

'De pestiferis libris, cuiusmodi sunt in Hispania Amadisus, Splandianus ...'. Production, Materiality, and Readers of the Dutch 'Amadijs'

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ABSTRACT

In the 16th century at the latest there were strong political, cultural and literary ties between the Iberian Peninsula and the Dutch speaking regions in north western Europe. Literature in general and especially romances from the 'south' were printed, translated and adapted in Dutch. After an introduction in which the contribution presents a short overview of the translation and adaptation of Iberian romances in Dutch the focus will be on the 'Amadijs' tradition especially. For the first time the Spanish source and the 'Amadijs' are compared, including an analysis of the paratextual elements of the first Dutch edition of 'Amadijs' (1546), which clearly shows that Nuyts did not follow his source as an inspiration for the design of his edition, but copied the design of earlier Dutch editions of narratives as a marketing strategy. Part four shows that the Dutch 'Amadijs' was obviously read by everyone in the early modern period.

KEYWORDS

Spanish and Dutch literature; prose novel; early modern literature and book culture; book history; paratext; illustration

Introduction

In 1524 the Antwerp printer Michiel Hillen van Hoochstraten was the first to publish the treatise 'De institutione feminae christianae', later a widespread guide for the education of young women written by the Valencia-born Juan Luis Vives (1493–1540) who lived in Leuven (Flemish Brabant) in that period.¹ In book I, Vives listed several works, popular in Spain, which should **not** be read. The first he mentions is 'Amadís':

Tum et de pestiferis libris, cuiusmodi sunt in Hispania Amadisus, Splandianus, Florisandus ... quarum ineptiarum nullus est finis ... In hac Belgica Florius et Albus flos ...²

At that time literature from 'Hispania' was popular in the southern Dutch-speaking areas. This is hardly surprising because of the close mercantile and political ties between the

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*To Wim van Anrooij for his inspiration and collegiality.

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Iberian Peninsula and the Dutch-speaking regions which are nowadays part of Belgium and of the southern parts of the Low Countries.

From the 12th century there were commercial ties between Portuguese, Catalan and Aragonese merchants and Flanders, culminating in safe-conducts granted by the Duke of Burgundy to the Portuguese and the people from the Algarve in 1386, to the Catalans in 1389, and to the Aragonese in 1401.³ From the late fifteenth century onwards, the political connections between the Spanish Empire and the ‘Dutch’ regions were intensified.⁴ Mary of Burgundy (1457–1482) who reigned in the Burgundian Netherlands, made her husband Maximilian of Habsburg (1459–1519) the custodian of her son Philip the Fair (1478–1506). As a sovereign of Burgundy from 1482, Philip became the first Habsburg ruler to be crowned King of Castile (from 1506). After Philip’s death his son Charles V (born in Ghent in 1500), inherited Philip’s Burgundian territories. In 1516 he was proclaimed king of Castile and Aragon.

Under Charles V the Seventeen Provinces of the ‘Low Countries’ were reorganized in the so-called Burgundian Treaty (Transaction of Augsburg) in 1548. From 1555 onwards, the Iberian Branch of the Habsburg Empire, including the Low Countries, was ruled by Philip II of Spain (1527 – 1598). In 1568 the Seventeen Provinces’ rebellion against Philip marked the beginning of the Eighty Years War. Whereas the seven northern provinces became independent in 1581, the southern provinces remained under Spanish rule; Antwerp fell in 1585. The Spanish Netherlands roughly comprised the north of present-day Belgium, Luxembourg and a small part in the north of present-day France. The strong political ties were accompanied by a huge interest in literature from the Iberian Peninsula, especially romances like ‘Amadijs’ from the ‘south’ were printed, translated and adapted here. The contribution starts with a short overview of the translation and adaptation of Iberian romance in Dutch, followed by an outline of the printed Dutch tradition of ‘Amadijs’ in part two. In part three the paratextual elements of the first Dutch edition of ‘Amadijs’ (1546) are compared with the source text. Part four discusses different known and anonymous Dutch readers and buyers of the narrative in the early modern period.

Iberian Romance in the Spanish Netherlands

Printers in the Spanish Netherlands did not only produce texts in Dutch and French, both local languages, but also in Low German, Italian, English and especially in Spanish.⁵ In the sixteenth century Antwerp, as the most important multilingual European printing centre, became also the most important place outside the Iberian Peninsula for publications in Spanish.⁶ The first Iberian text printed in the Spanish Netherlands was the first printed dictionary, the trilingual ‘Vocabulario para aprender Franches Espannol y Flamincp’ [sic] (‘Dictionary to learn French, Spanish and Flemish’), put on the market by Willem Vorsterman († 1543) in Antwerp in 1520 (USTC 78033).⁷

The two most prominent printer-publishers in Antwerp for books in Spanish were Jan Steelsius (ca. 1500–1562) and Marten Nuyts or Nutius (ca. 1515–1558). Nuyts had lived on the Iberian Peninsula for several years and learnt the language.⁸ After Nuyts’ death, Christoffel Plantijn (1520–1589) and his successors, the Moretus family, continued the production of Spanish books in Antwerp, especially liturgical works. They were followed,

during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, by the Verdussens in Antwerp, and Mommaert, Velpius and Foppens in Brussels. However, the production of books in Spanish was not the only Iberian influence in this part of Europe, translations played an important role as well.

Translations can be seen as an ‘instrument of empire’, and the role of translators and printers as part of the ‘first globalisation’ from 1500 onwards can hardly be underestimated.⁹ Different kinds of texts were translated: itineraries, technical works, theological, didactic-moralizing texts and fictional narratives. In the first half of the sixteenth century, Nuyts has effectively become the main printer who made Antwerp the European centre for the production and distribution of translated books.

Quite a few Spanish romances were adapted in Dutch in the first half of the sixteenth century, sometimes through a French intermediate. In about 1510 Henrick Eckert van Homberch put the first printed Dutch translation of a Spanish romance on the market in Antwerp, a folio edition: ‘Een seer schone ende suerlike hystorie van Oliuier van Castillen ende van Artus van Algarbe, sijnen lieven gheselle’, a narrative about the adventures of two stepbrothers (NK 3170).¹⁰ There are different hypotheses about the source of the Dutch version: the author used either both the Spanish and French tradition or (only) a French version printed in Geneva.¹¹

In 1523 ‘Een schoon historie van Turias ende Floreta’, based on ‘La Historia del rey Canamor y del infant Turián su hijo’,¹² was published in Brussels by Thomas van der Noot (USTC 442,202).¹³ The ‘Historie vander coninghinnen Sibilla’ (USTC 437,941) was directly translated from a Spanish source and was published by Willem Vorsterman in Antwerp in about 1538.¹⁴ From the ‘Palmerin’ cycle (a series of eight romances) two were transmitted in Dutch: ‘Historie van Palmerijn van Olijve’ and ‘Het eerste boeck, van Primalion van Griecken’. ‘Palmerijn’ was printed twice: in 1602 Jan Janssen published a quarto edition in Arnhem, in the north-eastern part of the Dutch speaking areas, without an illustration on the title page (USTC 1,022,763).¹⁵ The title page mentions its Castilian source, the translation into French and then into Dutch, and in this way clearly highlights its route from the south to the north as well as its widespread popularity.¹⁶ In 1613 Janssen published a second quarto edition with an illustrated title page and illustrations in the book itself, showing his strategy to make his books more attractive.¹⁷

‘Palmerijn’ was also chosen as a source for the plots of Dutch theatre plays. The famous playwright Gerbrand Adriaanszoon Bredero used episodes from it in three different plays: ‘Rodd’rick ende Alphonsus’ (1611), ‘Griane’ (1612) and ‘Stommen Ridder’ (1618).¹⁸ In 1618, Jan Starter chose Feliciano de Silva’s ‘Rogel de Grecia’, an addition to the ‘Palmerin’ series, as a source for his ‘Daraide’, as well as Pieter van Zeerijp for his ‘Arfleura en Brusanges’ (1646); Salomon Questiers wrote ‘Griecxen Amadis’ (1633).¹⁹

There are six editions in Dutch of four books of ‘Primaleón’: a quarto edition of the first book titled ‘Het eerste boeck, van Primalion van Griecken, Sone van Palmerin van Olyven’, published by Felix van Sambix in Rotterdam in 1613 (USTC 1,028,512). Its subtitle reveals that it was translated from Italian and Spanish, and from French into Dutch. Book II, translated by Samuel Min-el, was published in Rotterdam by Matthijs Bastiaensen, ca. 1609–1625 (USTC 1,028,511); and by Jan II van Waesberghe in 1621 (USTC 1,022,539). Book III, translated by A. Migoen, was published even twice in Rotterdam in 1614: by Matthijs Bastiaensz (USTC 1,028,510;

STCN 833,567,586), and by Jan III van Waesberghe (STCN 303,626,259). The translator dedicated his work to his young friend Meynaerd van Duynen (fol. A2r).²⁰ Book IV was translated by Felix van Sambix and published by Jan II van Waesberghe in 1619 (USTC 1,028,509). The transfer of romances from the south reached a peak when ‘Amadís de Gaula’ was translated into Dutch.

The Dutch ‘Amadijs’

On 8 October 1546 Marten Nuyts published book I of ‘Een schoone historie van den seer vroomen Amadijs van Gaulen’ in Antwerp.²¹ Nuyts worked in Antwerp as a bookseller, printer and publisher (ca. 1539/1540–1558). He published at least 229 works in five languages (Spanish, Latin, Dutch, French and Italian),²² in a workplace called ‘buyten die Camerpoorte in den Gulden Eenhoren’ (‘outside the Chambergate, in the golden unicorn’). This workplace had formerly belonged to Willem Vorsterman, and still had material in stock which Vorsterman had used before (see below).²³ The only extant, however incomplete, copy of this ‘Amadijs’ edition comprises 87 folios with 42 woodcuts.²⁴

Nuyts’ first edition can be called the starting point for an enormous ‘Amadijs’ production in Dutch. A total of 66 editions of books I – XXI were published until 1628.²⁵ Except for editions of books I – IV, which were translated from a Spanish source, first editions of the other books were translations from French.²⁶ The transmission of the Dutch ‘Amadijs’ is far from complete. For example, a publishing request by Daniel Vervliet, dated 4 May 1568, convincingly shows that there must have been other editions of Books I – III published by him in Antwerp between 1568 and 1574.²⁷ All in all, books I, II and III were printed at least six times; books IV, V and X five times; book XI four times; Books VI, VII, VIII, IX and XII three times, Books XIII – XVII twice, and books XVIII – XXI once.

There was a clear movement of the Dutch ‘Amadijs’ from the south to the north: until 1574 editions were published in Antwerp, but this stopped abruptly, obviously because of the Spanish troops in Antwerp, especially during the Spanish Fury in 1576.²⁸ Publication was interrupted for some years during the first phase of the Eighty Years War (1574–1587) and the state of turmoil it caused in the ‘Low Countries’.²⁹ Between 1587 and 1628, 55 (extant) editions were published in the northern Dutch-speaking areas (mostly in Rotterdam and Amsterdam). The most productive publishers were Hendrick Barentsz in Amsterdam (1607–1623), and Jan van Waesberghe II in Rotterdam (1589–1624) with twelve editions each,³⁰ Cornelisz. Claes with eleven editions in Amsterdam (1592–1607); and Jan Claes van Dorp with nine editions in Leiden (1592–1598).³¹ Van Selm convincingly reconstructed a logical sequence of editions of the first twelve books, probably published by Cornelisz. Claes in Amsterdam. Claes, who either printed them himself or had them printed by colleagues like Gillis Rooman or Jan Nicolaes III Biestkens, might have been the coordinator of the whole project.³²

The books differ in length: there are editions with 88 folios (XIV.1 and XIV.2) and with 212 or 214 folios (XII.2 and XII.1). Nearly all editions start with a title page which is illustrated with a woodcut.³³ Editions with the highest number of illustrations were published in Rotterdam by Jan II van Waesberghe (V.3; 1593; 24 illustrations including 15 repetitions) and Isaac van Waesberghe (XIX.1; 1625; 31 illustrations including 14

repetitions). All extant editions appeared in quarto, with the exception of the first edition which was printed in folio with an interesting title page (see below).

Production and Paratext of the First Dutch ‘Amadijs’ Edition

Title Page

Nuyts introduced the story with the following text on the title page:

Een schoone historie van | den seer vroomen Amadijs van Gaulen: | die welcke alle andere
Hystorien die tot noch toe ghesien ende gheprint sijn verde te bouen gaet: wter welcker een
yghelijck | Edelman ende vrouwe: veel vruchten: duechden: | ende wijsheyt krijghen mach:
want si vol | honichbloyender sentencien is.³⁴

The title page is printed in black and red. The reference to the genre in the first line appears in red letters, which are placed in a red frame, followed by a specification of the main figure of the book, an appraisal of the book as it surpasses all other histories seen and printed until then, and, being entertaining and didactic, is useful for both noble men and women. An image presenting a knight on horseback is placed under the subtitle. This kind of title page divided in three parts (large title, subtitle and image) is typical of books published in the southern Dutch-speaking areas in the first half of the sixteenth century.³⁵

This first Dutch ‘Amadijs’ was directly translated from a source in Spanish.³⁶ The title pages of all Iberian editions, however, differ from the Dutch. The earliest extant edition (Zaragoza: Jorge Coci, 1508) presented the first four books in one volume with the title ‘Los quatro libros del Virtuoso cauallero Amadis de Gaula’ (USTC 342,622). On the title page a huge illustration at the top, covering more than 80% of the page, shows a knight on horseback holding a banner in his hand with the short title ‘Amadis de Gaula’ across it. In a later edition (1521) Coci placed the short title at the top and made it more visible and readable (USTC 348,441).³⁷ Under the title is a woodcut, and under the woodcut the title was repeated and expanded, as the publisher also announced the four books of ‘Amadís’.³⁸

Vorsterman’s ‘Een schoone historie van Margarieten van Limborch’ (1516, NK 3168) and Nuyts’s ‘Amadijs’ match in a striking way.³⁹ Nuyts used the same woodblock for the words ‘Een schoone historie van’ (in red), having sawn off the second line with the title ‘margarieten van limborch’. A new woodblock with ‘Amadijs van Gaulen’ is placed under it in a square frame, and, just as in ‘Historie van Margarieten’, followed by a summary of the adventures in five lines. An illustration placed under the title depicts Amadijs on horseback. Both printers used decorative woodcuts on either side of the main woodblock. Unlike Vorsterman, Nuyts decided to add information about the place, printer and year of publishing as well as about the privilege already mentioned, and a sentence to emphasize that no printer was allowed to ‘imitate’ him.⁴⁰

None of the Iberian ‘Amadís’ title pages tells anything about the contents, the didactic intention or the printer/publisher. For the contents and composition of his ‘Amadijs’ title page Nuyts used the characteristic practices of the earlier southern Dutch book producers as a marketing strategy.⁴¹ Their material and styles for the title page design were obviously clearly still customary 30 years later.

Dedication and Prologue

Nuyts's 'Amadijs' was explicitly addressed to the nobleman Carolus of Liedekerke, burggrave of Brussels and Lombeke, and lord of Denderleeuw and Ydenvoorde (fol. A1v-A2r). He is described as 'eedele vrome' ('noble and brave') and 'seer discrete' ('able to discern'), 'discrete' being repeated again and again.

The dedication is mentioned among classical dedications by Julius Pollux ('Onomasticon' dedicated to emperor Commodus) and Marcus Vitruvius ('De architectura' dedicated to Octavianus Augustus). The author compares the example of a simple farmer who offered king Artaxerxes of Persia to drink water out of his hands,⁴² to his offering of the book to lord Carolus. In the next part, Carolus's faith, honesty, cordiality and piety are praised. In the last part Carolus is invited to 'read' 'Amadijs' (like Artaxerxes) because 'this history by the Spaniards is considered the best they have'.⁴³ The author-translator, perhaps Nuyts himself, was obviously very well acquainted with the literary taste in the Iberian Peninsula.⁴⁴ He expresses his hopes to translate other works into Dutch for the people who do not know Latin, French or Spanish. Because of the references to classical authors and events, the author-translator of the Dutch 'Amadijs' must have been well-educated, and addressed his narrative to a literate noble audience but it also aimed at a broader group of readers who understood neither Latin, French nor Spanish.

The prologue (fol. A2v-A3v) is reminiscent of the work of predecessors like Livius who elaborated on brave deeds to secure eternal memory and delight the reader. The author presents himself through a topos of modesty ('mijn simple verstant'; 'my simple mind'), suggesting he collected various elements from other authors in order to write about good examples for the profit and blessedness of all people.

The Dutch prologue provides information about king Fernando's victory: 'die ons doorluchtigen ende vromen Coninc Ferdinando victorioselijc gehadt heeft van het conincrijc van Granaten' ('which our illustrious and brave king Ferdinando victoriously made of the kingdom of Granada', fol. A2v). Cromberger's 'Amadis' edition printed in Sevilla (1526), is the first Spanish edition to mention the name of king Fernando and his Catholicism ('que el mestro muy efforçado y catholico rey don Fernando hizo del reyno de Granada'). Every single Spanish edition with this sentence, published until 1546, could therefore have been a source for the Dutch version.⁴⁵ In the Dutch version the word 'catholic' is not translated. Later it is omitted again and replaced with the word 'christelijc' ('Christian'). The reduction of Catholic elements might be interpreted as an indirect criticism of Catholicism in the middle of the sixteenth century. This is quite interesting because the text was printed in the south which was mainly Catholic even though it was also characterized by diverse religious movements.

In the last section the Dutch prologue mentions the correction of the first three books which were read in corrupt and defective versions, and the translation and correction of book four.⁴⁶ The Dutch prologue then names book five on Esplandian's adventures as the source of the fourth book.⁴⁷ Although translators frequently translated their source directly without allowing for new circumstances or facts, these sentences at least hint at the existence of – not preserved – three (or even four) Dutch 'Amadijs' books. Unfortunately, we do not have any material evidence of these books.

Structure

Just as its source, the ‘Amadijs’ was published in two columns and provides a clear structure, starting with the announcement and narrating text of the first book (fol. a1r-a2v):⁴⁸

Hier beghint het Yerste boeck vanden vromen ende doerluchtighen Ridder Amadis/ ... ghetranslatert wt den Spaenschen in Duytsche (fol. a1r).⁴⁹

‘Yerste boeck’ also makes the existence of at least one other Dutch book published by Nuyts very likely. The title informs the reader that the source is Spanish. In the first part of the narrating text the first chapter is announced with its number and title (‘Dyerste capittel. Hoe dat die schoone Helizene ...’ [‘The first chapter. How the beautiful Helizene’; fol. b1r]). Moreover, it is accompanied by a woodcut.

The Dutch edition has three different sizes of letter types: the largest for the number, the second largest for the title of the chapter and the third, the smallest, for the narrating text, providing a typographically very clear differentiation for the reader. The surviving copy of ‘Amadijs’ with the announcement of chapter XXXV of the first book on fol. xciiiv. The chapters and chapter titles correspond exactly in the Spanish and Dutch versions. Despite the same ‘amount’ of text, ‘Amadijs’ needs more space than its source because of the very large woodcuts which often fill three quarters of a page, whereas the images are much smaller in the Spanish version (see [Figures 1 and 2](#) for chapter VIII).



Figure 1. Een schoone historie van | den seer vroomen Amadijs van Gaulen, Antwerpen: Marten Nuyts, 1546, fol. f3r; copy: Mettingen, draiflessen collection, fol. f3r, © draiflessen collection Mettingen.

Primer. Fol. xv

este yelmo vos embia el / porque desonro
vna donzella que yua en vuestro mandado.
Como dixo el muerto es Balpano por ma
no de vn cauallero. Por dios donzella ma
rauillas me dezis. Certo señor dixo ella aq̄
conquirio ⁊ mato quantos auia en su casti
llo: ⁊ ala fin se combatio conel solo ⁊ corto le
la cabeza ⁊ por ser enojosa de traer me dixo
que bastaua el yelmo. Certo dixo el rey aq̄
es el cauallero nouel que por aqui passó que
por cierto sus cauallerias estrañas son de o
tras ⁊ pregunto ala donzella / si sabia como
auia nombre. Si señor dixo ella: mas esto fue
cō grã arte. Por dios desio me lo dixo el rey
que mucho me hareys alegre. Sabeo señor
dixo ella que ha nombre el Donzel del mar.
Quãdo esto oyo el rey fue maravillado ⁊ to
dos los otros ⁊ dixo. Si el fue a demãdar q̄
en lo hiziesse cauallero: no deue ser culpado
que mucho ha que me lo rogo: ⁊ yo lo tarde:
⁊ hizo mal de tardar caualleria a quien della
tan biẽ obra. ⁊ yo dixo Algrajes donde le po
drã hallar. El se vos encomienda mucho di
ro la donzella ⁊ manda vos desir por mi q̄
lo hallareys en la guerra de Baula si ay fuer
des. ⁊ yo dixo que buenas nueuas me dezis: di
ro Algrajes: agora he mas talante de me yr:
⁊ si lo yo hallo nunca a mi grado del sere par
tido. Derecho es dixo la donzella que el mu
cho os ama. Brãde fue el alegria que todos
ouieron delas buenas nueuas del Donzel
del mar. Mas sobre todos fue la de su seño
ra Oriana aun que mas que ninguno lo en
cubria. El rey quiso saber delas donzellas
por qual manera lo fizierõ cauallero: ⁊ ellas
gelo contaron todo. ⁊ yo dixo: mas cortesia ha
llo en vos que en mi: pues yo no lo tardaua
fino por su pro que lo via muy moço. La do
zella conto a Algrajes el mandado que le tra
ya de aquella que la historia contara adelã
te. ⁊ el se partio cō muy buena compaña pa
ra Baula.

Capitulo octauo co
mo el rey Lisuarte embio por su hija a casa
del rey Languines ⁊ el gela embio con su fi
la Alhabilia acompañadas de caualleros ⁊
dueñas ⁊ donzellas.



Despues de diez dias que Algrajes fue partido llegaron ay tres naos: en que venia Baldoar de rascauel con cient caualleros del rey Lisuarte ⁊ dueñas ⁊ donzellas para llevar a Oriana. El rey Languines lo acogio biẽ que lo tenia por buen cauallero ⁊ muy cuerdo. El le dixo el mandado del rey su señor como embiaua por su hija: ⁊ de mas desto Baldoar dixo al rey de parte del rey Lisuarte que le rogaua embiasse con Oriana a Alhabilia su hija q̄ assi como ella misma seria tratada ⁊ honrada a su voluntad. El rey fue muy alegre dello ⁊ atauiolas muy bien: ⁊ tuuo al cauallero ⁊ alas dueñas ⁊ donzellas en su corte algunos dias faziendoles muchas fiestas ⁊ mercedes: ⁊ hizo adereçar otras naues ⁊ bañecer las delas cosas necessarias ⁊ hizo aparajar caualleros ⁊ dueñas ⁊ donzellas las que le parecio que conuenian para tal viaje. Oriana que vio que este camino no se podia escusar adereço de recoger sus joyas ⁊ andando las recogiendo: vio la cera q̄ tomara al donzel del mar: ⁊ mēbro se le del ⁊ vinieron le las lagrimas a los ojos: ⁊ apreto las manos con cuyta de amor q̄ la forzaua ⁊ quebrãto la cera: ⁊ vio la carta que dentro estaua ⁊ leydo la hallo q̄ dezia este es amadis sin tiempo hijo de rey. Ella q̄ la carta vio estuuõ pesãdo vn poco: ⁊ entedio que el donzel del mar auia nombre Almadis ⁊ vio q̄ era hijo de rey: tal alegria nũca en coraçõ de psona entro como enel suyo. ⁊ llamado ala donzella d denamarcha le dixo. Almiga yo vos quero desir vn secreto q̄ le no diria sino a mi coraçõ ⁊ guar

Figure 2. *Amadis de Gaula*. Los quatro libros de *Amadis de gaula* nueuamente impressos y historiadoss en Sevilla. Sevilla: Jacobo and Juan Cromberger, 1526; copy: Lisboa, Biblioteca nacional, res. 454, fol. b7r (= xvr), © Biblioteca nacional de Portugal.

Illustrations

The first book of the Dutch ‘Amadijs’ is illustrated with 42 extant woodcuts on 87 extant leaves. With an average of about one woodcut on two leaves, this is quite a high percentage for a book published at that time. Obviously Nuyts did have many woodblocks at his disposal. The impressive woodcuts often nearly overtake the entire page, as in chapter VIII, which tells the story of king Liduaert who sends his daughter Oriane away, filling about two-thirds of the page (fol. f3r, [Figure 1](#)). In Cromberger’s edition, a small woodcut introduces chapter VIII (fol. b7r, [Figure 2](#)). In correspondence with the contents of the text, the latter shows people standing on the shore and waving to those leaving in two small rowing boats. In the Dutch edition there is no shore, and in fact no departure scene with people bidding farewell. Here, an impressive sailing ship nearly fills the entire image.⁵⁰

Except for these rather large woodblocks, Nuyts also used smaller images and frequently placed them next to each other to fill two columns. Decorative woodcuts were also placed at the top and bottom. Several of the woodcuts Nuyts chose for his ‘Amadijs’ had already been used for the edition of Vorsterman’s ‘Historie van Margarieten van Limborch’. Nuyts used these woodblocks despite the fact that they sometimes do not really fit the contents: chapter X of ‘Amadijs’, for example, tells how the young knight is recognized by his parents king Perion and queen Helizene.⁵¹ This chapter is introduced with an image showing a woman being led away ([Figure 3](#)).

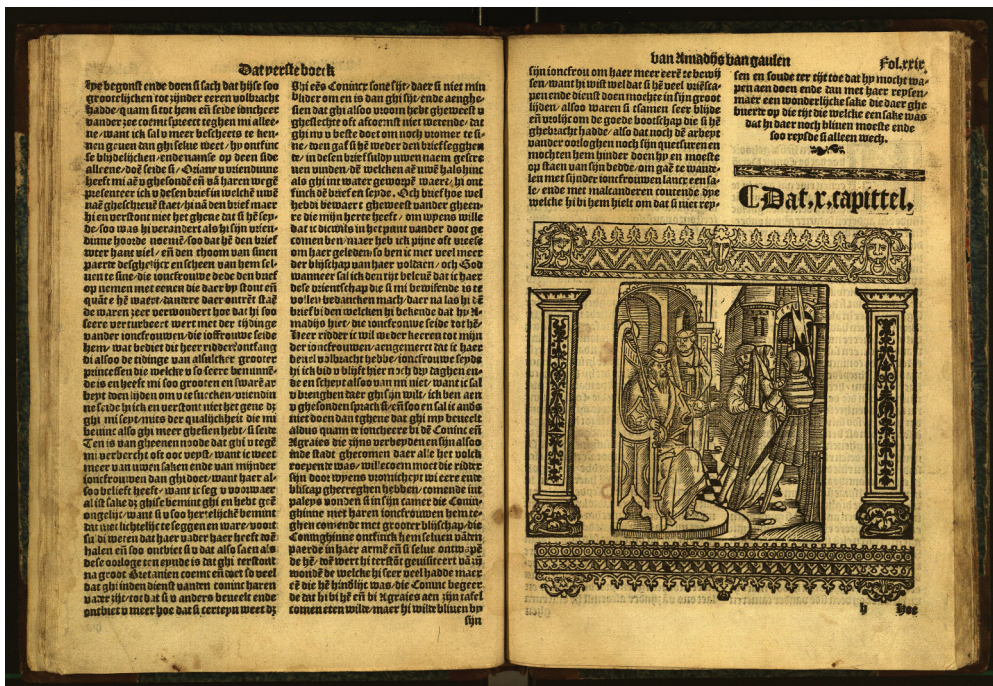


Figure 3. Een schoone historie van | den seer vroomen Amadijs van Gaulen Amadijs, Antwerpen: Marten Nuyts, 1546; copy: Mettingen, Draiflessen collection, fol. h1r, © Draiflessen collection Mettingen.

Nuyts also reused woodblocks which had illustrated Vorsterman's 'Die excellente coronijcke van Vlaenderen' (1531).⁵² Besides Nuyts exchanged one woodblock when two woodblocks were placed next to each other.⁵³ Some of the woodblocks were reworked by Nuyts: for example, he did not repeat the words and the coat of arms at the top in an image presenting 'CAROLVS IMP' in Vorsterman's chronicle and several coats of arms (Figures 4 and 5).⁵⁴

Obviously, Marten Nuyts did not only take over Willem Vorsterman's working place, but he also used Vorsterman's printing material. For Nuyts, as for many of his fellow

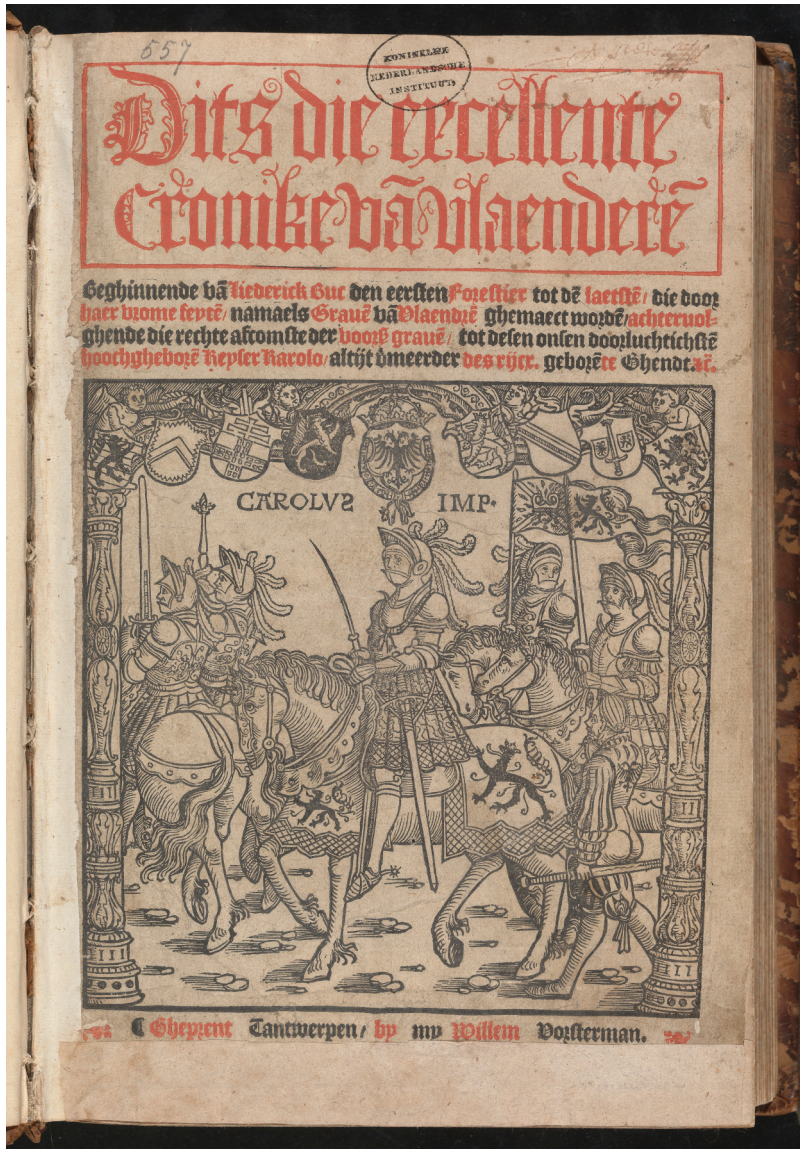


Figure 4. Title page, *die excellente cronike van vlaenderen* ... Antwerpen: Willem Vorsterman, 1531, copy: Den Haag, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 1084 B 15, title page, © Koninklijke Bibliotheek Den Haag.



Figure 5. Een schoone historie van | den seer vroomen Amadijs van Gaulen Amadijs, Antwerpen: Marten Nuyts, 1546; copy: Mettingen, Draiflessen collection, fol. b3v, © Draiflessen collection Mettingen.

printers, it was more important to provide an edition with (old) images than to produce new images better fitting to the contents, which would have been much costlier. Nuyts used Vorsterman's material for financial benefit, but he was also inspired by Vorsterman's composition and contents of title pages and books and imitated Vorsterman's design of publishing narratives and historical works as well. Nuyts adapted the 'foreign' books to the contemporary appearance and customary book design of the southern Dutch book market.

Readers of the Early Modern Dutch 'Amadijs'

'Amadijs' and comparable narratives were not only criticized in 1524 (see introductory paragraph) but in later years as well: in 1552 the Antwerp translator Nicolaes van Winghe (ca. 1495–1552) called 'Amadijs' one of the stories 'which never serve anything but to spend time (which is very precious) in a useless way and sometimes also to get many useless thoughts and bad habits'.⁵⁵ Who were the (intended) readers of the story?

Hardly anything is known about the buyers and the recipients of 'Amadijs' but some interesting information is provided by different sources in the 16th and 17th centuries. As the first Dutch edition of 'Amadijs' is dedicated to earl Carolus of Liedekercke (see above), the narrative was clearly addressed to the nobility. However, the listing of different languages that some people could not understand makes a broader group of recipients likely. Some years later, in 1561, the narrative was mentioned by the Dutch Prince William of Orange

(1533–1584) – later the leader of the revolt against the Spaniards. He told his seventeen-year-old wife Anna of Saxony (1544–1577) to read ‘Amadijs’ and other books for entertainment.⁵⁶

‘Amadijs’ was also read by other social groups, especially young women and men, and even children. The prologue to a new edition of book I by Jan van Waesberghe [II] in Rotterdam (1619) addressed the book to ‘all loving and reading youth, young men as well as young women’.⁵⁷ In 1566 Gerard Gosemius, a doctor from Leuven, wrote an instructional work called ‘Het cieraet der vrouwen’ (‘Women’s Embellishment’), addressed to young women, discouraging them from reading certain books, among which ‘Amadijs’:

Haer lesinghe flouwen als fenijn der serpenten.

Want sij ’t hert beswaren van jonghe vrouwen,

In ’t Amoreus in duytsch.

Flores en Blancefleur. Margriete van Limborch

In ’t Francoys. Amadis de Gaule.⁵⁸

In the comedy ‘Der Maeghdekens Schole’ (‘The School for Young Girls’; ca. 1570–1575) by Dirk Volckertszoon Coornhert the allegorical figure ‘Curiositas’ leads the young girl Galilea to the bad path and praises stories like ‘Amadijs’.⁵⁹ In his ‘Olijfbergh’ (1609) Karel van Mander warned the young people not to listen to literary works like ‘Amadijs’: ‘Thus, come, o youth, . . . | turn your ears away from idle poems, | . . . | and let not lure you to frivolous bad behaviour, | by Amadys and other paper like that’.⁶⁰

There were also neutral or even positive remarks about the ‘Amadijs’: in his ‘Itinerary’, Fynes Morrison, a traveller from Lincolnshire, mentioned for the year 1593 that he bought a Dutch version of the fourteenth book of ‘Amadis de Gaule’ in Lübeck.⁶¹ In Bredero’s drama ‘Moortje’ (1615, first published in 1617), one of the female characters says that her son Arent received, for the feast of St Nicholas (6 December), a blackboard, a catechism and ‘the nice stories of Fortunatus’ purse, Blancefleur and Amadis de Gauwelen’.⁶²

Conclusion

After a rough overview of the adaptations of Iberian narratives in the Dutch-speaking areas in the early modern period, this contribution concentrated on the transmission, material and multimodal characteristics of the first ‘Amadijs’ edition in Dutch, a narrative which can be called one of the most prominent narratives with the longest lasting aftermath. The examples of the reception show that ‘Amadijs’ was widely read and condemned at the same time.

There are several desiderata with regard to the research: for the Dutch ‘Amadijs’, a first modern critical edition (in preparation by the author), a synoptic modern English translation of the text and an in-depth comparative study of the narrative with its source should be prepared. In a broader context, research on the literary and book historical characteristics not only of ‘Amadijs’, but of the other narratives which go back to Iberian sources, are desirable too. This contribution is also intended as

a plea for new research analysing this rich literary traffic of narratives from south to north in early modern Europe and vice versa but also extend the research methods presented here to narratives and other genres like poetry and drama as well as religious works.⁶³

Notes

1. The author had moved to Bruges in 1512 and from there to Leuven in 1519 (Nijhoff and Kronenberg, *Nederlandsche bibliographie* [=NK], no. 2167). At least 40 editions and translations are known to have been published by 1600 (Lentzen, 'Vives' Ideen', 47).
2. And also, of pestiferous books like those popular in Spain: Amadis, Esplandian, Florisandus ... whose absurdities are infinite ... Here in Belgium we have Floris and Blancefloer ... (Fantazzi and Mattheeussen, *J. L. Vives*, Book I, chapter V, section 31, 45–46). 'Esplandián' (1510, USTC 347,783) and 'Florisando' (1512, USTC 348,401) are continuations of 'Amadís'. For the printed tradition of 'Floris ende Blancefloer' in Dutch see Schlusemann, 'Een cleyn schoone'; Debaene, 'Nederlandse prozaromans', 131; Debaene, *Nederlandse volksboeken*, 173–178, 208–209.
3. Elbl, 'Nation, Bolsa, and Factory'; Ferrer, 'Catalan commerce'.
4. Lademacher, *Geschichte*; van Gelderen, *The Political Thought*; van der Lem, *Die Entstehung*. In this contribution, the term 'Spanish Netherlands' is used as a short form for 'southern Dutch-speaking areas'.
5. For convenience the term 'Spanish' is chosen here (in an anachronistic way), including all language varieties spoken and written on the Iberian Peninsula in the early modern period. A preferable (too long) term would be: 'Iberian language varieties'. Printers in the Spanish Netherlands, like Gheraert Leeu, Jan van Doesborch and Willem Vorsterman, produced texts in more languages than, for example, their colleagues in other major centres such as Paris, Lyon or Venice.
6. 11% of all Spanish vernacular prints were published there (Peeters-Fontainas, *L'officine Espagnole*; Peeters-Fontainas, *Bibliographie*, mentions 1413 editions). Spanish books printed in the Low Countries were often intended for the export to the Spanish, German and English speaking areas (Bodenmüller, *Literaturtransfer*, 186; Vosters, 'Spaanse en Nederlandse').
7. See, for a figure of the title page, Peeters-Fontainas, *Bibliographie*, vol. I, 162.
8. From 1539 Steelsius printed at least 62 books in Spanish; see Rouzet, *Dictionnaire*, 208–209 (Steelsius), and 161–162 (Nuyts). Nuyts first worked as an apprentice for Steelsius and started publishing in 1543 (Peeters-Fontainas, *Bibliographie*, vol. I, no. 114).
9. Behiels, Thomas, and Pistor, 'Translation'; Blanco, 'Les langues'; Hermans, *De wereld*.
10. 'A very nice and fine story about Oliver of Castille and of Artus of Algarbe, his dear friend'; not mentioned in USTC; Edition: Kuiper and de Bruijn, *Een seer schone*.
11. Debaene, 'Spaanse "Libros de Caballerías"'.
12. Published in Spanish in 1509 in Burgos, in 1528 by Jacob Cromberger in Seville (USTC 342,782), and in 1562 by Felipe de Junta in Burgos ('La hystoria del Rey Canamor'; USTC 350,960). See also Beltrán, 'Los periplos marítimos'.
13. Kronenberg, 'Een onbekende uitgave'; van der Noot did translate from Spanish into Dutch himself. He was mentioned as a translator from 'Spanish' in 'Dat licht der kerstenen' (Brussel: Thomas van der Noot for Doen Pietersz., 1518, NK 2217). See Möller, *Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsamen*. Another Dutch edition was published by Jacob van Liesveldt's widow in 1554.
14. Debaene, 'Spaanse "Libros de Caballerías"', 140–3.
15. The production of a romance in Arnhem is an exception, because many other narratives (not only) with a Spanish origin, but also those going back to a French source, were produced in Antwerp, which was then still part of the Spanish kingdom. See Neri, 'Cuadro', for more detailed information on the European and Dutch 'Palmerijn' tradition.

16. 'Eerst ouerghesedt wt het Castiliaens in Francoys ende nv getranslateert wt het Francoys in onse ghemeyne Nederlantsche sprake' ('First translated from Castilian into French and now translated from French into our common Dutch language').
17. For a figure of the title page of the 1613 edition see: Bredero, 'Griane', 269. Bredero used the plot of 'Palmerijn' voor his 'Griane' and adapted several chapters (see the edition of these by Veenstra).
18. Thomas, *Romances*, 240.
19. In the late 17th century Dutch 'Amadijs' operas Thomas Arendz (1687) and Kornelis Elzevier (1715) were based on non-Spanish sources (*ibid.*). Elzevier, for example, translated John J. Heidegger's 'Amadis of Gaul'.
20. Migoen had also translated a Christian doctrine about the end of the world from French into Dutch in 1610 (STCN 840,170,556).
21. Nuyts was born in Meer (about 23 miles north-west of Antwerp), in 1515, joined the guild of St. Luke in 1540, and used different names: Martin Vermeere(n), Meranus (both because of his birthplace), Martino Nucerio or Martin Nutius. He lived in Spain for several years and learnt the language there. On 31 December 1544 he became a citizen of Antwerp with the name Martin Nuyts. See Rooses, 'Nutius (Martin)', 1901; on 'Amadijs' see Schlusemann, 'Coöperatie', esp. 389–394. As book I ends abruptly, we do not know if Nuyts also published book II (in this volume). The remarks by Thomas about the first edition in Dutch ('absurdly early date 1546') are outdated (Thomas, *Romances*, 235); for a detailed survey of the Dutch 'Amadijs' tradition see van Selm, *De 'Amadis van Gaule'-romans*.
22. Nuyts' 'Cancionero de Romances', a collection of traditional ballads (1547–1548, USTC 440,526) is one of the most illustrious examples of Iberian literature in the Dutch-speaking areas. This book might have been published 'in the context of Prince Philip's trip to Flanders'; see Garvin, 'El éxito'.
23. On Vorsterman, see Schlusemann, 'De uitwisseling'.
24. Berry Dongelmans (email 22 July 2019) was kind enough to inform me about the owners: the family Brenninkmeijer who had been working as 'Tüötten', wandering merchants in northern Europe, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (<https://www.nrw-stiftung.de/entdecken/foerderprojekte/tueoettenmuseum-mettingen.html>, accessed 28 November 2023). The copy is in a museum called Draiflessen Collection in Mettingen in the north of Germany. Quire A: three leaves (A4 missing); the next quire (a): two leaves; all the other quires: four leaves (b-z4). Quires c and v are missing; two leaves of the last quire have been preserved (²A). If we assume that it consisted of four leaves as well, at least eleven leaves are missing. Van Selm assumes that B-E4 are missing too (van Selm, *Amadis*, 103). The number of the last leaf is xciiij.
25. The existence of 16 editions has been reconstructed. Van Selm, *Amadis*, 101–171, provides extensive bibliographical descriptions of the extant editions. In the following, a roman number indicates the book, and an Arabic number the edition of this book: for example, IV.2 is the second edition of book IV. Thomas, *Romances*, 236, provided a list of 36 Dutch 'Amadijs' editions. For a short survey of the European tradition see Sánchez, 'Charting'.
26. Van Zanten, "'Overghezet'"; de Buzon, 'Notes sur la circulation', wrongly mentions the translation of the first two books from Spanish.
27. Van Selm, *Amadis*, 28–29; see, for other reconstructed editions, also 30–32.
28. Fagel, 'The Origins'.
29. Daniel Vervliet published the last edition of 'Amadijs' in the south (Antwerp, 1594; see Van Selm, *Amadis*, 30).
30. Van Selm, *Amadis*, 176.
31. Van Selm, *Amadis*, esp. 175–176.
32. Van Selm, *Amadis*, 36–40.
33. Books XII – XVIII only have an illustration on the title page, and not in the text itself.
34. 'A pleasant history of the very brave Amadis of Gaule, which surpasses by far all other histories which have until now been seen and printed. From which every nobleman and lady

- may benefit and get fruit, virtues and wisdom, because it is filled with flowering sweet sayings' (see Schlusemann, 'Coöperatie', with an image of the original).
35. See, for example, 'Een schoone historie van Margarieten', Antwerpen: Willem Vorsterman, 1516.
 36. Davids, *Verslag*.
 37. In later editions Juan Cromberger (1526) and Juan A.N. da Sabbio (Venice 1533; USTC 342,624) followed this pattern.
 38. In addition, the later editions emphasized their status as a newly printed edition.
 39. Schlusemann, 'Coöperatie', 391; Schlusemann, '*Schöne Historien*', 36–39, 47–52, 69–90, on the paratexts, and 291 (image of the title page) in 'Historie van Margarieten' (1516).
 40. This privilege was signed by Facuez, secretary of the chancellor of Brabant in Antwerp. In case of imitation, a printer would be fined fifty 'Karolus gulden'.
 41. See Schlusemann, '*Schöne Historien*', 38, mentioning other editions with this or comparable title pages; see also 'Historie van Meluzine' (Antwerpen: Henrick Eckert van Homberch, 1510; USTC 436,815), or 'Die historie van Peeter van Provencen' (Antwerpen: Willem Vorsterman, ca. 1517; USTC 436,967).
 42. This example was told by Plutarch in his 'Vita Artaxerxes', chapter 5.1; see Binder, *Plutarchs Vita*, 143.
 43. The prologue emphasizes 'that it will not be less pleasant in Dutch' (fol. A2r).
 44. Should the book gift not give him enough pleasure, because his mind appreciates books of a higher calibre, Carolus is invited to give the book to his wife Marie.
 45. Eisenberg and del Carmen Marín Pina, *Bibliografía*.
 46. 'Corrigerende dese die boecken van Amadis . . . ' ('correcting **these those** Amadis books', fol. A2v). The Dutch text does not really make sense, except if we assume that 'die' ('those') might be a fault for the Dutch word 'drie' (three). The Spanish prologue words it as follows: 'Corrigendo estos tres libros de Amadis . . . y trasladando y emendando el libro quatro' ('correcting these three books of Amadis . . . and translating and emending the fourth book', fol. A3v).
 47. 'Translaterende ende corrigerende het vierde boeck, met het vijfste boeck, ghenaeft dye vromicheyt oft valianticheit van Esplandian sijn sone welc in memorien van niemant tot noch toe ghesien en heeft gheweest' ('translating and emending the fourth book, with the fifth book, describes the braveness and virtue of his son Esplandian which up to now remained unseen and unrecorded', fol. A2v).
 48. In this paper 'narrating text' refers to any 'wording' in a narrative except for the peritext. On peritext and paratexts see Genette, *Paratexts*.
 49. 'Here starts the first book of the brave and famous knight Amadis . . . , translated from Spanish into Dutch' (fol. a1r).
 50. This woodblock was also used as the introduction to chapter IV.
 51. Other examples are fol. h2v in 'Margarieten' and fol. xlv in 'Amadijs', as well as fol. k1r in 'Margarieten' and fol. lv in 'Amadijs'.
 52. 'Coronijcke', fol. l1v, for example, was reused in 'Amadijs', fol. q1v; fol. z3v, in 'Amadijs', fol. lxxijr; fol. CCIXXXv, in 'Amadijs', fol. lxxxvijv; and fol. Bbiiv, in 'Amadijs', fol. d1r.
 53. See 'Coronijcke', fol. t3r, and 'Amadijs', 1546, fol. k1v.
 54. For the image in 'Amadijs' and the results in the following paragraph see Schlusemann, 'Coöperatie', 393 (Accessed November 15 2023).
 55. 'die dicmaels nerghens toe dienen dan den tijt (die bouen maten costelijck is) onnuttelijck ouer te brenghen/ende somtijts oock veel onnutte ghedachten ende quade listen daer toe te crighen', in: *Flauij Josephi*, fol. +2 r (USTC 444,013).
 56. Rachfahl, *Wilhelm*, vol. II, 126.
 57. 'alle lievende ende leesachtighe Jeucht, zoowel Joncmans als Joncvrouwen' ('all loving and reading youth, young men as well as young women', quoted by Van Selm, *Amadis*, 90).
 58. 'Reading them is like snake venom, | because they make the hearts of young women heavy | About love in Dutch. | Flores and Blancheflour. Margriete from Limburg | In French, Amadis de Gaule' (in 'Het cieraet der vrouwen', fol. E3v).

59. ‘Veel ghenoeghlijcke Storien, als van Amadis de Gaule’ (‘many delightful stories, like Amadijs de Gaule’; Coornhert, *Der Maeghdekens Schole*, 324).
60. ‘Dus comt o Ieucht . . . | V ooren went van ydel onreyn dichten | . . . | Noch locken tot lichtveerdich argh bestier, | Als Amadys en ander sulck papier’ (van Mander, *Olijfbergh*, 7–8).
61. See the quote in Thomas, *Romances*, 236, note 1 (see also <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A07834.0001.001/1:9.1.5?rgn=div3;view=fulltext>, book I, chapter V, pp. 56–57, accessed November 20, 2023). Morrison might have mixed up Dutch and Low German (the language spoken in Lübeck) but on the other hand, he had travelled in the Dutch speaking areas and should have recognized the difference. As the oldest preserved Dutch edition of book fourteen we know about, was printed in 1608, this information is very interesting.
62. Bredero, *Moortje*, vv. 2644–2645.
63. On Iberian plays in Amsterdam in the 17th century, see Vergeer, *Theatre*.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

With financial support from the German Science Foundation (DFG), (Schl 316/11-1).

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