



# The book in the Low Countries: New perspectives, hidden collections

21-22 June 2017 | IHR | Wolfson Conference Suite



## Conference abstracts

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**Reinier Salverda** (UCL and Fryske Akademy)

### *Dutch Books in London Libraries - Early beginnings and future perspectives*

In my presentation to the IHR conference on 21-22 June 2017, I will start from the following points. First, from a global historical perspective, the Dutch Republic was the Bookshop of the World, providing a vital service with its book production and book trade, and making a very significant contribution to the worldwide dissemination, including to England, of political knowledge and intellectual goods. Secondly, I will be speaking from the perspective of Memory of the World, a global UNESCO Programme in the domain of Documentary Heritage, which over the past 25 years has generated an enormously rich and varied World Register. There is an enormous scope for further nominations, e.g. in cooperation with Curacao and Surinam in the field of slavery, with South Africa around discovery of the dark continent, or with Japan around Siebold House Leiden and Holland Studies in Japan (Rangaku). Thirdly, I should like to say here a few words on scholarly research in the field of Dutch and Flemish Book Collections in London Libraries. For example, the Dutch Church collection at Austin Friars (very valuable, but scattered, would benefit from digital reunification). The aim of further research here should be to make better known what use such Dutch sources and collections – just think of the immense resources in Bloomsbury alone (in pamphlets, medical books, plays, manuscripts, etc etc) - can be for scholars working together in scholarly research across the North Sea. There are, of course, some good examples of such cooperation already, e.g. the Sailing Papers, Letters as Loot, and of course the fine BL tradition of Simoni and Harskamp (NB. Harskamp's Law), or that of Peter Burke and Christopher Joby. Of special importance here is the fact that there are so very many other Dutch book collections in the UK, not just in London, but also in Oxford and Cambridge.

That is to say, that really we are just at the beginning here. Think e.g. of the Bentinck papers in the British Museum – a project that began in the 1920s, but is still very unfinished - as a consequence of which we are faced with a big gap in our knowledge and understanding of this vital century in modern history and the vital role of this crucial figure in it. Starting from this example, I will set out what I began some twenty years ago in my survey of Dutch and Flemish book collections in London libraries, what I have learned, what remains to be done, and how I see the way forward. This on the basis of my Report of January 2000, on Dutch and Flemish Book Collections in London Libraries (unpublished, 22p).

#### Reference

R. Salverda (1997). 'Dutch Books in London Libraries'. In – *The Low Countries. Arts and Society in Flanders and the Netherlands*. A Yearbook 1997-1998. Vol. 5, pp. 271-272.

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## Catherine Wright (University of Oxford)

### *The collection of the Dutch Church library: an expression of an Anglo-Dutch identity?*

This paper investigates the history and development of the library of the Dutch Church at Austin Friars, from the foundation of the collection in the early seventeenth century onwards. It looks at the way in which the library was initially conceived, and how it was augmented by donations from members of the congregation (and others). In particular, it focuses on the minister Cesar Calandrini and his supervision and use of the collection, and argues that the collection can be seen as expressing the situation of the Church and its ministers during Calandrini's tenure (1639-65).

**Catherine Wright** completed her PhD on the history of the Dutch Church at Austin Friars in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in 2016, and is now preparing (parts of) it for publication – among other projects relating to the Dutch presence in early modern England. She works as the Assistant Editor of The English Historical Review.

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## Goran Proot (University of Udine)

### *The pricing strategy for books published by Jan Moretus I (fl. 1589–1610) and his successors at the Officina Plantiniana in the first half of the 17th century*

On 22 September 1610, Jan Moretus I died. The successor to Christopher Plantin, he directed the Officina Plantiniana between 1589 and 1610 and published 702 editions in addition to 554 broadsheets. In order to make the printing business more profitable, Jan Moretus modified the publishing strategy of his former boss. Fewer cheap editions left the workshop to the benefit of more sizeable works and books with fine illustrations for well-off customers, allowing more important returns. In this paper, the publishing strategy of Jan Moretus I will be compared with the one developed by his successors.

This survey is based on a comparison of the prices fixed by the management of the Officina Plantiniana before and after the death of Jan Moretus as they appear in the papers, and characteristics of the editions. It is part of a wider project, i.e., the EMO Book Trade project funded by the ERC about the 16th-c. book trade under the direction of prof. Angela Nuovo at the Università di Udine, Italy.

**Goran Proot** obtained his Ph.D. in Language and Literature at the University of Antwerp with a thesis about Jesuit theater in the Southern Netherlands from the period 1575–1773. He has been director of the Short Title Catalogue Flanders project (stcv), a major bibliographical project documenting all pre-1801 hand-press books published in Flanders. He is editor-in-chief of the book historical journal *De Gulden Passer*, and he is president of the non-profit organization Flanders Book Historical Society. He has worked as curator of rare books at Antwerp University Library (2003–2009). In 2012 he became Andrew W. Mellon Curator of Rare Books at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC. In 2014 he moved to the Bibliothèque Mazarine in Paris, where he directed the digital library and the conservation laboratory. On 1 November 2016, he joined the EMO Book Trade project funded by the ERC about the 16th-c. book trade under the direction of prof. Angela Nuovo at the Università di Udine, Italy. During the coming years, he will survey book prices from the period 1555–1630 in the archives of Christopher Plantin and his successors at the Museum Plantin-Moretus in Antwerp, and French, printed bookseller's catalogues with printed prices. In addition, he surveys layout and design of pre-1801 handpress books.

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**Jaap Geraerts** (University College London)

*The Archaeologies of Reading in Early Modern Europe: enter John Dee*

The Archaeology of Reading (AOR) is an international collaboration between the Centre for Editing Lives and Letters (UCL), Johns Hopkins University and Princeton University which aims to enable the more systematic study of early modern reading practices and strategies through the creation of a digital research environment. First, I will give a brief overview of the outcomes of the first phase of AOR (2014–6) such as the transcription and translation of all annotations made by Gabriel Harvey in thirteen of his books and the development of the underlying IT-infrastructure, including the modification of the IIIF-compliant Mirador viewer. The various functionalities of the viewer make it possible to view and manipulate digital images of a carefully curated corpus of annotated early modern imprints and to construct complex, query-based searches, thus opening up the wealth of data contained in these annotated books for new avenues of scholarly inquiry.

Subsequently, I will chart the new directions into which the second phase (2016–8) project is moving due to the inclusion of a second reader, the Elizabethan polymath John Dee, which has implications both for the scholarly as well as the technical strands of the project. The addition of 21 books annotated by Dee comprise volumes on medieval history, alchemy, astrology/astronomy, and New World discovery, thus greatly expanding the number of topics addressed in the AOR corpus. Many of these books include several technical annotations made by Dee, such as genealogical trees, astronomical charts, tables, and a wide variety of visual marginalia. Moreover, a range of physical annotations are yet another example of the myriad and complex ways in which early modern readers interacted with their books. The challenges posed by Dee's annotations are reflected in the ongoing activities of the AOR team pertaining to the refactoring of the bespoke XML schema and the development of new viewer functionalities relating to internal linking, structured data, Linked Open Data, as well as the integration of RMap.

**Jaap Geraerts** completed his PhD in 2015 (UCL) on the Catholic nobility in Utrecht and Guelders in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He is Research Associate at UCL's Centre for Editing Lives and Letters, spearheading the efforts of a team of graduate student Research Assistants to transcribe, translate, and encode into XML the manuscript marginalia of Gabriel Harvey and John Dee. His research projects revolve around the history of confessional co-existence in the early modern Dutch Republic, and the history of early modern reading practices. Currently he is preparing the manuscript of his forthcoming book, a reworked and expanded version of his dissertation, titled *Patrons of the Old Faith: the Catholic Nobility in Utrecht and Guelders, c. 1580–1702*.

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**Patrick Storme** (Universiteit Antwerpen)

*X-Ray Fluorescence as an analytical tool for studying the copper matrices in the Plantin-Moretus Museum collection*

The collection of the Plantin-Moretus Museum consists of a large variety of historical typographical items. Amongst these are sets of copper matrices, which are the 'dies' for casting lead printing letters ('type'). They are of foremost interest for the research of typography and have been studied thoroughly in the past decades, mainly through visual comparison and enduring research in the Plantin archives and books which were printed with type cast from the matrices.

Until now, there has never been an attempt to apply analytical measuring techniques. The main reason for this is the vast number of matrices (about 20.000 pieces) and the fact that they may not leave the museum nor may they be damaged for destructive analysis. Also, the majority of matrices are made of copper and were never questioned towards possible material variations to differentiate them from each other.



X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) is investigated to provide analytical results on the copper compositions. As a first step, the analytical method was evaluated on a relative small number of matrices (i.e. nearly 1000 pieces) to what level the results may serve as information. Starting from the metal composition of the matrices, multivariate methods including principal component analysis and cluster analysis reveal hidden structures in the data. The compositional similarities or differences are mapped and linked to historical information, allowing to correlate the chemical composition with the makers, time or location of the matrices' production.

Results show that a number of matrices sets show very similar alloy compositions which is coherent to their attribution. Other matrices differ importantly from others and also individual matrices which are added or changed at later times in a given set, were possible to be identified with the used analyses and the statistical methods. When applied to a larger part of the museum collection, this analytical technique could provide further proof for earlier research, draw some question marks upon former findings or bring new correlations at light in the origin and provenance of the matrices. It also can provide an insight in the use of copper throughout the 16-19th century and the evolution of refining techniques in combination with the sources and trade of the used copper.

**Patrick Storme** graduated in 1982 from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp with a masters' degree in gold- and silversmithing. Afterwards he served a six year internship reconstructing the 13th-century Saint-Gertrudis shrine (Nivelles, Belgium), which was partially destroyed during World War II. Throughout this time he became interested in historical gold- and silversmithing techniques and in the conservation-restoration of metal objects. In the early 1990s he co-founded the conservation department at the Royal Academy, where he was responsible for studies in the conservation of metals. He adapted the courses over the years, teaching the craft and systematically incorporating academic standards. The conservation department was integrated in the new Faculty of Design Sciences at the University of Antwerp in 2013 where he is currently undertaking PhD research.

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## **Heleen Wyffels** (KU Leuven)

### *The women of the Bellère family and the making of a printing dynasty in Douai (1593-1711)*

Douai, a town situated in a border region between France and the Habsburg Low Countries, attracted its first printing presses on the occasion of the foundation of a university in 1559. Due to a relatively high percentage of widows at the head of printing houses in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the university town seems at first sight to have been a favorable environment for female printers. Women certainly seemed to have played an important role in the Bellère family. In 1590, the Antwerp printer Balthazar I Bellerus or Bellère moved from his hometown to Douai, where his family would become one of those that dominated the printing scene of the university town. His firm would be in operation for more than a century, spanning two generations. Both Balthasar I Bellère and his son married twice and were succeeded by their respective widows. By examining marriage contracts, wills and other sources, this paper will explore how the women of the Bellère family firmly rooted their printing house in the social fabric of Douai and how they facilitated intergenerational continuation. This analysis will serve as a case study for some reflections on the relationship between printing dynasties and women's work in the university town.

Heleen Wyffels (°1992) studied History at the University of Leuven and graduated in 2014 with a dissertation on widow-printers in sixteenth-century Antwerp. At Maastricht University, she obtained an MA in Arts and Heritage in 2015 with a study on participatory heritage projects. Since 2016, she works in Leuven as a PhD-fellow of the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO), preparing a doctoral thesis on female printers in the Habsburg Low Countries (long 16th and 17th centuries) under the supervision of Violet Soen and Johan Verberckmoes.

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## Marja Smolenaars (Koninklijke Bibliotheek)

*“Printed in London? No, not really. A London publisher and his imports from the Netherlands”*

Samuel Smith was a late 17th, early 18th-century London bookseller and publisher, specialising in scientific books. He was also the official ‘printer’ to the Royal Society, although there is no evidence that he ever printed any book himself. He had many contacts on the Continent from whom he acquired large amounts of books, not just to sell in his shop as foreign reading material, but, as will be shown, also to bring them onto the market as his ‘own’ publications.

By comparing the publications that have his name in the imprint with the same titles with Dutch imprints has brought to light a number of strategies that enabled a London bookseller to extend his publications list without having to take the risk of financing a complete print run. As will be shown in the presentation, the notation in the Short-Title Catalogue Netherlands (STCN) of particular bibliographical features facilitates the discovery of these Anglo-Dutch book trade co-operations.

**Marja Smolenaars** works at the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, the National Library of the Netherlands, as a cataloguer and editor of the Short-Title Catalogue Netherlands. She is also working on a Ph-D thesis at Leiden University about Samuel Smith and the Anglo-Dutch book trade.

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## Steven Van Impe (Hendrik Conscience Heritage Library / University of Antwerp)

*A Provincial Newspaper in an Urban Setting. Reprints of the Gazette van Antwerpen in the Dutch Republic*

In recent decades, the concept of ‘provincial newspapers’ has been developed and applied to publications in the UK, in France and in the Dutch Republic. Provincial newspapers, i.e. newspapers published outside the capital or the main cities, have been alternately described as low-quality reprints of the ‘official’ newspapers or as innovative publications catering to a conscious regional audience – or, indeed, as a mixture of both. Either view, however, is based on the socio-geographical model of center and periphery, with non-provincial newspapers published in a printing metropolis and their provincial counterparts popping up in smaller, more or less rural towns. However, the publication of reprints of the Gazette van Antwerpen in several cities in the Dutch Republic throughout the 18th century suggests that the center-periphery logic of the standard model for ‘provincial newspapers’ hides a more complex dynamic. The Dutch Republic, though economically in decline since the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, was still a highly urbanized society permeated by print culture, and a fertile soil for the Enlightenment. Viewed from Amsterdam or The Hague, the city of Antwerp must have looked like a ruin of its former glory, with almost nothing but cheap devotional literature coming from its many presses. Still, the Antwerp newspaper, devoid of the lively debate found in many Dutch newspapers, was circulated widely in cheap, low-quality reprints reminiscent of the provincial newspapers in other parts of Europe. The case of the Gazette van Antwerpen shows that what is peripheral for one part of the population, can be central to another part.

**Steven Van Impe** (1978) is curator of old books and manuscripts at the Hendrik Conscience Library in Antwerp. He holds a master in History (Ghent University) and a post-graduate in Library and Information Science (Antwerp University). He worked as a bibliographer on the Short Title Catalogus Vlaanderen (STCV) before becoming a curator at the Hendrik Conscience Library in 2007. In his spare time he is writing a PhD on newspapers in 18th century Antwerp. He has published on the history of printing in the Southern Low Countries in the handpress period.

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## **Arthur der Weduwen** (University of St. Andrews)

### *Ephemeral Politics. State Publications in the Dutch Golden Age*

Early modern Dutch regents were determined communicators. Although they have long been characterised as aloof aristocrats, reluctant to interfere in the public sphere, the authorities in the Dutch Republic were responsible for the publication of tens of thousands of ordinances, edicts and announcements throughout the Golden Age. Through these ephemeral documents national, regional and municipal authorities became formidable participants in the Dutch public sphere. Such state publications have long been ignored; neglected as unpersuasive legal texts, left lingering in municipal archives and libraries.

But by analysing the wealth of state publications disseminated throughout the Dutch Republic it becomes clear that these were unlikely bestsellers of their time. Ordinances were published, sold, read, collected, altered, reprinted, discussed and discarded in extraordinary numbers. State publications provided the Dutch public with essential daily literature; and they played a significant part in the consensual bond of governance between the authorities and their citizens. In time, as the authorities committed an increasing number of their policies and decision-making to print, they paved the way for a more informed, and more critical public.

**Arthur der Weduwen** is a researcher at the University of St Andrews and the author of *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers of the Seventeenth Century* (Brill, 2017). His PhD is a study of government attempts to cultivate public opinion in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. He is a long-term associate of the Universal Short Title Catalogue project at St Andrews. He is now engaged (with Andrew Pettegree) on a study of the book culture of the Dutch Golden Age for Yale University Press.

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## **Erik Geleijns** (Museum Meermanno | House of the Book)

### *The forgotten cousins. Elzevier family members in The Hague, 1590-1665*

The Elzevier family is arguably the most studied booksellers' family of the Dutch Republic. Numerous books and articles have been written about the Amsterdam and Leiden branches of the family and their publications. Most of these are concerned with the famous 'Republics' series and other prestigious editions of the Elzeviers. In recent years, the Short-Title Catalogue, Netherlands has unearthed many of the academic publications that probably served as the firm's backbone in the sense that the steady income generated by the printing of dissertations provided the Elzeviers with the opportunity to publish works such as the exuberant *Academie de l'épee* (1630) by Gerard Thibault.

Hardly any attention, however, has so far been paid to the members of the family that occupied a book stall in the 'Great Hall' in the Court of Holland area in the center of the city of The Hague. Not only were they among the very first booksellers to occupy a spot in the hall, but they held numerous auctions from the late sixteenth to mid-seventeenth century. Despite their relative obscurity, they probably ranked among the most important booksellers of The Hague in this period. The paper will look into the Elzeviers' activities in The Hague and their relations to the Leiden/Amsterdam firm.

**Erik Geleijns** worked for many years as a cataloguer for the Short-Title Catalogue, Netherlands. At the moment he is Curator of Early Collections in Museum Meermanno | House of the Book and Collection Specialist in the National Library of the Netherlands, both in The Hague. His research interests are the history of the Hague book trade, especially in the eighteenth century, and material aspects of early printed books.

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