



# Dutch Institutional Reading Culture in the Early Nineteenth Century: An Exploration and a Comparison

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**Abstract:** In recent decades there has been an increase of literary-historical research into Dutch (institutional) reading culture. In this article the focus lies on institutional reading culture in the Netherlands during the years 1815-30. Although a great deal of research has been conducted into regional Dutch reading culture, a broader comparison with national and international developments does not exist as yet. We will argue that some manifestations of Dutch institutional reading culture were unique in an international context. The institutional reading culture of early-nineteenth-century Netherlands will be set against foreign research in order to explore what different institutions of reading in Leiden can teach us about Dutch institutional reading culture in general.

**Keywords:** Book History, Nineteenth Century, Institutional Reading Culture, Literary Societies, Book Clubs, Subscription Libraries, Circulating Libraries, Booksellers, United Kingdom of the Netherlands, Leiden

## Introduction

In the small town of Steenberg, situated in the Dutch province of North Brabant, near the Belgian border, a book club was set up in 1797, with *Voor Wetenschap en Deugd* (For Scholarship and Virtue) as its motto. Its members bought their books at Verkouteren's bookshop in the nearby town of Bergen op Zoom. The book club remained active during the years of French rule between 1806 and 1813. The members even continued, with unabated enthusiasm, after the liberation in 1813. They read, amongst others, works by the German dramatist August von Kotzebue, the Swiss poet Johann Kaspar Lavater, the English writer and traveller Sir John Bowring and the French writer Madame de Genlis.

The early nineteenth century boasted a great many book clubs like this. Not just in the Netherlands, but also in surrounding countries. Very little if any information [22] survives about the majority of these. Over the past decades, research into eighteenth- and nineteenth-century reading culture has been undertaken internationally, but also nationally. It is in particular since the introduction of Rolf Engelsing's theory (which suggests that a reading revolution took place after 1750, with a shift from 'intensive' rereading to an 'extensive' reading of more and different books) that a relatively important amount of research has been carried out into the institutional reading culture in Western Europe.<sup>1</sup> We have thus learnt a few things in the meantime about English *book clubs*, Scottish *subscription libraries*, French *cabinets de*

lecture, German *Leihbibliotheken* and Swiss *Lesegesellschaften*. However, relatively little has so far been published beyond the borders about the situation in the Netherlands<sup>2</sup> which, after all, was once known as the 'Printing press of Europe'.<sup>3</sup>

And yet, research into the reading culture of the Netherlands is by no means standing still. Significant, in this respect, was the appearance of a special issue in 1990 of the journal *De Negentiende Eeuw* (The Nineteenth Century) which was devoted to the subject. Two years earlier a book had been published on the reading culture in Middelburg at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Besides some general interest articles, the special issue contained contributions about various 'institutional' forms of reading culture in the nineteenth century. Another important publication was *Bladeren in andermans hoofd. Over lezers en leescultuur* (1994). In 2000 another special issue of *De Negentiende Eeuw* appeared, this time about 'Lezen in rangen en standen. Negentiende-eeuwse bibliotheken opnieuw bezocht' (Reading in All Social Classes: Nineteenth-Century Libraries Revisited).

This, together with other publications, demonstrates that within literary-historical research, reading culture is now being given ample attention. A relatively great deal of research has been conducted into reading in the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup> What is remarkable is that many studies in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century reading culture focus on areas in the less urbanized areas, instead of major cities like Amsterdam and The Hague.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the reading culture of women in the nineteenth century has also become a subject for study.<sup>6</sup> In the context of research into reading institutions, such as subscription libraries, book clubs, libraries and reading societies, the recent monograph *Een stad vol lezers. Leescultuur in Haarlem 1850-1920* (A City full of Readers: Reading Culture in Haarlem, 1850-1920) (2011) by Boudien de Vries deserves special mention.<sup>7</sup>

Research into reading institutions can be divided into research into mostly middle-class voluntary societies (such as book clubs and subscription libraries) and research into commercial initiatives (like circulating libraries). Although the various forms of institutional reading culture can be found all over Western Europe, the situation in each country has its own characteristic hallmarks. For instance, France counted quite a number of commercial circulating libraries but fairly few book clubs or subscription libraries. In Germany, by contrast, the latter were numerous. At any rate, in England, France, Germany and the Netherlands [23] two fundamentally different institutions – commercial and non-commercial – met the new demands which had arisen as a result of an increase in readership and a readers' wish to read more.<sup>8</sup>

Thanks to the growing academic interest in the development of *civil society* in the nineteenth century and aspects thereof (the creation, for example, of voluntary societies whose underpinnings and objectives both lie in democratic norms and principles), reading institutions have received a great deal of attention over the past years.<sup>9</sup> Early investigations tended to focus on the eighteenth century, but recent research has shown that all kinds of developments in the institutional reading culture culminated in the nineteenth century, too. The research results provide insight into early democratic trends, into the dissemination of Enlightenment ideals and aspects of the literary romantic movement and into the societal appeal of urban culture and the economic growth of the book trade.

The Netherlands may not form an exception in terms of its institutional reading culture, but we will argue that some of the manifestations of this culture were unique in an international perspective. This has emerged from recent research into book clubs in the constitutional and political context of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands over the period 1815-30 and into the

institutional reading culture in Leiden between 1760 and 1860. This article aims to bring together results from synchronic and diachronic research. In this way, the development of reading institutions in Leiden can be placed within a broader national context. Moreover, the institutional reading culture of the early nineteenth-century Netherlands will be set against foreign research in order to explore what different reading institutions in Leiden can teach us about Dutch institutional reading culture in general.

## Research in the Netherlands and Surrounding Countries: The Current Position

Our knowledge of the institutional reading culture in Western Europe is at best fragmentary. In Germany, for example, a relatively large number of monographs on local reading culture have been published, while the results of research into the English situation have mainly been published in articles or as part of larger studies. In this section, the results of Dutch research into the reading culture of the first half of the nineteenth century are set against the results of international research.

### *Scope of the Phenomenon*

Around 1800 there were at least 58 subscription libraries in England. In Scotland this number was 15 but, in the course of the first three decades of the nineteenth century, nearly 1,000 were founded. The number of circulating libraries in Scotland comprised at least 70 prior to 1800, after which another 200 were set up. [24] During the same period, England boasted almost 1,000 circulating libraries, in addition to 1,500 to 2,000 book clubs. After 1825 these reading institutions started to suffer from competition from libraries founded by idealistic organisations. The English example was imitated in Germany, where around 1830 at least 600 book clubs and subscription libraries existed. Based on current research, these seem to have been concentrated in the Rhineland area. Subscription libraries were founded, mainly in urban settings, in the states ruled by enlightened prince-electors, while book clubs were set up in rural areas. The number of circulating libraries, which were also created in the free imperial cities, rapidly grew in the nineteenth century, numbering between 1,500 and 2,000. After 1800, smaller subscription libraries (*Lesekabinetten*) increasingly felt the competition from larger subscription libraries (*Lesebibliotheken*) which attracted a vast membership from all over Germany. In the early nineteenth century, 520 circulating libraries existed in Paris alone. It was only between 1815 and 1848 that it became easier for other types of institutions to be founded. Nevertheless, little is known about the size of the phenomenon in France, especially outside the main cities. In Switzerland, about 50 subscription libraries and book clubs were founded before 1820. The increase in numbers commenced in the last decade of the eighteenth century but peaked during the nineteenth century. After 1830 the number of reading societies blossomed until 1870.<sup>10</sup>

In the Netherlands, book clubs were the most successful type of society around 1800. Between 1810 and 1819, there were at least 219; between 1820 and 1829, there were 297, while between 1830 and 1839, 323 were in existence.<sup>11</sup> Around 1800 there were circulating libraries in nearly all Dutch cities and, by 1850, in the vast majority of cities large subscription libraries, the so-called leesmusea, came into existence. In Belgium, although not entirely absent, it seems that fewer book clubs existed, but in the last quarter of the eighteenth century a number of

circulating libraries were set up by booksellers.<sup>12</sup> It is likely that subscription libraries were more common than book clubs.

Based on the available research, it appears that book clubs first came into being in England and Scotland, then in the German Rhineland and subsequently in the Netherlands and Switzerland as a common type of reading institution. In comparison, but possibly in absolute numbers as well, the Netherlands seems to have boasted a high number of book clubs, whilst elsewhere commercial circulating libraries were the main distributors of literature. In France and Belgium, but also in other parts of Germany besides the Rhineland, and Austria, in certain areas circulating libraries were usually the sole suppliers. In England and Scotland they co-existed with reading societies, but there was obvious competition in urban areas where the number of circulating libraries rose sharply. It is possible that in the Netherlands the number of book clubs blossomed because of the relatively small number of large urban areas and because book clubs were more likely to satisfy people's need for reading. [25]

### *Literature and Ideology*

Competition between reading societies and circulating libraries mainly boiled down to the sale of novels: this category of books was constantly criticised by the press, but in circulating libraries they were nevertheless borrowed in bulk. Perhaps the confines of a reading society, in which personal contact was more frequent and, as a consequence, social control stronger, were not conducive to openly professing an interest in novels. A circulating library, where books could be borrowed anonymously, offered the same type of literature in a safer setting. The popularity of novels can be explained by the similarities in topical subjects between novels and the spirit of the times: threat, fear, the invisible; between 1800 and 1850 societal developments took place in rapid succession, thus allowing novels to connect to certain collective emotions in Western Europe.<sup>13</sup>

In the early nineteenth century, reading institutions were an important distribution channel for books and magazines.<sup>14</sup> And this printed matter, in turn, was important for the dissemination of (middle-class) norms and values. Book clubs, for instance, are viewed as institutional exponents of the early nineteenth century's public sphere, conceptually that part of society which shaped public opinion. The evolution of this public sphere – and book clubs are implicitly given a role to play in this – is linked to the dissemination of enlightened thought.

Between 1800 and 1850 the frameworks of reading institutions seemed to explicitly reveal pre-political ideals such as principles of equality and fundamental democratic principles.<sup>15</sup> Although these already existed in the eighteenth century, the increasing spread of reading institutions made them accessible to more people, not in the least to those further removed from the top of the social pyramid. In England, Scotland and Germany the number of large subscription libraries progressively increased, while in the Netherlands the number of book clubs soared. At the same time reading societies started functioning as information centres on the French Revolution, later as distribution centres for literature critical of the authorities – as happened in Germany, France and Austria as the censorship measures show – and around 1848 they functioned in several countries as organisation centres for revolutionaries.<sup>16</sup> It is well conceivable that the significance of obtaining useful, current literature through a reading institution gradually declined in the nineteenth century – which might have found expression in the growing interest in trivial, recreational literature – whilst the importance of the possibility of educating oneself in democratic surroundings increased. From that perspective,

reading institutions in the nineteenth century could increasingly be labelled as miniature democracies.

Between 1815 and 1830 the book club took the form of an enlightened emancipatory initiative with strict rules and thus served as an exercise in typical enlightenment ideals such as self-discipline and equality. A collective discussion of or reflection on the literature was not among the book clubs' aims.<sup>17</sup> Both the way [26] the book clubs were run and the relationship between the governing body and the regular members can be taken as an exercise in self-discipline and democracy. The choice of reading matter also came about most democratically. On paper, there was no control from experienced readers, though conceivably there may well have been in practice. Legal restrictions as to religion or domicile ensured that the members of book clubs belonged to a homogeneous group so that any decision-making could be done quickly, if necessary. Members of Dutch book clubs in general did not belong to the traditional intellectual or social upper classes.

In the research into early nineteenth-century societies, emphasis is placed on the role of an emerging sense of nation. The great diversity of bourgeois initiatives has been characterized by Jan Bank and Joep Leerssen as a breeding ground for the new sense of solidarity and for the new national consciousness in the nineteenth century.<sup>18</sup> The assumption is that book clubs had the characteristics of typically bourgeois initiatives and that their members in all likelihood shared a mutual cultural orientation and ideal. Leerssen points out that it was through book clubs that the products of and about the national culture were distributed. He considers nationalistic literature as having encouraged national unity.<sup>19</sup> Language is regarded as the element linking, with retroactive effect, the nation with Dutch writers and poets as the legators of a national culture.<sup>20</sup> Seen from this angle, book clubs facilitated the cultivation of a collective, national identity.

Nevertheless, research into several Dutch book clubs between 1813 and 1830 – when nationalism was supposedly strong after the French were ousted and the Netherlands regained independence – has shown that only a small percentage of books purchased by book clubs was explicitly nationalistic. Maybe members of book clubs saw themselves as cosmopolitan world citizens. This view possibly leaves little or no place for explicit nationalism. There was hardly any variety in the tastes of book club members in the small northern town of Leens. Approximately 75 per cent of the purchased titles can be categorised as 'geography and travelogue', 'novels and collections of stories' or 'historical literature and biographies'. These findings match the results from earlier research investigating the purchases by Middelburg book clubs.<sup>21</sup>

The literature that members of Western European reading institutions circulated, bought for their collections or offered on loan, consisted of a wide variety of categories. During the nineteenth century we see a growing interest in (and offer of) novels. Frequently read authors included Washington Irving, Caroline Pichler, August von Kotzebue, François René de Chateaubriand, August Lafontaine, Madame de Genlis, Eugène Sue and, above all, Walter Scott. Especially in the early nineteenth century, travelogues, biographies, historical stories and societal subjects were the categories of choice. The literature in reading societies was characterized by a high degree of topical themes, while the books on offer in circulating libraries tended to have a more recreational value. The literature read [27] in nineteenth-century reading institutions expanded the local, regional, national and later on also social and emotional horizons of its readers. Initially, travel stories and historical works lent themselves

well for this purpose, but progressively novels satisfied the readers' curiosity about what was happening across their own borders and boundaries.

At first sight, book clubs in the northern Netherlands appear to have taken an evident interest in different cultures and countries. A great number of travel stories were read alongside foreign books in translation. Positive contemporary critics pointed out that translations might well have contributed to the development of the Dutch language and culture. Translations introduced readers to useful foreign knowledge, customs and traditions. Moreover, they helped to develop the readers' judgement and tastes as they presented them with the style and modelling of foreign texts.<sup>22</sup> It indicates a wish to get acquainted with other cultures, a development that had already been set in motion during the eighteenth century. At that time, the intelligentsia developed 'an interest in knowing about other peoples, their manners and culture, and their "national" character'.<sup>23</sup> This echoes Marita Mathijsen's observation that in literature, a sense of nationalism was encouraged precisely by drawing comparisons with what was happening abroad.<sup>24</sup>

Yet it was more likely that most foreign literature was read in translation because of the shortcomings of the Dutch production of novels. On second thought, therefore, the book clubs' purchases were more likely to have been induced by a desire to read for pleasure than as stemming from views about cosmopolitanism or a wish to achieve improved national citizenship through a comparison with foreign customs and traditions.<sup>25</sup>

### *Evaluation*

Dutch research shows that around 1800, middle-class self-improvement was the driving aspiration in Dutch reading institutions, as it was in other West European countries. The types of chosen literature do not appear to differ significantly from the choices made in, for instance, England, Germany or France. The social composition of reading institutions also appears to closely resemble that of similar forms of societies abroad. Finally, it has been said, again on the basis of the Dutch situation, that the reading revolution theory needs to be qualified and possibly even moved to the second half of the nineteenth century. Yet, this conclusion is based on fragmentary and limited research. Random samples were sometimes used and researchers often appear to have chosen to focus on either the period before or after 1800. Thus, it is frequently difficult to draw comparisons between research results for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. New research could supplement these results and would help the Dutch reading culture fit in better in an international perspective. To this end, results from research into the institutional reading culture of the city of Leiden are presented below in order to reach a [28] qualified international embedding of the institutional reading culture in the Netherlands.

## **Institutional Reading Culture in Leiden**

How was reading culture organised in Leiden in the early nineteenth century, particularly between 1815 and 1830?<sup>26</sup> Like most other Dutch towns before 1900, the university town's social pyramid had a broad base and a narrow top. Having developed into a flourishing town in the seventeenth century thanks to its textile industry, Leiden languished in the second half of the eighteenth century. The situation worsened during the years of French occupation; trade and the textile industry were dealt heavy blows by the Continental System, the Napoleonic embargo against British trade (1806-14). Factories ground to a standstill and food prices rose,

as did the number of poor. As a result, Leiden changed into a town with two faces. The city was, above all, renowned as a seat of learning, the domicile of professors and students, a place where Latin murmured through the trees.<sup>27</sup> Its much-praised Rapenburg – with its famous Academy building, the centre of the University, founded in 1575 – constituted the academic centre of the town. However, Leiden was also a town of poverty. Beggars were omnipresent on the city streets. Foreign tourists were occasionally surprised to discover that 16,000 people, out of a population of around 39,000, were reduced to extreme poverty.

This social inequality was also reflected in the opportunities the city offered in the way of reading. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, reading was reserved for a select population group only. There were a few institutional libraries but admission to these was restricted. The collection of the Leiden University library, for instance, was only open to professors, lecturers and students. The Bibliotheca Thysiana (the only seventeenth-century library in the Netherlands preserved in its original building), which chiefly contained books from the estate of scholar Johannes Thysius (1622-53), was, likewise, not open to the public at large. This was also true for the valuable collection of the Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde (Society of Dutch Literature) – the most elite and influential literary society of the nineteenth century – which only members could access.

Anyone wishing to read had to go to the (relatively accessible) coffee houses. Besides lawyers, merchants, doctors and clergymen, students were also popular visitors. They would often spend a great part of the day playing billiards. Some had a reading room, where groups could gather. This turned coffee houses into a breeding place for another type of reading institution: the societies. In 1768, for instance, the Amicitia society was founded, where prosperous citizens could meet and people could leisurely read newspapers and magazines at a reading table. Those wishing to read more than magazines or the daily papers had to turn to other institutions. [29]

### *Book Clubs*

Any cross-section of the Leiden institutional reading culture must include book clubs. They had come into existence in the 1770s. There must have been hundreds of these clubs in the eighteenth century in the Netherlands, mainly in the west of the country. After 1800 they grew exponentially, including in Leiden. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the city numbered at least 35 active clubs.<sup>28</sup> In most cases, no more than a name or motto survives. Examples include the book club *Tot bevordering van Wetenschap en Vaderlandsliefde* (For the Promotion of Scholarship and Patriotism), created around 1802 and *Het Leesgezelschap van twaalf leden* (The Twelve Members' Book Club), set up around 1806. Subscription lists published at the front or back of a book mention a variety of (hardly imaginative) names of book clubs, which often contained words such as 'useful' and 'desire to read'.

A special place was reserved for the specialist book clubs, such as *Lust tot Onderzoek* (Desire for Study), later renamed *Veritatis Ergo*, which was founded on 22 January 1822. Its rule book still survives, as does a *Geschiedenis* (History), compiled on the occasion of the club's sixtieth anniversary from which it can be inferred that the club had been an initiative of six divinity students. The members, who had all joined the student union, singled out theological works for their reading, though they might occasionally also buy poetry and novels. Around 1823, the club counted around sixteen members, and it was twenty four years on. As a rule, the members came together once a month to select the books and magazines to buy: apart from

theological publications, the choices usually concerned literature of a general cultural nature, such as *Vaderlandsche letter-oefeningen* (Exercises in Dutch Literature). The members did not organise any 'social' gatherings to discuss the works they had read. The lawyers' book club Themis was a similar initiative. Founded in 1828, it was meant for doctors of law, who jointly bought law and political science books.

Other book clubs, such as *Legendo Discimus*, which was founded at an unknown date, served more general purposes. It transpires from the surviving rule book that its twenty members were sent a book every Monday. They read only French and Dutch works. Early in December the books they had purchased were sold among the members. In the case of another club, *Verscheidenheid behaagt* (Diversity Is Pleasing), only a list dating from 1818 survives, detailing works to be sold to the members. It seems that they read both magazines and books. The list of titles is quite varied. It includes sermons, poems, travel stories, moral, political and literary treatises and plays. Mention is also made of *Lectuur voor vrouwen, bestaande uit onderscheidene verhalen ter veredeling van het hart* (Literature for Women, Consisting of Various Stories to Ennoble the Heart) from 1815-6, a work by the female author Fenna Mastenbroek, which may suggest that women could also join this club. [30]

The book club Van Tienen, in existence under that name since 1767, was renamed Tot Nut en Genoegen (For Advancement and Pleasure) in 1828. The club consisted of fifteen ordinary members; in addition, a number of external members were admitted. The ordinary members would meet every first or last Friday of the month. The secretary usually chose the club's reading matter in advance, but members were also free to suggest titles. Each week, they would be sent one or two books. 'Monthlies' had to be forwarded within three days. Once a year, in March or April, the annual book sale took place. It is not known what the members read; as is true for most clubs, its book list has not been preserved.

More information is available for some book clubs, for instance, in relation to *Miscens utile dulci*. Founded in 1780, this club flourished well into the nineteenth century. It was highly institutionalised: the club had a comprehensive rule book with as many as seventy-one articles and an extensive system of fines. (For example, a member who was responsible for the staining or tearing of a book would be fined.) The club was governed by a board of six. As a result of the strict organisation of the club, detailed records were kept, which have survived in their entirety. They identify how many people were members (fifty-two at its peak), who they were (chiefly dignitaries and professors), on which days books were sent out (every Wednesday and Saturday) and what German, French and Dutch works were bought and read. It emerges, for instance, that the members were interested in the works by the poet Willem Bilderdijk, whose publications were read by virtually all members. Another striking revelation is that the members seemed to have been in the grip of the 'Scottomania' prevailing in the 1820s, namely a predilection for historical novels by and in imitation of Walter Scott. The members' literary tastes were not unique, but tied in with national trends.

However, leading writers from the early nineteenth century like Bilderdijk and Hendrik Tollens were not amongst the most-read authors in Dutch book clubs, as evidenced by the literature read by the members of the aforementioned Leens book club.<sup>29</sup> Historical novels like Walter Scott's were generally popular in the book clubs. This demonstrates how accounts of the past could bring alive the common people's experience of life. It also served to inspire Dutch producers of reading matter,<sup>30</sup> but probably also the consumers', as suggested by their reading material.



The book clubs' choice of literature mainly consisted of wide general interest books. Thus, their members fit into the picture of enlightened citizens engaged in a continuing emancipation process. According to Kloek, the few consumers really keen on this category of books generally belonged to the political, economic and intellectual top ranks, at any rate, in the second half of the eighteenth century.<sup>31</sup> But then, so would book club members, given their preference for self-improvement literature. In 1994 Kloek came to the conclusion on the basis of previous studies featuring book clubs that this was, indeed, the case.<sup>32</sup> The Leens book club presents a more subtle picture. The occupational groups to which the members [31] belonged reveal that the consumption of self-improvement literature had penetrated more deeply into the social pyramid than had initially been assumed. On the other hand, a great deal of reading was also for pleasure, which detracts from the aims of enlightenment. In this respect, the reading tastes of book club members are not dissimilar to the lighter tastes of the patrons of the Leiden commercial circulating libraries.

### *Subscription Libraries*

In the 1820s an alternative to the book clubs sprang up in the form of subscription libraries (leeskabinetten), institutions which had a reading table and loaned out items from their collection. In 1819 such a subscription library (leesmuseum) was set up in Leiden, following the example of similar ones set up in cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Seven years earlier, around 1812, attempts were made to set up a subscription library in Leiden. Draft statutes had been drawn up, stipulating that the institution to be founded was to be equipped with the best national and foreign monthlies, the best geographical publications and other famous works. The plans, however, came to nothing. Eventually, in 1819, they did go ahead, at the initiative of seven Leiden dignitaries who considered that there was a substantial interest in the city in reading the best national and foreign literary magazines. But none of the existing reading institutions served this purpose. 'After all,' the founders argued in an announcement, 'the purpose of such an institution lies not only in making reading the most popular magazines less costly, but also in providing an opportunity to read them soon, to compare and reread them and again check previous articles after a certain amount of time has passed.'

Arrangements were made with the Leiden bookseller Johannes van Thoir to set up the Subscription Library. He was the longstanding organiser of a reading circle whose members had national and foreign literary magazines delivered to their homes. The Subscription Library was to take over this task. Membership fees amounted to seven guilders for a six months' subscription for professors and five guilders for students, of whom twenty could join as members. The initiators wrote to local scholars and wealthy citizens in an attempt to bring in members. Many promised to join, others needed time to think it over or declined the honour.

In 1822, the Subscription Library moved to Breestraat 113. The street has been compared by English visitors to the High Street in Oxford.<sup>33</sup> The Library, which was open every day from ten until ten, had comfortable rooms that were 'properly lit and well-heated in winter'. Members could read numerous magazines and newspapers as well various Dutch and foreign scholarly journals. Moreover, refreshments of all sorts were available. This indicates that the Subscription Library also fulfilled a social purpose. In this sense, it somewhat resembled a (more civilized [32] version of a) coffee house. Ordinary newspapers were assembled and kept in bindings. Numerous literary and scholarly journals were available for inspection in the Library for one month and interested members could have them delivered to their homes.

The move led to new regulations. Membership was to be decided by ballot. A distinction was made between ordinary and associate members. Ordinary members had to permanently reside in Leiden, whereas associate members need live there only for a limited time. Students were not admitted until their third year at university. Ordinary members were subdivided into three categories, called 'classes'. First-class members paid an annual fee of sixteen guilders and could read both in the Library and at home. Second-class members paid fourteen guilders and were allowed to read in the Library only. The third class was for members who only wanted to read magazines at home; the subscription fee for them was ten guilders. Women could also make use of this service. Although they were not admitted to the Library, they did have an opportunity to read at home. The governing body consisted of five officers. The general meeting took place in February, during which the board of governors would report on the Library's financial situation.

### *Commercial Circulating Libraries*

In the second half of the eighteenth century Leiden did not as yet have any commercial circulating libraries. In 1772 a bookseller, Jacob Murray, tried to set up a French circulating library, but he was not allowed to. The booksellers' guild was concerned that it would have an adverse effect on the trade in French books. It was also feared that other booksellers would follow suit and set up libraries for Dutch and Latin works as well.<sup>34</sup> For these reasons, from 1775 onwards, there was a complete ban on commercial circulating libraries in Leiden.<sup>35</sup>

It was not until around 1800 that commerce entered the Leiden reading culture. Johannes van Thoir is thought to have run a reading institution from 1800 onwards, according to a questionnaire from the French authorities. Little more is known about this except that it gave readers access to Dutch, French, German and English books, 'both for *pleasure* and entertainment and for *edification* and *education*'.<sup>36</sup> When, on 12 January 1807, a ship carrying 37,000 pounds of gunpowder exploded in the Leiden city centre – the so-called gunpowder ship explosion – Van Thoir was hit hard. His house and warehouse collapsed, his circulating library was lost and his wife only just survived the disaster and was seriously injured. When Van Thoir recovered from the shock, he tried to restart his bookshop and reading institution. He called on his fellow townsmen to support him and his 'still suffering family'.<sup>37</sup>

One of the most important owners of a circulating library in Leiden was C.C. van der Hoek. When Van der Hoek established himself as a bookseller in Leiden [33] in 1822, he took over the Murray brothers' and Van Thoir's collections and added to these.<sup>38</sup> On payment of an annual subscription fee of nine guilders fifty, subscribers could borrow books from Van der Hoek's collection for a fortnight. As the Subscription Library was housed in the same room as the Circulating Library, members of the former institution were also allowed to make use of the collection of the latter. A copy of the catalogue of the Circulating Library was available in the Library. Van der Hoek published this in 1822: it listed over three thousand books titles. It is one of the few catalogues of a nineteenth-century Dutch circulating library to have survived. It shows that the Library contained historical, political, literary and theological works.

The catalogue provides information about early nineteenth-century reading tastes. Besides magazines, edifying works were especially well represented. The same was true for novels and plays. A striking feature of this latter category is the number of titles by the German author August von Kotzebue, who published over two hundred plays. Translated German novels were also popular. Van der Hoek owned more than sixty titles by the prolific German writer August

Lafontaine, who typically combined a sentimental storyline with a moral lesson. In addition, there were the classics, such as Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*, Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Young's *Night Thoughts*. The catalogue also contained French titles, including works by La Fontaine, Rousseau and Voltaire. Conspicuous is the interest in Walter Scott, whose novels Van der Hoek owned both in English and French. In comparison: the rules of the previously mentioned Leens book club stipulated that the acquisition of books was subject to certain restrictions because 'such writings with a clear tendency to offend common decency or incite a deliberate assault of religious denominations must not be included'.<sup>39</sup> In practice this meant that all books and magazines circulated amongst the members of the Leens book club were in Dutch, although only half of these had originally been written in Dutch.<sup>40</sup> The other half of the corpus consisted of translated literature, interestingly mostly from German. Frequently acquired works included those by Kotzebue, an author who, as stated earlier, was also well-represented in the Van der Hoek library.

Other Leiden booksellers also founded commercial circulating libraries. A certain Jacob Wouter Dauw Lem, for example, ran a library around 1822. His collection held Dutch books only: novels, travelogues, poetry collections, biographies, miscellanies, historical works and some five hundred plays.<sup>41</sup> The fact that the collection only included Dutch-language works may indicate that Dauw Lem focused on a less learned public. At the same time, he was the organiser of a 'reading circle of newly published *books*, which are delivered to members for a certain period and are then collected again'. Subscription fees amounted to five guilders a year. In addition, he established a 'reading circle for Low German magazines'. Subscribers were sent magazines, which were collected again after a [34] while, at a cost of six (and later seven) guilders a year. As of 1830, reading circle members could also have daily papers delivered.<sup>42</sup>

Leiden bookseller Pieter van Leeuwen also owned a commercial circulating library. It comprised some 2,100 titles, chiefly novels, travelogues, biographies, plays and children's books, in Dutch, French, English and German. But he also supplied songs for wedding feasts and breakfasts.<sup>43</sup>

It is difficult to determine what contemporaries thought of the reading institutions. Only occasionally do we come across a reaction. The miscellany of the *Vaderlandsche Letter-Oefeningen* (Exercises in Dutch Letters) – the most influential magazine in nineteenth-century Netherlands – of 1825 includes, for instance, a piece that provides 'comments and warnings regarding the circulating libraries', (mistakenly) ascribed to the conservative poet Willem Bilderdijk. In it, the anonymous author expresses concern about the mediocre quality of the collections. He was referring in particular to the presence of novels, which he believed took up most of the space in the collections. Of course, he continues, there may well be virtuous novels, but the majority are reprehensible since they 'excite, brutalize, ruin the imagination of male and female readers, and fill their souls with dreams, while it would have been better for them, in various situations of their lives, never to have dreamed'. The author contended that such books aim to incite their readers to indecency and have an adverse effect on the hearts and brains of the young and 'less well-trained'. In order to put his theory to the test, one Saturday afternoon he went to a well-known circulating library, 'in one of our most important towns' (possibly Leiden). There, he noticed how the majority of the customers threw themselves at the popular translated novels. Astounded, he approached the owner of the library who said he should not be so surprised: 'this has been going on incessantly, day after day, year after year. Believe you me, the thirst for novels is so great that I might as well close my library if I excluded them from it.' In the end the anonymous author calls on readers to avoid novels because of the risk of

'creating people who do not exist, cherishing wishes that cannot be satisfied, doing deeds that will make you look ridiculous'.<sup>44</sup>

In line with the criticism that the anonymous author levelled at the collections of commercial circulating libraries, many critics regarded translations as posing a threat to the Dutch language and culture.<sup>45</sup> In this context, it is worth noting that of all the book club purchases from the western city of Dordrecht almost half were translations,<sup>46</sup> again mostly from German. This may have been the result of an anti-French reaction which, as far as plays and prose fiction were concerned, led to a decrease of French and an increase in German translations. Amongst the twenty Dutch-language novels that appeared in 1820, not a single one was Dutch in origin, while as many as fifteen were German. In 1830, this number was sixteen out of a total of twenty-five. Translations could be produced cheaply since foreign authors did not receive any royalties. This made translations attractive to [35] publishers.<sup>47</sup> By contrast, it would seem that French was more widely read in Leiden, probably as a result of the city's more intellectual academic culture.

After 1830 the number of commercial circulating libraries usually linked to a bookshop shot up in Leiden. One of the major players remained C.C. van der Hoek on the Breestraat. His collection was regularly supplemented with new Dutch, English, French and German books. The growth of his circulating library can be traced accurately through newspaper advertisements. In 1847 it contained, according to Van der Hoek, 9,600 titles; in 1849, 9,800; in 1852, 10,310; in 1853, 10,495 and in 1855, 10,930 titles. In the 1840s he added that his collection had been enlarged with the 'most sought-after romantic-historical works'.<sup>48</sup>

At first sight, the collections of the commercial circulating libraries and the Leiden Subscription Library show important similarities. Although the book list of the latter institution has not survived, one should bear in mind that visitors to the Subscription Library were distinguished citizens and that strict social control was the norm. Therefore, one simply could not read a sensational novel at the Subscription Library, whereas one could in the circulating libraries, which were more geared towards the general public's tastes.

### *Other Institutions of Reading*

Ideologically inspired institutions of reading existed alongside booksellers who ran circulating libraries for financial reasons. The most important player in this field was the Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen (Society for the Common Good), founded in 1784. Its aim was to disseminate enlightenment and civilization among the lower classes. Around 1800 Libraries for the Common Good were set up in many cities, including Haarlem (1794),<sup>49</sup> Dordrecht (1795), The Hague (1798) and Utrecht (1801). It took longer before such an institution arrived in Leiden because, although a Leiden branch of the Society for the Common Good had been set up as early as 1786, the city did not have a Library for the Common Good until 1823. It targeted mainly people from the working classes. Books could be borrowed for free and were available every Wednesday between noon and one o'clock. The institution had a civilizing mission: 'Such an institution not only brings about a love of reading; it also helps retain acquired knowledge and furthers the course of enlightenment and civilization, which is the aim of the Society.' Furthermore, the library would prevent people from reading immoral books elsewhere. The surviving catalogue shows that the collection, aimed at promoting religiousness, virtuousness and good manners, embraced the Common Good ideals.

Readers with limited means could go to the Society for the Common Good for religious and morally useful literature. Only one work would be loaned each time, for a period of eight to fourteen days. Everyone was supposed to behave in the library and to look smart. The books were handled with care. Anyone not complying [36] was barred from taking out books for a period. The didactic Common Good ideals were strictly adhered to. The 1846 catalogue reveals that the collection included short, edifying works, often with 'God' in the title, in addition to an important number of sermon collections. Travelogues, history and geography books and books 'about trades and crafts' were also on loan. In the category 'poetical works', Christian edifying and nationalistic poems were particularly well-represented. Its clientele increased in the course of the century. Places of worship and 'public institutions' were among the library's most frequent users.<sup>50</sup>

It is difficult to make any general statements on the basis of the Leiden situation alone. It would be interesting to investigate whether similar developments also took place in other towns. Would we observe the same pattern in cities without a university or was the reading culture elsewhere organised along different lines? Very little investigation has been done that can help provide an answer to these questions. Research into the situation in Haarlem in the second half of the nineteenth century provides a comparable picture.<sup>51</sup>

## Conclusion

This article focuses on the institutional reading culture in the Netherlands between 1815 and 1830. Whilst during the last decades a great deal of research has been carried out into regional Dutch reading culture, a broader comparison with national and international developments does not exist as yet. We will try to draw some exploratory conclusions with the case of Leiden as our starting point.

When aspects of the reading culture of Leiden are compared with the overall, national reading culture of the Netherlands, several points stand out. For instance, Leiden boasted a relatively high number of literary initiatives, including (elite) libraries and literary societies. Those were uncommon in the Netherlands, except in other university cities. The University of Leiden acted as an important cultural centre in the country and attracted many academics. This urban, intellectual population was quite likely the driving force behind the emergence of a diverse institutional reading culture. From this perspective, it is not surprising that Leiden saw the arrival of a relatively high number of book clubs. The comparison with national developments further highlights the specificity of the case of Leiden. The majority of Dutch book clubs purchased literature in Dutch almost exclusively. In Leiden, French volumes were found in some book clubs such as *Legendo Discimus* and *Miscens Utile Dulci*. It seems that the intellectual pool provided by the university city in turn led to the creation of book clubs for people with higher levels of education who wished to read more extensively than those participating in book clubs elsewhere in the Netherlands. More than anywhere else, most Leiden book clubs were rather exceptional in that they included books in languages other than Dutch. [37]

A closer look at the literature that was being read suggests that the institutional reading culture in Leiden shows great similarities with national developments. The aforementioned 'Scottomania' blossomed in Leiden as it did elsewhere. It is striking, though, that the interest in the works of Willem Bilderdijk seems to have been more pronounced in Leiden than in other Dutch book clubs, perhaps because the poet lived and worked in Leiden. Regardless of the

literature chosen, the reading of books was not followed by a discussion, neither in Leiden nor elsewhere in the Netherlands. In short, the literature on offer promoted unity and a sense of public spirit, which seamlessly matches the ideological and political climate of the period.<sup>52</sup> To what degree the political climate in other countries influenced the literary consumption in different segments of institutional reading culture is as yet unknown.

The case of Leiden furthermore shows that the predominantly larger cities were more likely to witness the creation of subscription libraries. This type of reading institution was rare in the Netherlands, but one was set up in Leiden. Another type of institution, the commercial circulating libraries, was not widespread in the country either. Presumably, since most were founded by booksellers, circulating libraries were restricted to larger cities where they could attract enough customers to be commercially viable. Leiden was no exception and the city hosted several of these libraries, which also sold a considerable number of translated literary works. It seems that buyers interested in translated books could, in the case of Leiden, obtain them at the circulating libraries, whilst elsewhere this was done through book clubs. In any event, both reading institutions were criticized for providing this type of literature.

The Leiden reading institutions bore the typical hallmarks that researchers have also found in similar organisations in other countries. The developments in Leiden bear the closest resemblance to the situation in Germany, where book clubs were also numerous and where the nineteenth century also saw an increase in subscription libraries. The Leiden Subscription Library seems to have coincided with the emergence of the so-called *Museen* in Germany, as John Ormrod has observed: from small societies to prestigious societies that were not just meant for reading but where sociability also played an important role. The relative homogeneity of the members and the possibility of having a drink were also points of similarity. Even though commercial circulating libraries were founded in Leiden around 1800, as had happened earlier in England and Scotland and to a lesser degree Germany, they seem to have played a less prominent role in the Leiden reading culture than they did in those countries, even France.

The Netherlands saw the formation of a relatively large number of book clubs. They provided native-language, popular literature, a role performed by commercial circulating libraries elsewhere. However, local diversity was visible within the institutional reading culture in the Netherlands, which presumably reflected the absence or presence of a sizeable intellectual elite. Leiden, or even any other large [38] city, is not representative of the Netherlands, although more local studies of the Dutch reading culture could possibly qualify this conclusion.

At any rate, the institutional reading culture of the Netherlands between 1815 and 1830 presents a varied picture. As illustrated by the case of Leiden, a degree of regional diversity was present and, even at the local level, striking differences existed between various institutions, in particular in terms of social participation and the consumption of literature. In this respect, the situation in the Netherlands fits in perfectly with the image of the divergent reading culture in Western Europe. The historiography of the countries surrounding the Netherlands, however, usually stresses that literary purchases exuded a strong spirit of international Enlightenment. Since the Netherlands lacked a large-scale production of novels of its own in that period, both publishers and readers had to resort to foreign literature. However, it cannot be said that the literary choices made by most participants in the Dutch institutional reading culture were inspired by Enlightenment ideals. Rather, it was a popular kind of literature that, elsewhere, was mainly distributed through commercial institutions. In the Netherlands, these institutions were fewer and therefore literature was primarily distributed through book clubs. This seems to

have been a unique characteristic of the Dutch institutional reading culture. Nevertheless, on account of the presence of circulating libraries, Leiden – and presumably other major cities – may have displayed more similarities with the international reading culture than the rest of the Netherlands.

## Notes

1. Rolf Engelsing, *Der Bürger als Leser. Lesergeschichte in Deutschland 1500-1800* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1974).
2. English books and articles on Dutch reading culture that focus attention on reading institutions are relatively rare. The most important are: J.J. Kloek and W.W. Mijnhardt, *1800: Blueprints for a National Community* (Assen: Royal van Gorcum / Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); J.J. Kloek, 'Reconsidering the reading revolution: The thesis of the "reading revolution" and a Dutch bookseller's clientele around 1800', *Poetics* 26:5-6 (1999), pp. 289-307; J.J. Kloek and W.W. Mijnhardt, 'The ability to select: The growth of the reading public and the problem of literary socialization in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', in *Cultural Participation: Trends since the Middle Ages*, ed. by Ann Rigney and Douwe Fokkema (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1993), pp. 51-62; Ann Rigney and Douwe Fokkema, 'The eighteenth-century revolution in reading: A myth?', in *Transactions of the Seventh International Congress on the Enlightenment, II* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1989), pp. 645-51.
3. Roel Pots, *Cultuur, koningen en democraten. Overheid & cultuur in Nederland* (Nijmegen: SUN, 2000), p. 28.
4. P.J. Buijnsters, 'Nederlandse leesgezelschappen uit de 18e eeuw', in *Nederlandse literatuur van de achttiende eeuw. Veertien verkenningen* (Utrecht: HES Uitgevers, 1984), pp. 183-98; [39] José de Kruijff, *Liefhebbers en gewoontelezers. Leescultuur in Den Haag in de achttiende eeuw* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1999); Hannie van Goinga, *Alom te bekomen. Veranderingen in de boekdistributie in de Republiek 1720-1800* (Amsterdam: De Buitenkant, 1999); Hannie van Goinga and Jeroen Salman, 'Expansie en begrenzing van de interne markt. De achttiende eeuw', in *Kopij en druk REVISITED. Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis 17*, ed. by Berry Dongelmans (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2010), pp. 171-219.
5. On the reading culture in Middelburg, see J.J. Kloek and W.W. Mijnhardt, 'Het lezerspubliek als object van onderzoek. Boekaanschaf in Middelburg in het begin van de negentiende eeuw', *De nieuwe taalgids* 79 (1986), pp. 14-32; J.J. Kloek and W.W. Mijnhardt, *Leescultuur in Middelburg aan het begin van de negentiende eeuw* (Middelburg: Zeeuwse Bibliotheek, 1988). For Zwolle, see Han Brouwer, *Lezen en schrijven in de provincie. De boeken van Zwolse boekverkopers, 1777-1849* (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 1995). For Groningen: P.Th.F.M. Boekholt, 'Leescultuur in Groningen', in *Rondom de reductie. Vierhonderd jaar provincie Groningen, 1594-1994*, ed. by P.Th.F.M. Boekholt (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1994), pp. 266-86. In Overijssel: J.C. Streng, *Kweekster van verstand en hart. Boekcultuur en leescultuur in Overijssel tussen 1650 en 1850* (Epe: STRENG, 2008). On Goeree-Overflakkee: Herman Paul, 'Leescultuur op Goeree-Overflakkee in de negentiende eeuw', *De Negentiende Eeuw* 24 (2000), pp. 98-121.
6. For reading women, see Berry Dongelmans, 'Niet geschikt voor vrouwen. Wat mochten vrouwen lezen in de negentiende eeuw?', *Literatuur* 13 (1996), pp. 326-34; Berry Dongelmans and Boudien de Vries,

- 'Het zoeklicht op de lezeres. Bronnen voor het onderzoek van de negentiende-eeuwse leescultuur', *De Negentiende Eeuw* 25 (2001), pp. 64-100.
7. On Dutch subscription libraries (leesmuseum), see Boudien de Vries, 'Leescultuur van de elite. Het Haarlemse Leesmuseum aan het eind van de negentiende eeuw', in *Haarlemse kringen. Vijftien verkenningen naar het literair-culturele leven in een negentiende-eeuwse stad*, ed. by W. van den Berg, Henk Eijssens and Ton van Kalmthout (Hilversum: Verloren, 1993), pp. 175-91; on reading societies: Boudien de Vries, 'De roman "Lidewijde" en de burgerlijke leescultuur. Lezers en leesgezelschappen in de negentiende eeuw', *Tijdschrift voor sociale geschiedenis* 25 (1999), pp. 129-56; on society libraries, see Boudien de Vries, 'Leerzaam vermaak? Enkele geleerde en verstrooiende genootschapsbibliotheken in de negentiende en twintigste eeuw', *De Negentiende Eeuw* 24 (2000), pp. 247-61; on public libraries: Boudien de Vries, 'Dordrecht: de openbare leeszaal en bibliotheek: een beslissende wending in de geschiedenis van de leescultuur', in *Nederland in de negentiende eeuw*, ed. by Jan Bank and Marita Mathijssen (Amsterdam: Bakker, 2006), pp. 438-49. On the reading culture in Haarlem, see Boudien de Vries, *Een stad vol lezers. Leescultuur in Haarlem 1850-1920* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2011).
  8. R. Chartier, 'Sociétés de lecture et cabinets de lecture en Europe au XVIIIe siècle. Essai de typologie', in *Sociétés et cabinets de lecture entre Lumières et romantisme* (Genève: Société de Lecture, 1995), pp. 43-4.
  9. For a historical overview, see Arnold Lubbers, "'Weinig meer dan hun naam...". Nieuwe inzichten over vroeg negentiende-eeuwse Noord-Nederlandse leesgezelschappen', *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis* 18 (2011), pp. 170-89.
  10. The numbers are mainly based on research results from: D. Allan, *A Nation of Readers: The Lending Library in Georgian England* (London: British Library, 2008), p. 46; Mark Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment: Books and Their Readers in Provincial Scotland, 1750- [40] 1820* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 58, 94-5; Marlies Prüsener, *Lesegesellschaften im achtzehnten Jahrhundert. Ein Betrag zur Lesergeschichte. Sonderdruck aus dem Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* (Frankfurt am Main: Buchhändler-Vereinigung, 1972), band XIII, 1-2, pp. 412-3; Alberto Martino, 'Die deutsche Leihbibliothek und ihr Publikum', in *Literatur in der sozialen Bewegung. Aufsätze und Forschungsberichte zum 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Günter Häntzschel, Georg Jäger and Alberto Martino (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1977), p. 1; Françoise Parent-Lardeur, *Les cabinets de lecture. La lecture publique à Paris sous la Restauration* (Paris, Pavot, 1982), p. 13.
  11. Dick Jansen, 'Uitgerekend op intekening. De kwantitatieve ontwikkeling van het leesgezelschap in Nederland, 1781-1850', *De Negentiende Eeuw* 14 (1990), p. 185.
  12. P. Delsaerdt, 'Het leeskabinet van citoyen Carpen, 1804', in *Gheprint tAntwerpen. Het boek in Antwerpen van de vijftiende tot de twintigste eeuw*, ed. by Jan Pauwels (Kapellen: Pelckmans, 2004), pp. 94-100.
  13. Jörg Schönert, 'Zur Typologie und Strategie der Titel von Leihbibliotheksromanen am Beispiel der Schauer- und Verbrechensliteratur (1790-1860)', in *Die Leihbibliothek als Institution des literarischen Lebens im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert. Organisationsformen, Bestände und Publikum*, ed. by Georg Jäger and Jörg Schönert (Hamburg: Ernst Hauswedell, 1980), pp. 166-72.
  14. W.W. Mijnhart, *Tot Heil van 't Menschdom. Culturele genootschappen in Nederland, 1750-1815* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1988), p. 106.



15. For example: John Ormrod, 'Bürgerliche Organisation und Lektüre in der literarisch-geselligen Vereinen der Restaurationsepoche', in *Zur Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur von der Aufklärung bis zur Jahrhundertwende. Einzelstudien*, ed. by John Ormrod, G. Häntzschel and K.N. Renner (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1985), pp. 130-4; B. Lescaze, 'Lire en Suisse. Un plaisir solitaire ou de société entre Lumières et Romantisme', in *Sociétés et cabinets de lecture entre Lumières et romantisme* (Genève: Société de Lecture, 1995), p. 23; Paul Kaufman, 'English Book Clubs and Their Social Import', in *Libraries and Their Users: Collected Papers in Library History* (London: The Library Association, 1969), p. 58.
16. H. Tilgner, *Lesegesellschaften an Mosel und Mittelrhein im Zeitalter des aufgeklärten Absolutismus. Ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte der Aufklärung im Kurfürstentum Trier* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2001), pp. 313-16; Ormrod, 'Bürgerliche Organisation und Lektüre', pp. 134-7.
17. Arnold Lubbers, "'Werken van Kunst & Smaak". De lectuurconsumptie van Dordtse leesgezelschappen tussen 1815 en 1830', in *Taal, cultuurbeleid en natievorming onder Willem I*, ed. by Rik Vosters and Janneke Weijermars (Brussel: KVAB, 2012), p. 136.
18. Joep Leerssen, *De bronnen van het vaderland. Taal, literatuur en de afbakening van Nederland, 1806-1890* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2006), p. 170; J.Th.M. Bank, *Het roemrijk vaderland. Cultureel nationalisme in Nederland in de negentiende eeuw* (The Hague: SDU, 1990), p. 41.
19. Leerssen, *De bronnen van het vaderland*, p. 170.
20. Bank, *Het roemrijk vaderland*, p. 20.
21. These results can be found in Kloek and Mijnhardt, *Leescultuur in Middelburg*, p. 86.
22. Korpel, *In Nederduitsch gewaad*, pp. 9-10.
23. Otto Dann, 'The Invention of National Languages' in *Unity and Diversity in European Culture c. 1800*, ed. by Tim Blanning and Hagen Schulze (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 121. [41]
24. Marita Mathijssen, 'De paradox van het international nationalisme in Nederland, 1830-1840' in *Naties in een spanningsveld. Tegenstrijdige bewegingen in de identiteitsvorming in negentiende-eeuws Vlaanderen en Nederland*, ed. by Nele Bemong et al. (Hilversum: Verloren, 2010), p. 49.
25. Arnold Lubbers, 'Het Noord-Nederlandse leesgezelschap in het Verenigd Koninkrijk der Nederlanden: broedplaats voor nationalisme en/of wereldburgerschap?', *De Negentiende Eeuw* 35 (2011), pp. 73-91.
26. Rick Honings, 'Het topje van de leesberg', in *Het Groeiboek. Aspecten van de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse boek*, ed. by Berry Dongelmans and Paul Hoftijzer (Leiden: De Ammoniet, 2011); Rick Honings, 'Een zoet vergif voor verstand en hart. De ontwikkeling van de leescultuur in Leiden, 1760-1860', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal en Letterkunde* 127 (2011), pp. 263-89. Also see: Rick Honings, *Geleerdheids zetel, Hollands roem! Het literaire leven in Leiden 1760-1860* (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2011).
27. In the words of Johannes Kneppelhout. Klikspaan, 'De Academiestad', in *Studentenschetsen*, ed. by A. Kets, M. Lenders and Olf Praamstra (Den Haag: Constantijn Huygens Instituut, 2002), 1, p. 234.
28. B.P.M. Dongelmans, 'Van De brave Hendrik tot de Speed Master. Het Leidse boek in de negentiende en twintigste eeuw', in *Stad van boeken. Handschrift en druk in Leiden, 1260-2000*, ed. by André Bouwman et al. (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2008), p. 413.

29. A. Lubbers, 'Lezen in Leens tussen 1815 en 1830. Over boeken en hun lezers tussen verlichting en vaderlandsliefde', *De Boekenwereld* 26 (2010), pp. 284-98.
30. Joep Leerssen, *Nationaal denken in Europa. Een cultuurhistorische schets* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), p. 79.
31. Kloek, 'De lezer als burger', p. 185.
32. Kloek, 'De lezer als burger', p. 189; Jansen, *Niet velen, maar veel*; Kloek and Mijnhardt, 'Het lezerspubliek als object van onderzoek'; Kloek and Mijnhardt, 'Bij Van Benthem geboekt'; Kloek and Mijnhardt, *Leescultuur in Middelburg*; Willem van den Berg, 'Het literaire genootschapsleven in de eerste helft van de negentiende eeuw', *De Negentiende Eeuw* 7 (1983), pp. 146-78.
33. John Macgregor, *My Note Book 1* (London: John Macrone, 1835), p. 165.
34. Rietje van Vliet, *Elie Luzac (1721-1796). Boekverkoper van de Verlichting* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2005), p. 359.
35. Van Goinga, *Alom te bekomen*, p. 261.
36. *Leydse Courant*, 7 December 1803. Translation by Rick Honings and Arnold Lubbers.
37. *Leydse Courant*, 9 February 1807; 13 February 1807. Translation by Rick Honings and Arnold Lubbers.
38. B. Luger, 'Een 19e-eeuwse leesbibliotheek', *De Negentiende Eeuw* 2 (1978), pp. 125-33; B.Luger, 'Wie las wat in de negentiende eeuw? Een verkenning', in *Nederlandse literatuur van de negentiende eeuw. Twaalf verkenningen*, ed. by W. van den Berg and Peter van Zonneveld (Utrecht: HES Uitgevers, 1986), pp. 46-68; B. Luger, *Wie las wat in de negentiende eeuw?* (Utrecht: Matrijs, 1997), pp. 21-32, 33-58.
39. *Groninger Archieven* 463:2. Register. Translation by Rick Honings and Arnold Lubbers.
40. Arnold Lubbers, 'Lezen in Leens tussen 1815 en 1830. Over boeken en hun lezers tussen verlichting en vaderlandsliefde', *De Boekenwereld* 26 (2010), pp. 284-98. [42]
41. *Leydse Courant*, 28 November 1821; 16 January 1822; 17 June 1822; 23 August 1822.
42. *Leydse Courant*, 23 September 1822; 5 January 1829; 11 January 1830.
43. *Leydse Courant*, 18 September 1822; 23 September 1822.
44. *Vaderlandsche Letteroefeningen* 1825/2, pp. 386-7, 393-4, 398-9. Translation by Rick Honings and Arnold Lubbers.
45. Luc Korpel, *In Nederduitsch gewaad. Nederlandse beschouwingen over vertalen 1760-1820* (The Hague: Stichting Bibliographia Neerlandica, 1993), p. 8.
46. Lubbers, 'Werken van Kunst & Smaak', pp. 138-9.
47. Kloek, *Een begreind vaderland*, p. 20.
48. *Leydse Courant*, 13 December 1847; 31 August 1849; 1 November 1852; 5 October 1853; 1 October 1855. Translation by Rick Honings and Arnold Lubbers.
49. W. van den Berg, "'Gij, die nu begeerig zijt om uwen geest op te schranderen'", in *Haarlemse kringen. Vijftien verkenningen naar het literair-culturele leven in een negentiende-eeuwse stad*, ed. by W. van den Berg, Henk Eijssens and Ton van Kalmthout (Hilversum: Verloren, 1993), pp. 9-26.

50. Leydse Courant, 16 May 1855.
51. De Vries, Een stad vol lezers.
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