

# The image(s) of the Low Countries in Italy. Focus on the selection, reception and image-building of Dutch-language literature translated into Italian (2000-2018)

**Paola Gentile**

*KU Leuven/University of Trieste*

This contribution seeks to shed light on the images of the Low Countries spread in Italy through the selection and reception of Dutch-language fiction in the period 2000-2018. The remarkable impulse to the link between Imagology and Translation Studies, triggered by the recent publication of the volume *Interconnecting Translation Studies and Imagology* (van Doorslaer, Flynn, & Leerssen, 2016), has revealed that the study of cultural images and the way in which they are created and spread is relevant more than ever before. In the context of literary translation, the spreading of images can occur not only at the textual level, but also in the phases that precede and accompany the publication of a translated work: from the selection of texts to be translated to the various stages of marketing, from the reception in the target culture to the network of contacts among the different actors involved in the translation process (governmental organizations, translators, publishing houses, etc.). This contribution ranges from the sociological macro-level of the genesis of a translation (selection and promotion) to the micro-level of the textual analysis, in order to scrutinise to what extent the selection, promotion and actual translation of literary works from Dutch into Italian contribute to creating or strengthening certain images associated with the Low Countries. This contribution will first show the results of the interviews carried out with Italian literary translators, the Dutch and Flemish Literature Foundations and editors of Italian publishers. Subsequently, the paratexts of the Dutch-language novels published from 2000 to 2018 will be shown to provide an overview of the reception of Dutch-language literature in Italy. Finally, the textual images contained in a corpus of 40 Dutch-language novels translated into Italian in the period 2000-2018 will be discussed.

## **Bibliography**

- Batchelor, Kathryn. 2018. *Translation and Paratexts*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Beller, Manfred, and Joep Leerssen. 2007. *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters: A Critical Survey*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Brems, Elke, Orsolya Réthelyi, and Ton van Kalmthout. 2016. *Doing Double Dutch. The International Circulation of Literature from the Low Countries*. Leuven: Leuven University Press.
- van Doorslaer, Luc, Peter Flynn, and Joep Leerssen. 2015. *Interconnecting Translation Studies and Imagology*. Edited by Luc Van Doorslaer, Peter Flynn, and Joep Leerssen. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Sapiro, Gisèle. 2016. "How Do Literary Works Cross Borders (or Not)?" *Journal of World Literature* 1 (1): 81–96. doi:10.1163/24056480-00101009.