

# Imagining the Dutch

## Course manual

Periods 1+2 (Autumn) 2019-2020



Coordinator: Tijn Vanneste

E-mail: [t.a.e.r.vanneste@vu.nl](mailto:t.a.e.r.vanneste@vu.nl)

**Table of contents:**

1. Imagining the Dutch: course description	p. 3
2. Schedule, literature and short outline of lectures	p. 7
3. Assignment	p. 10
4. Exam	p. 11
5. Contact Information	p. 11

## 1. *Imagining the Dutch*: course description

- **Course code:** L\_GCBAALG004
- **Period:** Period 4 & 5
- **Credits:** 6.0
- **Language of tuition:** English
- **Faculty:** Faculty of Humanities
- **Coordinators:** Tijn Vanneste
- **Teaching staff:** Guest lecturers
- **Teaching method(s):** Lectures
- **Location:** HG-08A20

### Course objectives

After completing this course:

- You have improved your knowledge of the history of the Netherlands and of Dutch politics and culture in general and more particularly on certain topics.
- You are able to reflect on important themes in Dutch history and different representations and images of Dutch history and identity in museums and media.
- You are able to integrate information of case studies and guest lecturers into the broader scientific framework that is discussed.
- You are able to critically review and discuss mandatory literature, used theories, dominant opinions and information on public websites about images of the Netherlands and themes in Dutch history.
- You are able to recognize normative thinking in scientific literature and in the work of historians.
- You are able to distinguish between history & the construction of history.

## Course content

A country of cheese and herring, that experienced an extraordinary Golden Age in the seventeenth century. And a country of tolerance, pillarization and consensus democracy, characteristics of a peaceful and prosperous present-day society. These are just a few examples of how the Netherlands has been portrayed in the past and in recent periods by foreigners and by Dutch citizens themselves. Examples that go some way to the crafting of a Dutch identity.

But such an identity might be fake, constructed rather than real. Over the years, questions about the true meaning of such generalized character traits of the Netherlandish people have been raised. Who are 'the Dutch' anyway? What is 'typically Dutch' about the Dutch from an international perspective? What are the differences between how the Dutch themselves and how foreigners have imagined the Netherlands? And how should we deal with these images from an academic perspective? These questions are all the more poignant in a twenty-first century that is moving towards a more global society, with older societal traits dissolving while new ones are being built, by a variety of people.

This course offers an introduction on Dutch history that is explicitly related to contemporary debates.

The lectures of the course focus on themes in Dutch history and will cover a wide range of topics – some examples are:

- The historical reasons for the extraordinary economic growth and cultural richness of the Netherlands in the 17th century
- The development of the Dutch as a maritime nation
- The rise of democracy in the 19th and 20th centuries
- The recent debates about the colonial past and immigration.



Discussion among students about the content of the lectures and the course literature is part of this course. Students have to read the literature in advance and have to make assignments. The course is finished with a written exam.

### **Form of tuition**

Weekly (guest) lectures

### **Type of assessment**

An assignment (counts for 35% of the grade) and a written exam (counts for 65% of the grade).

### **Course reading**

- F. Wielenga, *A History of the Netherlands: from the Sixteenth Century to the Present Day* (London 2015) will be used as the standard handbook for this course.
- Many lectures require additional reading from articles and/or book chapters. Links to these are posted on canvas under the heading for that week's lecture.

### **Form of tuition and working load in relation to the amount of credits and hours available**

*Imagining the Dutch* is a course of 6 ects. This means that every student has to make 168 hours available for this course, or ca. 13 hours a week. A student is expected to be able to read 6 pages per hour. So, in order to read the ca. 560 pages of literature of this course, you have 93 hours in total, or 7.2 hours a week. The literature is reasonably divided over the different topics.

Being present at every lecture and actively participating (= making notes, asking questions, and contribute to class discussions), and making the assignments is fundamental for being able to pass the final exam. Moreover, 16 hours are reserved for the final exam and should be a part of every student's planning.

Lecture hours (13x2)	= 26
Time for reading literature	= 93
Time for making small assignment related to week's literature	= 30
Extra learning hours before exam	= 16
Exam	= 3
<b>Total</b>	<b>= 168</b>

### **Presence and obligations**

All lectures and classes are mandatory. In case of illness, please write an e-mail to the coordinator of the course. If you miss more than two classes or lectures, you are unable to finish the course: i.e. you will not be allowed to make the exam and will not receive a grade. In addition, if you do not submit the assignments, or when the average grade of the assignments is unsatisfactory, you will not be allowed to do the exam and pass the course.

### **A diverse target audience**

The course is open to students from different backgrounds: regular BA students in History; students from other disciplines; and exchange/international students. The diversity of the group is an excellent starting point for discussions about perceptions of Dutch history and interdisciplinary debates about proper history writing. Furthermore, it also will be a challenging exercise for all participants to look beyond (disciplinary and national) borders. Please inform the coordinator if you are facing problems. However, keep in mind that the course is doable when you are present at every class, read the literature, participate in discussions, and make the assignments.

2. Schedule, themes and literature (lectures every Monday 17:30-19:15 in HG-11A24)

September 2	<i>Introduction: The Construction of Dutch History</i>	Dr. Tijl Vanneste	F. Wielenga, <i>A History of the Netherlands</i> : Introduction (pp. 1-7).  J. Verheul, 'In Foreign Eyes', in <i>Discovering the Dutch</i> , ed. E. Besamusca & J. Verheul (Amsterdam 2010), pp. 267-277.
September 9	<i>Dutch History: A Bird's Eye View from the Middle Ages until the End of the Golden Age</i>	Dr. Tijl Vanneste	Wielenga, Chapter 2 (pp. 9-40).
September 16	<i>The Dutch Maritime Enterprise</i>	Dr. Tijl Vanneste	Wielenga, Chapter 2 (pp. 40-47)  J.R. Bruijn, 'Seafarers in Early Modern and Modern Times: Change and Continuity', <i>International Journal of Maritime History</i> , 17:1 (2005), pp. 1-16.
September 23	<i>Tolerance &amp; Migration in the Netherlands</i>	Dr. Erika Kuijpers	Wielenga, Chapter 3 (pp. 65-77).  Benjamin J. Kaplan, "'Dutch' Religious Tolerance: Celebration and Revision', in <i>Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age</i> , ed. R. Po-Chia Hsia & Henk van Nierop (Cambridge 2002) 8-26.

September 30	<i>The Crust of the Earth</i>	Prof. Dr. Petra van Dam	Wielenga, Chapter 3 (pp. 102-110).  Milja van Tielhof, 'Forced Solidarity: Maintenance of Coastal Defences Along the North Sea Coast in the Early Modern Period', <i>Environment &amp; History</i> , 21:3 (2015), pp. 319-350.
October 7	<i>Documentary film: Peter Greenaway's 'Rembrandt's J'accuse'</i>	Dr. Tijn Vanneste	-
October 14	<i>Climate Change</i>	Prof. Dr. Petra van Dam	Wielenga, Chapter 3 (pp. 49-65 & pp. 92-102).  De Groot
October 21	BREAK	-	<b>DEADLINE Assignment Friday October 25, 6pm.</b>
October 28	<i>Dutch History: A Bird's Eye View from the Silver Age to 1848</i>	Miel Groten	Wielenga, Chapter 4 (pp. 111-143) & Chapter 5 (pp. 145-170)
November 4	<i>Modernity, Tradition and the Built Environment</i>	Miel Groten	Jenny Reynaerts, 'The Wall Paintings in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam', <i>Museum History Journal</i> 5 (2012) issue 2, pp. 245-260.
November 11	<i>Pillarization or public religion? The place of religion in the modern history of the Netherlands</i>	Koos-jan de Jager	Wielenga, Chapter 5 (pp. 170-180, pp. 192-197) & Chapter 6 (pp. 199-216).  Rudy B. Andeweg & G.A. Irwin, eds., <i>Governance and Politics of the Netherlands</i> (Basingstoke 2009), Chapter 'A Country of Minorities', pp. 22-51.

November 18	<i>Dutch Imperialism: The Netherlands as a Colonial Power</i>	Wim Manuhutu	Wielenga, Chapter 5 (pp. 183-192) & Chapter 6 (pp. 236-244).  Caroline Drieënhuizen, 'Social Careers Across Imperial Spaces: An Empire Family in the Dutch-British World, 1811-1933', <i>Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History</i> 44 (2016), pp. 397-422.
November 25	<i>Dutch Jewry &amp; the memory of WWII</i>	Dr. Bettine Siertsema	Wielenga, Chapter 6 (pp. 216-230).  P. Griffioen & R. Zeller, 'Comparing the persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands, France and Belgium, 1940-1945: similarities, differences, causes', <i>The persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands, 1940-1945</i> , ed. P. Romijn <i>et al.</i> (Amsterdam 2012), pp. 55-92.
December 2	<i>Consensus Democracy: a Dutch model?</i>	Dr. Ronald Kroeze	Wielenga, Chapter 6 (pp. 230-236 & pp. 244-258).  Read again pages 33-41 of Andeweg & Irwin, <i>Governance and Politics of the Netherlands</i> .
December 9	<i>Closing lecture: The Deconstruction of Dutch history</i>	Dr. Tijn Vanneste	Wielenga, Chapter 7 (pp. 259-268).
December 16	EXAM	Dr. Tijn Vanneste	-

### 3. Assignment

You will be asked to hand in one assignment, which will count for 35% of the final grade.

The Dutch Golden Age is a very important historical period. Not only has it turned the Netherlands (temporarily) into a world power, relying on perhaps the first 'modern economy' and able to trade, fight wars, and act as colonizer across the globe. Effects of that golden seventeenth century can still be felt in Dutch society today, to the extent that an important part of what the Dutch think of themselves, their society and their identity is shaped by this Golden Age. In this assignment, you are asked to reflect upon the use made of that Golden Age in a narrative that connects history with present-day Dutch society and identity.

- Your essay should make use of **the following article**: L. Cruz, 'Turning Dutch: Historical Myths in Early Modern Netherlands', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 39 (2008) 1: 3-22.
- You should also refer to at least **two of the previous lectures** in the following manner: (in a foot- or endnote): As stated by Dr. Erika Kuijpers in her lecture *Tolerance & Migration in the Netherlands* (March 11, 2019).
- Your essay should also include an assessment as to how Friso Wielenga has approached, in his introduction and first chapters, the topic of the Golden Age. Is he simply describing events as they really happened? Does he represent his narrative as the only possible interpretation of history, or not? Do you think there are more interpretations possible? Which ones? Is he offering a deeper analysis? Is he connecting Golden Age history to the present, and if so, how? These are some of the questions you could use when constructing your argument.
- The essay should be around 2,000 words. Hand in your essay on Canvas before **Friday October 25, 17:00**.

## 4. Exam

- The exam will take place on Monday, December 16, 2019 in room WG-Q105, between 15:15 and 18:00.
- The exam will consist of five sets of questions. You choose to answer four out of those five, meaning you have to drop one set of questions. Each set is worth 25 points, making for 100 points in total.
- Questions will be testing your knowledge as related to the lectures & readings of this course, as well as your ability to use that knowledge to formulate a more personal but still well-argued answer to a more open question.
- The questions are based on the lectures and literature.
- The following is an example of one set of exam questions:

### **Tolerance & the Golden Age (25 points)**

- a. Name 3 shipping industries that were important for the rise of the Dutch Republic in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and briefly explain why they were important (3x3 points)
- b. Discuss two important features of Dutch society during the Golden Age that amazed contemporary observers (5 points)
- c. What were the limits of tolerance during the Golden Age in the Dutch Republic? Give & briefly discuss two examples (2x2 points)
- d. Do you think the concept of 'tolerance' is still useful for today's society, considering its implication of inequality? Substantiate your answer with two arguments (7 points)

**If you fail to pass the course, a resit of the exam is possible. You have to register yourself. For the date and location of the exam and resit: see Canvas**

## 5. Contact information

If you have questions concerning this course, please contact the coordinator, Dr. Tijn Vanneste, by e-mail (t.a.e.r.vanneste@vu.nl) or during one of the classes. In addition, please regularly check your e-mail and Canvas for updates concerning *Imagining the Dutch*.