

Quality NON-FICTION

from Holland

Kees Beekmans

Cees Banning and Petra de Koning

Minka Nijhuis

Marjon van Royen

Tjalling Halbertsma

Floris-Jan van Luyn

Annemieke Hendriks

Dirk Vlasblom

Steffie van den Oord

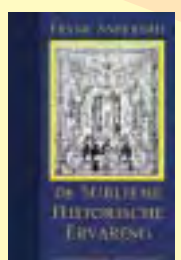
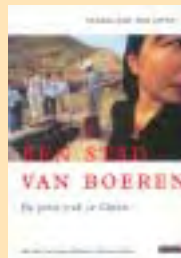
Annejet van der Zijl

Henk van Nierop

Luuc Kooijmans

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FOUNDATION FOR
THE PRODUCTION AND
TRANSLATION OF
DUTCH LITERATURE

Stories from the black class

Kees Beekmans

One Hand Can't Claps

THESE ARE TURBULENT TIMES in The Netherlands. With a growing population of Muslims, mainly of Moroccan or Turkish extraction, political debate has become increasingly heated. Should immigrants be allowed to preserve their own culture or be forced to adapt? In 2004, the year Mohammed became the most popular boy's name in the larger cities and Dutch people began to fear for the survival of their own free society, filmmaker and columnist Theo van Gogh was shot dead. Van Gogh never minced his words, routinely referring to Muslims as 'goat fuckers'. Mohammed B., a Dutch-Moroccan fundamentalist, shot him in cold blood in broad daylight in the street, then cut his throat. A ritual killing. It marked the start of an even more turbulent period, with increasingly entrenched opposition between 'us' and 'them'.

The same period saw the publication of school teacher Kees Beekmans' *One Hand Can't Claps*, welcomed by the media as a book that speaks, in a voice both literary and engaging, about who exactly the 'new Dutch' are. Beekmans is in a position to know, since he has taught their children for the past twelve years in a variety of 'black schools' (a term commonly used in The Netherlands to refer to schools attended mainly by the children of immigrants). Throughout those twelve years he has written about his experiences.

He describes what his pupils are like, how they think, how they treat each other and what they dream of. This is essential information, since most Dutch people know virtually nothing about these children. Beekmans had to make his own journey of discovery, and it is fascinating to see how his image of the children, their environment and their problems develops and alters over time. In the classroom Beekmans talks about Salman Rushdie and the Fatwa, about the hymen, Ramadan, the war in Iraq, and of course about The Netherlands. He asks children to write essays and recipes, he hands out extra work to those who misbehave, takes groups to the market and on school trips and talks to their parents.

But Beekmans' book does not simply provide new and useful information. He writes in a captivating style, somehow both objective and engaged. His stories are often funny and always original. *One Hand Can't Claps* deals with problems that all European countries are currently facing, and does so with an outspoken frankness typical of the Dutch.



Kees Beekmans teaches Dutch at a black school in Amsterdam for children with special educational needs. He studied Dutch language and literature at the University of Amsterdam and worked as a journalist before taking up a career in teaching. *One Hand Can't Claps* is his first book. Beekmans' stories have won him a Silver Zebra (1995) and the E. Du Perron Prize (2004).

Beekmans is not only a good writer, he is fond of his pupils.

VRIJ NEDERLAND

Beautifully written miniatures. This book should be required reading for politicians and civil servants.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

Read the sublimely written *One Hand Can't Claps* and you suddenly understand a great deal more about these tense times we are living through.

DE VOLKSKRANT

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Één hand kan niet klapt en andere verhalen uit de zwarte klas (2004)
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The Yugoslavia tribunal, justice and injustice

Cees Banning and Petra de Koning

The Balkans on the North Sea

IN THE SUMMER OF 1992 television images were broadcast of emaciated men behind barbed wire, Bosnian Muslims held prisoner by Bosnian Serbs. Western politicians expressed shock, but no one sent troops to the Balkans to end the ghastly war. Instead a UN tribunal was established in The Hague to try war criminals, modelled on the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals of 1946.

Was the Hague tribunal established simply to ease the embarrassment of the West? The court certainly made little impression on the war criminals. More than a year after judges and prosecutors began their work, seven thousand Muslims were murdered in the Bosnian enclave of Srebrenica. 'We failed miserably,' the former president of the tribunal, Antonio Cassese, admitted.

Journalists Cees Banning and Petra de Koning paint an intriguing portrait of the people who decided, shortly after fighting began, that a tribunal would be needed. They describe how the court became a reality and explain the investigative strategy and its consequences. Right from the start, prosecutors decided not to go after the most prominent political and military leaders but to concentrate on camp guards and army and police reservists, the 'small fry' who were easy to catch.

Could prosecutors have taken a different approach? The UN had very little money for war crimes trials and several years went by before NATO troops in Bosnia began arresting suspects. As soon as more prominent politicians and army officers did start to arrive in The Hague, former President of Yugoslavia Slobodan Milosevic among them, UN officials and Western politicians – especially American politicians – said the trials should be brought to a swift conclusion. The process had never been intended to last 'indefinitely'.

The authors have interviewed more than seventy employees and ex-employees of the UN court and spoken to politicians, lawyers and civil servants. They travelled to Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo to talk to victims and their families. The inside information they gathered enables them to offer animated descriptions not only of the people on trial but of those who struggled year after year to ensure the continued existence of the tribunal. A number of successful prosecutions resulted and several important contributions were made to the development of international law, but there were mistakes as well, leading to verdicts that were ultimately unsatisfactory.

The Balkans on the North Sea is a fascinating story of justice, guilt, violence and regret.



Cees Banning and Petra de Koning are editors at the Dutch broadsheet *NRC Handelsblad*. They have covered the work of the Yugoslavia tribunal since 1999, having previously reported for *NRC Handelsblad* on the war in Bosnia and Kosovo.

The Balkans on the North Sea is an astute journalistic description of an institution born of shame. Banning and De Koning provide a fascinating account of how the tribunal came into existence, including the considerable amount of improvisation needed to get it off the ground.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

Essential reading for anyone wishing to get to grips with the Yugoslavia tribunal.

THEO VAN BOVEN, chief registrar of the UN Court and Professor of International Law

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Balkan aan de Noordzee. Over het Joegoslavië-tribunaal, over recht en onrecht (2005)
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A family in Baghdad

Minka Nijhuis

Khala's House

IN-DEPTH STORIES ABOUT LIFE IN IRAQ are rare, since very few Western journalists dare to venture beyond the concrete walls of their heavily guarded hotels. Immediately after the fall of Saddam's regime in 2003, Minka Nijhuis decided to experience daily life with an Iraqi family; this is her unique, personal story of ordinary people living through a war, written with remarkably few preconceptions.

When actor Abbas and his wife Ward meet Nijhuis they start talking and are unable to stop. It is their first encounter with a foreign journalist, and stories, feelings and opinions kept hidden for years pour out. Nijhuis, who has been covering the war for several weeks, listens to the couple's passionate account of life under a dictatorship and their hopes and fears for the future. She feels she is finally discovering the real Iraq.

The war isn't over, it's just beginning, the couple warns her. Realising the significance of their words, Nijhuis decides to document the aftermath of the invasion as experienced by Ward, Abbas and their family. She moves in with the couple and Ward's elderly mother Khala, in a modest house in a middle-class neighbourhood of Baghdad and for several months shares their new life, a strange combination of hope, unfamiliar freedom, uncertainty and hardship.

Khala's House addresses broader issues too. Ward and Khala are of secular, highly educated Sunni descent, whereas Abbas is from a traditional conservative Shia family. All three are afraid this distinction will become a source of conflict within the family now that sectarian and religious tensions are emerging all around them. In response to social pressures, Ward and Khala already dress more traditionally than they ever imagined they would, and as highly educated women they fear they may lose the freedom to pursue professional careers. After the 2005 elections their doubts about the reconstruction process and the presence of American troops grow to such a degree that they consider leaving the country.

Minka Nijhuis is no ordinary war reporter. She writes about the fate of individuals with empathy and commitment, but also with humour and a profound understanding of the complexities of everyday life in wartime. Her stories about Khala's family are more personal and vivid than any number of news reports from Iraq.



Minka Nijhuis is an award-winning journalist for the Dutch daily *Trouw* and for several national radio stations. Over the past fifteen years she has covered conflicts in Cambodia, Burma, Kosovo, Afghanistan, East Timor and Iraq. She is the author of two books on Burma (*A Tea House in the Jungle*, 1995 and *Smuggled Goods*, 1998) and one about East Timor (*The Legacy of Matebian*, 2000) for which she was awarded the Prix des Ambassadeurs.

Minka Nijhuis has shown compassion and a sense of personal responsibility for other human beings whose lives she has touched by chance. *THE GUARDIAN*

Books like *Khala's House* are important because they provide an insight into what it means to live in a country that is literally exploding around you.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

Minka Nijhuis deftly combines events, conversations and background information to create a thoroughly absorbing tale. This is a dramatic, sometimes hair-raising story. *DE VOLKSKRANT*

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Het huis van Khala. Een familie in Bagdad (2004)
176 pp (60,000 words)

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The friendship of two remarkable women

Marjon van Royen

The Night of the Scream

THE NIGHT OF THE SCREAM is the absorbing account of a friendship between two women of very different classes and cultures. When Marjon van Royen arrives in Mexico City to take up a new job as correspondent for *NRC Handelsblad*, she has just spent four years covering the Balkan wars and thinks she can handle Mexico. Instead she finds herself wandering through a labyrinth of silent macho males and life-sized talking puppets, courteous robbers and corrupt policemen. She cannot penetrate the silence that dominates this Latin American country, where the only opportunity to let off steam seems to be the annual 'day of the scream'.

Marjon feels utterly at sea until she meets Sandra, a young Native Indian cook from the Central Highlands living in a shanty town on the outskirts of Mexico City. Sandra says things no one else wants or dares to say. Illiterate, penniless, but remarkably wise and humorous, Sandra becomes Marjon's guide, her storyteller, and eventually her best and only friend.

When their shack is burned down by local Mafiosi, Sandra and her daughters come to live with Marjon. She shares Sandra's trials – the kidnapping of her youngest daughter, the rape of her eldest, police violence and jail – and her joys: Sandra's laughter, her optimism and determination, and the surreal incidents that typify life in Mexico. Living with Sandra gives Marjon van Royen a unique insight into the daily lives of Mexico's have-nots, lives invisible to other correspondents, whose objectivity keeps them aloof from the people and cultures they describe.

Mexican life, Van Royen discovers, is full of unexpected injustices, especially for women like Sandra, part of the heavily exploited workforce on which the economy depends. In Mexico you don't complain, you shut up and hope things won't get worse. Sandra teaches her to adapt, 'to accept that losing is inevitable in this country', until the night of the scream, when a woman is raped on their own front porch. It is a night that changes everything, including the relationship between Marjon and Sandra.

Her friendship with Sandra forces Van Royen to confront her own illusions and mistakes, including her sense of herself as an untouchable gringa. She pays the price for her refusal to conform when she is deported by the Mexican authorities, at first losing Sandra too but later finding her again. Their friendship is restored. Different as they are, both women prove to be real survivors.



Marjon van Royen worked as a journalist and foreign correspondent for the Dutch daily *NRC Handelsblad*, covering Italy, the Balkans, Mexico and Latin America, and later for Dutch radio. Her first book, *Italy on a Monday* (1998), sold over 50,000 copies. She now lives in Rio de Janeiro, where she is working on a third book, this time about Brazil.

The tremendous commitment with which Van Royen describes a country, placing her own life on the line, is so convincing and so contagious that I can only bow my head in humility.

VRIJ NEDERLAND

She describes the ghosts that haunt her with great verve, as if they were characters in a novel, in some senses larger than life. She is in full command of the crafts of literary writing.

DE VOLKSKRANT

A shocking, enlightening and funny book you'd devour in one go – if you didn't have to put it down from time to time in astonishment or dismay.

KNACK

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De nacht van de schreeuw (2004)
477 pp (150,000 words)
5,000 copies sold

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On the desert trail of the Chinese discoverer of Europe

Tjalling Halbertsma

Leap to the West

THE IDEA THAT EUROPE WAS 'DISCOVERED' by a Chinese man sounds so strange to our Eurocentric ears that we instinctively disbelieve it. Yet it is true, and we have cultural explorer and anthropologist Tjalling Halbertsma to thank for unearthing this deeply buried story.

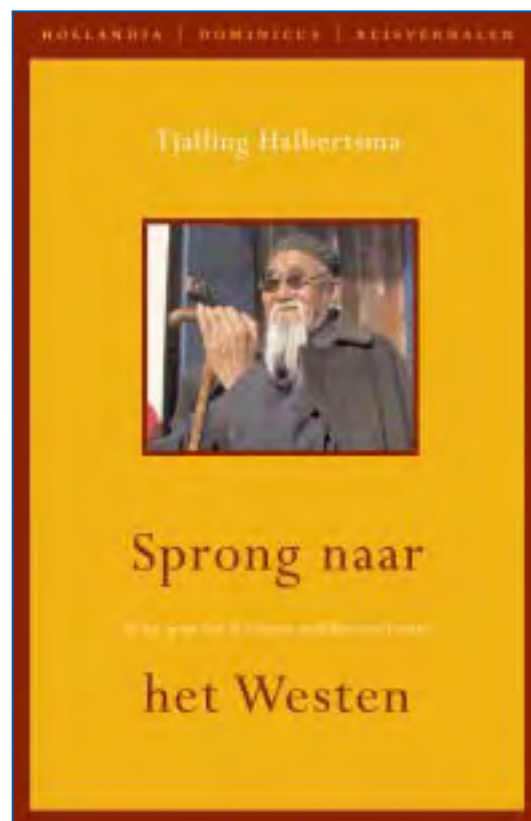
The West had Marco Polo to discover the East and the East had Rabban Sauma, a Nestorian monk. But unlike Polo's *The Description of the World*, Sauma's 725-year-old account is uncontested, with scholars agreeing that the journey of the 'Chinese discoverer of Europe', undertaken at the same time as Marco Polo's arrival in Asia, really did take place.

Halbertsma throws new light on Sauma's ancient account, now buried in the vaults of the British Museum in London. He stumbled across Sauma's legacy more than once while writing an earlier book, *The Lost Lotus Crosses*, a remarkable history of the Nestorians (early Christians) of China and Mongolia. In *Leap to the West* he follows the desert trail of a man who felt compelled to set off for the Promised Land and ended up in Europe.

Halbertsma covers the 7,000 kilometres from Beijing, formerly Khan Balek, to Kashgar in the far west of China like a modern pilgrim, searching for traces of Sauma and his travelling companion Mar Markos. Like Sauma, Halbertsma is repeatedly mocked by fate. For the time being his leap westwards will take him no further than the western border of China, where the conflict in Iraq forces him to retrace his steps.

As he travels through China, Halbertsma describes relics of a faded past as well as the far-reaching, sometimes tempestuous changes taking place today in the immense interior of the country. Western China is a repressed and therefore little visited region, but this does not deter Halbertsma, as he lurches and rattles along in his unreliable Beijing Jeep, exploring a virtually forgotten part of the world. He stops to investigate grave-robbers in Mongolia, a mausoleum for Genghis Khan, some possible descendants of Roman prisoners of war, an oil town in the middle of the Taklamakan desert and much more besides.

Throughout his account of his own journey into the world of Sauma and Markos, Halbertsma provides revealing images of continuing Chinese oppression of Mongols and Uighurs, along with marvellous descriptions of two Asians' historic exploration of the unknown West.



Tjalling Halbertsma is a lawyer and anthropologist who divides his time between Mongolia and China. From 2000 to 2004 he was an adviser to the Mongolian premier and in 2005 he acted as consultant to the successful election campaign by the current President of Mongolia. His previous books include *The Lost Lotus Crosses* (2002) and *Steppe Country* (2003), and his travel stories and photographs have appeared in *The South China Morning Post*, *Asian Art* and elsewhere.

THE PRESS ON STEPPE COUNTRY:

Halbertsma paints a picture of a Mongolia that will tempt anyone wanting to escape petty rules and constraints, predictability and routine, to move there immediately. *Steppe Country* describes a society on the verge of extinction.

DE VOLKSKRANT

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Sprong naar het Westen. In het woestijnspoor van de Chinese ontdekker van Europa (2005)
160 pp (45,000 words), with illustrations and references

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TITLES IN TRANSLATION

Steppe Country. Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, in preparation.

The great migration in China

Floris-Jan van Luyn

A Floating City of Peasants

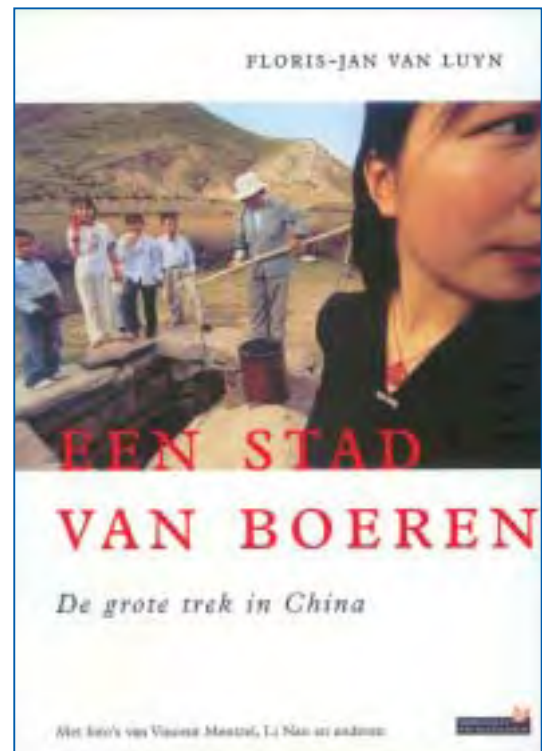
THE LARGEST HUMAN MIGRATION in history is taking place in China. Since the 1990s, 120 million peasants have left the countryside for the big city, sometimes motivated by ambition but more often by economic necessity. They work on construction sites, in factories, in catering or prostitution, and they are strong, tough, and without even the most basic rights. They are a crucial factor in the spectacular economic growth of the People's Republic.

Historian and China expert Floris-Jan van Luyn – who spent six years as a newspaper correspondent in China – hears from migrant farmers why they have abandoned their settled existence and what they dream of achieving. He discovers an enormous gulf between countryside and city. He visits farmers in their new urban environments, and travels back with them to visit those who stayed behind.

Van Luyn commiserates with Chunming, who stole money from his parents to pay for the long trip to Beijing and found work on a rubbish tip, work that regularly makes him vomit, which he accepts as part of the job. We meet Xiao Li, a prostitute in Haikou, tough and clever enough not only to make her pimp rich but herself as well, so she can send her little girl to the best school in Chongqing. Then there is Yingmin, too stupid for the village school, who describes how he worked his way up to become a project developer in Shenzhen, growing fat from drinking with civil servants to obtain the necessary stamps. The story of Lüsung is particularly horrifying – he campaigned for a village school and against corrupt government employees and as a result was tortured almost to death.

The book reveals the cruelties of life in rural China. Localised revolts are increasingly common and are violently repressed by the government. Van Luyn emphasises how important it is to see the dark side of the Chinese economic miracle. China's success depends on the efforts of peasants, who nevertheless remain second-class citizens.

The author has an impressive ability to see their side of the story. No outsider could get closer than he does, and his writing is excellent, personal yet objective and discriminating. He is never tempted to idealise. The relevance of his subject for the outside world is obvious. *A Floating City of Peasants* documents an historic turning point people outside China still know very little about.



Floris-Jan van Luyn is a journalist and filmmaker. He is South East Asia correspondent for the Dutch daily *NRC Handelsblad* following his stint as China correspondent from 1995 to 2001. He has studied history and Chinese in Leiden, Taipei and Beijing.

Floris-Jan van Luyn brings China to life by listening to the people, whose voices would otherwise have gone unheard. Here are stories, not of high politics, but of life as it is led by most Chinese. This is reportage at its best.

IAN BURUMA, author of *Bad Elements*

This is a great book and a fine piece of investigative journalism which gets behind China's economic boom and brings to life the people who make it possible. Anyone who wants to understand what is happening to China or to the world economy should read this book.

JASPER BECKER, author of *Hungry Ghosts and The Chinese*

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Een stad van boeren. De grote trek in China (2004)
239 pp (62,000 words), with illustrations
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Wandering around the Oder-Neisse line

Annemieke Hendriks

Divided Land

HUGE POPULATION shifts took place in the border area between Germany and Poland in the years immediately following the Second World War. At the Potsdam Conference in the summer of 1945, the allies put into force their decision to transfer the eastern part of the German Reich beyond the rivers Oder and Neisse to Poland. The Germans living there fled, were driven out, or merged with arriving Poles and Ukrainians forced to leave lands further east. Around fifteen million people in the region moved home.

For decades Poles and Germans lived with their backs to each other on either side of the Oder-Neisse line, confined to their respective socialist people's republics. Since the fall of the Eastern Bloc relations have not improved greatly, despite Poland becoming a member of the EU on 1 May 2004. The border region is still a place of division, where two peoples burdened by centuries of distrust and enmity are attempting to forge closer ties.

Journalist Annemieke Hendriks travelled through the region, on both sides of the border, from Silesia in the south to Pomerania in the north. Traces of the eventful history of the region in town and country are evocatively described in her book, as Hendriks talks to both Poles and Germans about the problems that divide them and their attempts to come to terms with the past. She describes how differently the two areas are developing today, illustrating the enormous contrast between economic misery on the German side and dynamic neo-capitalism just over the border.

Divided Land is a book no German or Pole could have written. Political correctness means Germans never dare speak ill of Poland, while Poles are too chauvinistic to abandon their own prejudiced version of history. As an outsider Hendriks feels free to challenge the reciprocal fears and prejudices of Germans and Poles and as a result her book is full of tense clashes, unexpected twists and turns, and enlightening observations. Hendriks proves the ideal reporter for such an undertaking. With great precision, in a smoothly readable style and with a perfectly judged dose of humour, she unlocks a painful aspect of European history, one that has received little attention until now.



Annemieke Hendriks has reported from Germany and Central Europe for the Dutch quality papers *De Volkskrant*, *De Groene Amsterdammer* and *Vrij Nederland*. She lives and works in Berlin and Amsterdam.

Annemieke Hendriks takes readers on an invigorating journey into New Europe, the German-Polish borderland where German and Polish cultural influences meet Bohemian, Austrian, Jewish, Ukrainian and many other traditions to form an inspiring melting pot.

KLAUS BACHMANN, Professor at the Willy Brandt Centre of the University of Wrocław and an influential writer for Polish and German newspapers

The great thing about Hendriks is that she gets the people of the border region to talk, whether they are Germans or Poles.

HANS VERBEEK, Dutch correspondent in Berlin and chairman of the Verein der Ausländischen Presse in Deutschland

PUBLISHING DETAILS

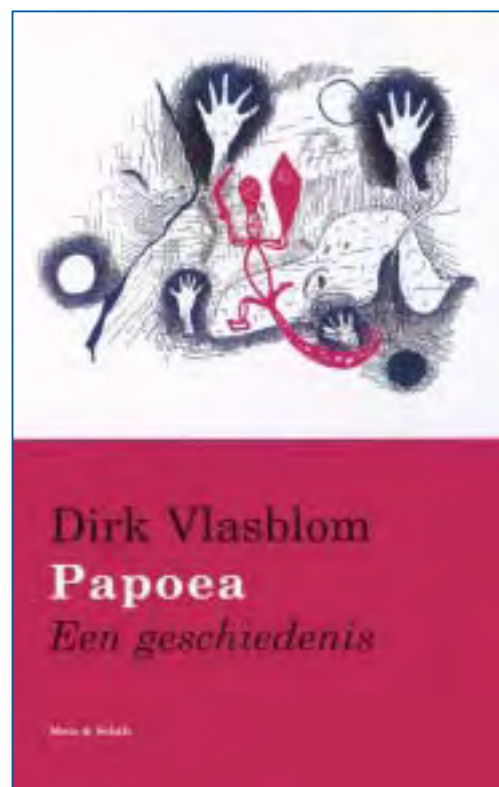
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A history

Dirk Vlasblom Papua



PAPUA by journalist and Indonesia expert Dirk Vlasblom is the first comprehensive history of western New Guinea, covering five centuries with an emphasis on the last hundred years – inevitably perhaps, since few written texts are available from earlier periods.

Vlasblom has studied all the relevant sources, including buried reports and obscure missionary archives. He speaks fluent Bahasa and has talked in depth with practically all the relevant authorities still living: Papuan leaders, some of whom have been fighting for an independent Papua for more than fifty years; Indonesian politicians and soldiers fiercely opposed to such a development; and countless Dutch colonial administrators and missionaries. He has witnessed the Great Papua Congress of 2000, and other critical events of recent years.

When sovereignty over the Dutch East Indies was transferred to Indonesia in 1949, western New Guinea was exempted. Under pressure from the United States, which did not want to damage its relationship with Indonesia, the Dutch betrayed the Papuans by backtracking on an earlier announcement that Dutch New Guinea would gain its independence in about 1970, once an intellectual elite had been formed and the country's infrastructure sufficiently developed. The conflict subsequently played out between Indonesia and The Netherlands over the heads of the Papuans, and UN involvement in the transfer to Indonesian rule are described here in detail.

It is a surprise to read criticisms from Indonesian soldiers and politicians of past mistakes made by the Indonesian army. Unfortunately this does not mean that humiliation of the Papuans is over, in spite of the promise of autonomy held out to them after the fall of Suharto's violent regime. Renewed repression has dashed their hopes, while a steady stream of immigrants means Papuans will soon be a minority in their own country.

Vlasblom's book tells a story never told before in such detail, making many new and unexpected connections. This is the standard work for anyone interested in the region, but perhaps most importantly of all it makes clear to the reader how obsessively the Papuans retain a world view dominated by the hope of salvation, often messianic in character. In a future paradise Papuans will finally regain their magic powers, so that they can turn events to their own advantage once more. Papua makes it painfully clear that there is still no sign of these 'redeemers'.

Dirk Vlasblom studied cultural anthropology and has been Jakarta correspondent for the broadsheet newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* since 1990. His previous books include *Jakarta, Jakarta: Reports from Indonesia* (1993), *In a Warung on the South Seas: Stories from Indonesia* (1998) and *Anchors and Chains: A Rotterdam Chronicle* (2001).

Papua is both a revealing story and a valuable contribution to discussions about the history of Papua. Vlasblom's book offers, for the first time, a balanced, articulate and invaluable guide to Papua's past, present and possible futures.

THE JOURNAL OF PACIFIC HISTORY

An impressive historical account.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Papoea. Een geschiedenis (2004)
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Memories of love

Steffie van den Oord

Love in Wartime

EACH NEW GENERATION sees a war differently, discovering ever more new stories. This applies even to the Second World War, about which we seem to know practically everything. Steffie van den Oord (b. 1970) focuses on love in the years 1940-45 in her book *Love in Wartime*, a moving piece of oral history.

Van den Oord's eighteen stories of love – epic, fatal, fleeting, unhappy and everlasting, set against a treacherous wartime background – are based on a combination of extensive research and in-depth interviews. The storytellers are now in their eighties and nineties. Some find the memories of their teens and twenties so painful that they have never spoken about them before; others beam and glow with pleasure, briefly falling in love all over again.

The author records their memories in monologues as beautiful as they are tragic, full of strange and shocking twists and turns. From these candid outpourings and confessions a picture emerges of 'the war' as human drama, leaving no life untouched. The stories in *Love in Wartime* demonstrate that powerful emotions can drown out all else, that love can give us the strength to survive the most unimaginable horrors.

Van den Oord meets people who fell in love after being thrown together in extraordinary circumstances, or were separated by tragic events. Annie from Rotterdam, aged sixteen, makes love to a sailor from the German navy; forced labourer Ben kisses his first man in a shelter during an air raid; Riek will never see her Canadian again. Young people fall in love in hiding, their world not much larger than a closet.

At times *Love in Wartime* seems almost too beautiful, at times too terrible; it is heartrending throughout, especially when telling of love that began in the camps and has endured to this day: Mau and Rina marry in the transit camp Westerbork, on the night before their transport to Auschwitz where they will lose everything except faith in their love; Louis survives Auschwitz partly through his love for Hannelore, then finds her after the war, pregnant by a German camp official, the man who saved her from deportation.

Steffie van den Oord's book is a marvellously rich addition to the literature of the Second World War.



Steffie van den Oord studied literature and cultural history. She is the author of *Centenarians. Life Stories of Hundred-Year-Olds in The Netherlands* (2002), which sold more than 14,000 copies.

Love in Wartime provides a multifaceted, personal and often intense picture of the lives of ordinary people during the war years.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

Love in Wartime is a wonderful collection of incisive interviews, of a kind seldom seen.

NIEUW ISRAELITISCH WEEKBLAD

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Liefde in oorlogstijd (2004)
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An extraordinary love story

Annejet van der Zijl

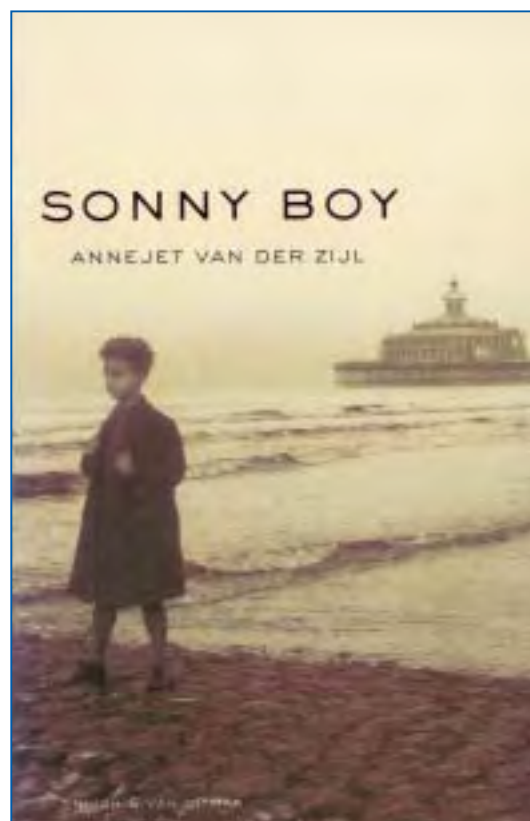
Sonny Boy

SONNY BOY', the title of an Al Jolson song from 1928, was the nickname given to Waldemar Nods and Rika van der Lans' little boy. 1928 was the year their impossible love began, a love they kept alive against all the odds. The contrast could not have been greater: Waldemar was a serious-minded black student from Paramaribo in Surinam, not yet twenty, son of a gold prospector and grandson of a woman who had yet to free herself from the chains of slavery; Rika was the daughter of a Catholic potato wholesaler, warm-hearted and obstinate, a married mother of four, approaching forty when they met. She was his landlady. When he moved in she had only just left her husband and was penniless, living with her children in a tiny rented apartment in The Hague.

Drawing on archives, correspondence and interviews with family members, Annejet van der Zijl has reconstructed their astonishing love story. When Rika became pregnant the scandal was complete; her own family responded no less harshly than the outside world. Didn't Waldemar come from a culture where male fidelity was notoriously lacking? And who would look after the *moski moski*, as the Surinamese would call him, the little brown-skinned boy with dark curls and blue eyes? They had no work, no money, no friends, and the Depression had begun. Perhaps hardest of all, Rika lost her other children after a fierce battle in which her husband was awarded custody.

Contrary to all expectations, the 'impossible' but hard-working and harmonious couple managed to create a prosperous business that generated a good income. Under Waldemar and Rika's unconventional management, Pension Walda became a favourite haunt of revue artistes, colonials on leave from the East Indies, and German seaside holidaymakers. But *Sonny Boy* is more than just a love story. It describes the everyday racism of the 1930s and the horrors of Nazism. When Pension Walda was requisitioned by the Germans during the occupation, Waldemar and Rika moved to a house where they soon had guests of a different kind: Jews in hiding. In 1944 they were betrayed and arrested. Both died in captivity.

Sonny Boy, in whom they invested all their desperate hopes and dreams, was left behind, alone. Annejet van der Zijl has done an excellent job of interweaving the personal history of one specific couple with the larger mainstream history of crisis, war and betrayal.



Annejet van der Zijl's first book, *Jagtlust*, was published in 1998. It was followed by the widely praised biography of the popular Dutch children's writer Annie M.G. Schmidt, *Anna* (2002), which sold more than 65,000 copies and was nominated for a Golden Owl Award.

The heartbreaking tale of an extraordinary pair of lovers. [...] A story that sometimes takes your breath away, leaving a lingering sense of astonishment.
DE VOLKSKRANT

A beautiful portrait [...], her story moved me to tears.
HP/DE TIJD

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Sonny Boy (2004)
235 pp (62,000 words), with references
100,000 copies sold

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War, terror and justice in the Dutch Revolt

Henk van Nierop

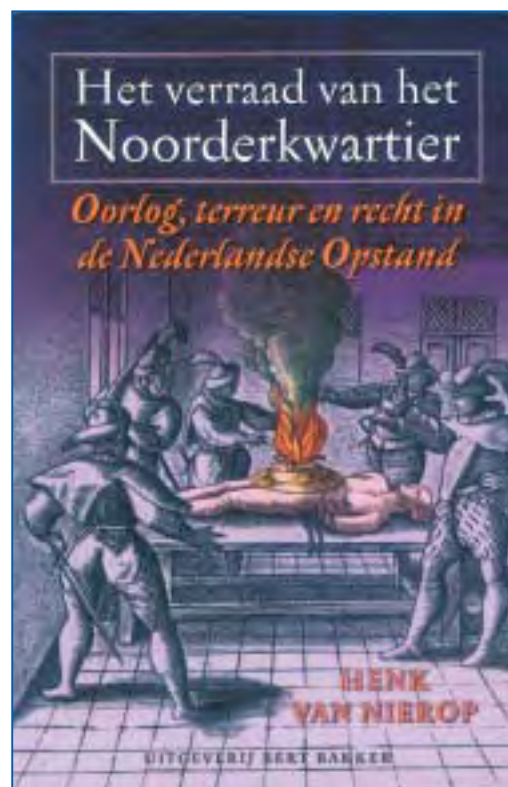
The Betrayal of the Northern Quarter

AT THE TIME, the Dutch Revolt must have been experienced as an incoherent series of battles, sieges, skirmishes, ambushes and random incidents. Only later were these melded into a rational historical account under the heading the Eighty Years War (1568–1648), a national war of independence from Spanish rule. A coherent epic was created, full of drama, heroism, absolute villains and saintly heroes. After the Second World War however, this Eighty Years War again came to be seen as a revolt, inextricably linked to social and economic developments, and to problems connected with the Reformation and the invention of the nation state.

Historian Henk van Nierop looks back to the chaotic early years of the revolt to study events from the perspective of ordinary people in the Low Countries. In most cases the revolt was not something they consciously chose to join. It was a war that came to them, with all its suffering and misery.

The backdrop to Van Nierop's absorbing account is the Dutch Northern Quarter, the area north of the IJ that had been an impregnable fortress since 1572, held by rebels who had revolted in the name of William of Orange. In the spring of 1575 a Spanish force gathered under the leadership of Hierges, Stadholder to Spain's Philip II, determined to take back the Northern Quarter. Less than two weeks later the Spanish retreated without having been fully deployed in battle. This withdrawal has been attributed to the firm action taken by Diederik Sonoy, William of Orange's Governor of the Northern Quarter. Alarmed by rumours of imminent betrayal, he ordered the arrest and interrogation of all foreigners. Blame fell on a number of Catholic citizens, among them Jan Jeroenszoon, a lawyer from the city of Hoorn. The municipal authorities in Hoorn, the friends of Jan Jeroenszoon, and William of Orange himself refused to be caught up in this mass hysteria and eventually succeeded in halting the torture of suspects. After the Pacification of Ghent (1576) the High Court of Holland acquitted Jan Jeroenszoon and summoned Sonoy and his entire investigative commission to appear before it.

Drawing on copious new source material, Van Nierop dissects the myths of the period in this beautifully composed book, painting a detailed picture of the sixteenth-century context: laws and privileges, reformation and unrest, outsiders and burghers, Sea Beggars and collaborators, warlords and a newly emerging government.



Henk van Nierop is Professor of Modern History at the University of Amsterdam and director of the university's Amsterdam Centre for the Study of the Golden Century. He regularly publishes work on aspects of Dutch sixteenth- and seventeenth-century history. He is one of the authors of the first volume of the new *History of Amsterdam* (2004).

An impressive new study of the true nature of the Dutch Revolt and the horror that civil war and revolution brings to 'ordinary people'.

GEOFFREY PARKER, author of *The Thirty Years' War* and *Grand Strategy of Philip II*

A disconcerting book. In The Betrayal of the Northern Quarter, Henk van Nierop gives a penetrating account of the misery inhabitants of this far corner of Holland were forced to undergo.
VRIJ NEDERLAND

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Het verraad van het Noorderkwartier. Oorlog, terreur en recht in de Nederlandse Opstand (1999)
344 pp (122,000 words), with notes and references
7,000 copies sold

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The anatomy lessons of Frederik Ruysch

Luuc Kooijmans The Artist of Death



Historian Luuc Kooijmans is the author of *Friendship* (1997), a highly acclaimed study of the role of friendship in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch society that was short-listed for the prestigious Generale Bank Prize for Literature. He is also the author of *Love on Order* (2000). In 2004 he was awarded the Prince Bernhard Cultural Foundation Humanities Prize for his entire oeuvre.

This valuable biography is a fitting, if belated, homage to a great but long-forgotten Dutchman.

TROUW

Kooijmans is eminently capable of interweaving biography with early-modern history. The Artist of Death is skilfully composed and clearly written.

VRIJ NEDERLAND

There is something addictive about this book.

DE VOLKSKRANT

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY anatomist Frederik Ruysch was world famous until well into the nineteenth century. His collection of carefully prepared, artistically displayed body parts in formaldehyde was one of Amsterdam's top tourist attractions. On a visit in 1697 Peter the Great was so impressed by the true-to-life nature of the embalmed child corpses that he embraced and kissed them. Twenty years later he was able to take the entire collection to Russia, where it is preserved to this day in the Kunstkamera in St. Petersburg, in hundreds of jars and bottles.

Ruysch was renowned for his skill at preserving bodies so perfectly that they seemed alive. He injected their arteries and organs with a special fluid, the ingredients of which he kept a closely guarded secret. Visitors were amazed to discover that the cadavers and body parts in his collection had achieved a form of immortality. Luuc Kooijmans, his biographer, describes Ruysch as an 'artist of death'.

Ruysch adorned body parts with collars, cuffs and frills to hide scars and other unsightly blemishes. He decked out a foetus in a cap and collar; he laid an embryo in the jaws of an African snake; in the amputated hand of a child he put a tortoise egg with a hatchling emerging. He filled five rooms of his house with his 'living cadavers', anatomical anomalies, all manner of animal specimens (1,500 jars in total), slippers made from human skin, even a breastplate bearing the brand of the thief from whose skin it was made. During his lifetime the artistic aspects of Ruysch's work sometimes brought criticism and scorn from scientists, but after he died it was as an artist of death that he continued to inspire people, from Balzac to Stephen Jay Gould.

The process of preparing his specimens helped Ruysch understand the secrets of the human body. Discoveries made through minute observation reached a broad audience by means of his anatomical collection, his public anatomy lessons, and his innumerable published works. These were troubled times in which the wisdom of centuries was called into question and new heroes emerged. With an eye for arresting details, Kooijmans describes how scholars like Ruysch dealt with a period of profound change.

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De doodskunstenaar. De anatomische lessen van Frederik Ruysch (2004)
517 pp (165,000 words), with illustrations, notes and references

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From Van Eyck to Rembrandt

Boudewijn Bakker

Landscape and World View

ART CRITICS LIKE TO EMPHASISE the modern and realist character of the famous Dutch landscape paintings of the seventeenth century. Art historian Boudewijn Bakker explicitly distances himself from this interpretation, drawing attention to the long history and tradition of landscape as a subject in Dutch painting, a history stretching back to Jan van Eyck's generation of the early fifteenth century. His broad, audacious approach, together with a lucid style and seemingly casual erudition, make this a remarkable and challenging study.

Where did the centuries-old fascination for landscape originate? What was the contemporary significance and purpose of Dutch landscape painting? In Bakker's view, early Dutch painting can only be understood in the context of the intellectual climate of the day. Rather than seeking answers in the insights offered by humanist art theory, he attempts to chart the traditional Christian view of the world commonly held at the time, which can assist our interpretation of the richly varied landscapes painted by the great masters.

Bakker introduces a diverse collection of thinkers and writers, figures we might not expect to find in a study of art history, such as fifteenth-century monastic scholar Dionysius the Carthusian, sixteenth-century religious reformer John Calvin, geographer Abraham Ortelius and seventeenth-century poet Constantijn Huygens. In their conception of landscape he identifies a world view that goes back to late-Medieval perceptions of God and creation.

It was a manner of thinking in which for instance the colour white, a lamb, the virtue of innocence and the person of Jesus were directly or indirectly connected on a plane higher than that of sensory perception, through mutual allusions that required no further explanation. Similarly, more general concepts such as macrocosm and microcosm, the Bible and nature, word and image, art and model were instinctively seen as interlinked, analogous phenomena.

For late-Medieval contemporaries, the painted landscape – just like the real one – functioned as a store-room of spiritual and moral messages, and according to Bakker this attitude was not confined to the Middle Ages. In fact, painters like Pieter Breugel, Rembrandt van Rijn and Jacob van Ruisdael probably thought far more traditionally than we tend to assume. This has important consequences for the interpretation of their art, which Bakker illustrates in his highly acclaimed final chapter on Rembrandt as a landscape painter.



Boudewijn Bakker, who works as a researcher at the Amsterdam City Archives, is a recognised expert on the history of landscape in the Dutch Golden Century. He has written several authoritative studies, including a book on Rembrandt's landscape drawings. He studied history and art history at the University of Amsterdam and obtained his doctorate *cum laude* on the subject treated in this book.

I regard *Landscape and World View* by Boudewijn Bakker as one of the most important and stimulating books of recent years in the field of Dutch art. It is clearly the result of extensive reading and original insights and it offers a coherent vision of the painted landscape, boldly overstepping the boundaries of the last several decades of art historical research. Many readers will readily be swept along by Bakker's argument as well as the elegance of his writing.

EDDY DE JONGH, Emiritus Professor at the University of Utrecht

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Landschap en wereldbeeld van Van Eyck tot Rembrandt (2004)
486 pp (100,000 words), with illustrations, notes and references

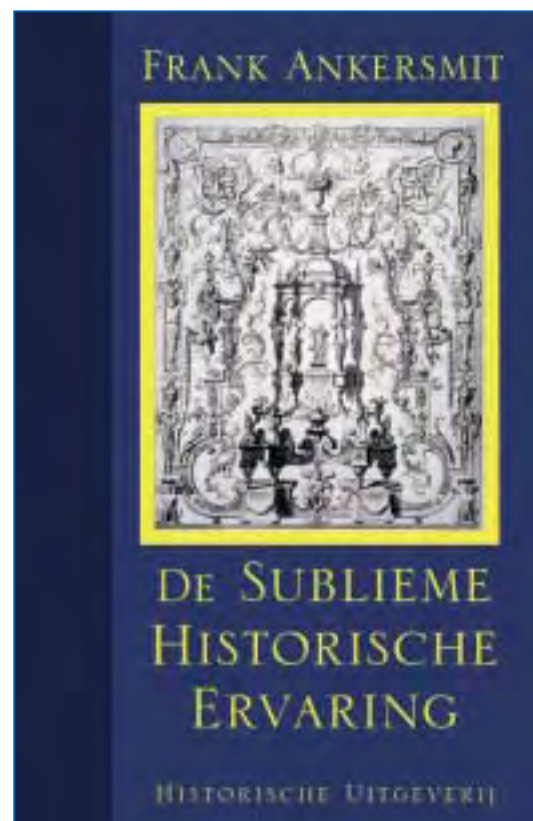
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On the role and nature of historical experience

Frank Ankersmit

Sublime Historical Experience



Frank Ankersmit is Professor of Intellectual History and Historical Theory at the University of Groningen. He obtained his doctorate with the thesis *Narrative Logic* (1983). In 1990 he published *The Navel of History*, followed in 1993 by his inaugural lecture entitled *The Historical Experience*. Other books by Ankersmit include *History and Topology* (1994), *Aesthetic Politics* (1997), *Historical Interpretation* (2001) and *Political Interpretation* (2002).

Sublime Historical Experience is a major contribution to the lively international debate about the nature of history as a discipline and the role of experience in our encounters with the past. This is a wonderfully provocative book, ambitious and quirky in all the right ways, written by an internationally acclaimed scholar at the height of his powers.

MARTIN JAY, Sidney Hellman Ehrman Professor of History at Berkeley University

IN *SUBLIME HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE*, philosopher of history Frank Ankersmit takes up where the famous Dutch historian Johan Huizinga left off. When he saw an exhibition of paintings by Flemish Primitives in 1902, Huizinga was so overwhelmed by a sense of direct contact with the past that it prompted him to think about what really connects us with earlier times. This 'historical experience' inspired his great study *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*. However, modern science and philosophy, since becoming dominated by epistemology, have placed little value on experience. In *Sublime Historical Experience* the erudite Ankersmit proposes new and controversial approaches to philosophy and the writing of history.

Ankersmit passionately defends the role of experience in philosophy, pointing out that it is missing even from the work of those thinkers, such as Gadamer and Rorty, who are most attuned to it. The world is without meaning if we are not touched by what the eighteenth century called 'the sublime', by that aspect of life for which no words are adequate.

History will remain remote if it is limited to an objective analysis of documents. In Ankersmit's view, the historian can only see the past as truly real when he regards himself as part of it. In wonderful cameos of such writers as Huizinga, Benjamin and Burckhardt, he shows that their work was inspired by a direct experience of the past, something described by Huizinga, if a little hesitantly, as 'ecstatic'.

Ankersmit's argument for 'romantic' history writing leads him to criticise strictly scientifically oriented historiography. Instead he is drawn to a 'poet of history writing' like Michelet, who explicitly brought his own historical experience to bear in depicting the French Revolution.

This is the only approach that enables historians to tell us what the past actually is, and which can provoke a sense of recognition that allows us to experience history as part of us, however far removed it is from the way we are today. Ankersmit uses his own personal historical experiences to illustrate the resulting sense of loss, as in his moving description of a painting by Francesco Guardi, in which he can actually feel the deep ennui of the ancien regime. In *Sublime Historical Experience*, Ankersmit sets out across a landscape full of unknowns and taboos, taking his readers on an extraordinary intellectual adventure.

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De sublieme historische ervaring (2005)
480 pp (160,000 words), with
illustrations and notes

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Universidad Iberoamericana, 1998. Also in Hungarian
(Typotex, 2004).
De sublieme historische ervaring. Stanford (California):
Stanford University Press, 2005.

Douwe Draaisma Why Life Speeds Up As You Get Older



Why Life Speeds Up As You Get Older was published by Marsilio in Italy, and by Cambridge University Press (United Kingdom), Eichborn (Germany) and Typotex (Hungary). Translations by Alianza (Spain), Eco-Livres (Corea), Shandong Education Press (China), Kodansha (Japan), Flammarion (France) and Panstwowy Instytut Wydawniczy (Poland) are forthcoming. The book has won several national prizes and has been shortlisted for the Aventis-prize 2005, the world's most prestigious award for popular science writing. 'One finishes the book with a heightened awareness of the complexity and the fickleness of human memory, and a genuine sense of pleasure at having encountered such a subtle, entertaining and illuminating guide to the territory', wrote *The Times Literary Supplement*. In The Netherlands 80,000 copies have been sold so far.

Recent translations

Jelto Drenth

The Origin of the World

Science and fiction of the vagina

(De oorsprong van de wereld)

Published in English by Reaktion Books

Hermann von der Dunk

Kulturgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts

(De verdwijnende hemel)

*Published in German by Deutsche
Verlags-Anstalt*

Jaap Goudsmit

Viral Fitness

The next SARS and West Nile in the making

(De virusinvasie)

*Published in English by Oxford
University Press*

Ad van Liempt

Hitler's Bounty Hunters

The betrayal of the Jews

(Kopgeld)

*Published in English by Berg.
Also in German by Siedler*

Geert Mak

Que sont devenus les paysans?

1950-2000. Jorwerd, village-témoign

(Hoe God verdween uit Jorwerd)

*Published in French by Autrement. Also in
English by Harvill and in German by Siedler*

Benjo Maso

The Sweat of the Gods

(Het zweet der goden)

Published in English by Mousehold Press

Harry Mulisch

Criminal Case 40/61

The trial of Adolf Eichmann: an eyewitness report

(De zaak 40/61)

*Published in English by University of
Pennsylvania Press. Also in German by
Aufbau and in French by Gallimard.
In preparation by Rizzoli (Italy)*

Herman Pleij

Colors Demonic and Devine

Shades of meaning in the Middle Ages

(Van karmijn, purper en blauw)

*Published in English by Columbia
University Press*

Lotte van de Pol

La puta y el ciudadano

(De burger en de hoer)

Published in Spanish by Siglo XXI

Mineke Schipper

Never Marry a Woman with Big Feet

Women in proverbs around the world

(Trouw nooit een vrouw met grote voeten)

*Published in English by Yale University
Press. In preparation by Océano (Spain),
New Star (China) and Astrel (Russia)*

Peter Winnen

Post aus Alpe d'Huez

(Van Santander naar Santander)

Published in German by Cavadonga

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