



DUTCH

Dutch Foundation
for Literature

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NON- FICTION

WANDERLUST

MIREILLE BERMAN



In this brochure, the Dutch Foundation for Literature is pleased to present well-written and much talked about non-fiction titles recently published in the Netherlands. More than ever, it has become clear that the world does not stop at national borders: the coronavirus, climate change, international conflicts affect us all, and we are kept abreast of global developments through traditional and new media. The Dutch non-fiction that we present here responds to this. The books are by Dutch authors, but all are international in terms of subject matter and approach: it is non-fiction *from* the Netherlands, but certainly not only of importance *to* the Netherlands.

For example, internationally-renowned virologist Jaap Goudsmit sheds light on the background of the COVID-19 pandemic; historian Beatrice de Graaf explains what motivates terrorists worldwide; and Daniël Verlaan exposes how cross-border internet crime works. But Dutch non-fiction authors also write about the kind of personal issues that keep us awake at night: a devastating feeling of guilt (Jannah Loontjens), loneliness (Marjan Slob), or simply insomnia (Bregje Hofstede). Authors writing about their identity inevitably bring the global dimensions of the post-colonial Netherlands into the picture: Raoul de Jong writes about Suriname, Jan Brokken about Indonesia. And then there is the infectious, naive wanderlust of *The Globetrotters*, who set off in 1911 to make the world a better place.

The Dutch Foundation for Literature is keen to provide a platform for this global exchange. Now that COVID-19 has glued everyone to their screens and the usual conversations at bookfairs in Frankfurt, London and elsewhere are impossible, we are running a monthly Editors' Hour, in which international non-fiction publishers are invited to take a seat around a virtual table to discuss recent acquisitions and publishing developments. No titles are pitched – although this is not forbidden – but conversations are held on how today's world is affecting the book trade. Together with my colleague Michele Hutchison, we cordially invite interested editors to attend one of the following meetings. Please drop us a line at: m.berman@letterenfonds.nl

Raoul de Jong

Jaguarman — My Father, His Father and Other Heroes of Suriname



Dutch title

Jaguarman. Mijn vader, zijn vader en andere Surinaamse helden

Year of publication

2020

Page count

256

Publisher

De Bezige Bij

Rights

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Illustrations

B&W drawings

Raoul de Jong, the son of a Dutch mother and a Surinamese father, has never met his father until he receives an email just before his twenty-eighth birthday asking to meet. Intriguingly his father tells him about a family curse. ‘Please, son, leave it alone,’ his father urges him, but this is enough for the curious writer to do exactly the opposite. One of his ancestors, a medicine man, could transform himself into a jaguar and, gripped by this mystery, Raoul decides to investigate in Suriname.

Raoul’s account of his quest is composed of ten letters to his mysterious ancestor, the Jaguarman. To get in touch with him and his other ancestors, Raoul completes a seven-day ritual upon the advice of Winti priestess, Miss Elly Purperhart. The central questions for the Jaguarman are as follows, ‘My father said you could turn yourself into the strongest, and some say, the cruellest animal in the South American rainforest, the king of the Amazon, the jaguar. How did you do that? Who were you? Where did you come from? How did you get your strength? And why, according to my father, should I leave those powers alone?’

As a reader, you follow this investigation of the Jaguarman’s powers, and if you let yourself be carried away, you fall under his spell – no matter how rationally you begin this book. Along with the main character, you learn about the tumultuous past of the Surinamese people. The history of the former Dutch colony is one of oppression and slavery, but those who search also find a great deal of hope and vitality. Raoul is living proof: his ancestors somehow managed to survive. During this quest, in which he acquaints himself

An inspirational journey into the heart of Suriname

with leading Surinamese writers, thinkers and resistance heroes, he discovers how the jaguar’s power was essential for the country, and comes to understand how much everyone can learn from it.

This is a personal, idiosyncratic book written like an adventure novel, with room for magic and mystery and a hope-filled conclusion. It is also a beautiful ode to the land of his father. De Jong himself says, ‘I didn’t intend my book to be “white homework”, you could read it like that, but you would also be selling it short. You don’t have to have Surinamese roots or be the great-grandson of a plantation owner to take away something from the history of Suriname.’

Raoul de Jong (b. 1984) travelled through West Africa for four months at the age of nineteen, survived New York for four months with fifty dollars in his pocket and walked from Rotterdam to Marseille. He has published six novels, including *De grootsheid van het al* (The Vastness of the Universe, 2013) and *Dagboek van een adolescent* (Diary of an Adolescent, 2018).

‘If there is one book you really need to read this year, it is *Jaguarman*: to learn something essential about uncomfortable truths, to “keep thinking for yourself, even when no one else does” and to embrace your inner beauty.’

Tzum

‘*Jaguarman* is a surprisingly rich book. De Jong pulls you into the story, which is full of offshoots and leaps in time and thought.’

NRC Handelsblad



Photo (© Stephan Vanfleteren)

Bas von Benda-Beckmann

After The Annex — Anne Frank and the Nazi Death Camps



Dutch title

Na het Achterhuis. Anne Frank en de andere onderduikers in de kampen

Year of publication

2020

Page count

416

Sample translation

Available

Publisher

Querido
Martijn Prins
m.prins@singeluitgeverijen.nl

Rights sold

Catalan, Galician, Castilian, French,
German, Portuguese, Russia

When Anne Frank’s father, Otto, returned to Amsterdam from Auschwitz, he sought to uncover what had happened to his wife and two daughters, the Van Pels family and dentist Fritz Pfeffer – the seven companions with whom he had spent two years in hiding before their arrest by the Gestapo. He awaited their return at the train station each day, photographs of them in hand. Tragically, after piecing together the stories of the few eyewitnesses he found, he would be forced to conclude that he alone had survived the Nazi death camps. Seventy-five years later, *After the Annex* takes up Otto Frank’s project and carefully reconstructs each of their camp experiences in the final days of the Holocaust.

On the last page of what might be the best-known war story in all of Western history, Anne Frank and the seven protagonists of her diary joined the faceless mass of Holocaust victims whose individual fates, experiences and memories remain largely unknown. In this first systematic and comprehensive historical account of its kind, author Bas von Benda-Beckmann turns to the wide array of sources available to historians today to restore to each their individuality. Starting with their lives before the war, he retraces their journey from their detainment in Amsterdam to Dutch transit camp Westerbork, at which point their paths diverge as they are deported and transferred between Auschwitz-Birkenau, Bergen-Belsen, Mauthausen, Raguhn, Melk and Neuengamme. He meticulously reconstructs their experiences of forced labour, factory work, disease, hunger, violence, freezing temperatures and death marches.

The first comprehensive study of its kind, on the tragic camp fates of Anne Frank and each of her seven companions in hiding

While many records are still missing, and in many cases were actively destroyed by the Nazis, Von Beckmann makes use of countless eye-witness accounts from people who had been in the same camps at the same time in order to paint a picture of the conditions they would have been subjected to. Such a process is not without its historiographical challenges, which the author addresses, just as he makes new discoveries about their individual fates and interactions in the camps. Von Benda-Beckmann also situates these experiences within a larger historical context and the Nazis’ developing approach to the systematic extermination of European Jewish people.

This is a heart-wrenching and detailed historical account, written in a highly readable and evocative style. The many photographs of documents and details that have been included help bring this disturbing chapter of history to life, taking us the closest yet to the tragedy of these eight individuals.

After the Annex was published in collaboration with the Anne Frank Foundation, where Bas von Benda-Beckmann (b. 1976) currently works as a historian. He received his PhD from the University of Amsterdam, where he wrote his dissertation about the German historiography of the Allied bombings during the Second World War.

Previous books include *The Velsler Affair*, which was shortlisted for the Libris History Prize, and *The Oranjehotel*, which garnered equally high praise. This latest work builds on previous historical research by Erika Prins, Esther Göbel, Gertjan Broek and Teresien da Silva.

‘Everyone should read this unbearable book, though you actually would never recommend it to anyone.’

Trouw

‘Suspenseful is not exactly the right word. It feels inappropriate for a story about the Holocaust. But what do you call a book that you find harder and harder to put down, because you want to know what happens next?’

NRC Handelsblad



Photo (© Lionne Hietberg)

Bregje Hofstede

Getting To Sleep — How an Insomniac Reclaimed the Night



Dutch title

Slaap vatten. Hoe een slapeloze de nacht terugwon

Year of publication

2021

Page count

140

Sample translation

Available

Rights

Das Mag
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Rights sold

Germany

Most animal species do not suffer from insomnia. Only animals living in captivity are known to develop sleeping problems. Horses in cramped stables, for example, sway all night and hardly sleep. Yet one in ten people suffer from chronic insomnia – are our cages too small? Bregje Hofstede, a certified insomniac herself, looks at the root causes of poor sleep in the hope of understanding why she has such trouble with it.

'Sleep was once a god: Morpheus, god of dreams. In paintings, he is a handsome winged young man who takes the sleeper in his arms.' While sleep may be a universal part of life, it remains surprisingly mysterious. We do not really know what it is, why we do it, how it works or why exactly it goes wrong. What are the fault lines running through our nights?

In this literary essay, Bregje Hofstede examines the function of sleep, why we fail at it and how much we are responsible for our own sleeplessness or not. Along the way, she addresses the place dreams have in our lives, why our moods are so dependent on sleep and what a sleep-friendly environment might look like. After trying the usual treatments like melatonin, blue light and exercise, she concludes that insomnia is actually a wake-up call that something greater must change.

This is a personal handbook for the bad sleeper, positioned somewhere between popular science and memoir, written in a confessional literary style. Bregje Hofstede is a master at combining different genres: she gives us access to the intimacy of her inner world, refers to thinkers, sleep psychologists and psychiatrists, philosophers,

A beautifully-written essay that shifts the problem of sleeplessness beyond the sleeper

and smoothly weaves world literature through her own candid reflections. As in her memoir on burnout, she concludes that we cannot separate physical complaints from the demands, social pressure and tensions caused by the world around us. Herbal tea and better curtains may help, but the real solution lies in how we deal with our emotions.

Hofstede's own search for tranquillity ends with a radical decision: she moves from the city to a mountainous region in the French countryside. 'If lifestyle tips don't work, don't change your lifestyle, change your life,' she concludes, noting that though she has made this decision for herself, she doesn't want to impose it on others.

Bregje Hofstede (b. 1988) is a writer and journalist, whose debut novel *The Sky Above Paris* received excellent reviews and was translated into German and Danish. She followed this with *Drift*, which was nominated for the Libris Literature Prize and also published in German. Her next book was *The Rediscovery of the Body*, in which

she examines her own burnout. For *De Correspondent*, she regularly writes on the topic of New Feminism. The English translation of Hofstede's autobiographical essay *Mountain* was published as a chapbook in 2020 by Strangers Press and explores love and childhood, nostalgia and hope.

On *The Rediscovery of the Body*:

'No tips here, no catharsis, but her book encourages reflection on mental and physical health and the interaction between the two.'

Trouw

On her novel *Drift*:

'With *Drift*, Bregje Hofstede proves that she belongs to the new wave of Great Dutch writers.'

De Wereld Draait Door book panel (TV)



Photo (© Natalie Hill)

Daniël Verlaan

I Know Your Password



Dutch title
Ik weet je wachtwoord
Year of publication
2020
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347
Sold copies
30,000
Sample translation
Available
Publisher
Das Mag
Rights
Cossee International Agency
Stella Rieck
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Picture this: you buy something on eBay and not long afterwards your bank account is plundered. Or your smart thermostat is hijacked and your house heated to 37°C until you transfer bitcoins to the hackers. You buy a surveillance camera to keep an eye on your dog and it suddenly says ‘Suck my dick’. The internet is a world of opportunities but we often forget that these opportunities are open to criminals and stalkers too.

Daniël Verlaan, a young investigative journalist specialized in new technology, has written an eye-opening and frank, story-driven account of the hidden dangers of the digital world. He explains how hackers look for weaknesses in website and database security, what the dark web is, why you should be concerned about data leaks, phishing, ransomware and spyware, and – most importantly – what you can do about it.

Verlaan went undercover and surfed the dark web. He interviewed hackers, cyber criminals and victims of revenge porn. He talked to a teenager who brought down entire banking systems and found out how a small arthouse cinema could take computers hostage on a large scale. Unsuspecting targets as well as perpetrators of clever, malicious and international hacks each have their say. Surprisingly, some amazingly well-executed online scams turn out to be little more than the bored experiments of insecure adolescent boys.

These are disturbing, sometimes terrifying stories that will make you think again about how you use your computer and your smart phone. While DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service), international cyberattacks and phishing pose

True stories from the dark side of the web

their own kind of threat, Verlaan also infiltrated a large-scale paedophile network on the dark web and shares findings that came unsettlingly close to home. In a chapter on revenge porn, it becomes clear how devastating these types of criminal actions can be, and Joëlle and Nova tell how their lives have been turned upside down by threats, extortion and stalking.

Each chapter concludes with useful tips against digital vulnerability. Readers will abandon their naïve belief that they have nothing to hide after reading this book. You may have nothing to hide, but you do have something to lose. In this age of Covid-19, when most of our life is conducted through our laptops and smartphones, and online scams are more common than ever, this book has been on the bestseller lists for weeks.

Daniël Verlaan (b. 1989) is a tech journalist for the TV channel *RTL Nieuws* where he reports on technology and researches the dark side of the internet. In 2019, he received two journalism prizes for his work: De Tegel for journalistic talent, and De Loep, the prestigious prize for the best investigative journalism.

‘I Know Your Password reads like a journalistic thriller.’

De Volkskrant

‘A true page-turner.’

NRC Handelsblad

‘Read this book and take Verlaan’s advice to heart. Hackers will hate you for it.’

8Weekly

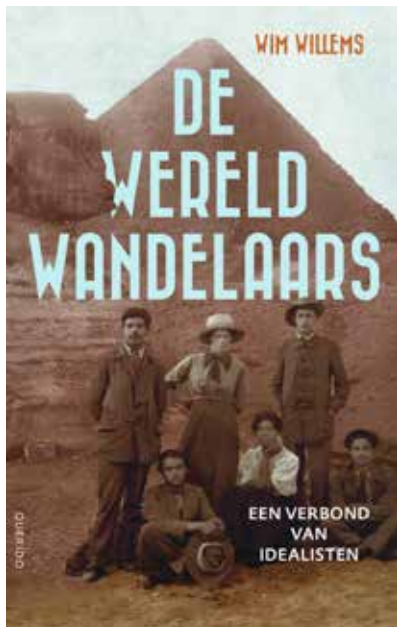


Photo (© Bart Koetsier)

Wim Willems

The Globetrotters — A League of Idealists

Idealist revolutionaries in sandals



On 16 July 1911, three friends dressed in velvet suits and leather sandals set out from Amsterdam to walk around the world. They were pacifists, vegetarians, teetotallers, socialists, but – above all – working-class boys set on escaping their lot in life. Without much money or preparation, yet buoyed by their optimism and idealism, they would make it to the Middle East before their journey was cut short by the First World War. Nearly a century later, a chest of their diaries, letters and drawings fell into historian Wim Willems' lap, sparking a new journey to reconstruct their footsteps and motivations, their later lives and evolution of their ideals.

To earn money, the three friends sold portrait cards and reported on their travels for small newspapers. They slept beneath the stars, or in haystacks, traversed snowy mountains barefoot; they were 'hippies avant la lettre', and their unusual fame quickly spread as they walked through Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Romania, and from Constantinople to Palestine. After eight months, Marie Zwarts, the girlfriend of one of the three, would join the group.

Eventually spanning years, it was not a journey free of setbacks and fights, and Willems describes their many encounters and impressions, as well as the surprising places their optimism and fervent belief in goodwill took them. Their message of pacifism and socialist unity, however, contrasted sharply with the world around them. With the help of diary entries and letters home, Willems resurrects a Europe on the brink of dizzying bloodshed, as the young group navigates the

ethnic tensions in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and takes in the remains of the Ottoman Empire and colonialism in the Middle East.

In addition to retracing their steps, Willems attempts to uncover the source of their vision – especially in a time when only the elite could expect to travel. He also speaks with their living descendants in the Netherlands, Israel and Australia to sketch the very different lives the group led after their journey. None of them escaped the sweeping political movements of the twentieth century, with tragic consequences for one. Nevertheless, their mission lives on today in their family members spread around the globe.

This is an extraordinary history, one as entertaining as it is poignant, and an ode to youthful idealism that will capture readers' hearts. It also includes a selection of delightful photographs and drawings made underway.

Wim Willems (b. 1951) is emeritus professor of Social History at the University of Leiden. As an avid walker who also grew up in a working-class family where studying was not a given, he felt a strong bond with the three globetrotters and their inspired endeavour to lead a different life. Willems is the author of, among other titles, the highly

praised biography of Indo writer and intellectual Tjalie Robinson.

'A story that seems too crazy to be true, but nevertheless is. [...] It is a breath-taking journey.'

NRC Handelsblad

'A small monument to bygone ideals.'

Het Parool

'This book makes you reflect on hope, longing, dreaming and utopia.'

De Groene Amsterdammer

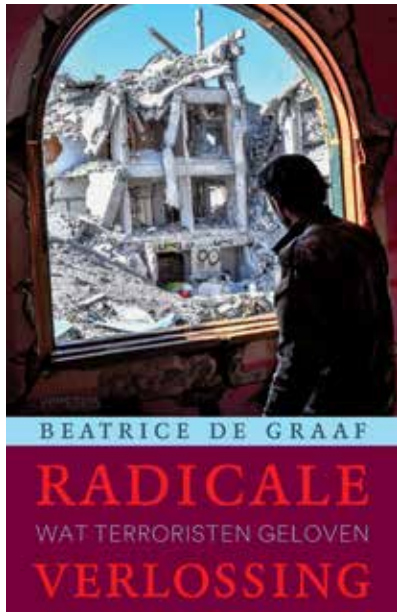


Photo (©Arrash Nikkhah)

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De Wereldwandelaars. Een verbond van idealisten
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2020
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384
Sample translation
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Rights
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Beatrice de Graaf

Radical Redemption — What Terrorists Believe In



Dutch title

Radicale verlossing. Wat terroristen geloven

Year of publication

2021

Page count

304

Full English translation

Available

Publisher

Prometheus

Rights

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Jihadist terrorism is often dismissed as a problem of ‘Islam’ or as a consequence of discrimination. Others conclude that terrorists are mentally disturbed. While these might be easy answers, they do little to reflect the process of radicalisation. Terrorism expert Beatrice de Graaf examines the individual lives behind acts of violent extremism to throw light on the connection between a terrorist’s beliefs and their actions.

Upon recording the life stories of almost thirty convicted terrorists – mainly Dutch jihadists but also non-Western terrorists and Western right-wing extremists – De Graaf discovers a broad narrative of individuals searching for radical meaning. In their frustration and rage at their individual lives, they came to believe that radical personal redemption could be achieved through violence. They found a higher purpose in a view of the world that cast them as the centre in the battle between good and evil. How did these men acquire this belief and where did it lead them? What happened when that desired redemption never came?

That these often-harrowing life stories usually end in disillusionment does not seem to have lessened extremism’s heroic draw, particularly for disaffected young people. De Graaf ends by calling for more research to explore ways of reducing terrorism’s appeal and identifying better alternatives for those who turn to it in search of meaning. One crucial requirement is that religious or ideological communities clearly distance themselves from individuals who believe that violence is a means of redemption. There needs to be a counter-

On terrorism and the search for meaning – a human portrait

narrative. But there is also a task for wider society. Terrorism preys on the fears of its victims, both those of people directly affected by it and in the imagination of the society at large. How can we put that fear of the terrorist’s search for radical redemption in proportion?

Radical Redemption combines testimony, history, psychology, politics and theology to identify and unpack a vital aspect of the most recent wave of violent extremism.

Beatrice de Graaf (b. 1976) is a professor of History of International Relations and Global Governance at Utrecht University. She researches the history of terrorism, war and violence and is particularly interested in the fight against them. She was a fellow at Cambridge University, regularly makes public appearances as an expert

on terrorism and has published, among other titles, *Dangerous Women*, *Theatre of Fear*, *Terrorists on Trial* and *The Balancers*. In 2018 her oeuvre was awarded the Netherlands’ highest scientific distinction: the Stevin Award.

On *Theatre of Fear*:

‘Beatrice de Graaf works in a very intelligent and surprising way and comes up with interesting and extremely topical insights. Her work is a relief in a time in which everyone seems to already have their opinion ready.’

8Weekly

On *Dangerous Women*:

‘The great thing about these portraits is that they are all worthwhile, carefully documented and averse to clichés or pre-established stances.’

de Volkskrant



Photo (© David van Dam)

Frank Westerman

The Cosmic Comedy



Dutch title

De kosmische komedie

Year of publication

2021

Page count

284

Sample translation

Available

Publisher

Querido Fosfor

Rights

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Strange phenomena in the sky are the most popular omens of all time: the passage of comets, eclipses of the sun and moon, meteorite hits and stars that suddenly light up. The end must be nigh. Cosmology represents humankind's ultimate reaching for the stars, whether with a telescope or a rocket. *The Cosmic Comedy* lifts off with the question *why navigate the universe? Are we compensating for a lack? Emptiness? What do we expect to find on the moon or on Mars that we don't have on Earth?*

The Cosmic Comedy is a philosophical meditation on the longing for a better world – beyond the Earth's atmosphere. Our journey revolves around Westerman's own axis, Westerbork in the Dutch province of Drenthe where he grew up. There the observatory with its world-class telescope Westerbork Synthesis Radio Telescope (WSRT), brainchild of pioneer Jan Oort, scans the sky with its majestic satellite dishes. On the site of the former Nazi transit camp. Nowhere is heaven so close to hell.

Beyond Westerbork, the author takes the reader to Franeker planetarium, the oldest working planetarium in the world. There in 1774, Eise Eisinga, a wool-comber by trade, built a model of the solar system in his living room to reassure people that a doomsday prediction that the planets would spiral out of their orbits to be burned up by the sun could not be true.

We also travel to Italy, where three centuries after Dante, Galileo Galilei, the father of observational astronomy, shifted Earth from the centre of the universe for good when he discovered Jupi-

'The Discovery of Heaven but in real life. Stunning.' – Radio 1

ter's satellite moons. Westerman visits the villa in Tuscany where Galileo spent seven years imprisoned for his views. He also talks to contemporary Milanese astronomer Guiseppe Gavazzi and looks back on Christianity's conflict with astronomy.

In poetic prose, Frank Westerman takes the reader on a grand tour through time, taking in our tilting image of the heavens, with or without god. Westerman comes to the conclusion that stargazing, driven by wonder, has changed our view of the heavens, while space travel, driven by rivalry, has changed our view of the Earth. From Copernicus, Huygens and Schiaparelli to Yuri Gagarin and the first female robot in space, *The Cosmic Comedy* is science non-fiction at its most mind-blowing.

Frank Westerman (b. 1964) studied Tropical Cultivation at Wageningen University. In 1987 he spent a year in the Peruvian Andes, researching the irrigation methods of Aymara Indians. Westerman is the author of many bestsellers: *The Republic of Grain* (1999), *Engineers of the Soul* (2002), *El Negro and Me* (2004), *Ararat* (2007), *Brother Mendel's Perfect*

Horse (2010), *Choke Valley* (2013) and *A Word A Word* (2016). His work, which has received numerous awards, has been widely translated. His previous book, *We, Hom-inids*, has been translated into French, German, Italian, Polish, Spanish and English so far.

'A dizzying story about the connection between heaven and hell.'

Het Parool

'A lyrical account with a rich theme handled by Westerman with verve, weaving together reportage, childhood memories, essay, historical treatise and philosophical reflection [...] a wonderful book about man, the cosmos and the desire to reach further than seems possible.'

NRC Handelsblad



Photo (© Lionne Hietberg)

Renata Laqueur

Introduction, afterword
and editing by
Saskia Goldschmidt



Dutch title

Dagboek uit Bergen-Belsen.
Maart 1944-april 1945

Year of publication

2021

Page count

240

Sample translation

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Rights

Sebes & Bisseling

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Rights sold

Italy

Diary From Bergen-Belsen — March 1944 - April 1945

At the age of twenty-four, Renata Laqueur and her husband Paul Goldschmidt, two Jewish members of the Dutch resistance, are arrested and, after a short internment in transit camp Westerbork, deported to concentration camp Bergen-Belsen in Germany. Though it is strictly forbidden, Laqueur manages to record her camp experience in four notebooks and, shortly after the couple's liberation, write up her remaining notes in detail. More than a story of survival, *Diary from Bergen-Belsen* is the surreal portrait of a sensitive and intelligent young woman attempting to transcend her harrowing reality, made all the more powerful by her emotional restraint and ruthless pen.

After four months at Westerbork, Renata begins her diary with the train journey to Germany, where she and her husband must soon battle disease and starvation, violence and humiliation. She lucidly notes down her reactions and depicts the camp's deteriorating conditions, the absurd quality of their isolated existence as well as the tragedy of her prime years senselessly wasted there. All the while, memories and thoughts of art and music, the physical act of writing, provide a source of emotional strength. She does everything to care for Paul, who is dangerously close to death; however, by December 1944, Renata is too physically weak herself to continue writing. In the overcrowded camp, death takes on terrifying proportions: the crematorium is overwhelmed, piles of corpses fill the camp.

A rare and detailed Holocaust testimony, comparable with *Last Stop Auschwitz*

Before the English and Canadians arrive in April 1945, she and Paul are packed, along with 2,500 other emaciated and dying prisoners, into a train and shipped through devastated Germany. The nightmarish journey will last two weeks, until they are finally liberated by the Russians, near the village of Tröbitz, where she records her journey and catches typhus while volunteering in a field hospital. Once back in the Netherlands, she types out her diary as a national war document, reliving the monstrous, dream-like world she passed through.

For this new edition, Paul's daughter, Saskia Goldschmidt, a Dutch author, has provided an invaluable introduction, afterword and notes that detail Renata's life before and after the diary, the fate of her and Paul's marriage, and Renata's struggle with trauma and guilt. Returning to the original notebooks at the Bergen-Belsen memorial archive, Goldschmidt has also included, for the first time, an intimate final portion of the diary which candidly addresses the pain and rage that Renata, like so many other camp survivors, attempted to suppress throughout her life.

Renata Laqueur (1919-2011) was born in what is now Brzeg, Poland and grew up in Amsterdam. Her father was a Prussian professor and among the first scientists to isolate the hormone testosterone. After the war, she moved to New York City, where she remarried and completed a PhD in Comparative Literary Studies at New York University, arguing

for the literary merit of concentration camp diaries. Previous editions of her diary have been translated into German and Welsh.

Saskia Goldschmidt (b. 1954) is the author of *Mandatory Happiness: Portrait of a Family* and *The Hormone Factory*. She currently lives in Amsterdam.

'She describes the misery of the camp starkly – but also with sensitivity. [...] The suffering described here is the suffering of a million people. A peacefully written book.'

Nederlands Dagblad

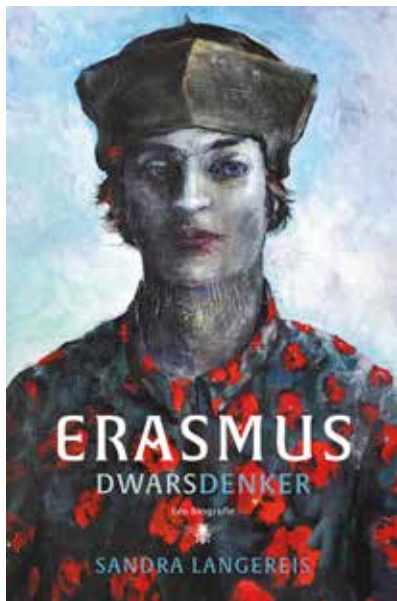
'A very moving book, that is what *Diary from Bergen-Belsen* is. [...] Although the author has tried to avoid emotion, the facts are so charged and sobering that the reader nevertheless finds themselves closely involved.'

Limburgs Dagblad



Sandra Langereis

Erasmus The Maverick — A Biography



Dutch title

*Erasmus: dwarsdenker.
Een biografie*

Year of publication

2021

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752

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Rights

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Erasmus (1469-1536) was a humanist, an icon of critical thought and tolerance. Nevertheless, he has always been a controversial figure. In his study of the Bible, he assumed that the scriptures were man-made. Through philological research, he showed how the 'Holy Writ' had developed over the course of centuries. That enraged both conservative clergymen and Martin Luther. Langereis presents Erasmus as a modern thinker, who sought to make those who read the Bible more rational and intelligent.

In this monumental biography, Sandra Langereis – historian and specialist in the 16th-century world of letters – makes use of a wealth of archival material. Erasmus' published correspondence alone consists of more than 3,000 letters. She paints a detailed portrait of Erasmus, which clearly shows his merits and those aspects of his personality that were less admirable. But if Erasmus had only been ambitious and arrogant, then people would not have written about him for over five centuries.

Erasmus was building on a humanist tradition in which the recovery of classical antiquity's literary and philosophical legacy was central. But because the printing press made a definitive breakthrough, he became the first best-selling author and could reach an enormous audience. Through Erasmus' work, the educated middle classes learned to write and speak a supple and natural Latin. With *In Praise of Folly*, he initiated the attack on the money-grubbing and belligerent popes as well as other abuses within the church. His most important achievement, however, was

Erasmus' life and thought – the definitive biography of a European icon

that he demonstrated that the Latin Bible was the result of centuries of sloppy translation and copying.

Although Erasmus is still seen as a critical thinker and an advocate for tolerance, we can only understand him within his day and age. This is why Langereis closely examines the contemporary historical, cultural and religious developments. She delves into medieval theology, the Bible's evolution over a thousand years, the practice of copying manuscripts in monasteries, the rise of universities and the printing press, the rise of the book market, the rediscovery of classics and the development of vernaculars, the reform movement within the church, financial flows and the dangers travellers had to face.

All of this is written in a narrative, accessible style, without pomposity or endless citations. Langereis' biography of Erasmus is not only the new, definitive biography of one of Europe's greatest intellectuals, it is also an attractive, informative cultural history beyond compare.

Sandra Langereis (b. 1967) is a historian of science and culture and a biographer. Her previous biography, *The Wordsmith*, about the 16th-century printer and publisher Christoffel Plantijn, was nominated for the Libris History Prize and chosen as best biography and best history book of 2014 by the newspapers *de Volkskrant* and *Trouw*.

She considers this biography of Erasmus, in which he is portrayed as a rational and tolerant man, as 'relevant for people today'.

'There were biographies about Erasmus already, but those were more like sketches. Not one is as detailed and well-written as *Erasmus The Maverick*.'

Vrij Nederland

'In her monumental biography, Sandra Langereis paints not only a clear picture of Erasmus' achievements and ill manners, but also offers an imposing cultural history of Europe during the Renaissance.'

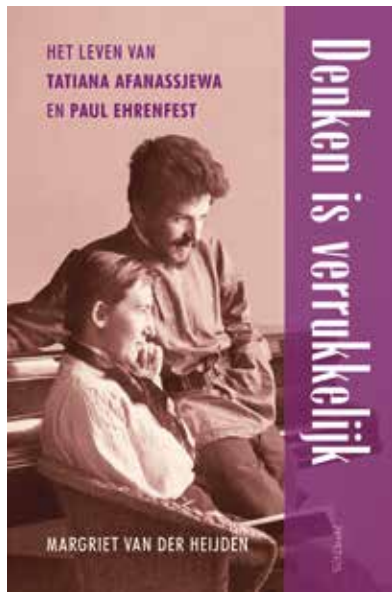
Historisch Nieuwsblad



Photo (© Geert Snoeijer)

Margriet van der Heijden

The Delightfulness of Thought — The Lives of Tatiana Afanassjewa and Paul Ehrenfest



A double biography that foregrounds science as an ongoing conversation

Particle physicist and science journalist Margriet van der Heijden describes the lives of the Jewish physicist Paul Ehrenfest (1880-1933) and his wife, Russian mathematician Tatyana Afanassjewa (1876-1964). Their story is also that of the lightning development of physics at the start of the 20th-century, when quantum mechanics and the theory of relativity were developed.

The two meet as students in Göttingen. In 1912, Paul becomes a professor in Leiden, and their house becomes a lively salon for famous scientists. During WW1 and the turbulent times that follow, the couple lead the way with progressive ideas about pacifism and gender equality.

In 1926, Tatyana leaves for Moscow, disappointed. As a female scientist, she was kept in the wings. Without Tatyana, Paul becomes unhinged, and despairs the Nazism of Hitler's Germany. He writes farewell letters and kills himself, after first killing their youngest son Wassik, a boy with Down's syndrome.

Paul did not make any major discoveries, but the role he played was perhaps just as important. He connected ideas, brought scientists together, and posed critical questions to colleagues such as Einstein, Bohr, Schrödinger. This is a social history of Europe, seen through the eyes of outsiders: a Jewish boy and a Russian Orthodox girl, whose lives were lived in a fascinating circle.

Dutch title
Denken is verrukkelijk. De levens van Tatiana Afanassjewa and Paul Ehrenfest
Year of publication
2021
Page count
432
Publisher
Prometheus
Rights
Marisca van der Mark
foreignrights@pbo.nl

'A double biography that reads like a novel.'
De Nederlandse Boekengids

Rudi Wester

Is There Any Life Stranger Than Mine? — Jef Last 1898-1972



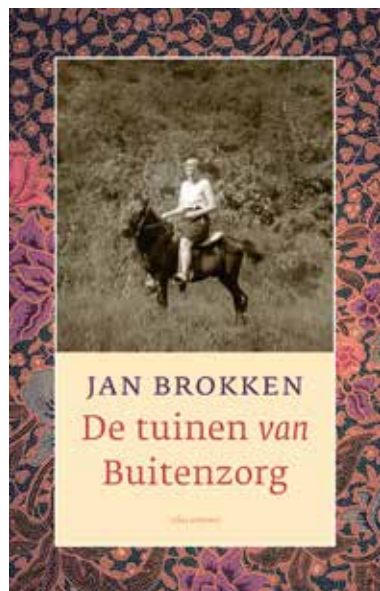
'A captivating book about a life-long search for love and justice.' – Trouw

Writer, poet, painter, journalist, translator, compelling speaker: Jef Last doesn't fit any box. He roamed the globe, fought in the Spanish Civil War and was a brave resistance fighter. All his life he was a romantic, passionate about freedom and justice, ever championing the underdog. A cultural bridge-builder between East and West, with his reflections on Chinese philosophy and translations of great Japanese writers, he counted André Gide and Willy Brandt among his friends. He evolved from an ardent socialist into a humanist, with a stopover as a communist. He was capricious and sometimes difficult, but had strong principles and was true to his conscience. He was a mirror of his time but also ahead of his time, as his biographer notes.

Jef Last was a man who constantly asked questions and wouldn't accept second-hand knowledge. The son of a well-to-do family, he was driven by an intense aversion to bourgeois ethics, preferring instead to be a worker among workers. Along with Joris Ivens, he was a pioneer in avant-garde film. Last was quick to see the dangers of fascism, battled against colonialism after World War II, and fought for homosexuality to be acknowledged. Rudi Wester has written a compelling biography of this restless globetrotter.

Dutch title
Bestaat er een raarder leven dan het mijne? Jef Last 1898 - 1972
Year of publication
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Prometheus
Rights
Marisca van der Mark
foreignrights@pbo.nl

'A very readable and affectionate biography.'
Biografie Portaal



Master storyteller
Jan Brokken dives into
his personal history

Jan Brokken The Gardens of Buitenzorg

Long before Jan Brokken (b. 1949) was born, his parents lived in Indonesia, a Dutch colony at the time. Brokken never knew much about this part of his parents' past. He only ever knew his mother as a pastor's wife in a traditional village in Holland. After his parents' death, his aunt hands him the letters and photographs that her sister Olga had sent her from abroad. In tender, sensitive and tentative fashion, Brokken searches these letters for the woman who, during her life, had always remained a stranger to him. Who was she before becoming his mother? What inspired her, what did she think about?

Olga turns out to be much more liberated and idealistic than he remembers. She enjoyed learning foreign languages, had in-depth discussions with intellectuals and connected, by giving sewing lessons, with the women around her. Brokken, who has a number of wonderful books about music to his name, interweaves his journey with the life story of Lithuanian composer Leopold Godowsky, who fell under the spell of Indonesian gamelan music.



A subtle, philosophical
exploration of the fear of
other people's judgement

Jannah Loontjens Guilty — An Exploration of My Conscience

Page count
240
Publisher
Podium
Rights
Cossee Literary Agency
Stella Rieck
rieck@cossee.com

'Aside from all of the philosophical and psychological theorising, *Guilty* is above all a confession about what went wrong in the writer's past.'

Tzum

'Inspired and literary, Loontjens takes the path to self-reconciliation.'

NRC Handelsblad

Poet, essayist, novelist and philosopher Jannah Loontjens, mother of two young children, decides not to celebrate Christmas with her mother this year. Afterwards she feels enormously burdened: how should she tell her? And where do those stubborn, everlasting feelings of guilt (about her lover, her children, that one glass of wine too many, her own body – the list goes on) actually come from?

She decides to explore, with the help of philosophers, writers and theologians, her own conscience, analysing those damned pangs of guilt to their core, fearlessly peeling them back. She examines those moments in her past when she has felt unnecessarily guilty and when it truly has been a matter of guilt.

In the end, she comes to the realisation that feelings of guilt arise from a fear of others' judgement. 'My guilt often appears to be a mask, behind which fear lurks, fear of other people's judgement. Fear that makes me feign that everything is fine. This pseudo-contentment obstructs the path to honesty, and tenderness.'

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'Brokken brings every sentence to life. *The Gardens of Buitenzorg* is vintage non-fiction by an internationally esteemed craftsman.'

De Standaard

'Jan Brokken travels through history and comes home.'

Dagblad van het Noorden



Observations about the coronavirus crisis by a professor with a can-do attitude

Jaap Goudsmit Free From Corona — The Start of a New Era

Virologist and epidemiologist Jaap Goudsmit, professor at the Harvard School of Public Health and scientific director of the Human Vaccines Project, describes the facts and fictions among all the stories about the virus, infections and vaccination. He explains how the SARS-CoV-2 virus mutates, possibly becomes more dangerous, why it mainly affects the elderly, how it compares to other viruses and what vaccines there are – always with an eye for the names of researchers who matter, but also for scientific controversies and uncertainties.

Goudsmit ends with a rather hopeful picture of the future. We are, he says, now globally capable of handling pandemics: of identifying the cause, making tests, testing vaccines and making those available. This is the start of a new era, in which we must establish that the virus is here to stay and will keep coming back with new variants. And in which we must commit to changing our lifestyle, vaccinating ourselves again each year and building a testing society.

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ehoste@pluim.nl

‘A book that looks forward, despite the unmistakable problems, to the future with optimism.’

Het Parool



Loneliness is a human talent, even if it does not make you happier

Marjan Slob The Empty Sky — On Loneliness

Loneliness is the dark side of the powerful human ability to imagine other, better worlds. After all, when you are lonely, you are suffering from what is not there, and you can picture it. Seen in this way, loneliness is inseparably intertwined with important human attributes: self-reflection and imagination. It is a terrible feeling, but also reveals your possibilities. At the same time, the price paid for experiencing loneliness is that you are painfully aware of what is missing from your current life.

Marjan Slob dives into the phenomenon of loneliness, entering into dialogues with philosophers such as Blaise Pascal, Daniel Dennett and Simone de Beauvoir. She finds, in literature, music and film, images that bring the concept of loneliness into focus. David Bowie plays an important role throughout her story: his transformations offer a helpful example of how to deal with the given of human loneliness with elegance and self-awareness. *The Empty Sky* is a consoling, agile ode to loneliness, written with a light, supple pen.

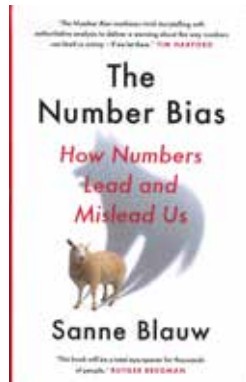
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Orli Naamani
onaamani@amboanthos.nl

‘A scintillating and quirky book about loneliness, surprisingly multidimensional in scope. Supplely and attractively written.’

Jury report for the shortlist Best Spiritual Book of 2021

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Sanne Blauw

The Number Bias: How Numbers Lead and Mislead Us

Dutch title

Het bestverkochte boek ooit (met deze titel)

Published in

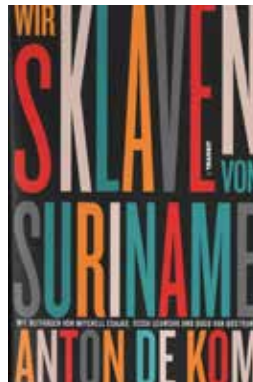
English by Sceptre (2020)

Translated by

Suzanne Heukensfeldt Jansen

Other translations

Arabic (Arab Scientific Publishers), Complex Chinese (Business Today), Czech (Host), German (DVA), Greek (Alexandria), Italian (Garzanti), Japanese (Sunmark Publishing), Korean (Gilbut Publishing), Polish (Znak), Portuguese (Bertrand), Russian (Azbooka)



Anton de Kom

Wir Sklaven von Suriname

Dutch title

Wij slaven van Suriname

Published in

German by Transit (2021)

Translated by

Birgit Erdmann

Other translations

English (Polity)



Geert Mak

Store forventninger. På sporet av den europeiske drømmen. Europa 2000-2020

Dutch title

Grote verwachtingen

Published in

Norwegian by Cappelen Damm (2020)

Translated by

Eve-Marie Lund

Other translations

Bosnian (Buybook), Danish (Epilog), English (Harvill Secker), French (Gallimard), German (Siedler), Greek (Metaichmio), Italian (Fazi), Korean (Okdang Books)



Annet Mooij

Das Jahrhundert der Gisèle. Mythos und Wirklichkeit einer Künstlerin

Dutch title

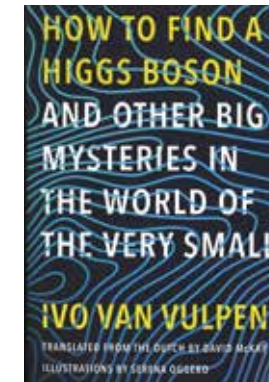
De eeuw van Gisèle. Mythe en werkelijkheid van een kunstenaar

Published in

German by Büchergilde Gutenberg (2020)

Translated by

Gerd Busse



Ivo van Vulpen

How to Find a Higgs Boson: And Other Big Mysteries in the World of the Very Small

Dutch title

De melodie van de natuur. De zoektocht naar de bouwstenen van het heelal

Published in

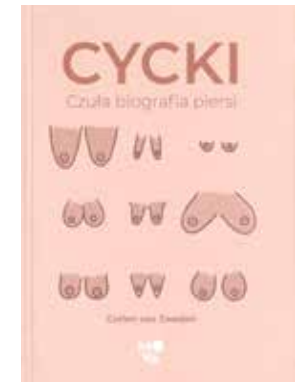
English by Yale University Press (2020)

Translated by

David McKay

Other translations

Croatian (TIM press)



Corien van Zweden

Cycki. Czuta biografia piersi

Dutch title

Borsten. De levensloop van een intiem lichaamsdeel

Published in

Polish by Mova (2020)

Translated by

Olga Niziolek

Other translations

Finnish (WSOY)

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Anesthetist photographed by Jiri Büller
in April 2020, following her night shift
on the COVID-19 ward. The portrait was
awarded the 2020 Silver Camera prize.