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Abstract

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Keywords: Song translation, multimodality, socialism, poetry, Ernst van Altena, Henriette Roland Holst

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This contribution provides a comparative analysis of two Dutch translations of "L'Internationale", one made by Henriette Roland Holst in 1900 and the other by Ernst van Altena in 1981, respectively. The comparison is relevant for two reasons: (1) the latter translation can be considered a reaction to the former; and (2) each translator paid particular attention to the literary rather than the musical characteristics of the source text. The lyrics are therefore given a prominent place in the analysis; at the same time, we also dwell on the multimodal dimensions of the text. Roland Holst's version was clearly meant to be sung. In her translation, she added a number of forms of address, which make the text more personal. She also adapted the text to make it less party-political and incitive. Finally, her lyric can be considered more poetic than the original. Alternatively, the tenor of van Altena's translation is more concrete and informal than the source text. He provides another view on the original, but one that is not necessarily less mediated one, contrary to what he has suggested in public reflections. The result is a hybrid form comprising a demarcation strategy with regard to Roland Holst and his preliminary wish of rendering the source text as completely as possible.

"L'Internationale": from literature to music

"L'Internationale", the emblematic anthem of the workers movement, is striking for a number of reasons: not only is it one of the most well-known and most-sung songs in the world, it has also played a major role in the identity formation of uncountable socialist movements, attesting to its historical impact. In this sense, "L'Internationale" is an excellent illustration of how music takes a prominent place in culture. And yet, the British socio-musicologist, Simon Frith (2004: 1) notes with some surprise that the ubiquitous presence of music has largely been ignored by scholars. However, since the so-called 'cultural turn' in translation studies and the increasing success of such disciplines as cultural studies and popular music studies, the situation has changed profoundly. Music (both classical and popular) has become a key object of study in literary and translation studies. Within translation studies, some scholars (such as Franzon et al. 2021: 20) have even argued for a specific sub-discipline called 'song translation studies', which would pay sufficient attention to the multimodal character of music in general and the specificities of music translation in particular (see, for example, Low 2017; Mus & Neelsen 2021).

The translation of music became a bona fide object of study within translation studies beginning in the 1990s. For a long time, however, there has been a strong focus on canonical genres such as opera librettos and 'art songs' (cf. Minors 2013), as well as on the technical dimension of song translation. In this regard, Peter Low's 'pentathlon

principle' was and still is one of the most used references. By means of this sporting metaphor, Low distinguishes five criteria in the process of song translation: singability, sense, naturalness, rhyme, and rhythm. The pentathlon principle has proved fruitful for many case studies, but ideally requires a double expertise from the researcher: technical knowledge (of translation and of music) on the one hand and a scientific background in translation studies on the other. Regarding the latter, a scientific perspective can shed light on the specific function of lyrics compared to other dimensions (or 'modes') of the song and on the overall function of the song within the context in which it was produced and/or translated. Today, more and more attention is paid to plurisemiotic (KAINDL 2005) or multimodal (CARPI 2021) aspects of song translation. In this regard, popular music has proved to be very relevant because in it we often see an explicit combination of verbal, visual, gestural and other modes, e.g., in music videos, live performances, stage musicals, etc.

This contribution provides an in-depth analysis of two translations of "L'Internationale", one made by Henriette Roland Holst in 1900 and the other by Ernst van Altena in 1981, respectively. Though both translations differ considerably (only the former was meant to be sung, for example), a comparative analysis was considered relevant for two reasons: firstly, the van Altena translation can be considered a reaction to the Roland Holst translation and, secondly, each translator paid particular attention to the literary rather than the musical characteristics of the source text. The lyrics will therefore be given a prominent place in the analysis. At the same time, we will dwell on the multimodal dimensions of the text by examining whether the translation and reception were influenced by their literary and musical origins, on the one hand, and by the new context in which they would function, on the other.

Though "L'Internationale" was originally published as a poem and only afterward set to music, it has since become extremely difficult to ignore its musical dimension when reading the original text or its later published translations. This can have an impact on the visibility of the text and on the importance accorded to it by the reader or listener. Already in 1907, warnings were sent out in anarchist circles that this poem set to music would obviously catch on, but that the sung version (to which many also sang along) might cause listeners to stop paying attention to the meaning of the words: "*L'Internationale* est une chanson à la mode que tout le monde chantonne ou sifflote, sans en connaître ou sans en comprendre les paroles" (*Les Temps Nouveaux*, 19.1.1907) [The Internationale is a fashionable song that everybody hums or whistles without knowing or understanding the words]. Moreover, music is often put forward as a universal language that can bring everyone together.[1] Following the first English translation in 1900, T. Sims wrote the following in the party organ, *Justice*: "[…] Music is international. We are internationalists; let our songs be international also" (in GIELKENS 1998: 77). A

[1] The idea of music as a universal language was picked up enthusiastically by many and popped up regularly in the years that followed. In 1921 the French-speaking Belgian left-leaning internationalist art magazine *Lumière* remarks that, ideally, music should be "la langue universelle" [the universal language] that speaks to "toutes les oreilles comme la peinture parle à tous les yeux" [all ears much like a painting does to all eyes].

similar ambition could be found in the French socialist newspaper, *L'Humanité*: "L'Internationale résonne sur toutes les lèvres prolétariennes et dans les langues diverses où elle a été traduite, elle parle le même langage à tous les exploités" (29.6.1907) [The Internationale resounds on the lips of all proletarians in the diverse languages into which it has been translated; it speaks the same language to all the exploited.].

Though some considered the neglect of the text of "L'Internationale" as ruining the whole song, this did not mean that the song would lose its mobilising power, which was strengthened by the music and/or by the interplay between word and music. This does not apply solely to "L'Internationale", but rather can be seen as a common feature of music that circulates internationally: in a special issue of *The Translator* on music and translation, Susam-Sarajeva (2008: 192) writes that in some cases, "non-translation in the case of music may allow the imagination more leeway […]".

Before turning to the song's reception in the Dutch language area, let us spend a moment on the history of the origins of the French text, which belongs within the repertoire of Second International socialist poetry – "un phénomène négligé des chercheurs" [a phenomenon neglected by scholars], according to Marc Angenot (2013: 167). This occasional and combative poetry was aimed at a broader audience, its intention being to promote social struggle through songs that were sung during socialist evenings, parties and banquets. (Poems that were not set to music were also widely circulated.) This highly diverse repertoire was not embedded within a party context: 'chanson populaire' [popular song] or 'chanson sociale' [social song] comprises the totality of 'poèmes des chansonniers romantiques réunis dans le 'Caveau moderne' fondé en 1806, tradition où les noms les plus fameux étaient ceux de Béranger, Gustave Nadaud, and then d'Eugène Pottier' [of poems by romantic composers united in the 'Caveau moderne' founded in 1806, a tradition in which the most famous names were Béranger, Gustave Nadaud, and then Eugène Pottier] (ibid.: 172–173). It was only from 1880 on that these songs became increasingly known as 'socialist songs' because of their explicit overtures to various socialist parties. Despite the increasing social and political ambitions of these songs, this took nothing away from what their composers considered their artistic potential. On the contrary, they considered the struggle for justice and equality as the nucleus of what art should be about, even though it hardly seemed to be the case either in contemporary 'decadent' or 'depraved' bourgeois art or in more popular 'café-concert', that the socialist press considered a danger to militant action. Marc Angenot (ibid.: 187) summarises this contrast in powerful terms:

Face à la niaiserie apolitique et démobilisatrice du café-concert, la chanson socialiste est politique de part en part, mais pas dans le sens d'un simple endoctrinement prosaïque : elle émeut profondément, elle est conforme à une sensibilité militante qui, au milieu des rituels des partis 'révolutionnaires', dans les grands hymnes entonnés en chœur, en vient fréquemment aux larmes […]

[In contrast to the apolitical and demobilizing drivel of the café concert, socialist song is political through and through, but not in the sense of simple prosaic indoctrination: it touches deeply, it is in keeping with a militant sensitivity that often brings a tear to the

eye during the rituals of 'revolutionary' parties when singing those grand anthems in chorus [...]]

The function of this music was multiple from the outset: putting a sincere sensitivity to words and music, on the one hand, and an unambiguous incitement to action, on the other.

A number of these socialist songs were published anonymously, while others were clearly the work of individual authors, the most well-known of whom were Jean-Baptiste Clément ("Le temps des cerises") and Eugène Pottier ("L'Internationale"). The origins of "L'Internationale" are well known. The words of the poem were written in 1871 by the Frenchman Eugène Pottier, and were originally meant to be sung to the tune of the Marseillaise. In 1888, the Belgian Pierre De Geyter composed the melody we know to this very day. Four years later, "L'Internationale" was proclaimed the official anthem of the workers' movement, after which it circulated very quickly and was adapted musically (including arrangements for piano, choir, brass band, etc.) and was also translated enthusiastically by many. A full one hundred years later, Jan Gielkens (1998: 73) remarked that "L'Internationale" was "misschien wel het meest vertaalde lied ter wereld" [was perhaps the most translated song in the world]. The number of translations, re-arrangements, adaptations and parodies amount in total to at least 140 versions in 50 languages.

The Dutch translations

"L'Internationale" has been translated several times into Dutch. The line between borrowing, adaptation and translation is sometimes thin, and as a result numerous different versions exist in Dutch (cf. GIELKENS 1998). In 1890, for example, Karel Waeri, the Ghent composer/musician kept the melody but wrote a completely new text – a very common practice among composers of such anthems, it must be noted. The first singable Dutch translation was published on 4 April 1894 and was penned by Johan Visscher (cf. GIELKENS 2004). The most well-known version is by the Dutch poet and socialist Henriette Roland Holst (dating from 1900), but if we also take intersemiotic translations into account, we must also mention the series of wood carvings by the Flemish graphic artist Frans Masereel. His last work is an illustrated edition of "L'Internationale", which he published in 1970, at the age of 81.

As the extensive literature on retranslations has shown, the reasons for retranslating a text can be extremely diverse: quality-related (especially if the first translation has been criticised), commercial (e.g., marking the anniversary of an author or a work), functional (e.g., if the translation is to serve another purpose, address a new audience, or be sung instead of read), etc. (VAN POUCKE 2017; TAHIR GÜRÇAĞLAR 2019; KOSKINEN & PALOPOSKI 2014). In this respect, numerous partial or full Dutch translations of "L'Internationale" followed the Roland Holst translation, including translations by Theun de Vries (following the transformation of the SDAP to the Labour Party), Jacques Firmin Vogelaar (to the melody of "L'Internationale", combined with the Dutch national anthem), Jaap van de Merwe (a very radical rearrangement in a much

more informal language register), an anonymous translator (meant specifically for a Flemish audience), and, finally, Ernst van Altena, a version labelled by Gielkens (1998: 82) as a "meer literaire poging" [more literary effort].

In what follows, we will focus firstly on what can be called the most canonical translation, i.e., the translation by Roland Holst. In contrast to previous research, we wish to stress the relation between her strategy as a translator and her poetics as an author. How can we situate this translation in relation to the life and work of Roland Holst, and why was she an ideal translator to canonize this song? We then turn to van Altena's translation, exploring the various ways his version differs from Roland Holst's. Given that van Altena's version was not meant to be sung, its literary dimensions are foregrounded in the analysis. We conclude by comparing the two translations.

Henriette Roland Holst's translation

The first time the Dutch poet Henriette Roland Holst (1869–1952) heard a performance of "L'Internationale" was probably during the 1900 International Socialist Congress in Paris. She was part of the Dutch delegation. Not long afterwards, in the same year, she translated the text into Dutch.[2] The translation was probably printed for the first time in 1902 and sung at a festive evening before the start of the Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij (SDAP) [Social Democratic Workers Party] congress (GIELKENS 1998: 7). Her version has since remained the canonical version both in Flanders and the Netherlands; Van de Merwe termed it a "taaie klassieker" [stubborn classic] (VAN DE MERWE 1974: 49).

During her lifetime, Henriette Roland Holst was widely considered one of the greatest Dutch poets ever known (BEL 2018: 464). Though her poetry has since been largely forgotten, she remains well known as a socialist and communist activist. Her translation of "L'Internationale" lies at the crossroads between these two ambitions (poetry and activism).

Henriette Van der Schalk (as she was known before her marriage to the painter Richard Roland Holst) stemmed from a well-to-do middleclass family. At the end of the nineteenth century, she became entranced by the then-burgeoning socialist movement, among other things, from reading Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*, which she came to know through a poet friend Herman Gorter. In 1897, she joined the SDAP. She immediately put all her energy into party activities, giving readings and writing pamphlets and articles in innumerable socialist newspapers. She also provided financial support to the party and even became a member of the party executive (SCHAAP 2000). She gained international renown and was in close contact with Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht and Leo Trotsky. She was a polyglot and wrote the successful pamphlet (first hand, in

[2] In 1898, Roland Holst had already borrowed a collection of poems by Eugène Pottier from a fellow party member; she copied some poems and mentioned in a letter that she would translate a few of them one day if she had the time (ETTY 1996: 77–78; GIELKENS 1998: 7). Her translation is mentioned for the first time in 1900 in a letter sent to the newspaper *Het Volk* (ETTY 1996: 632; GIELKENS 1998: 7). It was printed for the first time in 1902 (STERRINGA 1902; see GIELKENS 1998) and in 1903 along with the music (POLAK 1903).

German) *Generalstreik und Sozialdemokratie* (1905) [General Strike and Social Democracy], for example. Her relations with socialism and communism were rather tempestuous and hence much publicised (see ETTY 1996 and SCHAAP 2000). She turned from socialism to communism during the First World War: in 1921 she even participated in the Third Congress of the Communist International in Moscow but left the party in 1927. She became more and more of a religious socialist but remained on the barricades in protest against fascism and colonial exploitation in the Dutch East Indies, among other things.

Roland Holst's translation of "L'Internationale" belongs to her early commitment to socialism, and in fact to her beginnings as a poet. Her debut as a poet came in 1896 when she published the collection *Sonnetten en verzen in terzinen geschreven* [*Sonnets and verses written in terza rima*], written in mystic symbolic style. After encountering socialism and Marxism, she wished to bring her two callings together. Like many Dutch socialists, she found inspiration in the work of the English socialist thinker, writer, and artist William Morris, who had died shortly beforehand (in 1896). She translated much of his work, and a year after joining the SDAP published a collection of Morris's essays entitled *John Ball en andere vertalingen* (1898) [John Ball and other translations]. She remarked in relation to these essays: "Blijkbaar was ik in die jaren rijp geworden om ze te begrijpen, het was of de schellen mij van de oogen vielen, of ik de maatschappij, het mij omringende leven in een nieuw, helder licht zag" [Seemingly I had matured enough in those years to understand them, as if the scales had fallen from the eyes, as if I saw society, and life surrounding me in a new clear light] (ROLAND HOLST 1898: 95). As a means of reckoning with her own 'old' poetics, she wrote the pamphlet entitled *Socialisme en literatuur* [*Socialism and Literature*]. However, she had not yet recovered her own poetic voice. She did write propaganda verse, later collected in *Meiliederen en propaganda-verzen* (1915) [*May Songs and Propaganda Verses*], but her lyrical work would be published only seven years after her debut, in a second collection that bore the significant title *De nieuwe geboort* (1903) [*The New Birth*]. In this collection, she gives voice to her joy regarding her new vision of the world and expresses her sorrow at the heavy sacrifices that accompany it. The collection bears witness to a strong awareness of a joyful expectation of a new age and society, of an awareness of living at a pivotal moment in time and of a readiness to make sacrifices. Meanwhile, in only a few years, she had managed to gain considerable knowledge of and a passion for socialism, publishing a steady stream of studies on socialist topics such as *Kapitaal en Arbeid in Nederland* (1902) [*Capital and Labour in the Netherlands*], a concise cultural history of the working class from a Marxist perspective, and a pamphlet called *Arbeiders en alcohol* (1902) [*Workers and Alcohol*].

The translation of "L'Internationale" happened in the middle of all these writings: innumerable socio-political articles and pamphlets, her translation of William Morris, propaganda verses, her mystical debut and her second socialist collection. Roland Holst was highly aware of the difference between poetry and propaganda verse. In the preface to her translation of William Morris's essays, she writes: "Morris' propagandaverzen zijn bekend en in hun soort voortreffelijk: natuurlijk wist hij zeer goed dat in wat wordt geschreven met het oog op propaganda, nooit het afgeslotene, in zich zelve

bloeiende leven kan tieren van poëzie" [Morris's propaganda verses are well known and are excellent examples of their kind: of course, he knew very well that what is written for the purposes of propaganda can never draw on the self-blossoming life of poetry"] (ROLAND HOLST 1898: 8–9). She also makes this distinction for her own poetry. In the foreword to *De Nieuwe Geboort,* she writes that socialist poetry is no propaganda poetry for the workers movement.

Van eene poëzie, zuiver sociaaldemocratisch van geest, dat wil zeggen, uit de gedachte- en gevoelswereld van het strijdend proletariaat geboren, hebben wij nog geen voorstelling. Daartoe is de proletarische klasse nog te zwak en leven in haar nog te veel burgerlijke reminicenzen.

[We cannot yet imagine that singular type of poetry, purely socio-democratic in spirit, which means born of the world of thought and feelings of the militant working class. The proletariat is too weak for it and still has too many middleclass memories living on in it.]. (ROLAND HOLST 1903)[3]

She recognises that her own lyrical poetry is not socio-democratic enough and that her propaganda poetry (separate from *De nieuwe geboort*) is not truly socialist poetry. In fact, she associated the latter more with her activist side than with her poetic side: elsewhere she speaks disparagingly of her "propagandistisch geschrijf" [propagandist scribblings] (ROLAND HOLST 1900). This also applies to her translation of "L'Internationale",[4] which plays no part at all in what she tells us of her own life in her memoirs *Het vuur brandde voort* [*The Fire Burns On*] or in her correspondence. Seemingly it was just a little job she did between turns. And yet it is the one text that remains of her literary heritage.

To conduct the comparative translation analysis, we will draw on the version published in 1902. (There are other adapted versions in circulation.) The first thing to notice is that only three stanzas were translated (1, 3 and 5). That is why the version sung in Dutch is much shorter than the original. One can only wonder how that played out at international conferences when all versions of the song were sung at the same time. Roland Holst kept the original rhyme scheme (consistently alternating rhyme). Because she alternates between feminine and masculine rhyme, as does the French original, each second line seems to acquire a stress (masculine rhyme); there is a full stop every two lines

[3] In 1903, the Flemish poet Karel Van de Woestijne, speaking about *De nieuwe geboort*, nonetheless expressed the lamentation that Roland Holst had wasted her poetic talent (which he had previously praised) on "proletarisch-sociale deklamatie en opgezwollen meeting-praat" [proletarian social bombast and the bloated talk of mass meetings]. He concluded: "Zij was eene dichteres, die socialiste werd" [she was a poet who became a socialist] (VAN DE WOESTIJNE 1903: 631, 636).

[4] Like most girls from a well-off background, Roland Holst was very fluent in French. (She even wrote verse in French in her youth.) She did not translate much except for Morris and then Dante (*Il Convito*, unpublished), which had a strong influence on her first collection. She also participated in translations of work by Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy.

(often in the form of an exclamation mark). This alternance between feminine and masculine rhyme is of course emphasised in the music but this is not easy to convey in all languages. It is a common verse form in Dutch, however. Sticking to the rhyme scheme enhances the song's singability, as well as the capacity to remember it. But the end rhyme has clear consequences for the rest of the lines. Retaining this end rhyme forces the rest of the translation to be rather "free" in terms of its meaning.

It is striking that the volcano metaphor in the first stanza was replaced by a flood metaphor, for example, which is slightly less explosive (aggressive) and does not express vertical movement to the same degree if at all. Roland Holst's line in the first stanza is famous: "Sterft, gij oude vormen en gedachten!" [Die, ye old forms and thoughts!], in which she is more imperative and poetic in her stance than the original "Du passé faisons table rase" [Of the past a tabula rasa let us make]: the imperative "Sterft" [Die] is the most outspokenly aggressive term in the whole poem. The final line in this stanza sounds a very different note, however: "Begeerte heeft ons aangeraakt" [Desire has touched us], which has no corresponding line in the source text. This poetic phrase ushers another tone of a more lyrical order into the stanza: desire and touch humanizes and embodies the discourse. Moreover, "desire" is a typical word in Roland Holst's poetic vocabulary: in her first two collections (between which this translation came about) the word occurs no less than twenty times. The refrain below begins with a line that is less powerful than the French "C'est la lutte finale" [It's the final struggle], which is very hopeful and rousing. Roland Holst writes: "ten laatste male" [for the last time], which is more of a rhyming stopgap than a call to arms. "Finale" was translated but not "lutte". Much was gained by the fact that the rhyme of the French original and Dutch translation are the same: -ale. Roland Holst begins the refrain with a form of address: "Makkers" [Mates], an informal variant of "friend". This creates a sense of friendship in the refrain.

C'est la lutte finale	Makkers, ten laatste male
Groupons-nous et demain	Tot den strijd ons geschaard,
L'Internationale	En d'Internationale
Sera le genre humain	Zal morgen heerschen op aard

She perpetuates this friendly atmosphere by using another form of address in the second stanza (the third in the French version): "Broeders" [Brothers]. Such forms of address by the lyrical persona in a poem could be considered rather one-sided, but in the case of a song, everyone can feel addressed and take the place of the lyrical persona: everyone who sings along also sings of and to "mates" and "brothers" and as such is both the addresser and the addressee. In itself, this performative act of singing and expressing words creates a circle of friends. Roland Holst makes the stanza less specific by dropping "l'impôt" [tax] and replacing it with a more poetic image: "tot het merg wordt d' arme uitgezogen" [the poor are sucked dry to the marrow]. Roland Holst's translation of the third stanza is less sharp and concrete than the original. She makes no call to arms or for a military strike or to kill the generals. "Cannibals" are turned into more innocent "barbarians". The tenor of this stanza is emblematic of the whole

translation: less concrete, less agitative, less party-political. This effect is strengthened by the omission of stanzas 2, 4 and 6 that contain more forms of address, such as "producteurs" [producers] and "ouvriers" [workers], (which are very different in kind than "mates" and "brothers"), along with references to mines and railways and to the party. Roland Holst's political discourse has been infiltrated by a more personal discourse. This is not only a matter of using such terms as "mates" (three times in each refrain, in fact) and "brothers" (twice), through which anyone singing the song will feel a more personal bond with the other singers. This translation is more personal because of Roland Holst's particular form of poetry, which is clearly visible in the Dutch translation. The phrase "desire has touched us" is an example already mentioned above. Between her first and second collection, the words "mates" and "brothers" increasingly became part of Roland Holst's vocabulary: there are two occurrences of "makkers" [mates] and two forms of "broeder" [brother] in her debut in contrast to nine "makkers" (four of which are forms of address) and nine forms of "broeder" in her first socialist collection. Of course, these do not only belong to Roland Holst's particular lexicon but also to the general vocabulary of socialism as such.[5] But Roland Holst's highly personal poetic language is visible in other ways. Extensive studies have been carried out on the particular language she used in the first stage of her career as a writer (Ariëns 1943; Weevers 1957; Van Praag 1946) and many of these elements can be found in this translation as well. Van Praag points to the "very strange abbreviations" she uses when dropping unstressed syllables and to various other blends. Examples of this in the translation are "slaafgeboornen" instead of "slaafgeborenen" [slave born], "d'arme" for "de arme" [the poor], or "waap'nen" for "wapenen" [weapons]. She also often drops smaller words such as prepositions (here: "Wij hebben waap'nen (om) hen te raken" [We have weapons (with which) to strike them]) and articles ("Geen recht waar (de) plicht is opgeheven" [No right where (the) duty has been abandoned]). She sometimes uses strange abstractions, such as nominalized infinitives ("reedlijk willen" [reasonable willing]). Other verb forms are also used in a strange way, such as the past participle in "tot den strijd ons geschaard" [rallied us to the fight]. Roland Holst also typically draws on little-used genitive constructions, as illustrated here: "and'rer twisten" [others' disputes] and "and'rer wil" [others' will]. These peculiarities of Roland Holst's early poetic style, which were considered by some critics as weaknesses that hampered readability, do leave their mark on this translation. As a result, not only is "L'Internationale" recognisable in terms of its style as a Henriette Roland Holst poem, but its stylistic characteristics (called manneristic by some, see van Altena 1981) considerably also hamper its singability. This is audible in performances in which the genitive construction "'s hongers sfeer" for example, is sung as "hongers sfeer" or "hongersfeer", making it unclear for some singers where the stress should lie, how certain words should be pronounced or stressed, etc. Its difficulty to sing and its "complicated language" (Gielkens 1998: 12) along with its archaic character (even in her own time, Roland Holst was reproached for being archaic) have all resulted

[5] For an interesting discussion of French forms of address in "L'Internationale", see Angenot (1992).

in calls for a new translation (GIELKENS 1998: 13). And yet no other translation has taken its place in the canon, a translation which has since acquired the status of national heritage (VAN DE MERWE 1974: 335–355).

How can we explain its canonical status? At the time Roland Holst translated the lyric, her career as a poet really took off and her renown only grew during the first half of the twentieth century. After that she was mainly known as "een dichteres die ooit heel beroemd was, veel dichtbundels heeft gepubliceerd, maar misschien geen grote literaire kunst heeft voortgebracht" [a poet who was once very famous, published many collections of poetry, but perhaps had produced no great literary art of note] (BEL 2018: 464–465). Now she is mainly known as "a huge political personality who had paved the way both nationally and internationally" (ibid.: 464). In fact, she was an ideal translator for "L'Internationale": she had considerable literary authority (her own highly esteemed oeuvre that was recognisable in various ways in this translation), she was a celebrated socialist activist, as a result of which not only could literary qualities be attributed to the translated lyrics but also an aura of authentic inspiration and conviction. Viewed in combination with her own lyric poetry (such as *De nieuwe geboort*), her propaganda verse, her many pamphlets and speeches, this translation got off to a flying start. She was often present at events during the early years where the song was sung. The most well-known performers of this translation in those first decades were Stem des Volks [The Peoples' Voice], a socialist choir. According to Etty (1996: 78; see also VAN DE MERWE 1974: 199–203), Henriette Roland Holst translated the text for this militant choir, who were directed with verve by the legendary Otto de Nobel. It is certain that De Nobel rearranged it for a 'mixed choir' as can be seen from the partition dating from 1913 of the Bond van Arbeiders-Zangvereenigingen in Nederland (IISG) [The Union of Dutch Workers Singers Associations]. The Stem des Volks was originally an Amsterdam choir but was emulated in many Dutch cities using more or less the same socialist repertoire. Henriette Roland Holst's translation of the song therefore became well known in socialist circles. Even though the text is demonstrably difficult, and people stumbled over certain words and phrases, it acquired a place in the cultural memory (and was handed down from generation to generation), all in Roland Holst's words. Or to put it another way, another translation and another text would have made another song of it. As early as 1938, the communist writer Theun De Vries was asked to do another translation because of criticism of Roland Holst's difficult text, but his rendition never surpassed Roland Holst's version: workers found it too difficult to learn the new translation as they were too used to Roland Holst's text (GIELKENS 1998: 13). He even said so himself in the *Volkskrant* of 16 November 1987: "Ik heb mijn leven lang de tekst van Henriëtte Roland Holst gezongen […]. Die woorden zitten er bij mij zo diep in. Dieper dan die van mijn eigen tekst. Mijn vertaling ken ik niet eens uit het hoofd." [I've sung the text of Henriëtte Roland Holst all my life […]. Those words are so deep inside me. Deeper than my own text. I don't even know my own translation by heart.]

Ernst van Altena's translation

Though Ernst van Altena's (1933–1999) translation of "L'Internationale" never enjoyed prominence, van Altena himself became famous as a translator, mainly of French poetry and chanson. His consecrated status is visible, among other things, in his many awards: the Martinus Nijhoffprijs (the most prestigious translation prize in the Dutch language area), which he received in 1964 for his translation of François Villon (*Verzamelde gedichten*, 1963) [Collected Poems] and the Hiëronymus Prize for his complete translation work. He began his translation career in 1955 with French chansons (Béart, Bécaud, Brassens) and seven years later he worked on a large Jacques Brel project, to which he owes his reputation as song translator, partly because Brel himself performed his Dutch translations.

Van Apollinaire tot Wedekind, a (not exhaustive) volume of van Altena's collected translation work published in 1981, comprises almost 700 texts by about 150 authors – including his version of "L'Internationale". In his foreword to the volume, van Altena delves deeper into the selection process and makes a few striking remarks about his translations of lyrics. He notes that lyrics that lose significant value when considered without the accompanying music are often mistakenly called 'commercial' in the variety business (VAN ALTENA 1981: 5); nonetheless he uses exactly this criterion to decide which texts would be included in his *Van Apollinaire tot Wedekind*. In some of his boldest remarks, van Altena sketches a portrait of the translator he was or wished to be. For example, in explaining why many of his translations are socially committed, he remarks that "*de* vertaler is meer moralist dan estheet" ["*the* translator is more of a moralist than an aesthete] (ibid.: 6, our italics) and regards the translator as having an important "sociale taak" [social task], that is, as someone who can unlock certain texts for an audience that does not understand the source language. Regarding the translation of poetry, he remarks:

Afhankelijk van de aard van de uitgangstekst en van het gebruiksdoel, kan [het vertalen van poëzië] een vrijwel letterlijk navolgen van het origineel zijn, ofwel een zeer vrijmoedige bewerking. Maar in elk geval is het geen woord-na-woord-weergave van het origineel, want daarbij verdampt de poëzie.

[Depending on the nature of the initial text and its purpose, [translating poetry] can either mean literally following the original or making a very frank adaptation. But whatever the case, it's never a word-for-word rendition because then the poetry simply evaporates.] (ibid.: 7)

Alongside his foreword, van Altena also provides contextualising notes on each author. For his translation of "L'Internationale" he mainly outlines the life and work of Eugène Pottier (whose entire oeuvre deserves revaluation, according to van Altena), and then discusses his own translation in more depth in the last paragraph:

Een nieuwe vertaling van de Internationale maak je natuurlijk niet om te proberen de traditionele van Henriëtte Roland Holst te vervangen. Ook al is die heel wat maniëristischer dan het volkse origineel van Pottier, de Nederlandse tekst is beladen met te veel groots verleden om ermee te kunnen concurreren. Een nieuwe vertaling heeft dan ook als enige functie het zicht op het origineel weer wat te verduidelijken.

[You don't simply do a new translation of the Internationale to try and replace the traditional one by Henriette Roland Holst. Even though it is more manneristic than Pottier's more folksy original, the Dutch text is far too steeped in a grander past than one cannot compete with. The only purpose of a new translation would be to somehow clarify the view on the original.] (VAN ALTENA 1981: 546)

Given that van Altena was making a retranslation, he felt obliged to justify the existence of his own version. By providing a subtle mixture of admiration for and criticism of Roland Holst's translation, he paved the way for his own version, which fits entirely within the general portrait he sketched of himself in the foreword: a specifically socially committed translation, because of the choice of source text, and with the main goal of (once again) providing the reader access to the source text. The question is whether this general ambition, as it comes to the fore in the paratext (the foreword and the contextualising notes), is achieved in the translation itself. Following Batchelor (2018), we consider a translation's paratext as any element conveying comment on the translation, or presenting it to readers, or influencing how the translation is received. However, as Tahir Gürçağlar (2016: 116) argues, the study of paratexts "cannot be a substitute for textual translation analysis". In this case, it must also be noted that van Altena was seemingly economical with the truth.[6] Indeed, comparative analyses are essential, since paratexts function as strategic *lieux d'énonciation* for self-representation. Too often, they are studied in isolation, with rigorous comparative analyses of source and target texts altogether omitted due to the time-consuming nature of the task.
As we have pointed out above, Gielkens described van Altena's translation as "literary"; in another piece he adds that van Altena tried to transfer "de tekst en niet de intentie" [the text but not its intention] into Dutch (GIELKENS 1999: 38). What does he mean by

[6] A series of corrections were printed in the 2006 *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde* [Annual of the Dutch Society of Letters] relating to Ernst van Altena's obituary in the 2000 –2001 Annual. The author (van Altena's brother) concludes with the following: "Deze correcties op een levensbericht gaan over biografische gegevens en niet over de merites van Ernst van Altena's vertalingen. Al komen veel critici ook daarbij weer bij grote tegenstrijdigheden uit. Frans de Haan schreef in *De Volkskrant* van 7 juli 2000 over Ernst van Altena's werk: '[…] prachtige dingen die je doen dagdromen over een van Altena met wat meer geduld en zelfkritiek: aan talent ontbrak het hem zeker niet.'" (VAN ALTENA 2006: 112). [These corrections to the obituary are biographical in nature and have nothing to do with merits of Ernst van Altena's translations, even though once again many critics point to large contradictions in them. Frans de Haan wrote in *De Volkskrant* of 7 July 2000 about Ernst van Altena's work: '[...] beautiful things that make you daydream about a van Altena with more patience and self-criticism: talent was one thing he certainly didn't lack.']

these rather concise formulations? It is certain that van Altena's translation is complete – including the infamous fifth stanza ("le couplet des généraux") [the couplet about the generals], which had been left out of various other translations because of its explicit call to murder officers ("[…] nos balles / sont pour nos propres généraux") [our bullets are for our own generals]. Besides this, its inclusion in the collection *Van Apollinaire tot Wedekind*, the absence of references to any concrete song context[7] and the accompanying note make it clear that the translation was not immediately meant to be sung. As a result, van Altena was not hampered during the translation by any of the technical imperatives of song. In contrast, he did keep to the rhyme scheme in part; the alternance of masculine and feminine rhyme that fits the song so well was not retained throughout, however.

An overall analysis of the translation shows that van Altena mainly focused on transferring language register: the Dutch version is considerably less lofty, which is visible in the lexical choices (more concrete than in the source text) and in its style (less rich than the source text). These choices cannot be simply explained in terms of the limitations caused by transferring the rhyme scheme. Take the first stanza for example:

Debout! les damnés de la terre!	Verschoppelingen, kom in opstand!
Debout ! les forçats de la faim!	Gij hongerslaven, kom, val aan!
La raison tonne en son cratère,	Nuchter denken gaat nu aan de kop, want
C'est l'éruption de la fin.	rede stroomt uit de geestvulkaan!
Du passé faisons table rase,	Maak schoon schip met het zwart verleden,
Foule esclave, debout! debout!	slavenmassa's sta op, sta op!
Le monde va changer de base:	De wereld draait naar recht en reden
Nous ne sommes rien, soyons tout!	wij lagen onder: op naar de top!
C'est la lutte finale	*Laatste strijd, alles geven*
Groupons-nous, et demain,	*solidair allemaal!*
L'Internationale	*En 't rechtvaardige leven*
Sera le genre humain.	*wordt internationaal!*

In terms of form, the French text uses clear repetition ("debout" appears four times, two as anaphors in the first two lines) and an extended metaphor of verticality ("debout", "éruption", "cratère") to represent "opstand" [uprising] (both literally and figuratively). All of this was weakened in the Dutch version: "debout" was translated in three different ways, and the strong "éruption" changed word type in the translation and becomes the less strong horizontal "stromen (uit)" [flow or stream out]. Perhaps van Altena was influenced by Roland Holst here, who translated the verb "tonner" [to thunder] as "stromen" [steam/flow], but he did keep the verticality of "éruption" in "rijzen" [to rise/surge up]. Through its use of everyday speech, van Altena's rendition of the refrain is also more concrete, direct and informal than the French. Not only is

[7] The translation appeared for the first time in the collection. There does not seem to have been any reason or request to translate this Dutch version for singing purposes.

the adjective "(lutte) finale" replaced by "laatste (strijd)," a strikingly ordinary usage "alles geven" [give your all] is added on to the line. In the same way that "lutte finale" is more informal in Dutch than in French, the imperative "groupons-nous" in the following line was translated by the equally informal "solidair allemaal" [let's all stick together]. "Humain" becomes "rechtvaardig" [just], and even the clear reference to "L'Internationale" (with capital letter in line three of the refrain) was translated as the general adjective ("internationaal") [international]; in like manner, the symbolic "égalité" [equality] in the third stanza disappears altogether in Dutch.

This translation strategy is noticeable in every stanza. In one (very striking) sentence, the switch to an informal language register is domesticating in tenor. Lines 5–6 in the fifth stanza ("S'ils s'obstinent, ces cannibales, / à faire de nous des héros," [If they persist, these cannibals, in turning us into heroes]) become: "Dat ze erkennen, die kannibalen: / de ware held is *Jan Soldaat*" [That they recognise, these cannibals, the true hero is Johnny Soldier] in Dutch (our italics). There are no further clear choices for domestication to be found in the translation, but that van Altena did not shun them elsewhere is clear from the foreword in which he also noted that he often opted for a "vrijmoedige bewerking" [frank rendition] (see VAN ALTENA 1981: 7), one example being "Les copains d'Abord" by Georges Brassens, where the Mediterranean becomes the Ijsselmeer and pastis turns into Berenburger, etc.

This direct, spoken-language style matches the vision and goals proposed by van Altena in the foreword and his notes accompanying his version of "L'Internationale": to unlock a text for a new audience and allow the target-text reader to acquire a view on the original. In van Altena's far from manneristic style we can also detect a strategy of demarcation with regard to the canonical translation by Roland Holst. To conclude, though this translation is not singable, the memory of the song is kept alive in the layout with its clear distinction between stanzas and refrain, the refrain being indented and set in italics.

Conclusion

Henriette Roland Holst's translation of "L'Internationale" came about at a time when both her literary and political authority were at their zenith and she had a large network in both domains (as well as, among other places, in choirs, where her song was circulated very quickly and efficiently). To her, "L'Internationale" was part of her propaganda work: she did not consider the translation as part of her poetic oeuvre. Her version was clearly meant to be sung: she kept the rhyme scheme, which was closely connected to the music (alternating masculine and feminine rhyme) and made the lyric easier to remember. She added a number of forms of address (mates, brothers), which awakened a sense of solidarity and of belonging to a group while singing. This makes the text more personal: the singer addressing the co-singer. At the same time, she made it less party-political (and therefore more timeless) and incisive. Her lyric is more poetic than the original. This is because Roland Holst, even though she did not count this translation as belonging to her poetry, still left her poetic mark on it, as demonstrated above. It is true that the typical peculiarities of her style do hamper the

singing – but not too severely. Perhaps this stems from what we also discussed above: that adapting the text of "L'Internationale" does not necessarily rob it of its mobilizing power, which was strengthened by the music and/or the interaction between word and sound.

Van Altena realised that his translation should not attempt to replace Roland Holst's version, which had by then accumulated eighty years of history. He himself argued that Roland Holst's translation was so established that the original had disappeared from view in the Dutch language area. He wished to do a new socially committed translation, primarily to provide access to the source text. This intention paradoxically applies to many (re)translations: to (re)translate so as to better reflect the source text. He does so, among other things, by translating all the stanzas and by not limiting himself to a certain (more virtuous) selection. A detailed analysis shows, however, that the tenor of his translation is more concrete and informal than the source text. He provides another view on the source text, but not necessarily a less mediated one, despite what he seems to suggest in the paratextual material. The result is a hybrid form comprising a demarcation strategy with regard to Roland Holst and his initial ambition of rendering the source text as completely as possible.

The political and the personal are woven together in each case. The personal (one's own motives, one's own poetics) has an undeniable domesticating character that moves the lyric away from the original. A constant feature of "L'Internationale" is its music, as it binds together all translations in all languages and registers. In this way, one could argue that a version is closer to the original if it is singable and is actually sung in practice. Henriette Roland Holst's "De Internationale" is etched into the song memory of left-wing Dutch people and in this respect is closer to the original: it fulfils the same function.

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