Caught Between Propaganda and Science

Ulrich Gerhard Lauts, the Forgotten Father of Dutch Philology in Brussels

Wim Vandenbussche


DOI: 10.5117/9789089648273/CH05

Abstract

Ulrich Lauts (1787-1865) qualified as one of the forgotten fathers of Dutch philology in the Low Countries. As the very first professor of Dutch language and literature at the Brussels Museum for Sciences and Letters, he wrote a series of linguistic reference works on Dutch in the 1820s, including grammars and dictionaries. In addition, he developed various lecture series on the history of Dutch literature. Despite his scholarly training and sound expertise, however, Lauts's works is permeated with overt nationalist and political undertones. Like many of his contemporary philologists, his linguistic and literary studies were explicitly intended to support the nation building enterprise of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. Using both primary sources and hitherto unexplored archive materials, this contribution shows how Lauts embodied the token nationalist philologer of his time.

Keywords: U.G. Lauts, Brussels, Dutch philology, nation building

Introduction

When the Dutch King Willem I installed the advanced study of Dutch grammar and literature in the Southern Low Countries, Ulrich Gerhard Lauts was singled out to man the first chair of Dutch philology in Brussels ever. In less than a decade, Lauts compiled a series of authoritative handbooks
and dictionaries for language teaching purposes, developed one of the very first courses on Dutch literature, and secured himself a privileged position of silent advisor in the entourage of the highest state officials. With his combination of socio-political agency, scholarly excellence, and academic bravado, Lauts embodied the token nationalist philologist of his time. Standing by himself at the very cradle of the discipline in Brussels, moreover, his work and persona qualify for standard references in the annals of linguistic historiography.

And yet, Lauts soon became one of the many 'unknown celebrities' in the early history of Dutch philology – acknowledged but sadly underresearched. Compared to the scattered but important body of work on the philological protagonists of his day in the university towns of Leuven, Ghent, and Liège, Lauts's personality, work, and output are largely clad in shadows. While many of his publications are readily available in printed and electronic form, no comprehensive study of his work has been written to date. This chapter should therefore be read as a first attempt to compile the available information on the link between Lauts's philological work and the overall cultural nationalism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in the Low Countries. The focus will be on his activities during his stay in Brussels in the 1820s. In addition, I will try to illustrate how Lauts's linguistic practice in four of his early works from this period resonated with the enterprise of constructing a new Dutch identity.

2 Biographical Information

Lauts was born in Amsterdam on the 19th of May 1787 as the son of a shopkeeper. His father's death in 1811 and the subsequent closing of the

---

1 Van Kalmthout et al., 2016.
2 Google Books offers free scanned versions of Lauts's four major linguistic works: Éléments de la langue hollandaise (1815 (2nd reprinted edition), Woordenboek van nederlandsche gelijkgezindende en klankverwante woorden (1825), Woordenboek voor de spelling der nederlandsche taal (1827), and Voorlezingen over de Nederlandsche letterkunde (1829).
3 Most notable among the scarce contributions on Lauts are Lousberg & Janssens, 2005, and Janssens & Steyaert, 2008, discussing Lauts's pedagogy and language-political activism in Brussels during the 1820s. Van der Horst, 2011, provides a detailed linguistic analysis of Lauts's normative views on word order in Dutch. Lauts's role in Dutch language education in Brussels has further been given due attention in overview works on the language-political history of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (most notably Blauwkuip, 1920; De Jonghe, 1967).
4 The main facts on Lauts's life and work are well documented through entries in various biographical overview works (cf. Blok & Molhuysen, 1930; ter Laan, 1952; van den Branden &
business urged him to go abroad; he is reported to have travelled through Germany, England, and Denmark. Although little is known about Lauts's exact whereabouts, this period is said to have been formative for his interest in both commerce and economy, as well as history and philology. He settled in Brussels after the United Kingdom of the Netherlands was founded; his appointment as a teacher of Dutch grammar and literature at the Brussels Athenaeum (secondary school) followed in 1822. He is listed as the founder of the Brussels branch of the Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen in 1825 ("Society for Public Welfare")8 and as a member of various cultural organisations including the literary circle Concordia.8 In 1827 a royal decree bestowed the chair of Dutch literature at the newly founded Museum voor Wetenschappen en Letteren ("Museum for Sciences and Literature") upon Lauts, where he would teach a course on national literature in Dutch (see below). After the Belgian Revolution in 1830 he moved on to a language teaching post at the Royal Marine Institute in Medemblik (Netherlands) which he held until his pension in 1840. After moving back and forth between the Dutch towns of Kampen (1840, 1848) and Leiden (1843), he settled in Utrecht (1863) where he would die on the 25th of July 1865.

His early written production (before 1830) consisted of philological work, including two dictionaries, a grammar of Dutch for speakers of French, a sequel to a Dutch reading primer and a lecture series on Dutch literature. Virtually all later publications deal with politics, geography, diplomacy, and the Dutch colonial enterprise, comprising books and articles on the life of the Dutch King Willem III but also on Japan, Bali, Java, California, Anglo-Dutch colonial diplomacy, educational legislation, Dutch settlers in South Africa, and the politics and geography of the Dutch Indies. His necrology mentions that his contemporaries were overwhelmed by his work, due to alleged verbosity, incompleteness, and lack of precision.

---

5 The Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen was founded in 1784 as a philanthropical organisation favouring public education for all (and especially the lower) layers of society (Mijnhardt & Wichers, 1984).

6 On the 3rd of August 1823, a letter to Minister of Justice van Maanen reports: The society Concordia has supported today a previously agreed proposal from Mr. Lauts to establish a branch of the Nut van 't Algemeen in Brussels. As a consequence a sufficient number of financial supporters were immediately reached: Celenbrander, 1905-1922, Volume 9, Part 2, Gs 37, p. 243.
Much of Lauts’s later political engagement focused on the Boer- and Voortrekker-movements in South Africa, which he fervently defended and which also figured in his scholarly work. Studies on the political relationship between the Netherlands and South Africa contain frequent references to Lauts’s active involvement in this ‘colonial diplomacy’: he became a diplomatic agent and consul of the new republic of South Africa (from 1852 onwards) and the Orange-Free State (1854).

3 Lauts in Brussels

When Lauts settled in Brussels, the language-political situation in the Southern Low Countries had fundamentally changed compared to the preceding two and a half centuries. Ever since 1585 the Northern and Southern Low Countries had been divided: whereas the northern provinces (corresponding more or less to the present-day Netherlands) were united in the independent Republic of the United Provinces, the southern provinces (corresponding roughly to present-day Belgium and Luxembourg) fell under Spanish (1585-1714), Austrian (1714-1794), and French (1794-1815) rule. In 1815 North and South were ‘reunited’ by the Congress of Vienna in the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, led by King Willem I. The king’s wish to pursue a réunion intime et complete (‘an intimate and total reunion’) between both territories inspired a number of policy choices intended to support the construction of a common identity. The full ‘deutchification’ of the legal, administrative, and educational domains was a core element in this strategy. The ‘enlightened’ monarch further favoured the establishment of institutions for higher education, including initiatives specifically aimed at the popularisation of science for a broad public. Ulrich Gerhard Lauts played a key role in both endeavours.

The French rulers of the Southern Low Countries saw little room for Dutch in the educational domain after their take-over in 1794: primary schools were allowed to use Dutch next to French, but all secondary schools were to be exclusively French-speaking. Although the actual impact and implementation of these measures may not have been as severe as oft believed, King Willem I and secondary education did face a sufficient number of competent opponents. Steyaert shows how Lauts functioned in the Brussels athenaeum as a forceful and influential speaker in the discussions that compromised the gradual Dutchization of the school.

Internal opposition from the school board hampered the process. Stephen Aertsen even alleged that the teaching staff was (allegedly) about to dutchify their courses on general and Dutch language courses. Lauts worked to teach Dutch to pupils that had been educated in French. Battling the ‘prejudices’ (also an obstacle) and the required support of an assiduous support for Dutch language teaching between early 1816 and 1822, Lauts’s pedagogical qualities, it is argued, allowed him to secure his position at the athenaeum.

The archive references listed below show that Lauts was more than a passive civil servant of the authorities. Next to his correspondence and professional work, Lauts wrote to the editor of the Brussels School and in higher education in the Dutch-speaking community of Belgium. Ulrich Gerhard Lauts, his position at the athenaeum.

7 This concerns the inland migration from the Cape area in the 1890s by Afrikaner farmers (‘Boers’) which was a significant factor in the colonisation of Southern Africa (De Klerk, 2003).
12 Ibidem, pp. 176-177.
ment focused on the Boer- and which he fervently defended and ties on the political relationship a contain frequent references to the diplomacy: he became a public of South Africa (from 1852.

language-political situation in the gradually changed compared to the er since 1585 the Northern and whereas the northern provinces day Netherlands) were united in provinces, the southern provinces (nam and Luxembourg) fell under and French (1794-1815) rule. In the Congress of Vienna in the Kingdom Willem I. The king's wish an intimate and total reunion') er of policy choices intended to entity. The full 'redutchification' ul domains was a core element in ther favoured the establishment ng initiatives specifically aimed d public. Ulrich Gerhard Lauts

Countries saw little room for their take-over in 1794: primary to French, but all secondary speaking. Although the actual measures may not have been as

area in the 1890s by Afrikaner farmers of Southern Africa (De Klerk, 2009). Language history of Dutch, cf. Willemyns, Dutch in the Southern Low Countries is severe as oft believed," King Willem's redutchificatie policy of primary and secondary education did face the serious challenge of recruiting a sufficient number of competent language teachers in Dutch. Janssens & Steyaert show how Lauts functioned as one of those agents of redutchificatie in the Brussels athenaeum from 1822 onwards. Their detailed discussion (based on De Jonghe, 1967) reveals the herculean difficulties that compromised the gradual reintroduction of Dutch in this secondary school.

Internal opposition from the French-favouring school principal and school board hampered the progress significantly. A substantial part of the teaching staff was (allegedly) unable to master Dutch sufficiently to dutchify their courses on general subjects (i.e. other than the specific Dutch language courses). Lauts further reports of the continuous struggle to teach Dutch to pupils that had already been Frenchified to a large extent. Battling the 'prejudices' (also among parents) against the Dutch language required the support of an assistant teacher and the diversification of language teaching between early and late learners of Dutch. The actual accomplishment of the full redutchification by 1829 was not helped by Lauts's pedagogical qualities, it appears. De Jonghe mentions his lack of authority in the classroom as well as his repeated absence due to health problems. While an evaluation from 1823 was still positive about Lauts's 'good pedagogy, especially for advanced pupils', later inspection reports were highly critical of his teaching practices and characterise Lauts as grumpy, bad-tempered, and unable to teach in an understandable way. Commercial and ideological disputes with his principal further troubled his position at the athenaeum.

The archive references listed by De Jonghe convincingly show that Lauts was more than a passive civil servant following instructions from higher authorities. Next to his correspondence with minister of education Anton Reinhard Falck, Lauts wrote a report in August 1823 on the situation in his school and in higher education in general for the minister of justice Felix van Maanen, which was forwarded to King Willem himself in October

12 Ibidem, pp. 176-177.
that year. In that report Lauts explicitly informed against the francophone dominance in the athenaeum’s boarding school:

The boarding school’s internal service [...] is completely governed by Wallons. The new principal Bayard, the almoner Berth, the vice-principal Decamp, the study masters and all lower-ranked employees are Wallons [...] It is suggested that [Bayard] [...] has fired the Flemish employees. As much is certain that he interferes with teaching (which is not within his competence), that he will never devote himself to the study of Dutch and that, under his supervision, the dutchification of the boarding school will always be obstructed.  

4  Elémens de la langue hollandaise (1821)

Next to his roles as teacher and governmental informant/advisor, Lauts marked his place during the short reunion of the Low Countries as a writer of philological reference works on the Dutch language for the use in secondary schools. His 1821 Elémens de la langue hollandaise was a grammar of Dutch written in French and dedicated to minister of education Falk, specifically intended to be used in the upper three years of secondary schools in the Walloon provinces. The second and revised version appeared in 1825 (reprinted in 1826), the third version was in the works for 1830 but never materialised due to the Belgian revolution. Lauts used the book in his classes at the Brussels athenaeum.

Janssens and Steyaert provide an extensive analysis of the ‘Essay on the history of the language and the national literature of the Netherlands’ which precedes the actual grammar and which is the most relevant for the purposes and focus of the present volume. Rather than repeating their close reading of this text, I will summarise their main conclusions. The introduction is permeated by a nationalist undertone, through phrases like

23 Paraphrased in De Jonghe, 1967, p. 339, footnote No84; my translation. All translations in this article are mine.
24 Janssens & Steyaert, 2008, p. 179. In the introduction to his 1826 dictionary, Lauts explains that he omitted a number of things in the second edition of the Elémens that bore ‘less relation to grammar proper’ in favour of more room for spelling and pronunciation matters (Lauts, 1826b, p. vi).
25 Bergman, 1867.
26 Janssens & Steyaert, 2008, p. 179.
28 Lauts, 1825, p. xii: ‘L’histoire de tous les siècles ne manquera jamais sa langue nationale pour en choisir.’
29 Ibidem, p. xiv: ‘La langue employée formée.’
31 Janssens and Steyaert, 2008, p. 293.
32 Lauts, 1826a, p. xii.
formed against the francophone school:

is completely governed by Walloon Berth, the vice-principal ranked employees are Wallonians and the Flemish employees. As
aching (which is not within his
self to the study of Dutch and
ation of the boarding school will

naïve (1821)

mental informant/advisor, Lauts
of the Low Countries as a writer
language for the use in second-
e holandaïsé was a grammar of
minister of education Falck, upper three years of secondary
and revised version appeared
ion was in the works for i830 but
solution.26 Lauts used the book in
ensive analysis of the ‘Essay on
al literature of the Netherlands’
ich is the most relevant for the
.24 Rather than repeating their
ise their main conclusions. The
undertone, through phrases like

N.B.4, my translation. All translations in
explains that he omitted a number of things
relation to grammar proper’ in favour of
Lauts, 1826b, p. vi).

‘the history of all these centuries shows that a free people never abandons
its national language for another.’23 Dutch is also foregrounded as a mature
language of old: while the history of Dutch is dealt with in the shortest of
terms (barely 5 pages), the first instances of Middle Dutch are characterised
as ‘pure, harmonious, and fully evolved’24 and also as superior to German
which only started evolving seriously during the eighteenth century and
can boast documents from no earlier than the sixteenth century onwards.
The projection of an idealised and perfect language is continued in Lauts’s
précis of Dutch literary history: mediaeval documents are said to be
characterised by a ‘harmonious style and an inimitable naïveté’, whereas
sixteenth and seventeenth century literary Dutch ‘acquired a high degree
of perfection that assigned Dutch for evermore a place amongst the most
polished languages of Europe’.

Janssens and Steyaert characterise this introduction as ‘vague, confused,
incoherent, full of irrelevant information and even pure nonsense’, and
attribute this to the lack of reference works in the domain of Dutch literary
history at the time of writing.25 Their main thesis, however, is that this
introduction should not be read as a solid piece of academic work but as
a language propaganda pamphlet defending and promoting his mother
tongue, instead, in times of French dominance and overall contempt for
Dutch in Brussels. In support of this view (and in addition to the many
quotes already provided in their article), one might also refer to the fact
that Lauts explicitly quotes Jean Paul F. Richter’s characterisation of
the Dutch as ‘the biggest purists of Europe’;26 the phonology of Dutch is also
repeatedly described as softer than the harsh sound system of German.
As such, Lauts’s introduction to the Eléments prefigures – both in terms of
contents and activism – his far more elaborate lectures on Dutch literature
from 1829 which will be discussed in detail below.

The 467-page grammar itself is, of course, far less of language-political
interest (and was, accordingly, hardly ever analysed in detail, apart from van
der Horst, 2011). Yet, it is a comprehensive, detailed, and skillfully composed

23 Lauts, 1825, p. xii: ‘L’histoire de tous les siècles démontre qu’un peuple libre n’abandonne
jamais sa langue nationale pour en choisir une autre’.
24 Ibidem, p. xiv: ‘La langue employée dans ces écrits est pure, harmonieuse et entièrement
formée’.
leurs écrits [...] le haut degré de perfection que la langue acquit, lui assigna dès lors une place
parmi les langues les plus polies de l’Europe’.
26 Janssens and Steyaert, 2008, p. 293.
27 Lauts, 1826a, p. xxi.
piece of linguistic work that can easily compete with other traditional grammars of Dutch from the same era. Lauts should, in other words, not merely be seen as a nationalist propaganda figure who put his field of enquiry to language political use. The *Elémens* serves as convincing proof of his professional skill as a grammarian and language pedagogue. The work follows and prescribes the same Northern Dutch norms as the famous reference works by Siegenbeek and Weiland, which was normal practice at the time, also in the work of Southern grammarians after 1823.28 There is no reference to typically Southern grammatical features like using the accusative form of the masculine definite article *den* in nominative position. The -ke diminutive suffix, still often used in the southern provinces at the time, is said to be ‘often used in older times but now hardly used at all, apart from poetry’.29 Lauts does acknowledge that the double negation is still in use in Flanders and Brabant, but adds that the feature has been abandoned from the seventeenth century onwards by good authors.30 As orthography goes, all norms follow the Northern tradition and none of the southern shibboleth forms appear.31

The only ‘hidden’ ideological bias may appear in the paragraph on loan words and foreign graphemes. When mentioning ‘several foreign words that have gained currency in the language’, Lauts adds that ‘the Dutch language can create, by means of its roots, all words the human intelligence may need’.32 The very same idea is echoed in the passage on compound verbs: ‘The Dutch language possesses, like any mother-language, the advantage of being able to form within its bosom and with its proper materials, all words that the progress of the human spirit may make necessary’.33 The paragraph on foreign verbs (and derived forms) used in Dutch and requiring an accented

28 Vosters, Belsack, Puttaert & Vandenbussche, 2014.
29 Lauts, 1826a, p. 96: ‘j'ais on employait beaucoup les diminutifs ke, ken, kijn, sien, lijn; mais ils ne sont plus guère en usage, excepté en poésie’.
30 Lauts, 1826a, p. 422: ‘Anciennement on employait partout deux mots pour former la négation, savoir: en ... *niet*, comme aujourd'hui encore en Flandre et dans le Brabant, aussi les plaçait-on de la même manièr qu'en français. Dès le 17e siècle cependant cette double négation a fait place à la simple négation *niet*, généralement usité par tous les bons auteurs’.
31 Lauts prescribes no accented spelling for so-called sharp-long or soft-long *[k]/ and *[k]/*, long *[ja]/ is spelled *[ka]/ and not *[ce]/, *[je]/ and *[ye]/ are spelled *[ce]/ and *[cu]/, not *[cye]/ or *[cuy]*/. For a full overview of Southern shibboleth features, cf. Vosters, 2013, pp. 174-177.
32 Lauts, 1826a, p. 82: ‘Quoique la langue hollandaise, puisse crées, au moyen de ces racines tous les mots dont l'intelligence humaine peut avoir besoin, cependant il y a plusieurs mots étrangers qui ont acquis droit de bourgeoisie’.
33 Ibidem, p. 269: ‘La langue hollandaise possède comme toute mère-langue, l'avantage de pouvoir former dans son sein et avec ses propres matériaux, tous les mots que le procès de l'esprit humaine peuvent rendre nécessaires’.

spelling to assure a correct pronuocation of French *graver* and fatoenére’ to avoid the clear advice: ‘One must not use these formations in a dictionary. It is also best to avoid...’

5 1826 and 1827 Dictionaries

In 1826 Lauts published the *Gelijkluide ende en klankverwante en sound-related words*, which was the first dictionary to recognize that the Dutch language possesses, like any mother-language, the advantage of being able to form within its bosom and with its proper materials, all words that the progress of the human spirit may make necessary.34 The paragraph on the use of foreign verbs (and derived forms) used in Dutch and requiring an accented

34 Ibidem, p. 84: ‘Mais il faut éviter l'emploi également hâté de ces ongels, exercer, manière, régénérer...’
36 Lauts, 1826b, p. vi: ‘menige jongeling was, het was vreemd doen blijven, het onderscheid gevoelen niet alleen, maar ook op het gebied van zoodanige verwante klanken, welke de ziel zoowel gehoor vereersten, on wel...’
37 Ibidem, p. vii: ‘Bij deze gelegenheid zijn onderscheid, met verweerheid uitspraak lenigheid blijven; om dat, volgens mijn oordeel, het onderscheid op het gebied van zoodanige verwante klanken, welke de ziel zoowel gehoor vereersten, on wel...’

The next year a second dictionary, the *Woordenboek voor de spelling der...*
compete with other traditional roots should, in other words, not da figure who put his field of nen serves as convincing proof and language pedagogue. The hern Dutch norms as the famous end, which was normal practice rammarians after 1823.34 There natical features like using the ticle den in nominative position in the southern provinces at the es but now hardly used at all, edge that the double negation adds that the feature has been onwards by good authors.35 As tern tradition and none of the appear in the paragraph on loan ong ‘several foreign words that adds that ‘the Dutch language is the human intelligence may assauge on compound verbs: The language, the advantage of being proper materials, all words that necessary’.36 The paragraph on utch and requiring an accented

spelling to assure a correct pronunciation (like gravéren ‘to engrave’ from French graver and fatsoenéren ‘to make decent’ from French façonner) ends with the clear advice: ‘One must avoid the use of both these verbs and their derivations. It is also best to avoid hantéren, regéren, boetséren, [...].’34

5 1826 and 1827 Dictionaries

In 1826 Lauts published the 75-page Woordenboek van Nederlandsche gelijkvloedende en klankverwante woorden (‘Dictionary of homophonic and sound-related words’), which was used as a handbook in his Brussels athenaeum, but also in schools in Namur and Bouillon.35 The publication reportedly resulted from a need felt in his everyday educational practice, where ‘many youngsters, who had been deprived of the Dutch language during their first education, not only learned to appreciate the difference between various related sounds, but also to distinguish them by ear; even of sounds so closely related that distinguishing them required a very trained ear in certain areas of the Northern part of the Kingdom’.36 Lauts points out that this was the first dictionary of homonyms to his knowledge, apart from one French work. While firmly rooted in the practice of teaching Dutch to francophone Belgians (and, as such, instrumental in the governmental education policy), this dictionary contains none of the language political agency found in the Éléments. The only element that may hint at criticism of his earlier work is this striking sentence: ‘At this occasion it also be foremost said that all insincere resentment and pretentious pedantry will remain unnoticed and unanswered by me; because, in my opinion, modesty is inseparable from civilisation, while both testify to a good education.’37

The next year a second dictionary saw the light, the 214 page long Woordenboek voor de spelling der Nederlandsche taal (1827) (‘Dictionary

34 Ibidem, p. 84: ‘Mais il faut éviter l’emploi tant de ces verbes que de leur dérivés. Il est bon d’éviter également hantéren, exercer, manier; regéren, régner; boetséren, faire des ouvrages en relief’.
36 Lauts, 1826b, p. vi: ‘menige jongeling, wiens eerste opvoeding hem aan de nederlandsche taal had vreemd doen blijven, het onderscheid van de verschillende verwante klanken leerde gevoelen niet alleen, maar ook op het geheur onderscheiden, en in de uitspraak toepassen; zelfs van zoodanige verwante klanken, welke in sommige gedeelten van het noorden des rijks, een zeer geoorfend gehoor vereischten, om wel te worden onderscheiden’.
37 Ibidem, p. vii: ‘Bij deze gelegenheid zij tevens een vooral gezegd dat [...] alle onheuschte vitterij en met verwaandheid uitgesprokene betwetterij door mij steeds ongeacht en onbeantwoord zal blijven; om dat, volgens mijn oordeel, beschcheidenheid onafscheidelijk is van beschaafheid, terwijl beiden een goede opvoeding getuigen’.
for the spelling of the Dutch language’). The work was dedicated to Siegenbeek and the preface reads as a humble and servile glorification of Lauts’s philological colleague and example. It is made very clear that the Siegenbeek norm for spelling is the only possible guideline in the Low Countries, which prefigures the explicit rejection on the following pages of all Southern attempts to secure some space for Flemish and Brabant features in the official orthography (see below). It is interesting that Lauts explicitly does not attribute Siegenbeek’s success at advancing the uniformity of spelling to the official character of his word list (which was ‘published in the name and upon the demand of the state government of the Northern provinces’) but rather to his (alleged) impartial and thorough linguistic approach that received popular support from literary societies and fellow linguists. In the actual introduction to the dictionary Lauts even frames the popularity of the Siegenbeek spelling as a consequence of regained national independence (after the French occupation of the Low Countries) and renewed national existence. This ‘inflamed each true Dutchman with honourable patriotic love’ and ‘the urge to acquire and practice Dutch resulted in the wish for a uniform spelling, shared by all ranks of society’. The attack on the Flemish particularists follows seamlessly: ‘Anyone who is not attached to the Flemish orthography devotes himself with the greatest precision to the application of uniformity of spelling, following the principles developed in the treatise by Mr Siegenbeek’ (id.).

After repeatedly explaining that the present work seeks to remedy the limited mastery of (and higher reliance on) dictionaries in the Southern provinces, Lauts lists a catalogue of features that should not be included in dictionaries. He claims that in teaching practice and will not be accepted consensus on different concerns the spelling of long /æ:/ always be written as <aa > and << according to Lauts, writes diphthongs <Tel and <ui>. In the case of the spelling is not tolerated in normal part of the shibboleth set of Southern symbols value for the so-called be a solid group of spelling featuring they represent a sharp North-South /æ:/ and /ɛ:/ in closed syllables, monophthong in non-loanwords old diphthongs /ei/ and /oey/ [... daily basis in the Southern province nationalistic enterprise of creating of Southern particularist tendencies in both previous works.

One further detail should be noted in his assistance with (and critically writes that another manuscript ‘Dictionary on the genders’) has been distant. He soon see the light. The work was referred to in any of the secondary.

6 Teaching at the Museum

The Museum van Wetenschappen has served as a public educational instrument in a variety of scholarly domains used

42 Lauts, 1827, pp. ix-xi.
43 Vouters, 2011, pp. 174-177: ‘Er lijkt dus een systematische verhouding te zijn, dat ze i name de spelling van /æ:/ en /ɛ:/ in gesloten bij niet-loenwoorden, het tweede graafseil’
44 Lauts, 1827, p. ii.
45 The manuscript is now located in the archives of the Royal Library, contains numerous hand-written annotat
The work was dedicated to Siegenbeek and servile glorification of Lauts's aide very clear that the Siegenbeek line in the Low Countries, which following pages of all Southernish and Brabantish features in the resting that Lauts explicitly does ancing the uniformity of spelling which was 'published in the name ment of the Northern provinces') thorough linguistic approach that dieties and fellow linguists. In the its even frames the popularity of regained national independence Countries) and renewed national man with honourable patriotic Dutch results in the wish for a society. The attack on the Flemish who is not attached to the with the greatest precision to the following the principles developed present work seeks to remedy the on) dictionaries in the Southern utes that should not be included with Nederduitsche instead of Neder- use the former title. The copy we used has he vernieuwd volksbestaan van der een edele vaderlandsche [...] ndsche taal, moest daardoor bij allen een s tot behartiging van eenparigheid in de en doordrong'. development of the basis of the local varieties, nationists who insisted 'that the northern ght to take over as much as possible the forth' (Willeyns, 1993).

The spelling of /æ/ and /e/ in closed syllables, the spelling of /ei/ from a West-Germanic monophthong in non-loanwords, the second grapheme in the spelling of the old diphthongs /ei/ and /oey/ [...]. All listed variants were still used on a daily basis in the Southern provinces. As such, Lauts manifestly linked the nationalist enterprise of creating a common writing culture to the rejection of Southern particularist tendencies, with a fierceness that was not present in both previous works.

One further detail should be mentioned: while thanking Siegenbeek for his assistance with (and critical comments on) the Elémens, Lauts surprisingly writes that another manuscript for a Woordenboek voor de geslachten ('Dictionary on the genders') had been finished for over a year and would soon see the light. The work was never published, however, and was not referred to in any of the secondary sources used for this article.

Teaching at the Museum van Wetenschappen en Letteren

The Museum van Wetenschappen en Letteren opened in 1827 in Brussels. It served as a public educational institution, free of charge, offering courses in a variety of scholarly domains until 1834. Both its creation and location in

42 Lauts, 1827, pp. ix-xi.
44 Lauts, 1827, p. ii.
45 The manuscript is now located in the Lauts archive in the Leiden University Library; it contains numerous hand-written annotations by Siegenbeek (shelfmark BPL 2245/1281q).
Brussels is usually interpreted as a compensation for the fact that Brussels was not assigned one of the new state universities in 1816 (which were located in Ghent, Leuven, and Liège instead). After its closing, it would actually provide one of the important foundations for the new Université Libre de Bruxelles in 1834, both in terms of professorial staff and resources. While scholarly contributions on the Museum are few and far between, a number of recurring facts in the scattered and fragmentary references to the institution provide sufficient information to assess Lauts's role in the enterprise.

The Museum was instrumental to King Willem's view on the role of public education. Vanpaemel points at the close collaboration between one of the Museum's founders, Alphonse Quetelet and the minister of education, Falck. The latter (to whom Lauts dedicated his *Éléments*) was convinced of the use of decent education as an instrument to further the "national feeling" that had to perpetuate the union between the Northern and Southern Low Countries. 10 courses were to be offered and the professors were selected and appointed by the national administrator for education; there is no doubt, accordingly, that the full teaching staff had the support of the regime (and vice versa). Lauts was singled out as professor of national literature and was the only one to teach in Dutch; his address at the official opening ceremony in 1827 was the only Dutch contribution as well. While the language of instruction may explain the limited success of Lauts's classes (compared to the other courses), Janssens and Steyaert quote an article by Masoin from 1902 stating that Lauts could not impose himself on his audience, either by talent or character; the growing opposition to the King would also have extended to those who served him too willingly. Lauts gave twelve lectures in all at the Museum, the first three of which were published in one volume in 1829. The remaining nine, according to Bergman, 'remain in his literary legacy, and would probably not be unworthy of publication'.

46 Vanpaemel, 1997, is the only detailed article on the Museum to my knowledge; this paragraph is heavily indebted to that source. He mentions one previous study on the topic from 1882.
48 Original text: 'overtuigd van het nut van degelijk onderwijs als een instrument ter bevordering van het 'nationaal gevoel' dat de unie tussen de Noordelijke en Zuidelijke Nederlanden moest bestendigen'.
51 Bergman, 1867, p. 143. The Lauts archive in Leiden (shelfmark BPL 2245/7887-b) contains the manuscripts of all lectures held in 1827, 1828, and 1829, including many unpublished ones, be it in various degrees of preparation. Next to fully finalised 'clean' texts, some lectures consist of draft versions and scattered notes. Further analyses of these sources are in the works.

7 Voorlezingen over de Nederlandse taal en letteren

Lauts introduces his 'lectures on Dutch until the present day, with a similar resolution to the English literature' with a six-line poem* for sciences and literature'. The educational project is stressed in the image of its 'enlightened' royal founders: 'an institution destined to feed the science and knowledge of literature, to be it local or foreigner, and all of whatsoever'. When quoting from the Museum in 1827, Lauts recalls how the King, and to the Netherlands, from which third countries, to dispel darkness, heath of swollen rhetoric, Charles will, in the light of the literary existence of the Dutch 'of-denounced' but 'outstanding' tradition, blames both foreign powers. In his public that the glowing love and identity will urge him to spread his integrationist view is then once again quoted from a poem by M.C. van Hall, in which the King live! His peoples flourishes, jointly growing from the own roots snares from the same lute.

The first lecture (from 1827?) is the fatherland) as the prime motivation of...
 Voorlezingen over de Nederlandsche letterkunde (1829)

Lauts introduces his 'lectures on Dutch literature, from the earliest times until the present day, with a simultaneous look on the High German, French, and English literature' with a short note on the history of the 'Museum for sciences and literature'. The emancipatory and positivist nature of the educational project is stressed in the most emphatic terms and echoes the image of its 'enlightened' royal founder from the very opening lines onwards: 'an institution destined to feed the more civilised ranks of society with science and knowledge of literature, suited for both genders, open to everyone, be it local or foreigner, and all of this without any condition or obligation, whatsoever'. When quoting from his speech during the inauguration of the Museum in 1827, Lauts recalls how he mentioned 'the glory that pertained to the Netherlands, from which the civilisation was repeatedly spread over other countries, to dispel darkness abroad and kindle a new light'. In the heat of swollen rhetoric, Charles the Great is even portrayed as 'the founder of the literary existence of the Dutch language'. Lauts further praises the 'oft-denounced' but 'outstanding' Dutch literature in the best romantic tradition, blames both foreign pretention and local ignorance, and assures his public that the glowing love for his country and his heartfelt Dutch identity will urge him to spread brotherly love amongst all Dutchmen. The integrationist view is then once again underscored with an elaborate quote from a poem by M.C. van Hall, in which the following stanza stands out: 'May the King live! His peoples flourish! United be North and South! Like oaks, jointly growing from the own root/ Like streams, flowing intertwined/ Like snares from the same lute'.

The first lecture (from 1827?) foregrounds vaderlandsliefe ('love for the fatherland') as the prime motivation for the study of (and interest in) Dutch

52 Lauts, 1829, 'Voorrede', p. 15: 'D'en roem die Nederland toekwam, als hebbende zich van uit ons vaderland, de beschaving meermaal over andere landen verspreid, om elders de duisternis te verdrijven en een nieuw licht te ontsteken.'
54 Ibidem, p. 19.
55 Ibidem, p. 32. ‘Als eiken, die te zaam, uit d’eigen wortel groeijen/ Als stroomen, die, genengeld, vloeijen/ Als snares van dezelfde luit!’
literature and literary history. Lauts consistently addresses his public in Brussels as Nederlanders ('Dutchmen') and explicitly mentions that even 'those who are more familiar with French or any other language through birth, education, or any other reason' feel the need to acquire a better mastery of Dutch which is 'the property of the larger part of Dutchmen by far'. What follows is a vintage romantic nationalist definition of language as the carrier of a people's true nature and soul; it distinguishes the Dutch from other people, functions as a barrier against foreign manners and taste, preserves the national spirit, and works as an identifying force for 'children' and 'brothers' of the 'same family'.

Lauts starts off with a short prehistory of Dutch (reminiscent of the introduction to the Eléemens) and distinguishes between an upper and lower Germanic language (the latter roughly corresponding to North and West-Germanic), characterised as 'hard' versus 'soft'. The latter (including the antecedents of Dutch) is presented as preferable, with a (at the time not unusual) mixture of folk linguistic nonsense and solid scholarly references. While Lauts admits that there are no traces of Dutch literature before the thirteenth century, he does list a few earlier landmarks of Salic, Frisian, Low German and Nether/Lower Franco-Cantabrian origin, and explicitly mentions the Nibelungenlied, albeit German, as still pertaining to the Dutch language because of the important role played by a 'hero of the Netherlands' in the work.

56 Ibidem, p. 9.
57 Ibidem, p. 10.
58 Ibidem, p. 11.
59 Lauts quotes madame De Staël's view (from De l'Allemagne, 1813 – Lauts misquotes the title as Sur l'Allemagne) that differences in pronunciation can be attributed to varying qualities of soil and climate: mountainous areas cause speakers to use a 'stronger tone' to be understood by the people below, whereas the nearness of the sea results in a sweeter, weaker, and 'flowing' pronunciation. For a further contextualisation of this climatological theory in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century thought, cf. Leerssen, 1999, pp. 33-38, 107.
60 Lauts refers to Leibniz and Klopstock. Throughout this publication Lauts proves to be well versed in both historical and contemporary philology. Key references include established scholars like Barthold Hendrik Lulofs and Annaeus Yper (who both wrote a history of the Dutch language and were professors in Groningen under King Willem I, cf. Janssen & Steyaert, 2008, p. 301 ff.), but also Johan Kinderling, Johan Schilte, Friedrich Schlegel, and many others. He further uses Lambert ten Kate's Aanleiding tot de kennis van het verhevene deel der Nederlandsche sprake and Hendrik van Wijns Historische en letterkundige avondstanden as background references in matters pertaining to Dutch literary history. For Lulofs and van Wijn, see the chapters by Petiet and van Kalmthout.
61 Lauts marks the onset of a written Dutch tradition with Hendrik De Keure van Brussels from 1229, and refers to Jan Frans Willems's edition.

When next commenting upon Dutch excellence states that Dutch stands out in contrast with the harsh 'raw' amount of synonyms and the richness in terms of purity and originality of the wide territory covered by the also-socalled natural tendency of opportunities for nominalisation and quotations from famous authors.

This glorification of Dutch in specific political contexts of the broader tradition of metaphysics. Hagen illustrates the continuous sixteenth century – the generic. Many scholars and treatises, including Matthijs Sieuwerts, Weijermars specifically discuss books and treatises on the excellence of the provinces of Willem's Kingdom and the Southern Low Countries: 'The Dutch in Liège during the period conformed itself entirely to the

As such, Lauts most definitively must be the only one – again for the period a common linguistic (and brokely South.

ently addresses his public in explicitly mentions that even any other language through the need to acquire a better larger part of Dutchmen by nalist definition of language il: it distinguishes the Dutch most foreign manners and taste, identifying force for children’

Dutch (reminiscent of the hes between an upper and corresponding to North and is ‘soft’. The latter (including rable, with a (at the time not solid scholarly referencing of Dutch literature before marks of Salic, Frisian, Low and explicitly mentions the ming to the Dutch language to of the Netherlands’ in the

gne, 1813 — Lauts misquotes the title be attributed to varying qualities as a ‘stronger tone’ to be understood as in a sweeter, weaker, and ‘flowing’ rabitical theory in eighteenth— in 62.

his publication Lauts proves to be Key references include established (who both wrote a history of the ng Willem I, cf. Jannsen & Steyaert, riedrich Schlegel, and many other hennisse van het verhevene deel der en letterkundige avondstonden as early history. For Lulofs and van Wijn, Hendrik I’s Keure van Brussels from

When next commenting upon the beauty of the Dutch language, Lauts states that Dutch stands out on the levels of ‘euphony, richness, and excellence’. The Dutch tendency towards ‘soft’ and ‘melting’ sounds is contrasted with the harsh ‘raw gurgling tones’ dominating High German, while arguments for the alleged richness are found in the word stock, the amount of synonyms, and the morphology of Dutch. Excellence is framed in terms of purity and originality, and apparently reinforced through the wide territory covered by the ancestors of Dutch. Lauts also brings in the so-called natural tendency of Dutch towards euphony in syntax and its opportunities for nominalisation. These claims are larded with extensive quotations from famous authors such as Hooft and Vondel.

This glorification of Dutch is by no means exceptional, neither in the specific political context of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, nor in the broader tradition of metalinguistic literature on Dutch through time. Hagen illustrates the continuous flow of literary praise for Dutch ever since the sixteenth century — the genre extends to many other languages as well. Many scholarly colleagues and contemporaries of Lauts engaged in similar treatises, including Matthijs Siegenbeek and Johannes Kinker.

Weijermars specifically discusses the incessant production of brochures and books on the excellence of Dutch (compared to French) in the Southern provinces of Willem’s Kingdom and points at their crucial role in the nation-formation enterprise, however. In this context Steyaert’s appraisal of early philology at the Université de Liège can easily be extended to the rest of the Southern Low Countries: ‘It can be argued that the academic study of Dutch in Liège during the period of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands conformed itself entirely to the king’s politics of unification.’

As such, Lauts most definitely lent his scholarly activities — as one of many — once again to the overarching process of creating (or inventing) a common linguistic (and broader cultural) identity bridging North and South.

62 Lauts, 1829, p. 23 ff.: ‘Welhuidendheid, rijkdom, voortreffelijkheid’.
63 Lauts refers to Siegenbeek’s treatises on the orthography of Dutch (Verhandeling over de spelling der Nederduitsche taal ter bevordering van eenaarigheid in deze, uitgegeven in naam en op last van het Staatsbevind van de Batavische Republiek) and on the influence of harmony on spelling (Verhandeling over den invloed der welhuidendheid en gemakkelijkheid van uitspraak op de spelling der Nederduitsche taal) from 1804 (Lauts mentions 1805). See Rutten’s chapter on Siegenbeek.
64 Hagen, 1999.
65 Weijermars, 2012, p. 139.
66 Steyaert, 2015, p. 213.
While Lauts's second lecture is not as permeated by nationalist discourse as the preceding pages, the author remains equally adamant when it comes to convincing the public that Dutch ranks among the first languages of Europe. Where all praise, so far, hinged upon the 'euphony, richness and excellence' of Dutch, Lauts now proceeds to an overview of Dutch literary history from the thirteenth century onwards. The landscape of the neighbouring German, French, and English literature of the thirteenth and fourteenth century is depicted as barren ground: 'Our countrymen needed only to deliver the slightest, to reach the same heights as the most developed of their closest neighbours'.

In that alleged literary wasteland, Lauts singles out a number of Dutch authors who stand apart for the 'purity' of their language. This quality is repeatedly defined as the (near) absence of loanwords. The 'unspoil'd character of Dutch and the superiority of its early literature is the complemented by the claims that Dutch was already relatively uniform across the language territory at the time. The alleged clarity of thirteenth century Dutch and its (questionable) present-day intelligibility is presented as convincing evidence of a long standing Dutch language practice that must have predated the Middle Ages for centuries. The wish to portray Dutch as a unified language (and hence, possibly, also as a very early national symbol) tempts Lauts (despite his solid philological training) to the (obviously false) claim that thirteenth century writings of Brabantic, Limburgian, or Hollandic nature were hard to distinguish from one another.

The image of literary superiority is continued in Lauts's discussion of fourteenth century Dutch poetry and prose, where the Flemish and Brabantic literary societies (the so-called rederijkerskamers) are said to be older than (and hence, 'trump') their (far more famous) French counterparts. The apogee of literary triumph is reached in the fifteenth century with the invention of printing by Laurens Janszoon Coster, from... Holland. Lauts explicitly denounces claims of a common and simultaneous invention in Germany. Other transnational literary phenomena are equally re-annexed as Dutch in origin: the roots of fifteenth century theatre in the Low Countries were not French church performances, but autochthonous (and older) Dutch 'chamber plays' instead. Even when admitting that the origins of the popular Reynaert stories might not be Dutch, Lauts still stresses that their

67 Lauts, 1829, p. 51: 'Onze landgenoten behoeven slechts weinig te leveren, om op dezelfde hoogte te staan, als de verstrekkende dier naburen, met welke wij ons in de meest onmiddellijke aanraking bevinden'.
68 Ibidem, p. 58.

European fame is due to two events: the Dutch language was pronounced the fairest of languages. Fourteenth century literature holds the most esteem in Europe. The following centuries are cursed with unfavourable influence on the 'poor' but proud language. The French language and French culture hold a place of esteem.

Once again, Lauts's messianism is more extreme than could be imagined. Weijermars, a noted flow of literary anthologies and professors at the new universities. He literally states that Lauts's limitation was also found in the works of the university of Ghent who published exactly the same goals as Lauts's. The essence of Dutch from the first literature was 'exemplary for the literary self-respecting teacher' to the history of Dutch literature's exchange occurred very soon after in the Northern and Southern Dutch. The importance of their study over the collapse of the Dutch Republic was seven years of the independent Netherlands established in 1815. Raising the standard for other languages was the common practice simply as his contemporaries.

In his third lecture, Lauts focuses on the 16th century, an era of discovery and the rise of religion in the preceding century, but also the 'old' and the 'new' from 1550 on, to the ideological (and geopolitical) Catholicism prefigures a speech in which the Dutch dominate and determine each another. This thematic literary exposed is nothing more than a sixteenth-century history, consis...
meated by nationalist discourse equally adamant when it comes among the first languages of on the ‘euphony’ of the Dutch language and to an overview of Dutch literary on the thirteenth century group: ‘Our countrymen with the same heights as the most that alleged literary wasteland, who stand apart for the “purity” as the (near) absence of Dutch and the superiority of its claims that Dutch was already priority at the time. The alleged its (questionable) present-day dence of a long standing Dutch the Middle Ages for centuries. guage (and hence, possibly, also its (despite his solid philological thirteenth century writings of are hard to distinguish from continued in Lauts’s discussion prose, where the Flemish and ederijkerskamers) are said to be famous) French counterparts. in the fifteenth century with the Coster, from... Holland. Lauts and simultaneous invention in homer are equally re-annexed century theatre in the Low Coun- but autochthonous (and older) admitting that the origins of the th, Lauts still stresses that their European fame is due to two editions that were made by... Dutchmen. If the Dutch language was prone to include loan words at the time, much of the blame was to be bestowed on the Burgundian rulers who had an unfavourable influence on the ‘purity’ of the language and who brought the French language and French manners to the Netherlands.

Once again, Lauts’s messianistic drive to glorify Dutch is less surprising than could be imagined. Weijermars points out that there was a continuous flow of literary anthologies and histories of literature at the time, both by professors at the new universities and by other philologists and teachers. She literally states that Lauts’s link between national literature and civilisation was also found in the works of Schrant, the professor of Dutch at the university of Ghent who published two anthologies in 1827 that served exactly the same goals as Lauts’s lectures. He, too, tried to prove the richness of Dutch from the first literary sources onwards, an approach that was exemplary for the literary work of Dutch teachers in the South. Any self-respecting teacher published an anthology in which he testifies to the history of Dutch literature? Rock points out that this emancipatory change occurred very soon after the establishment of Dutch philology, both in the Northern and Southern Provinces: ‘Young scholars [...] emphasised the importance of their study for the nation-state being built, after the collapse of the Dutch Republic in 1795 and the unification of the former seven sovereign provinces into the kingdom of the Netherlands newly established in 1813.’ Raising the status of Dutch compared to French and other languages was the common goal that united these scholars and Lauts simply did as his contemporaries and colleagues did.

In his third lecture Lauts focuses on the sixteenth century, presented as an era of discovery and literary expansion (due to the invention of printing in the preceding century), but also as a time of a heroic clash between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ from 1550 onwards. This implicit introductory reference to the ideological (and geopolitical) opposition between Protestants and Catholics prefigures a speech in which the benign effects of the Reformation dominate and determine each and every appraisal of literary quality. Lauts’s literary exposé is nothing more than a guise for a highly biased account of sixteenth century history, consistently interpreted in favour of the Northern

70 Ibidem. p. 182. Toelit, 2008, provides a concise overview of Schrant’s role in the development of Dutch philology at the University of Ghent.
and Protestant view. The separation of the Low Countries after 1585 and the ensuing separate evolution of the Dutch language in North and South, is referred to as follows: ‘Some [peoples of Europe] completely neglected the practice of the mother tongue, and in the Netherlands especially there existed from then onwards, during approximately two centuries, as two different nations, who did not care about each other’s existence and progress or retreat, namely Netherlanders and Latins, the latter comprising almost all scholars in our home country.’ As the quality of Dutch literature goes, the first half of the sixteenth century is evaluated as moderate at best. Lauts lists a catalogue of noteworthy authors but mentions ‘loan words and stiff clumsiness of meter’ as the ‘main faults of the century’. The glory years of Dutch were realised in the Northern Low countries after 1550, however, and are contrasted with the situation in Germany and France. Luther is presented as the man who saved German from oblivion and as the only noteworthy author of literary value in German throughout the sixteenth century. The literary landscape in France is also portrayed as relatively poor. England stands out because of a number of literary greats, including Shakespeare, but is not discussed in the same detail. In the Northern Provinces, however, the regained independence prepares the country for the ‘high step of glory’ of seventeenth century Dutch literature in which the ‘fatherland reaches the same glitter in literature as in matters of politics, economy, commerce and art’. The written language lost nothing in the intensifying weakness [...] Serious writers; and power, vigour, art and emotions and melting finishes.

These void characterisations form the backbone for the remaining text. There is a selection of literary heroes and heroines, the age of seventeenth-century literature as close allies of King Willem of Orange dominated by their political and religious publications. The author Cornelis Koops is given credit for his critical work. He is essentially a supporter, and in many instances inspires the reader to convict Willem of Orange.

The same pattern applies to Willem’s personal advisor, Maarten Jansz. Koop, not only of his language but his literary works. His letter to the Church – should be it only for his political support, but also for the satirical tone – is given to support the conclusions the author wishes to make: the vigour of expression, clarity, simplicity and the sense of worth to inspire the reader to convict Willem of Orange.

de Low Countries after 1585 and 16th century language in North and South, 
re "Europe" completely neglected the Netherlands especially the 
terminally two centuries, as two 
other's existence and progress 
ls, the latter comprising almost 
quality of Dutch literature goes, 
ated as moderate at best, Lauts 
mentions 'loan words and stiff 
the century'.

in the Northern Low countries 
the situation in Germany and 
 saved German from oblivion 
ery value in German throughout 
te in France is also portrayed 
cause of a number of literary 
discussed in the same detail. In 
med independence prepares the 
entury Dutch literature in 
ter in literature as in matters of 

74 Lauts, 1829, p. 93; "den hoogten trap van luister, dien onze letterkunde in de 17e eeuw bereikt, 

75 ibidem, p. 99: "de schrijftaal, veel doen verliezen van die zachte, mischien hier en daar 

76 Lauts, 1829, p. 93: "den hoogten trap van luister, dien onze letterkunde in de 17e eeuw bereikt, 

77 ibidem, p. 99: "Zuiverheid van taal, gespierdheid van uitdrukking, helderheid en beva 

78 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

79 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

80 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

CATCH BETWEEN PROPAGANDA AND SCIENCE

politics, economy, commerce, and navigation. The victory of the Northern 
provines is said to have had an effect on the gender of words, on the renewal 
of the lexicon and on the overall tone of Dutch:

The written language lost much of its soft and sometimes perhaps drag 
ging weakness [...] Serious events required serious language from the 
writers; and power, vigour, and pithy expressions replaced soft, dragging 
tones and melting finishes.

These void characterisations of linguistic and literary qualities are the 
backbone for the remaining pages of the lecture, in which Lauts praises 
a selection of literary heroes who allegedly paved the way for the golden 
age of seventeenth-century literature. Virtually all of these authors were 
close allies of King Willem of Orange; the discussion of their influence is 
dominated by their political activities and the ideological contents of 
their publications. The author Coornhert is deemed worthy of two pages of praise, 
be it only for his political support of Willem of Orange. When his literary 
value is finally brought to the fore, extensive quotes from his poetry are 
given to support the conclusion that his style displays 'purity of language, 
vigour of expression, clarity of tone, which, combined with friendliness, 
inspires the reader to conviction'.

The same pattern applies to the discussion of Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde, 
Willem's personal advisor. Marnix is repeatedly applauded for the purity of 
his language but his literary masterpiece – a parody of the Catholic 
Church – should be remembered because 'in the moral and religious spheres 
this satire has contributed as much to the health and the stimulation of 
the human spirit, as the electrical fluid often to the purification of air 
impregnated with unhealthy substances'. The extensive praise for the 

81 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

82 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

83 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

84 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

85 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

86 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

87 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

88 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

89 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

90 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

91 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

92 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

93 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

94 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

95 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

96 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

97 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

98 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

99 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

100 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

101 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

102 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

103 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

104 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

105 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de 

106 ibidem, p. 104: "In het zedelijke en godsdienstige heeft dit hekelschrift even zeer tot de
national anthem supposedly written by Marnix is underscored by the quotation in full with all stanzas, and once more reinforces the overall doctrine behind Lauts's words.

The last literary hotshot to be praised for his 'sweet-flowingness, combined with force and intelligence' is Spiegel.80 While his style is rough, his language hard to understand and the sentence structure defying what is proper Dutch, Lauts still highlights the 'richness of his ideas, the power of his diction and the honourable feelings he expresses'.81

Whereas the first two lectures were still balanced between philological insights and language political endeavours, the third blatantly gives in to the lure of nationalist propaganda. The symbolical victory of Protestantism over Catholicism, the adoration of the 'fatherland's father' (as Willem of Orange tends to be called) and his closest allies, the focus on texts of great nationalist importance like the anthem; each of these aspects leads to the conclusion that all sixteenth century glory was to be found in the North. The glow of this apogee of national history is then extended to the present day ruler and the newly reunited Kingdom. As argued before, this practice qualifies Lauts as a typical philologist of his generation, conforming to a blended 'grand narrative' of literary and national history, which was the rule rather than the exception in the Southern Low Countries at the time.

8 Desiderata for Further Research

As indicated above, this is but a modest first contribution to a full appraisal of Lauts's role and position in the study of the construction of a Dutch national identity. While some of the secondary sources used quote excerpts from the (apparently widely scattered) correspondence between Lauts and his contemporaries, much is to be expected from a close analysis of Lauts's personal archives, bequeathed to the University of Leiden archives.82

Two specific projects from his time in Brussels appeal to curiosity, because of their potentially instrumental function in the overall dutchification policy of King Willem's reign. The first concerns Lauts's attempts to dutchify theatre life in Brussels. Dutch newspaper in the same sense between Falk and van den Boorn Colenbrander.84 Lauts had some influence, which was then forwarded to Maanen that he is inclined to see Lauts as one of the people who well informed when it comes to reply to the King, the theatre light. Lauts had apparently some influence only, which leads company may not be as good as recruiting Northern actors, of language (i.e. Dutch) and the South. When it comes to the number of competent actors, confident answers to these none, is suggested that the project and the ministers propose to extensive files on the topic, which may help provide some of the theatre sphere.

The launch of a Dutch national newspaper control was met with caution, not convinced of the potential of Dutch newspapers in other undertaking would be a waste to this specific project. Lauts in Brussels, for certain, as can the Northern Dutch publicize a newspaper supported by (a)

A fuller understanding of his time in Brussels may come

80 Ibidem, p. 107: 'zoveelvloeiendheid, gepaard met kracht en ziinrijkheid'.
82 The 'Archief Ulrich Gerard Lauts' (shelfmark BPL.2145) contains 3 running meters of sources, including scholarly notes and texts of treatises concerning Dutch studies, national history, and geography, mainly of the Dutch colonies. Further detail studies of these sources are being prepared.
83 Cf. van den Berg & Coutenier, 1970
84 Colenbrander, 1905-1922, Volume 3, the information on those pages.
86 Witte, 2014, p. 94. The Lauts archive, the theatre and the newspaper project.
to dutchify theatre life in Brussels; the second the establishment of a Dutch newspaper in the same town. Both elements appear in correspondence between Falck and van Maanen from 1823, reproduced in extenso by Colenbrander. Lauts had sent a report on both issues to the King in 1823, which was then forwarded to both ministers in May 1823.

As to the creation of a Dutch theatre company, Falck indicates to van Maanen that he is inclined to recommend this to the King, and suggests Lauts as one of the people suited to lead the company. He declares to be less well informed when it comes to judging the newspaper project. In the formal reply to the King, the theatre project is indeed presented in a favourable light. Lauts had apparently suggested to appoint actors from the Southern provinces only, which leads both ministers to state that ‘the theatre company may not be as good as could be wished.’ It would be cheaper than recruiting Northern actors, however, and it might stimulate the practice of language (i.e. Dutch) and art among other amateur companies in the South. When it comes to the questions of being able to attract a sufficient number of competent actors and calculating the necessary funds, Lauts’s confident answers to these matters are presented as a solid guarantee. The king is urged that the project will greatly benefit from Lauts’s appointment and the ministers propose to allocate the necessary funds. De Jonghe refers to extensive files on the topic in the National Archives of The Hague, which may help to provide a fuller picture of Lauts’s role and activity in the theatre sphere.

The launch of a Dutch newspaper in Brussels under governmental control was met with caution and criticism, however. Both ministers were not convinced of the potential reading public, referred to the difficulties of Dutch newspapers in other Southern provinces and feared the whole undertaking would be a waste of money. It is unclear what further happened to this specific project. Lauts did remain involved in the newspaper branch in Brussels, for certain, as can be gleaned from Witte who lists him as one of the Northern Dutch publicists who contributed to La Gazette des Pays Bas, a newspaper supported by (and spreading the views of) the government.

A fuller understanding of Lauts’s role in the press and the theatre during his time in Brussels may complement the picture of a government-loyal

83 Cf. van den Berg & Couttenier, 2009, p. 177.
84 Colenbrander, 1905-1922, Volume 8, Part 3, Gs 30, pp. 609-612. This paragraph paraphrases the information on those pages.
86 Witte, 2014, p. 94. The Lauts archive in Leiden contains (as yet unexplored) folders on both the theatre and the newspaper projects.
teacher and philologist who played a fairly traditional language political role in the specific context of the frenchedified Brussels elite life. A further step could then be to assess the lasting impact of Laut's activism during his formative years in Brussels on his production and agency in later life. It is already clear from his bibliography and references in secondary sources that Laut's cultural-nationalist turn extended to the Dutch colonial enterprise in Africa and Asia.

Each of these pathways for further research would, of course, greatly benefit from an interdisciplinary embedding, taking into account notions of 'ethnolinguistic' or 'cultural nationalism' and 'imagined communities'.

Given this large array of research desiderata, it is too early to provide a conclusive characterisation of Laut's impact on the development of Dutch philology and the nation building drive during the United Kingdom of the Netherlands and beyond. Lauts most certainly fits, however, Leeressen's appraisal of early nineteenth-century philology:

"The political usefulness of philologists was, then, explicitly conceived of in national or even nationalist terms. 'Love of the Fatherland' had by now become a categorical human and moral virtue, while to serve in the interests of the 'fatherland' was considered both an unquestionably good thing and something for which philologists [...] felt themselves to be eminently equipped [...] From the reader's present perspective, such a subordination of academic scholarship to politics is deeply suspect, but for the scholars themselves, it was a pure and unproblematic question of public usefulness."

References

J.T. Bergman, 'Levensberigt van Ulrich Gerard Lauts', Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde (1867), 141-152.

F. Blauwkuip, De taalbesluiten van Koning Willem I (Amsterdam: De Bussy, 1920).


87 Van Ginderachter, 2008, e.g.

traditional language political eld Brussels elite life. A further effect of Laut's activism during his on and agency in later life. It isences in secondary sources that to the Dutch colonial enterprise research would, of course, greatly n, taking into account notions and 'imagined communities'.
ta, it is too early to provide a ist on the development of Dutch ing the United Kingdom of the nly fits, however, Leerksen's lory:

... then, explicitly conceived love of the Fatherland' had by nal virtue, while to serve in rdered both an unquestionably ogists [...] felt themselves to or present perspective, such a politics is deeply suspect, but and unproblematic question


P. De Klerk, 'Was die Groot Trek werkelijk groot? 'n Historiografiese ondersoek na die gevolge en betekenis van die Groot Trek', Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe, 49 (2009), 658-673.


U.G. Lauts, Eléments de la langue hollandaise, 2nd ed. (Brussels: De Vroom, 1825).

U.G. Lauts, Eléments de la langue hollandaise, reprinted 2nd ed. (Brussels: Luneman, 1826a).

U.G. Lauts, Woordenboek van nederlandsche gelijkkluidende en klankverwante woorden (Homonyms), met de beteekenis in het Fransch (Brussels: Luneman, 1826b).


U.G. Lauts, Vorlesingen over de Nederlandsche letterkunde sedert de vroegste tijden tot op onze dagen, met een gelijkzijdige blik op de hoogduitsche, Franse en engelse letterkunde, gehouden in het Museum van Wetenschappen en Letteren te Brussel (Brussels: Tencé, 1829).

J. Leerksen, Nationaal denken in Europa (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1999).


W. van den Berg & P. Coutenier, *Alles is taal geworden: Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1800-1900* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2009).


**About the Author**

**Wim Vandenbussche** (1973) studied Germanic philology at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, where he now is professor of Dutch and general linguistics. He teaches courses on Dutch and Germanic language history, as well as on various aspects of sociolinguistics. His research is situated in the domain of historical sociolinguistics, with particular attention to the language situation in Flanders during the 18th and 19th century. He is one of the founders of HISON, the Historical Sociolinguistics Network, and a member of both the Agder Academy of Sciences and Letters and the Royal Academy for Dutch Language and Literature.
Edited by Rick Honings, Gijsbert Rutten and Ton van Kalmthout

Language, Literature and the Construction of a Dutch National Identity (1780-1830)