

*The Multilingual Muse: Transcultural Poetics in the Burgundian Netherlands*. Edited by ADRIAN ARMSTRONG and ELSA STRIETMAN. Oxford: Legenda, 2017. xi + 190 pp.

Inhabited by native speakers of Dutch, German, and French, the Low Countries have always been a region of cultural exchange. In little over a century (1384–1506), the francophone Burgundian dukes (and one duchess) succeeded in unifying most of the Low Countries under their rule. In their wake followed a largely francophone elite, inspiring a court culture that easily rivalled that of France, also in terms of literary patronage. This francophone elite culture interacted with pre-existing literary traditions in Dutch, and it is these precise points of cultural exchange that are the focus of the book. The ‘multilingual muse’ appears in many guises: linguistic issues (loan words, code-switching), cultural contexts (printing, chambers of rhetoric, guilds), and translations of texts. The editors chose well in placing the contribution of Dirk Schoenaers first, as he briefly touches upon issues that are reprised in detail in other contributions. After stressing that multilingualism had been an integral part of culture in the Low Countries well before the arrival of the Burgundians, Schoenaers argues that French loan words made their way into literature via the urban and regional administration. Administrative and political elites were intertwined with or engaged in circles of literary production (translation, printing, writing), facilitating transcultural exchange. Cases fitting this pattern are found across the volume. Catherine Emerson deals with loan words in the work of Anthonis de Roovere, Georges Chastelain, and Jean Molinet — all multilingual and native to the Low Countries — showing how multilingualism and code-switching permeated daily life. (The example of Molinet listing Dutch beer names speaks for itself.) Malcolm Walsby looks at multilingual printing, well studied for the later sixteenth century, but less so for incunabula. It apparently slipped his attention that all of the bilingual prints are reports of fairly recent historical events, which may well be crucial to their being printed in parallel editions. In any case, printers apparently were active brokers in literary exchange, as is shown by Susie

Speakman Sutch and Rebecca Dixon. Both cases — Dutch adaptations of Olivier de La Marche's *Chevalier délibéré* and of Pierre Michault's *La Dance aux aveugles* respectively — demonstrate that translation is to be understood not only in linguistic, but also in cultural terms, as the new Dutch texts were aimed at urban rather than courtly audiences. Dirk Coigneau, dealing with 'cherry-picking' in Dutch translations of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles*, arrives at similar observations. Urban circles form the focus of Anne-Laure Van Bruaene and Laura Crombie, who show how rhetorical chambers and shooting guilds formed networks allowing for mutual influences across language borders. As a whole, the volume successfully tackles the thorny issue of French influence in the administration and literature of the Low Countries, a debate that risks being infused by present-day sentiments about the relationship between the French and the Dutch and their respective communities which certainly has been the case in the past). Through the viewpoint of transcultural exchange, and by giving voice to cases in their contemporary contexts, the editors successfully present an enriching new picture of multilingualism in the fifteenth-century Low Countries.

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