

Abstract in English

This bachelor thesis deals with the contemporary Dutch rural novel. The main questions are:

1. What features characteristic of the Dutch rural novel can be found in the more recent novels *Joe Speedboot* (2005) by Tommy Wieringa (in English *Joe Speedboat*, 2010) and *Boven is het stil* (2006) by Gerbrand Bakker, (in English *The Twin*, 2008)?
 - a) Are the characteristic features, as described in Dutch literary history books and glossaries of literary terms, present in the analysed books?
 - b) Have the analysed books characteristics attributed to them by the article of literary critic Xandra Schutte?
 - c) Can we identify any other characteristic features? Can we speak of a new tradition of the contemporary Dutch rural novel?

The theoretical part is concerned with classification of Dutch rural novel in the literary and historical context. In this part the Dutch rural novel is defined and the characteristic are also mentioned. The theoretical part continues with a summary of the development of Dutch rural novel from its beginning to the present day.

The corpus consists of two contemporary Dutch rural novels – *Joe Speedboot* by Tommy Wieringa and *Boven is het stil* by Gerbrand Bakker. They are analysed using the structural analysis. The goal of this bachelor thesis is to place the analysed novels within the genre. Emphasis is placed on the characters, setting, themes and use of language.

Research suggests that both analysed works show signs of rural novel as described by the academic literature. There are only few features that correspond with those attributed by Xandra Schutte. The characters and specific rural community is typical for this literary genre. The novels also contain numerous descriptions of the surroundings and rural life. Subjects are associated with the environment in which the actions take place. These include generation conflicts, dying out of families or depiction of the immense differences between town and country. It is possible to speak about a significant change in the themes and use of language. The topic is no longer exclusively associated with rural surroundings, but also works with current issues and events, such as multiculturalism, homosexuality or bulimia. Characters no longer speak a dialect or a dialect-influenced language.

On the one hand, it is possible to say that Dutch rural novel has undergone profound development. On the other hand, at this moment it is too early to talk about a new tradition of contemporary Dutch rural novel. It will be interesting to see how the works of Tommy

Wieringa, Gerbrand Bakker and of course other authors of rural novel will evolve. Their development will certainly be an interesting topic for a more comprehensive study than a bachelor thesis.