand tour*, or at a so-called French School, at which French was the most important subject matter as well as the teaching language.<sup>38</sup> These three

<sup>35</sup> For more information about the origin of these professors see: FRIJHOFF, Willem: «Excellence, amitié ou patronage? Les nominations des professeurs aux universités néerlandaises entre 1575 et 1814», in [Lucien BELY, preface]: *Les Universités en Europe (1450-1814)*, Paris, Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2013, pp. 193-235 [*Bulletin des historiens modernistes des universités françaises*, 36].

<sup>36</sup> About Bayle: BOST, Hubert: *Pierre Bayle, historien, critique, moraliste*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2006. For more information about his network see: LIESHOUT, H. H. M. van: *The Making of the Dictionnaire Historique et Critique by Pierre Bayle*, Amsterdam & Utrecht, APA-Holland University Press, 2001.

<sup>37</sup> See FRIJHOFF, Willem: «Le plurilinguisme des élites en Europe de l'Ancien Régime au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle», in *Le Français dans le monde: recherches et applications* [special issue *Vers le plurilinguisme des élites*], eds. Daniel Coste & Jean Hébrard], 1991, pp. 120-129.

<sup>38</sup> About French language teachers see: KOK-ESCALE, Marie-Christine & STRIEN-CHARDON-NEAU, Madeleine van: «Apprentissage de la langue et comparatisme culturel en Hollande: le métier de maître de langue (XVIII-XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles)», *Documents pour l'histoire du français langue étrangère ou seconde*, 33-34 (June 2005), pp. 120-143; BÖDEKER, Hans Erich: «'Sehen, hören, sammeln und schreiben.' Gelehrte Reisen im Kommunikationssystem der Gelehrtenrepublik», *Paedagogica Historica*, 38:2-3 (2002), pp. 505-532. It is not always possible to distinguish between a French language teacher and a French School because the term «school» had several connotations and often simply meant «instructional opportunity» or «class». There is no good comprehensive study about the French schools. For an attempted synthesis see FRIJHOFF, Willem: «Van onderwijs naar opvoedend onderwijs. Ontwikkelingslijnen van opvoeding en onderwijs in Noord-Nederland in de achttiende eeuw», in *Werkgroep Achttiende Eeuw, Onderwijs en opvoeding in de achttiende eeuw*, Amsterdam & Maarssen, Holland University Press, 1983, pp. 3-39; ESSEBOOM, Cees: «Via microstudies naar een verantwoord macrobeeld», *Meesterwerk*, 11 (1989), pp. 2-10; DODDE, Nan L. & ESSEBOOM, Cees: «Instruction and Education in French Schools. A Reconnaissance in the Northern Netherlands 1550-1700», in CLERQ, Jan de; LIOCE, Nico & SWIGGERS, Pierre (eds.): *Grammaire et enseignement du français, 1500-1700*, Leuven, Peeters, 2000, pp. 39-60; VAN DE HAAR, Alisa: «Van 'nimf' tot 'schoolvrouw': de Franse school en haar onderwijzeressen in de 16<sup>e</sup>- en 17<sup>e</sup>-eeuwse Nederlanden», *Historica*, 38:2 (2015), pp. 11-16.

languages had complementary functions. The learned professor Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655) from Leiden was, for instance, not only a skilled writer in Neo-Latin but also an important Dutch poet in his time. Knowledge of Latin was less common for women as they were in fact excluded from the institutional forms of secondary and tertiary education, from the Latin school and the university. A famous exception was the language genius Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678), born in Cologne but raised and living in the Dutch Republic. She spoke and was able to write in twelve languages, including all those of the Ancient World. And she was the only woman we know of who attended the university lectures of Professor Voetius in Utrecht, though behind a curtain that separated her from the student mob.

During the seventeenth century, approximately 3 to 5% of adult males in the Dutch Republic knew Latin, while during the eighteenth century only half of these were familiar with that language.<sup>39</sup> We cannot provide precise information about the percentage of native Dutch who knew French. Because they mostly had a passive knowledge of this language, as a spoken means of communication, their proficiency cannot be located in written or printed sources. Reading French was of course easier than speaking French. However, we should not exaggerate that percentage either. Diaries of foreign travelers make it clear that the elite showed off their knowledge of the French language, especially vis-à-vis foreigners, but that ordinary people had little affinity for it and knew even less about it.<sup>40</sup>

## 7. Immigrants

In theory, Dutch-in-the-making was the most obvious language for most of the inhabitants of the Republic. Yet, in reality the Northern Netherlands can be considered to have been to have been a multilingual society, where French, German, English, Danish, Norwegian, Scottish, Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, Italian, and Yiddish were in use, because huge minorities practicing these languages had settled in the provinces and cities, not only in the main province, maritime Holland, but also, particularly those coming from Germany, in the provinces of the interior. Because language is the preeminent instrument for social interaction, no immigrant can avoid language contact with those around him who speak a different tongue. It is precisely for this reason that linguistic practice is a very sensitive topic both for the immigrants and for the receiving community. It refers directly to the social culture and the sense of identity of the groups in question

<sup>39</sup> FRIJHOFF, Willem: «Crisis of modernising? Hypothesen over de ontwikkeling van het voortgezet en hoger onderwijs in Holland in de achttiende eeuw», *Holland. Regionaal-historisch tijdschrift*, 17 (1985), pp. 37-56.

<sup>40</sup> Examples and quotes from MURRIS, R.: *La Hollande et les Hollandais au XVII<sup>e</sup> et au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles vus par les Français*, Paris, Champion, 1925. Murriss underestimates, by the way, the penetration of French into the middle classes through the network of the French Schools and through self-study with the numerous textbooks.

and, as such, forms one of the basic instruments for processes of identification, assimilation, and integration. This multilateral language contact can of course take different forms. To name some of them:

1. the unconditional transition to the standard language of the receiving community;
2. full conservation of one's own language;
3. the simple use of this language in situations in which the group identity is threatened;
4. forms of semi-communication between related languages in which everyone keeps speaking his own language at a simplified level that guarantees mutual understanding;
5. finally, all forms of linguistic mixture such as dialects, pidgin (a simplified linguistic communication by speakers who don't share a common language), creolization (the creation of a new fixed language variant through mixing languages), or koineization (adaptation of the spoken language through language contact between speakers of language variants that in principle can understand each other).<sup>41</sup>

Foreign immigration to the province of Holland alone — which in its best years had less than one million inhabitants — has added up to some 500 or even 600,000 people during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Between 1600 and 1800, no less than 36% of the grooms and 21% of the brides who had their marriage registered in the city of Amsterdam (230,000 inhabitants in the first quarter of the eighteenth century), had been born outside the Dutch Republic. In absolute numbers, we are talking a little over 183,000 young immigrants listed in the marriage registers.<sup>42</sup> However, Dutch language use was not their only way of integration. There was a great number of private French Schools for those who could afford it. Although these schools rooted in the network of late medieval and early renaissance international relations, their number and importance were greatly enhanced by the immigration waves of the late sixteenth century. After the 1580s, at least 150,000 new, often French-speaking citizens of the Republic, among whom many young, unmarried boys and girls, were refugees from the Southern Netherlands for confessional or political reasons, and a century later some 40.000 Huguenots came from France. Although the public religion of the new Dutch Republic was Calvinism, the immigration waves included Lutherans, Catholics, Baptists and Jews, not to forget the many sailors from Scandinavia and the soldiers from the Holy Roman Empire, France, England, or Scotland, or the Puritan exiles from England.

<sup>41</sup> For this last term see: KERSWILL, Paul: «Koineization as Language Change,» in CHAMBERS, J. K.; TRUDGILL, P. & SCHILLINGS-ESTES, N. (eds.): *The Handbook of Language Variation and Change*, Oxford & Malden, MA, Blackwell, 2002, pp. 669-702; a case study by KERSWILL, Paul & WILLIAMS, Ann: «Creating a New Town Koine: Children and Language Change in Milton Keynes», *Language in Society*, 29 (2000), pp. 65-115.

<sup>42</sup> HART, S.: *Geschrift en getal: een keuze uit de demografisch-, economisch-, en sociaal-historische studiën op grond van Amsterdamse en Zaanse archivalia, 1600-1800*, Dordrecht: Historische Vereniging Holland, 1976, p. 144, table 10. For female migration see: KUIJPERS, Erika & POL, Lotte van de: «Poor women's Migration to the City. The Attraction of Amsterdam Health Care and Social Assistance in Early Modern Times», *Journal of Urban History*, 32:1 (November 2005), pp. 44-60.

Nevertheless, altogether most of the immigrants were Germans: Lutherans or Calvinists, of course, but also economic migrants like the Catholic peddlers called «*bovenlanders*» (i.e., coming from the highlands above the sea level), since they normally hailed from Northwest-Germany, in particular the Westphalian borderlands. They traveled the countryside with their wares and in the late nineteenth century became the founders of the huge nineteenth- and twentieth-century Dutch department stores C&A Brenninkmeyer, Vroom & Dreesmann, Peek & Cloppenburg, Voss, etc. They cultivated their Catholic religion, their common subculture and their Westphalian dialect for years to come, like the Walloon refugees did with French at the end of the sixteenth century, and the Huguenots a century later.<sup>43</sup> The Sephardic community of Amsterdam is another good example of how multilingualism functioned in practice: Portuguese was its official language, Spanish the language of writing, Hebrew the language of prayer, and Dutch the language for interactions with Christians.

The German regional languages were frequently the object of ridicule in popular comedies and satires about de «*poepen*» or «*moffen*» as the poor German migrants were pejoratively referred to in those days. In his farce *The Stepmother* (1684), Thomas Asselyn portrays penniless Westphalians as vagrants who fleece their host. Anti-German sentiment was also clearly expressed in frequently reprinted popular prints and books starring naive or stupid German peasant immigrants, often in Westphalian dialect. Given layout and font, they were clearly intended for a broad working-class audience.

Next to immigration, the second reason why the multilingual society remained a reality was that daily linguistic life was still for a large part determined by the regional languages, such as Frisian in the North, Lower Saxon in the East, and Zeeland or Brabant dialects in the Southern Provinces.<sup>44</sup> In the States General, there were complaints that the Western representatives did not understand their Eastern colleagues, though these kinds of communication problems must

<sup>43</sup> FRIJHOFF, Willem: «Modèles éducatifs et circulation des hommes: les ambiguïtés du Second Refuge», in BOTS, J. A. H. et al. (eds.): *La Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes et les Provinces-Unies*, 1685. *Colloque international du Tricentenaire, Leyde, 1-3 avril 1985*, Amsterdam & Maarssen, APA-Holland University Press, 1986, pp. 51-75; LOONEN, P. L. M.: «The Influence of the Huguenots on the Teaching of French in the Dutch Republic during the 17<sup>th</sup> Century», in DE CLERQ: *Grammaire et enseignement du français*, pp. 317-333; FRIJHOFF, Willem: «Uncertain Brotherhood: The Huguenots in the Dutch Republic», in RUYMBEKE, Bertrand van & SPARKS, Randy J. (eds.): *Memory and Identity. The Huguenots in France and the Atlantic Diaspora*, Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003, pp. 128-171; VAN DER LINDEN, David: *Experiencing Exile: Huguenot Refugees in the Dutch Republic, 1680-1700*, Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015.

<sup>44</sup> FRIJHOFF & SPIES: 1650: *Hard-won Unity*, 227-230. To understand linguistic reality in Overijssel during the seventeenth century and the possible effects of religious politics on the pronunciation of the regional language see: RHEENEN, Pieter van: *In Holland staat een 'Huis': Kloeke expansietheorie met speciale aandacht voor de dialecten van Overijssel*, Amsterdam, Stichting Neerlandistiek VU/Münster, Nodus Publikationen, 2006; and HEEROMA, K.: «De taalgeschiedenis van Overijssel», in B. H. Slicher van BATH et al. (eds.): *Geschiedenis van Overijssel*, Zwolle, Waanders, 1979, pp. 69-82.

gradually have diminished, as the Western Dutch variant by and large became the standard language of the upper class.

Thirdly, various forms of *lingua franca* in different areas of social life made plurilingualism a necessity for many residents when interacting with each other. Think of trade, crafts, the sciences, war and defense, administration, culture, or religion. In fact, French traditionally was the language of continental trade. Indeed, France was the most centrally located country in Western Europe, and it had by far the most populous territory, with an enormous economic potential and a similar political weight.<sup>45</sup> It is no coincidence that the French King felt entitled to a ‘universal monarchy’ (*monarchie universelle*), as he defined his power himself. His language, in the *langue d’oil* version that was being spoken in the Northern core regions, asserted itself as the dominant variant in international communication, despite the success of other language variants in the Southern, prosperous regions of the *langue d’oc*. French had also been the language of the Burgundian court in Brussels and of the first Habsburg monarchs.<sup>46</sup> Starting with the revival of French culture in the Renaissance, under Francis I (King from 1515 to 1547), but especially from the second half of the sixteenth century onwards, French gradually advanced as the language of the new French court culture, replacing slowly but surely the Italian and Spanish court culture in Europe. In the process, French became the working language of international relations. Paris, Fontainebleau, then Versailles and Marly became inevitable poles of *civilité*, civilization and culture.<sup>47</sup> From this linguistic situation, the French themselves, eventually, derived a pretention of universality of their language that they based on its intrinsic superiority — like Simon Stevin had earlier postulated about Low German. The zenith of the triumph of the French language as cultural *lingua*

<sup>45</sup> See for what follows FRIJHOFF, Willem: «Verfransing? Franse taal en Nederlandse cultuur tot in de Revolutietijd», *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 104 (1989), pp. 592–609; «L’usage du français en Hollande, xviiie-xixe siècles, propositions pour un modèle d’interprétation», *Études de linguistique appliquée*, nouvelle série, 78 (1990), pp. 17–26; «Le Français en Hollande après la Paix de Westphalie: langue d’immigrés, langue d’envahisseurs, ou langue universelle?», *Documents pour l’histoire du français langue étrangère ou seconde*, 18 (1996), pp. 329–350; FRIJHOFF, Willem & REBOULLET, André (eds.): *Histoire de la diffusion et de l’enseignement du français dans le monde* [special issue of *Le Français dans le monde: recherches et applications*], Paris, Le Français dans le monde, 1998. Earlier works dealing with the Low Countries remain relevant as well, especially BRUNOT, Ferdinand: *Histoire de la langue française des origines à nos jours*, V, Paris, Armand Colin, 1917, pp. 194–274; VIII (1934), pp. 189–229; RIEMENS, K. J.: *Esquisse historique de l’enseignement du français en Hollande du xviiie au xixe siècle*, Leiden, Sijthoff, 1919.

<sup>46</sup> BOONE, Marc: «Langue, pouvoirs et dialogue. Aspects linguistiques de la communication entre les ducs de Bourgogne et leur sujets flamands», *Revue du Nord*, 91 (2001), pp. 9–33.

<sup>47</sup> ELIAS, Norbert: *Die höfische Gesellschaft: Untersuchungen zur Soziologie des Königtums und der höfischen Aristokratie*, Darmstadt & Neuwied, Luchterhand, 1969 [*The Court Society*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford, Blackwell, 1982)]; MONTANDON, Alain (ed.): *Pour une histoire des traités de savoir-vivre en Europe*, Clermont-Ferrand, Association des publications de la Faculté des Lettres, 1994; MONTANDON, Alain (ed.): *L’honnête homme et le dandy*, Tübingen, Narr, 1993; MUCHEMBLED, Robert: *La société policée. Politique et politesse en France du xviiie au xxe siècle*, Paris, Éd. du Seuil, 1998.

franca of Europe was reached in 1784, when Antoine de Rivarol (1753-1801) held a lecture at the Berlin academy with the title *L'Universalité de la langue française*. He frankly declared the moral superiority of the French language and its supremacy vis-à-vis other modern languages: «Of all the languages, French is the only one that has integrity attached to its genius. Dependable, social, rational, this is no longer the French language, it is the human language».<sup>48</sup> Yet, this was also the moment in which the quasi-monopoly of the French language among the European *Bildungsbürgertum* started giving way to German for literature, theology, technology, pedagogy and the sciences, and to English for novelists, philosophers, economists and social reformers.

## 8. Education in foreign languages

From early on, French dominated all other modern foreign languages taught in the Low Countries, even in the Dutch-speaking provinces in the North.<sup>49</sup> There were large numbers of language instructors, interpreters and translators. They either established themselves, added these skills to a different profession, or joined a schoolmasters or merchants guild. The enduring spread of French as a language of communication in the Dutch-speaking countries is eloquently illustrated in the sales numbers of language textbooks for merchants, administrators and travelers, by authors hailing from the Southern Netherlands such as Gabriel Meurier (c. 1530-1610?), Peeter Heyns (1537-1598) and his son Zacharias (1566-1630).<sup>50</sup> The Fall of Antwerp in 1585 caused a substantial flow of skilled refugees,

<sup>48</sup> RIVAROL: *De l'universalité de la langue française. Discours qui a remporté le prix à l'Académie de Berlin en 1784* (2d ed.), Berlin & Paris, Prault & Bailley, 1785, p. 85: «Elle est de toutes les langues la seule qui ait une probité attachée à son génie. Sûre, sociale, raisonnable, ce n'est plus la langue française, c'est la langue humaine». Modern edition: RIVAROL, Antoine de: *De l'universalité de la langue française*, Texte établi et commenté par Th. Susan, Paris & Toulouse, H. Didier, 1930.

<sup>49</sup> A simple but clear synthesis of the development of (foreign) language education is provided by: CARAVOLAS, Jean-Antoine: *Le Point sur l'histoire de l'enseignement des langues* (~3000-1950), Anjou, Québec, Centre Éducatif et Culturel, 1995. For the Netherlands; BAARDMAN, G. G.: «Geschiedenis van het onderwijs in vreemde talen tot het einde van de XIXe eeuw», *Levende Talen* (1953), pp. 525-545; ELS, Theo J. M. van & KNOPS, Mathieu F.: «The History of the Teaching of Foreign Languages in the Low Countries», *Historiographica Linguistica*, 15:1-2 (1988), pp. 289-316; and from the point of view of an analysis of the pedagogical methods: NOORDEGRAAF, Jan & VONK, Frank (eds.): *Five Hundred Years of Foreign Language Teaching in the Netherlands 1450-1950*, Amsterdam, Stichting Neerlandistiek VU/Münster, Nodus, 1993. For a study that addresses the issue on a European scale: SCHRÖDER, Konrad (ed.): *Fremdsprachenunterricht 1500-1800* [Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, 52], Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1992.

<sup>50</sup> Merchant manuals also often include an appendix with practical dialogues and a useful targeted vocabulary list: HOOCK, JOCHEN & JEANNIN, Pierre (eds.): *Ars mercatoria. Handbücher und Traktate für den Gebrauch des Kaufmanns/Manuels et traités à l'usage des merchants*, 1470-1820. *Eine analytische Bibliographie* (3 vols.), Paderborn etc., Schöningh, 1991-2001. About the family Heyns: NNBW, II (1912), pp. 574-579; MOES, E. W. & BURGER JR., C. P.: *De Amsterdamsche boekdrukkers en uitgevers in de zestiende eeuw* Amsterdam, Van Langenhuysen, 1900-1915, IV, pp. 174-285; DIBBETS, G. R. W.: «Peeter Heyns' Cort onderwijs: een schoolboek voor het onderwijs in

for confessional as well as economic reasons, who submerged the market for intellectual positions in the Dutch Republic. Among them were many French-speaking Walloons, but also hundreds of bilingual Flemish schoolmasters, who gave the dissemination of the French language a tremendous boost.<sup>51</sup> We should not simply reduce the success of the refugees to the effects of the labor market, however. They also played an active role in public life, in the Chambers of Rhetoric, in church councils, in promoting singing and theater in public, and in the didactic distribution of the moral norms of Erasmian humanism. The various languages that they spoke and the cultures that were attached to them turned the refugees into the avant-garde of a tolerant world image open to diversity and pluralism.<sup>52</sup>

The French-Dutch *Vocabulaire*, a dictionary from 1511 by Noël de Berlaimont (d. 1531), was in the early modern period probably the most frequently printed textbook. Until 1759, there were more than 150 known editions in many variations.<sup>53</sup> From 1557 onwards, there are editions in the Northern Netherlands: first in Rotterdam, then in Delft, Flushing, Middelburg, The Hague, Leiden, and Amsterdam. Its spread across many cities not only documents the growing trade contacts between France and the early Dutch Republic, but also the rise of French as a language of culture. Indeed, this was not a simple, common French-Dutch dictionary.<sup>54</sup> The *Vocabulaire* was a practical, pocket-size guide meant to be carried on the person. Besides an alphabetic dictionary, it contained pronunciation rules, dialogues, model letters, contracts, and even a few prayers. Over time, other ma-

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de Franse taal uit de tweede helft van de zestiende eeuw», *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde*, 99:2 (1983), pp. 85-107; DIBBETS, G. R. W.: «Peeter Heyns: een 'ghespraecksaem man, van goede gheleertheit», *Meesterwerk*, 1 (1994), pp. 3-15; MEEUS, Hubert: «Zacharias Heyns: een 'drucker' die nooit drukte», *De Gulden Passer*, 23 (1995), pp. 107-127.

<sup>51</sup> BRIELS, Jan: *De Zuidnederlandse immigratie in Amsterdam en Haarlem omstreeks 1572-1630* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Utrecht, 1976); BRIELS, J. G. C. A.: «Zuidnederlandse onderwijskrachten in Noord-Nederland 1570-1630», *Archief voor de geschiedenis van de katholieke kerk in Nederland*, 14 (1972), pp. 89-169, 277-298; 15 (1973), pp. 103-104, 263-297; BRIELS, J.: *Zuidnederlanders in de Republiek 1572-1630: Een demografische en cultuurhistorische studie*, Sint-Niklaas, Danthe, 1985; FRIJHOFF, Willem: «Migrations religieuses dans les Provinces-Unies avant le second Refuge», *Revue du Nord*, 80, no. 326-327 (July-December 1998), pp. 573-598.

<sup>52</sup> This is what J. M. J. L. NOËL argues in: «L'école des filles et la philosophie du mariage dans les Pays-Bas du XVII<sup>e</sup> et du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles», in *Werkgroep Achttiende Eeuw, Onderwijs en opvoeding in de achttiende eeuw*, Amsterdam & Maarssen, APA-Holland University Press, 1983, pp. 137-153.

<sup>53</sup> RIEMENS, K. J.: «Hoe men in de zestiende eeuw in Nederland Fransch leerde», *Paedagogische Studiën*, 10 (1929), pp. 113-118; AUBERT, Françoise: «Apprentissage des langues étrangères et préparation au voyage. À propos d'un manuel plurilingue attribué à Berlaimont», *Documents pour l'histoire du français langue étrangère ou seconde*, no. 11 (July 1993), pp. 14-20; COLOMBO TIMELLI, Maria: «Noël de Berlaimont», *La lettre de SIHFLES*, 8, no. 32 (December 1996), pp. 4-6.

<sup>54</sup> A substantial amount of similar French language texts (including those of Meurier and Berlaimont) is listed in the auction catalogue of Cornelis Claesz of Amsterdam, 1610, see: SELM, B. van: *Een menigte treffelijke Boecken. Nederlandse boekhandelscatalogi in het begin van de zeventiende eeuw*, Utrecht, Hes, 1987, pp. 234-242, 275-283. See also the classic, though by now somewhat outdated study of RIEMENS, K. J.: *Esquisse historique de l'enseignement du français en Hollande du XVII<sup>e</sup> au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Leiden: Sijthoff, 1919.

terials were added such as pre-scripted conversations for the road, the market, or the tavern, further explanations about syntax, spelling, or pronunciation, tables for verb conjugations, proper conduct rules, and advice for traveling students. It quickly turned into a polyglot instrument for practical plurilingualism. In the Antwerp edition of 1576 there were already six languages, in the Leiden edition of 1593 there were seven —Dutch, French, Latin, German, Spanish, Italian and English— and from the 1598 Delft edition onwards, to which Portuguese had been added, there were a total of eight languages. Outside of the Netherlands, Breton, Bohemian or Polish were sometimes added. The need to learn several languages simultaneously was reflected in the qualifications that the important language teachers attributed to themselves, such as the former Huguenot minister and refugee Barthélemy Piélat (c.1635-1681), who about 1680 marketed himself as a «professeur de langues hébraïque, grecque, latine, italienne, française, allemande, hollandaise et anglaise».<sup>55</sup>

## 9. Language knowledge and Frenchification

The early modern invasion of the Dutch Republic by French language use has, on a very early stage already, been typified and opposed as a ‘Frenchification’ of Dutch society. Although the *topos* of the Frenchification must be critically examined, French was certainly spoken in a great many places, social groups, and occasions, including by the tens of thousands French-speaking refugees at the end of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Walloons and the Huguenots. As French-speakers, they were supposedly able to communicate with each other, even though the West-Flemish hybrid forms of Dutch and French, the Hainaut accent, and *a fortiori* the tricky dialect of Liège, must have been unintelligible to many fellow-refugees and still more to a simple Dutchman who had learned French from a textbook. Cultured-French functioned as their *lingua franca*, and already in 1586, the Walloon refugees received their own church organization, with a separate, autonomous Reformed Synod. In fact, they concentrated in specific neighborhoods, stayed and married among themselves, and gave shape to a specific, French-minded subculture.

Given the prestige of French as international language of culture, and as *lingua franca*, the relative autonomy of the rather highly skilled French-speaking sector of the population contributed to a status increase of the French language. Status seekers eagerly joined the bandwagon to distinguish themselves from the common people. In addition to being the church of the native French-speakers and their Dutch offspring, the Walloon Church, with its slowly dwindling numbers, became in the eighteenth century also the ‘posh’ church, where the small,

<sup>55</sup> *L'Anti-Grammaire du Sieur Barthélemy Piélat*, Amsterdam, Jean Jeanson de Waesberghe, 1672, second edition 1681, cited by VAN STRIEN-CHARDONNEAU & KOK-ESCALE: «Van Parival tot Baudet», 4. About the members of the immigrant family Piélat see: NNBW, V (1921), pp. 501-506.



French-schooled upper crust of Dutch society could mark itself as cultural ‘higher’ than those who attended the Dutch-speaking Reformed Church.<sup>56</sup> Countless satires of the seventeenth century ridicule already the linguistic effects of this social and cultural drive for status. Andries Péls (1631-1681), for instance, member of the Amsterdam literary society *Nil Volentibus Arduum* that fought for quality improvement of the Dutch language, represents in his comedy *De Verwaande Hollandsche Franschman* (The Arrogant Dutch Frenchman) a Dutch citizen whose name unsurprisingly is François. This hero not only follows French fashion, uses French bastardized words and spews half-baked French sentences, but also is turned on by noble titles, as is fully appropriate for an inhabitant of the hated France of the Sun King.<sup>57</sup> Finally, French language and French culture, but Francophile cosmopolitanism as well, were seen as the major wreckers of patriotic morals. During the eighteenth century, the critics of the many Dutch *Spectator* journals made the growing ‘Frenchification’ the focus of a real identity crisis of the national community, until the Napoleonic adventure reset the debate, and French was finally reduced to its utilitarian and cultural basic functions.<sup>58</sup>

How seriously we should take the charges of Frenchification of the Dutch society remains difficult to judge. Indeed, during the last quarter of the eighteenth century France turned into a political opponent. At that point, the entire discussion became imbedded in political, moral and ideological opinions. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the French language was widespread among the upper crust. During the seventeenth century, a balance had developed between the use of Dutch and French in people-to-people contact. As merchant apprentices, Dutch youth moved to the French trade cities, first to Paris, Rouen, La Rochelle and Nantes, later also to Bordeaux and Lyons, where large Dutch colonies developed, sometimes with as many as a few thousand inhabitants, rivaling the Scottish colony in Rotterdam, or the English ones in Middelburg and in Amsterdam. Conversely, French youth came to the Republic to learn Dutch, given its importance as a trade language.

## 10. Competing languages

However, by and by competing languages emerged. German and English were not often actively taught in the lower schools of the Dutch Republic. Few French schools included English in their curriculum, but in the larger cities one could find English language teachers here and there. Occasionally teachers from

<sup>56</sup> FRIJHOFF, Willem: «Uncertain Brotherhood: The Huguenots in the Dutch Republic,» in RUYMBEKE, Bertrand van & SPARKS, RANDY J. (eds.): *Memory and Identity. The Huguenots in France and the Atlantic Diaspora*, Columbia, SC, University of South Carolina Press, 2003, pp. 128-171.

<sup>57</sup> ARDUUM, Nil Volentibus: *De Verwaande Hollandsche Franschman*, Amsterdam, Albertus Magnus, 1684.

<sup>58</sup> FRIJHOFF: «Verfransing?», pp. 592-609; BUIJNSTERS, P. J.: *Spectatoriale geschriften*, Utrecht, Hess, 1991, pp. 85-88.

other schools knew English as well. Besides, hither and thither there were small, private English one-man schools, or boarding schools for the rich, but these were seldom long lived. Nevertheless, a steady flow of English textbooks and dictionaries were being produced, and instruction opportunities presented themselves at the English and Scottish churches in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. After the Dutch Revolt, many inhabitants from the Northern and Southern Netherlands, who had escaped Alva's repression and fled to England where they spent a good ten to fifteen years, now returned to the young Dutch Republic. Supported by the policy of the English crown, they functioned there, thanks to their English language skills, as cultural brokers of English culture and religion, especially of its Puritan spiritualism.<sup>59</sup>

Still, passive knowledge of the English language must have been many times greater than can be anticipated from such data. There were Englishmen and Scots in the communities of *merchant adventurers* in the cities of Holland and Zeeland, but also in the foreign regiments of the Dutch army in the many garrison towns of the non-maritime, interior provinces. Moreover, the religious persecution in England and Scotland repeatedly drove considerable groups to the Dutch Republic, including the royal family itself during Cromwell's Republic.<sup>60</sup> Contrary to the Lutherans, the Baptists and the Catholics, they were not obliged to keep a low profile because of their religion, since their church communities were considered Sister Churches of the Dutch Reformed Church, and they could openly promote themselves. In the Scottish church at Rotterdam, English was spoken in the Scottish variant. Because of the language barrier, the Scottish church council, and not the magistrate, mediated when there were conflicts within the Scottish community. The quotes in the church minutes clearly show that Scottish English remained the everyday language of the many Scots in Rotterdam, and that most of them were unable to express themselves in understandable Dutch.<sup>61</sup>

Immigration from the German states, whether for religious reasons or not, created a far more substantial and permanent flow, not only into the major cities in Holland and Utrecht, but more precisely into the eastern and northern parts of the country. Here, the continuum of the cultural space and the linguistic unity of the Eastern Netherlands with the German borderland played a considerable role.

<sup>59</sup> EBER, Raingard: *Niederländische Exulanten im England des 16. und frühen 17. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, Duncker & Humblot, 1996; SCHONEVELD, Cornelis W.: *Intertraffic of the Mind: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Anglo-Dutch Translation with a Checklist of Books Translated from English into Dutch, 1600-1700*, Leiden, Brill, 1983; id.: *Sea-Changes. Studies in Three Centuries of Anglo-Dutch Cultural Transmission*, Amsterdam & Atlanta, GA, Rodopi, 1996; HOF, W.J. op 't: *Engelse piëtistische geschriften in het Nederlands, 1598-1622*, Rotterdam, Lindenberg, 1987.

<sup>60</sup> SPRUNGER, Keith L.: *Dutch Puritanism. A History of English and Scottish Churches in the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Leiden, Brill, 1982; id.: *Trumpets from the Tower. English Puritan Printing in the Netherlands, 1600-1640*, Leiden, Brill, 1994.

<sup>61</sup> CATTERALL, William Douglas: *Community Without Borders: Scots Migrants and the Changing Face of Power in the Dutch Republic, c.1600-1690*, Boston & Leiden, Brill, 2002; GARDNER, Ginny: *The Scottish Exile Community in the Netherlands, 1660-1690: 'Shaken together in the bag of affliction'*, East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 2004.

Many Germans, in fact, came from close-by, from East and North-Friesland, Westphalia and Lower Saxony, Cleves and Jülich, the Rhineland and the Palatinate, not to speak of those who had fled the disasters of the war, such as the destruction of Magdeburg in 1631. The metropolis of Cologne, always a city with a quasi-mythical status, may be considered the geographical pivot of the flows of German migrants and refugees. Until the early seventeenth century, when the cultural orientation of the Dutch gradually turned toward the West, Cologne had been the cultural capital of the Eastern Netherlands. For the many Dutch Catholics, about one third of the population of the Dutch Republic, Cologne remained an important center of culture, religion and education, next to the large cities of Ghent in Flanders, and of Antwerp, Louvain, Brussels and Mechelen (Mechlin or Malines) in Brabant.

Groningen was considered the sister city of Emden, and towns such as Cleves, Emmerich, Wesel, Münster, Duisburg and Düsseldorf were within reach for the average Dutchman. The language problem only played a minor role, since the regional language stayed close to Dutch for a long time, and there had continuously been Dutch communities in these cities. The still Dutch-speaking village of Kavelaer became, in the second half of the seventeenth century, a pilgrimage destination for hundreds of thousands of Catholics from the Netherlands, a getaway destination par excellence.<sup>62</sup> In addition, next to the Germans who passed through the Dutch Republic, Germans made up a substantial part of the regiments of the Dutch army, and populated, with their wives and children, the garrison towns near the frontier.

In almost all of these Dutch and German regions, some variety of Lower Saxon was spoken, or a more or less understandable form of Low German.<sup>63</sup> However, since High German gradually imposed itself as a standard cultural language in these regions as well, German travelers found themselves dissuaded from speaking Dutch since, in their eyes, this language was rather close to the hardly prestigious Lower German vernacular. They preferred communicating in High German or French.<sup>64</sup> In fact, in the course of the eighteenth century, traditional *francophilie* turned into an increasing admiration for German culture, scholarship and science. We see this turnaround in the remarkable breakthrough that German literature, philosophy, pedagogy, and subsequently medicine and the sciences experienced in the Netherlands during the second half of the eighteenth century.<sup>65</sup> German modernity, embodied in Leibniz, Wolff and Kant,

<sup>62</sup> WINGENS, Marc: *Over de grens. De bedevaart van de katholieke Nederlanders in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw*, Nijmegen, SUN, 1994.

<sup>63</sup> For the status change of Low German see SANDERS, Willy: *Sachsensprache, Hansesprache, Plattdeutsch: sprachgeschichtliche Grundzüge des Niederdeutschen*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982.

<sup>64</sup> BIENTJES, Julia: *Holland und der Holländer im Urteil deutscher Reisender 1400-1800*, Groningen, Wolters, 1967, pp. 139-145.

<sup>65</sup> For translations from the German and for reviews of German titles see EIJNATTEN, Joris van: «Paratexts, Book Reviews, and Dutch Literary Publicity. Translations from German into Dutch, 1760-1796», *Wolfenbütteler Notizen zur Buchgeschichte*, 25 (2000), pp. 95-127; id.: «History, Reform

Campe and Basedow, Lavater and Gellert, Klopstock and Lessing, Goethe and Schiller, sharply contrasted with the tradition-bound culture of the French that had become a bit worn-out.<sup>66</sup> German pietism takes then over from English puritanism, the pleasure- and study trip to the German states replaces the *grand tour* through Italy or the *petit tour* through France, and the newly founded German universities constitute real centers of innovation. Halle was since the end of the seventeenth century the first university in Europe where instruction took place in the vernacular language, and in Göttingen new academic fields developed, particularly the emerging study of ethnology, that was to play an important role in the identity building of the future kingdom of the Netherlands. These were the universities where young Dutchmen, who later would head the innovation process of their national culture, registered *en masse*.<sup>67</sup>

## II. Epilogue

Let us sum up. In the multilingual context of the big and rising cities, with plenty of migrants speaking foreign languages, and against the background of international scholarship and expanding elite culture, the seventeenth century was already buzzing with conversations about the use, the usefulness, and the form of the Dutch language on the one hand, and the place and role of other languages, classical as well as modern ones, on the other hand. This fact relativizes the importance of monolingualism as a national characteristic. The Dutch traditionally have been sloppy with their language, and they have never placed their life in the service of *one* single language. It is not the linguistic product «Dutch» itself that they consider as their heritage, but rather the way in which they deal with language in contact with others, in other words, forms of multilingualism and plurilingualism. The Dutch approach their linguistic culture rather from a process-orientated and functional point of view, not in a patrimonial or historici-

und Aufklärung. German Theological Writing and Dutch Literary Publicity in the Eighteenth Century», *Zeitschrift für neuere Theologiegeschichte/Journal for the History of Modern Theology*, 7 (2000), pp. 173-204.

<sup>66</sup> SPOELSTRA, H. A. C.: *De invloed van de Deutsche letterkunde op de Nederlandsche in de tweede helft van de achttiende eeuw*, Amsterdam, H.J. Paris, 1931; INGEN, Ferdinand van: *Holländisch-deutsche Wechselbeziehungen in der Literatur des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Bonn, Presse- und Kulturabteilung der Kgl. Niederländischen Botschaft, 1981; JORDAN, Lothar: «Niederländische Lyrik und ihre deutsche Rezeption in der frühen Neuzeit», *Wolfenbütteler Bibliotheksinformationen*, 25: 3-4 (2000), pp. 82-83; GEMERT, Guillaume van & GEUENICH, Dieter (eds.): *Gegenseitigkeiten. Deutsch-niederländische Wechselbeziehungen von der frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart*, Essen, Pomp Verlag, 2003.

<sup>67</sup> For the second part of the eighteenth century, see KOUWENBERG, Annemieke: «'De kennis der Deutsche taal is, derhalven, voor een Geleerden, hedendaags onontbeerlijk'. De Hollandse Maatschappij der Wetenschappen en Felix Meritis als bemiddelaars tussen de Nederlandse en Duitse wetenschappen», *De Achttiende Eeuw*, special issue *Ger-manie*, 40:1 (2008), pp. 51-63.

zing sense, as is most often the case for the French, German, English and Spanish language.

Present-day standard Dutch is therefore substantially further removed from its seventeenth-century source than, for example, French, or Spanish, that have a much higher symbolic significance for the national identity and are being monitored, cultivated and cherished by national institutions. The Dutch, on the other hand, consider multilingualism, with linguistic adaptations in a diversity of contexts and situations, as an immaterial value that is characteristic of their identity. Their identification with the 'project Netherlands' does not rule out identification with other linguistic areas. Quite on the contrary, their societal project itself can make an abundant use of input from other languages, without affecting the identity of the national community.

