

Overview

I teach Old English, Middle English, Tolkien and Medieval studies at the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. I am a cultural historian of early medieval England, with a background in medieval history as well as English language and literature. The common strand in my research is gaining an understanding of Anglo-Saxon culture and of how modern generations have interacted with this early medieval heritage, in both scholarship and popular culture. I have published on *Beowulf*, Old English textual criticism, Tolkien studies and the history of Anglo-Saxon studies. My latest monograph [*Old Age in Early Medieval England: A Cultural History*](#) (2019) is the first book-length study of the cultural conceptualisation of growing old in Anglo-Saxon England. Multidisciplinary in approach, the book covers a broad range of sources, ranging from encyclopaedic notes to homilies, heroic poems, wisdom literature and hagiography.

You can find out more about me and my research on my personal website and blog: www.dutchanglosaxonist.com. For a full version of my CV, click [here](#).

Profile

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Curriculum vitae

Education

2002-2005: B.A. History (*cum laude*)

2004-2007: B.A. English Language and Culture (*cum laude*)

2007-2008: M.A. English Language and Culture (*cum laude*)

2006-2010: M.Phil. History: Societies and Institutions: Medieval History (*cum laude*)

2011-2016: Ph.D. 'Growing Old among the Anglo-Saxons: The Cultural Conceptualisation of Old Age in Early Medieval England' (*cum laude*)

Professional experience

2008-2010: Various temporary teaching positions in Linguistics and Philology at the department of English Language and Culture, Leiden University

2010: Temporary teaching position at the department of English, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen

2010: Temporary employment as an English Teacher at Mendelcollege, Haarlem
2011-2016: PhD student and lecturer (docentpromovendus) at the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society (supervisors: prof.dr. Rolf H. Bremmer Jr & prof.dr. Wim van Anrooij)
2016-: University Lecturer/Assistant Professor at the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society

Ancillary Positions

- [*Neophilologus: An International Journal of Modern and Medieval Language and Literature*](#) (Springer) – Managing Editor
- [*English Studies*](#) (Taylor & Francis) – Reviews Editor pre-1500.
- [*Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik*](#) (Brill) – Member of the Editorial Board
- [*Teachers of Old English in Britain and Ireland \(TOEBI\)*](#) – Committee Member and Webmaster
- [*Vereniging van Oudgermanisten \(VOG\)*](#) - Chair

Teaching

I have taught at university level since 2008, mostly at Leiden University, with a brief spell at Radboud University Nijmegen. In 2014, I was awarded with the [Humanities Faculty Teaching Prize](#) for the most inspiring lecturer of the faculty of Humanities at Leiden University. In 2015/2016, I was one of the teaching ambassadors for ‘blended learning’ at Leiden University’s Expertise Centre for Online Learning (ECOLe). In 2017, I was one of three nominees for the [LUS Teaching Award](#).

I teach Old English, Middle English, Tolkien studies and Medieval Studies in the *BA English Language and Literature* and the *MA Literary Studies: English Literature and Culture* at Leiden University. I am also the current coordinator of the minor programme *De Middeleeuwen en de vroegmoderne tijd*. You can find out more about the courses I have been involved in here: <http://dutchanglosaxonist.com/teaching/>. This website also includes an overview of my projects in teaching innovation.

BA and MA thesis supervision

I will happily supervise any thesis on Old and Middle English language and literature; Anglo-Saxon culture and history; medievalism; and fantasy literature (especially Tolkien). For an overview of BA and MA theses I have supervised as a first reader, see: <https://dutchanglosaxonist.com/teaching/thesis-supervision/>

Conferences

Conferences are a vital element of academic life. An overview of the conferences I have organised (or am currently organising) and a list of conference papers I have presented can be found here: <http://dutchanglosaxonist.com/conferences/>

Press and popularisation

I like to share my knowledge of the history, culture and language of the Middle Ages with people in- and outside academia. My research blog www.dutchanglosaxonist.com (active since October 2015) has had over 150.000 views by more than 120.000 unique visitors. I am also one of the editors of the [Leiden Medievalists Blog](#). I am also active on [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

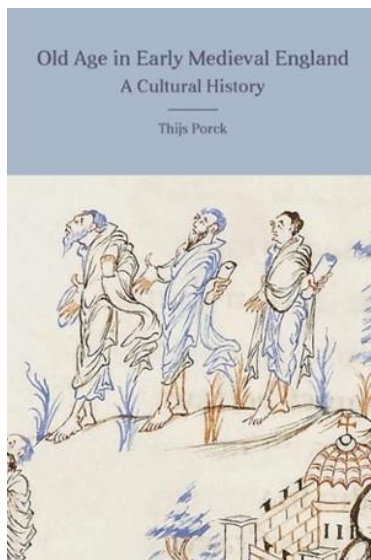
In addition, I have given over sixty public lectures on various topics, such as Tolkien's *The Hobbit*, movie adaptations of *Beowulf*, King Arthur, The Norman Conquest, Dr Who in Anglo-Saxon England and Anglo-Saxon anecdotes. My Tolkien lectures are part of [Kennis op Straat](#), an online platform developed by De Jonge Akademie (KNAW / Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences). For an overview of my efforts so far, see: <http://dutchanglosaxonist.com/press-and-popularization/>.

Key publications

For a full overview of my publications, with Open Access options where available, see: <https://dutchanglosaxonist.com/research-and-publications/>

Monograph and edited volumes:

- Thijs Porck, [Old Age in Early Medieval England: A Cultural History](#) (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2019)



*This first full survey of the Anglo-Saxon cultural conceptualisation of old age, as manifested and reflected in the texts and artwork of the inhabitants of early medieval England, presents a more nuanced and complicated picture. The author argues that although senescence was associated with the potential for wisdom and pious living, the Anglo-Saxons also anticipated various social, psychological and physical repercussions of growing old. Their attitude towards elderly men and women – whether they were saints, warriors or kings – was equally ambivalent. Multidisciplinary in approach, this book makes use of a wide variety of sources, ranging from the visual arts to hagiography, homiletic literature and heroic poetry. Individual chapters deal with early medieval definitions of the life cycle; the merits and downsides of old age as represented in Anglo-Saxon homilies and wisdom poetry; the hagiographic topos of elderly saints; the portrayal of grey-haired warriors in heroic literature; *Beowulf* as a mirror for elderly kings; and the cultural roles attributed to old women.*

- Thijs Porck, Amos van Baalen & Jodie Mann, eds., [Scholarly Correspondence on Medieval Germanic Language and Literature](#), special issue of *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik* 78: 2-3 (Brill, 2018)

In an age before the Cloud and social media, scholars relied on letter-writing for collaboration, peer feedback and the building and sustaining of academic networks. Furthermore, since bringing publications to print was a slow and laborious process, letters were considered a quick and efficient way to share one's insights, data and discoveries with colleagues. As such, scholarly correspondence is an important source for the history of philological scholarship.



Scholarly Correspondence on Medieval Germanic Language and Literature

Edited by
Thijs Porck
Amos van Baaen
Jodie Mann



LEIDEN | BOSTON

Indeed, as Ton van Kalmthout explains in the first contribution to this special issue, the value of such epistolary evidence is threefold: letters are a medium for knowledge transfer, they allow the reconstruction of the social and institutional contexts in which knowledge was gathered and disseminated and, as private documents, they give an insight into the personalities and ambitions of the scholars involved. Further contributions to this special issue demonstrate these unique qualities of correspondence.

- Thijs Porck, ed., [The Familiar and the Foreign in Old Germanic Studies](#), special issue of *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik* 77:3-4 (Brill, 2017)



The Familiar and the Foreign in Old Germanic Studies

A celebratory collection on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Vereniging van Oudgermanisten

Edited by
Thijs Porck

VOLUME 77 (2017)



BRILL
RODOPI

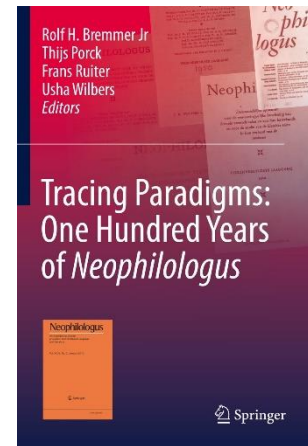
LEIDEN | BOSTON

This collection celebrates the thirtieth anniversary of the Dutch Society for Old Germanic studies, the Vereniging voor Oudgermanisten. The collection brings together contributions by both veteran and early career members of the society and centres on the theme of the encounter between the familiar and the foreign. The articles are representative of the broad scope of Old Germanic studies, ranging from philology to historical linguistics, through to history, text editions and manuscript studies, and spanning the

geographical area from Iceland to the Mediterranean. The topics covered include cultural contact, literary representations of the 'Other', loan words, contact-induced sound changes, distinctive linguonyms and obscure riddles.

- Rolf H. Bremmer, Thijs Porck, Frans Ruiters & Usha Wilbers, eds., [Tracing Paradigms: One Hundred Years of Neophilologus](#) (Springer, 2016)

This volume brings together a selection of pivotal articles published in the hundred years since the launch of the journal Neophilologus: An International Journal of Modern and Mediaeval Language and Literature. Each article is accompanied by an up-to-date commentary written by former and current editors of the journal. The commentaries position the articles within the history of the journal in particular and within the field of Modern Language Studies in general. As such, this book not only outlines the history of a scholarly journal, but also the history of an entire field.



Grants & awards

[Vlaams-Nederlandse Prijs voor Teksteditie 2010](#)

[Onderwijsprijs Geesteswetenschappen 2014](#)

[Research grant Leiden University Fund \(LUF\) / Bolland Fonds 2016](#)