



Universiteit Leiden

Reception of Cicero in Dutch medieval and early modern literature

Applicants

Eligible proposals must have at least two applicants from Humanities, preferably with an interdisciplinary approach.

Supervisor Name	Discipline
Dr. Christoph Pieper	Classical Studies
Dr. Geert Warnar	Dutch (medieval) literature

Project description

Ghy en hebt niet al te vergeefs Ciceronum ghelesen, dat hoor ick wel. In his dialogue on grief the sixteenth-century humanist Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert does not hide who inspired his work: the Roman orator and philosopher Cicero. The (re)discovery of his texts in the later Middle Ages marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the dialogue, a genre of particular significance in the literary culture of Western Europe, especially in the Low Countries. Cicero's philosophical dialogues became major models for the successful genre of the early modern dialogue. Coornhert's translation of Cicero's *De officiis* (1561) was the first Ciceronian work published in Dutch, but from the thirteenth century onwards his words can be traced in quotations, excerpts, anthologies and other accounts. As yet, there is no systematic survey of Ciceronian literature in Dutch. Therefore, it is still impossible to analyze or even to describe Cicero's role as a non-Christian authority in Dutch literature.

This proposal aims to bring together these early traces of Cicero in Netherlandish, (1) to document the discovery of his works in the Low Countries in order (2) to assess the reception of Cicero in Dutch literature up till Coornhert's *De officiis* translation. As the enormous influence of Cicero's rhetorical handbook *De inventione* all over Europe is well-known, special focus will be on the role Cicero's rhetorical dialogue *De oratore* (which represents a more philosophical take on oratory as such) and his philosophical dialogues played in Dutch literature. This requires an interdisciplinary approach which combines expertise of Classical and Dutch Studies, as the reception of Cicero cannot be separated from his uncontested role as model for Latin works published in late medieval and early modern Europe. Cicero's influence reaches far beyond rhetoric into the realms of philosophical and literary dialogue. (298 words)

Research Trainee Profile

The candidates should be (Res)MA-students, trained in (BA-programs of) "Nederlandse Taal en Cultuur" and/or "Griekse en Latijnse Taal en Cultuur", with an interest in medieval and early modern studies (visible for instance through participation in a minor program, internship, or the topic of the BA thesis). They should show a basic familiarity with the characteristics of text

transmission in a manuscript culture and the early phases of printing. Within their MA or ResMA in Neerlandistiek/Dutch Studies and/or Classics and Ancient Civilisations/track Classics, they should be specializing or willing to specialize in medieval and/or early modern literature.

The Faculty of Humanities has created a 'keuzetraject' Medieval and Early-Modern Studies (that allows students to specialize in these periods across the MA-programs). The proposed project would eventually be ideal for a student within this trajectory. The traineeship provides a perfect occasion to further develop research skills and expertise that are being taught in the core course of this keuzetraject, especially concerning cultural translation, intellectual history, literary studies, textual culture and the history of the printed book and manuscript. As the project crosses the boundaries of the MA-programs in Dutch Literature and Classical Studies, it would challenge students to move into medieval and early modern studies in the broadest sense, for which the knowledge of vernacular and Latin traditions is of equal importance.

Collaboration

This project is meant as a collaboration of researchers in Classical and Dutch Studies. It is closely associated with Christoph Pieper's current VIDI project 'Mediated Cicero' on the reception of Cicero from Antiquity until early modern times. The research trainees would therefore be able to profit not only from the expertise of the applicants, but also from exchanging their methodological and textual findings with the collaborators of the VIDI project. Whereas Pieper's project mainly deals with the influence of Cicero the politician and the orator, this project will extend the focus on the philosophical Cicero. Also, the research will be concentrated on vernacular Dutch authors, whereas the VIDI project looks mainly (though not exclusively) at the afterlife in literature written in Latin. With this focus on the *vernacular* tradition, the proposed project will also benefit from some of the results of Warnar's small KIEM-project on the *Effectiveness of Dialogue in Communication, Past and Present*, that focused on Dutch literary culture for its historical component.

The project touches upon various (sub)disciplines that deal with textual culture, ranging from the classical, medieval and early modern history of rhetoric, literature and philosophy to the material philology of manuscripts and the printed book – uniting various fields of expertise of different time clusters within LUCAS.

External collaboration is planned with dr Carole Mabboux from the *École française de Rome* who is currently working on a project on the influence of Cicero on late medieval political discourse in Italy. At the end of the project, we plan to organize a symposium in the Leiden UB (which holds an important collection of medieval Ciceronian manuscripts) with dr Mabboux as key note speaker, during which the research trainees and the applicants will present their findings. (288 words)

Deliverables

The objectives of the project are:

- (1) a database to document the early traces of Cicero's works in Dutch between ca. 1300 and 1561
- (2) a first assessment of the early reception of Cicero's philosophical dialogues in Dutch literature
- (3) a symposium to be held in August or September 2019

The deliverables coincide with these objectives. The research trainees will work on an inventory of Dutch texts that mention, quote or adapt Cicero, mention the titles of his works or key concepts of his treatises. The research will first focus on the digital data on medieval and early modern Dutch texts (including the cd-rom Middelnederlands, DBNL, BNM). This inventory will be the basis for (and annex to) an article that provides a survey of Cicero in Dutch literature as a case study for the

'cultural use' of this classical author (and authority) in the vernacular. The article will be written by the two applicants, with the two research trainees as co-authors. The research results and (new) expertise will open up new fields of inquiry, relevant to current projects on the reception of Cicero, Dutch literature and dialogue and the Zwaartekracht-project *Anchoring Innovation*, for which the trainees will be qualified especially. (200 words)

Planning

Month 1-3

- Trainee 1 (Dutch literature): collecting data in primary sources of Dutch literature (digitally available) and through bibliographical work – one search in the cd-rom Middelnederlands on Cicero and Tullius already results in hits from eleven texts before 1420.
- Trainee 2 (Classical studies): collecting (general) information on the medieval and early modern Latin reception of Cicero in the Low Countries in secondary literature and bibliographies.

Month 4

- Trainee 1 and 2 together: gathering data in (digital) inventory, classifying material (translation, excerpts, anthologies), (partial) transcriptions

Month 5-7

- Trainee 1 and 2 together: describing patterns in the Dutch use of Ciceronian literature in connection to the Latin tradition in the Low Countries.
- Applicants: preparation of the survey article on Cicero in Dutch literature
- Applicants: organization of final symposium

(126 words)

Student Application

Students should apply by sending a cv, a letter of motivation and the name of one referent to both applicants:

Dr. Christoph Pieper: c.pieper@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Dr. Geert Warnar: g.warnar@hum.leidenuniv.nl