



Universiteit Leiden

Scholarly collaboration before the digital age: Pieter Jacob Cosijn, Johannes Franck and the first etymological dictionary of the Dutch language

Applicants

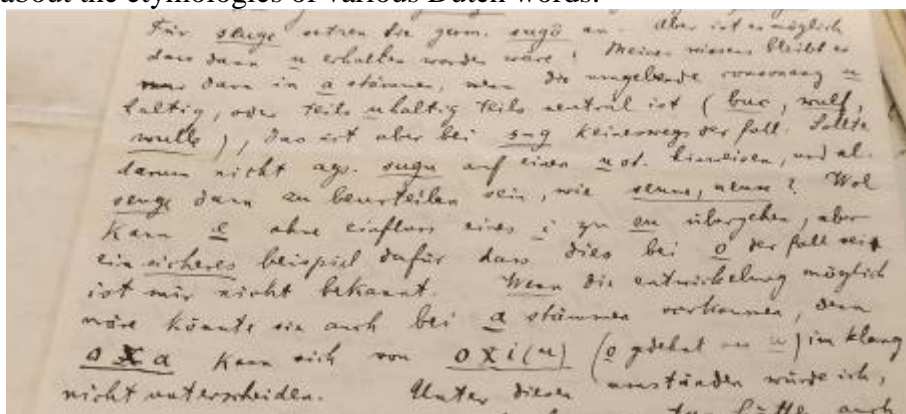
Eligible proposals must have at least two applicants from Humanities, preferably with an interdisciplinary approach.

Supervisor Name	Discipline
Dr. Thijs Porck, Assistant Professor of Medieval English (LUCAS)	Medieval English language and literature, esp. Anglo-Saxon/Old English; 19th-century history of English studies
Dr. Peter Alexander Kerkhof, Assistant Professor in Comparative Indo-European Linguistics (LUCL)	Comparative Indo-European Linguistics, linguistic history of Dutch, etymology

Project description

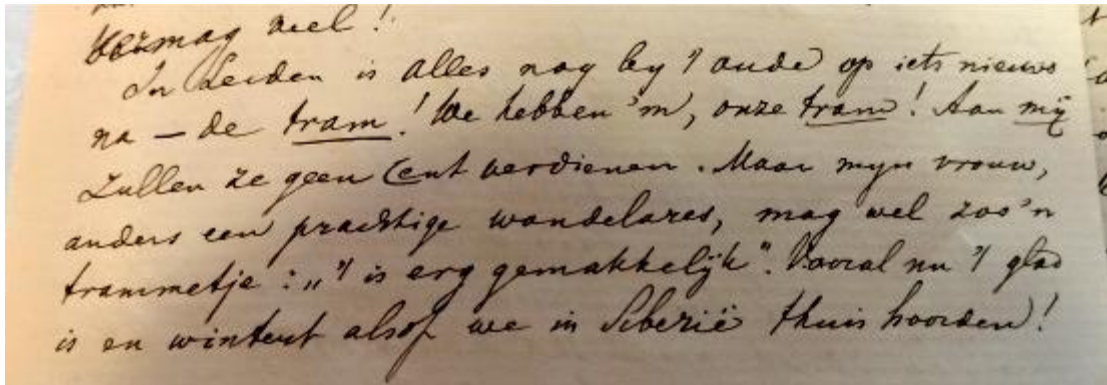
In this age of GoogleDocs and social media, it is hard to imagine how scholars collaborated before the Internet. This project will shed light on how two pioneering nineteenth-century scholars exchanged ideas through handwritten letters. It aims to reconstruct how this correspondence contributed to the publication of a landmark in Dutch lexicography and historical linguistics: Johannes Franck's *Etymologisch Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* (1884-1892), the first etymological dictionary of Dutch on Neogrammarian principles.

Johannes Franck (1854-1914), "privaatdozent" at the University of Bonn, corresponded with various colleagues in the Netherlands, including Pieter Jacob Cosijn (1840-1899), Leiden's first professor of Old Germanic and Anglo-Saxon. In 1883, Cosijn convinced the publisher Nijhoff to hire Franck to write an etymological dictionary of Dutch. In subsequent years, Franck and Cosijn corresponded about the etymologies of various Dutch words.



Franck to Cosijn about the etymology of Dutch *zeug*

Their correspondence (73 letters in the Leiden University Library, over the period 1879-1893) provides a unique insight into how these scholars worked and lived: Cosijn and Franck not only bounced off etymological hypotheses, but also shared much about their private lives, including their concerns over antisemitism in nineteenth-century Germany.



Cosijn to Franck about the introduction of trams in Leiden

This project aims to reconstruct how this exchange of letters may have influenced Franck's etymological ideas. As it turns out, Cosijn often disagreed with Franck and his alternative suggestions often ended up in Franck's published dictionary. A reconstruction of this collaboration is important for at least two reasons. First of all, the correspondence may shed some light on the accusation by some reviewers of Franck's etymological dictionary that its author had merely translated Friedrich Kluge's *Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (1883). Secondly, these letters demonstrate the role played by scholarly correspondence in the acquisition, development and exchange of knowledge in the nineteenth century. (300 words)

Research Trainee Profile

Each proposal requests two Research Trainees. Describe the general tasks of the research trainees, how these tasks are academically challenging to the research trainees, whether they need any preliminary knowledge (regarding the topic and/or research methods) and which skills the research trainees should have. Also specify which type of students are eligible to apply (Ba, Ma, ResMa).

The general tasks of the research trainees are as follows:

- They study the content of the correspondence between Cosijn and Frank and produce an inventory of this content, listing the Dutch words of which the etymologies are discussed, as well as any other topics. This task will introduce the trainees to the study of historical documents in the special collections of Leiden University; the number of letters (73) is manageable for a project of this scale.
- They produce several academic case studies, relating the Dutch etymologies that are discussed in the letters to the manner in which they are treated in the etymological dictionary. This task will require the research trainees to fully understand the historical linguistic arguments that lead to the proposition of a particular word's etymology.
- On the basis of their inventory and case studies, they produce a number of short popular articles for the online journal *Neerlandistiek.nl* and/or the *Leiden University Special Collections Blog*. This task will challenge the trainees to translate their academic research into a format that is accessible to a wider audience.
- On the basis of their inventory and case studies, the research trainees give a conference paper during the Oudgermanistendag (7 June 2019), a national conference on the study of Old Germanic languages. This task will require the trainees to contextualize their research and produce a conference presentation for experts in the field.
- At the end of the project, the research trainees and the applicants write an article on Franck and Cosijn's correspondence for the peer-reviewed journal *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en*

Letterkunde. This task will introduce the trainees to writing a publication for a peer-reviewed journal.

The research trainees are expected to have some background in and affinity for the study of historical Germanic languages (preferably Dutch and/or Old English [Cosijn's field of expertise]), esp. historical linguistics and etymology. At least one of the research trainees needs to be fluent in German. Any experience with transcribing historical documents is a plus. Advanced BA (third-year), MA and ResMA students are eligible to apply.

Collaboration

If applicable: Describe how your research improves collaboration and cross-pollination between the disciplines involved (max. 300 words)

In this project, the research trainees study a pivotal phase in the development of the academic discipline of etymology and historical linguistics in the Netherlands, the main topic of Franck and Cosijn's correspondence. Etymology itself is a multi-disciplinary field, which profits from cross-pollination of such areas as linguistics, cultural history, philology, onomastics and comparative Indo-European linguistics. Moreover, since the topic of the project itself is the manner in which scholars communicated and collaborated in an earlier period, the trainees will become fully aware of the value of scholarly cross-pollination.

The project itself will also require collaboration: one trainee will mainly focus on the letters written by the Anglo-Saxonist Cosijn, while the other will concentrate on the letters written by the Netherlandicist Franck. As such, the inventory and the case studies can only be delivered if the trainees work well together and share their own findings with each other.

Lastly, the research trainees will benefit from working with both applicants, whose research areas complement each other for this project. Thijs Porck, like Cosijn an Anglo-Saxonist, has written articles about the correspondence of nineteenth-century scholars, while Peter Alexander Kerkhof, like Franck an expert in the earliest history of Dutch, has published various etymological studies. Porck and Kerkhof have also collaborated in the past by co-organizing the annual Junius Symposium for Young Old Germanicists.

Deliverables

Enumerate intended project results: papers, research proposals or otherwise. (max 200 words)

1. An inventory of the contents of the 73 letters between Franck and Cosijn, which will be published as an appendix to a peer-reviewed journal article (see deliverable #4).
2. At least three short popular articles about etymological case studies, the correspondence, and/or scholarly collaboration in the nineteenth century for *Neerlandistiek.nl* and/or the *Leiden University Special Collections Blog*.
3. A conference paper for the Oudgermanistendag, the annual gathering of the Dutch-Flemish Society for Old Germanic Studies (7 June 2019).
4. A peer-reviewed journal article about the correspondence (co-authored with the applicants) for *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde*.

Planning

Provide a breakdown of the project into phases with tentative timing (max 150 words)

Phase 1: Research training (February-March 2019)

The research trainees are introduced to the research topic through the study of relevant secondary literature (biographical articles about Johannes Franck and Pieter Jacob Cosijn, as well as articles about scholarly correspondence). Students are trained in working with archival material and the

reading and transcribing of nineteenth-century letters. They jointly produce an inventory of the letters between Franck and Cosijn.

Phase 2: Case studies and short popular articles (April-May 2019)

The research trainees prepare their case studies and learn how to translate their academic research to a wider audience by preparing short pop sci articles for *Neerlandistiek.nl* and/or the *Leiden University Special Collections Blog*.

Phase 3: Conference presentation and peer-reviewed journal article (June-August 2019)

The research trainees share the results of their academic research with fellow academics through a conference presentation and a co-authored article for a peer-reviewed journal.

Student Application

Provide information on how to apply e.g. required documents for application (resume, motivation letter etc.) and an email address where student applications should be sent to.

C.V. (listing relevant courses and skills) and motivation letter should be sent to m.h.porck@hum.leidenuniv.nl and p.a.kerkhof@hum.leidenuniv.nl