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### Papieren monumenten

*Over diepe breuken en lange lijnen in de geschiedenis van tekstedities in de Nederlanden, 1591-1863*

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## SYNOPSIS

This dissertation is a history of literary text editions in the Dutch vernacular, published between 1591 and 1863.

An edition is the product of a text editor; he redistributes, by printing press, an ancient text, of which he himself is not the author, but which he can adapt. As he explicitly points out his adaptations and presence in the text, the editor's self-representation is distinctive. This self-representation can be found in the edition's peritext (Genette), where the editor accounts for his actions. These peritexts have been the key source for this study. Further, the broadest, classical understanding of literature applies, which not only covers epic poetry and verse, but also folk tales, chronicles and treatises. The chronological scope is broad as well: the investigated period starts with the first publication of a vernacular edition in the Netherlands, and ends with the consolidation of vernacular text editions as an academic discipline.

International scientific literature on philological history usually presents text editions as barely problematic first products of philological activity. Two tendencies are apparent. The first one considers text editions as the onset of modern philologies, which after 1760 developed in Europe within the context of literary historicism and cultural nationalism. This first tendency is represented here by Joep Leerssen's work. Editors with a national agenda from the Low Countries, s.a. Jan Frans Willems, Willem Jonckbloet or Matthias de Vries have often before been investigated in this sense. Representative of the second tendency is Anthony Grafton's work. It considers text editions as products of textual criticism – the most important task classical philology has dedicated itself to since the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Most prominent in the Republic of Letters were editors from Leiden, s.a. Josephus Scaliger, Janus Dousa and Petrus Scriverius. Their intention was to uncover the truth, even the one about the deepest past.

This investigation applies both historiographic tendencies to the Dutch vernacular editions. It is centered around four questions. Two of them aim at an inventory and an outline of the local context of editions in the Netherlands. A first question assesses the object of editorial study: which texts were republished? Secondly, a prosopographic question: who republished those texts and in which institutional context? The other questions assess the differences between both historiographic tendencies: a third one inquiring after the legitimations editors ascribed to their activities; a fourth, epistemologically, after the foundations they derived their reliability from. It is supposed that the answer to these questions will become

especially clear in cases of false philological knowledge, in text editions younger than they were made to appear, and which were sometimes even written by the editors themselves. In this matter, Klaas Koliijn's forged chronicle, with editions from between 1700 and 1777, proves an influential case.

A first result of this study is the recognition of a threefold nationalization in Dutch editing between 1591 and 1863. This can be concluded from the answers to the first three questions. First of all, the own Dutch language and history, next to the classical, became fixed values in editors' text choices. Initially, they were mostly concerned with Amsterdam poets from the Dutch Golden Age (esp. Joost van den Vondel) and medieval provincial histories (esp. Melis Stoke's chronicle of Holland); from 1784 on additionally with the language of chronicle editors (s.a. Jacob van Maerlant's in the *Spiegel historiael*), and after 1819 with medieval lyrical and epic verse as well (s.a. Esopet and Arthur and Charles romances). Secondly, editors worked more and more in a national context. Even before 1600, editors became individual and recognizable textual agents. And around 1800 they organized themselves in national and specialized institutes. The very first one was the *Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde in Leiden* (since 1766), the most specialized one the *Vereeniging ter bevordering der oude Nederlandsche letterkunde* (1843-1848). Thirdly, editors legitimated their activities in an increasingly national manner. From the beginning, around 1600, a feeling of Dutch singularity – closely related to the horrors and successes of the Dutch Revolt – became reason for surveying the own language and history. After the Napoleonic Era, this particular feeling evolved into something more abstract, more ethical and thus more national.

So, the nationalization of editing is apparent in the choice of texts, in its institutionalization and in its legitimation. Between 1770 and 1850, nationalization accelerated and affiliated Dutch editors to international developments, especially to German literary historicism and nationalism. After 1840, it finally resulted in the consolidation of a national scientific philology of the Dutch vernacular.

The second result of this investigation is the uncovering of a continuity in the epistemology of editing: a tension between, on the one hand, the importance attached to making ancient texts available through editions, and, on the other hand, the difficulty in proving those editions' reliability. Throughout the investigated period, availability was the editors' main purpose, and they invoked various reasons for their reliability: firstly their scholarly and social status as editors, later more often their connections to national and specialized institutes, but eventually always the presence of a material ancient form of the text. In the consolidation of a materialistic epistemology in editing, the Koliijn case played a key role.

This persistent epistemological tension can be explained as being part of an almost timeless scholarly attitude among editors: antiquarianism (Momigliano). Characteristics are an exemplaristic approach of the past and ancient language forms, and a fascination for the material world outside the text as the source of philological certainty. Antiquarianism was a dominant research attitude around 1600 in the Netherlands, too. It remained part of the scholarly tradition, with Willem Bilderdijk as one of its important advocates in the 1820's. However, as this dissertation points out, antiquarianism characterized the national philological science after 1840 still.

This dissertation argues that antiquarianism determined the entire investigated history of literary text editions; that the Dutch national philology after 1840 could be a belated fulfillment of the promises made around 1600; that text scholars without the material world must have sensed a threat of epistemological doubt; and finally, that editors, between their fragile old papers, keep on looking for the almost eternal certainty of monuments.