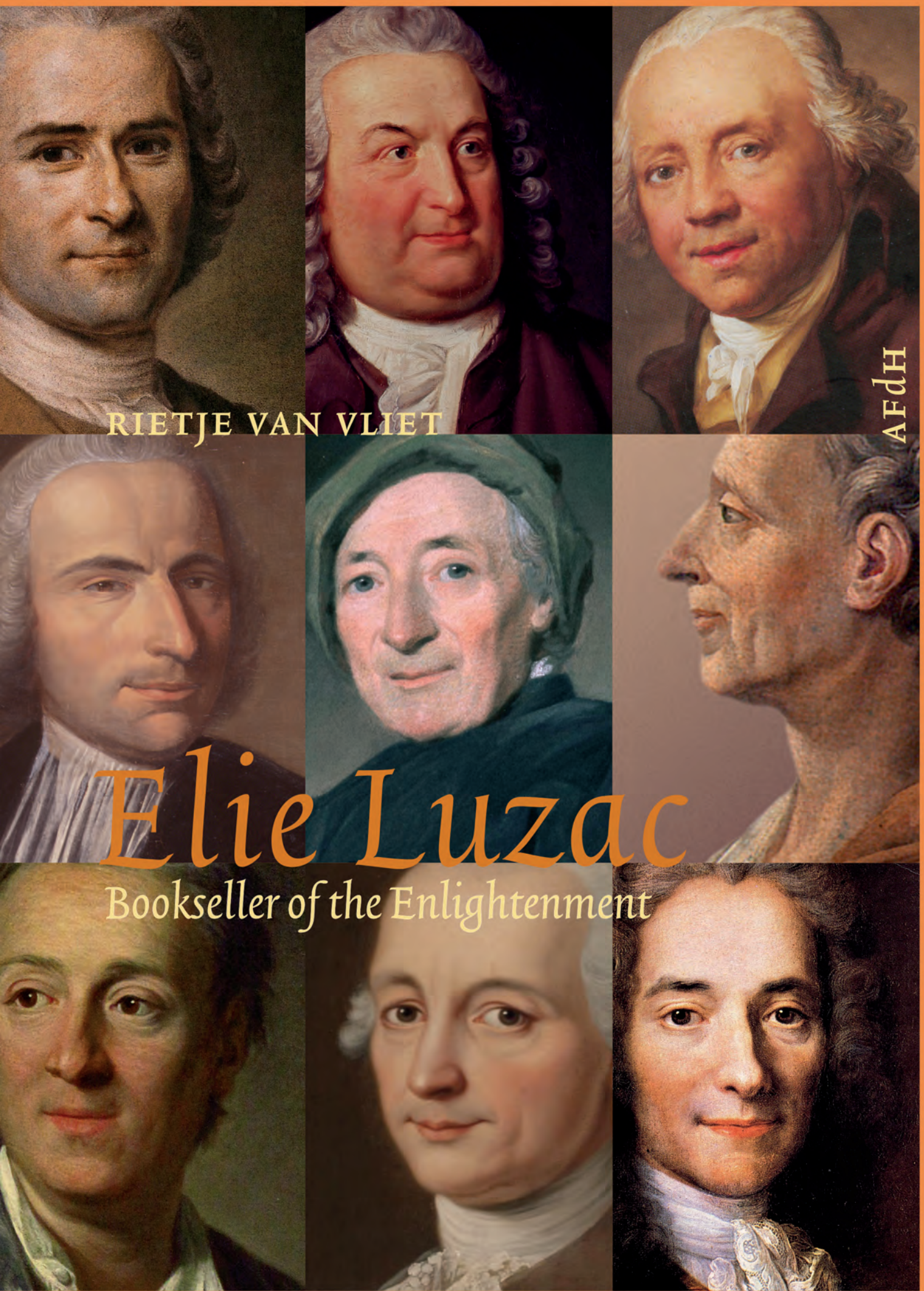

RIETJE VAN VLIET

Elie Luzac

Bookseller of the Enlightenment

AFdH

Elie Luzac

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Elie Luzac
(1721-1796)

BOOKSELLER OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

AFdH PUBLISHERS

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On the front cover: portraits of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Albrecht von Haller, Friedrich Nicolai, Johannes Nicolaas Sebastiaan Allamand, Elie Luzac, Montesquieu, Denis Diderot, Abraham Gotthelf Kästner, Voltaire.
On the back cover: portraits of Leonhard Euler, Etienne Luzac, David Ruhnken, Adriaan Kluit, Samuel Luchtmans, Johannes Luchtmans, Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis, Jan Wagenaar, William V of Orange
(See also cd-rom, list of illustrations.)

Frontispiece: A portrait of Elie Luzac, plainly dressed, apparently how he wanted to be immortalized.

Contents

Introduction

When I first visited the Universitätsarchiv of the Georg-August Universität in Göttingen, I could not yet know what was lying in store for me. Inspired by Wyger Velema's *Enlightenment and conservatism* about the author and lawyer Elie Luzac, I had ploughed through every archive of Leiden notaries public from the second half of the eighteenth century.[1] I wanted to find out more about this intriguing person, who was also a bookseller in his native town of Leiden. What kind of man was Luzac, who had more than 20,000 pages in print to his name in which he dissected the expositions of his opponents to the bone? What moved him to publish *L'homme machine*, a work whose professed materialism made it highly controversial? How could he at the same time have opposed the ideas of the very popular Rousseau? And why did he remain a staunch defender of the stadholderate, even when he himself became the target of republican, and later Patriot opposition? To what extent are the enlightened conservative opinions held by the unconventional Luzac reflected in his bookselling career? Did he perhaps have a mission as a bookseller, attempting to steer the reading public as a 'broker of ideas'?

Although the Luzac family left many traces in the eighteenth century in the form of notarial deeds, and my first Luzac file was soon filled to capacity, my research in the Regionale Archief Leiden yielded only bits and pieces, which would not fall together to form a full picture of Luzac as a bookseller. Velema's dissertation, too, contained material about Luzac the bookseller which raised more questions than answers. One intriguing footnote told me that the University Archives of Göttingen contained a few items relative to a conflict between Luzac and the University of Göttingen.[2] Miss I.H. van Eeghen had already suggested in her compendium study *De Amsterdamse boekhandel* that Luzac had been active not only in Leiden but also in Göttingen,[3] yet what had taken the Leiden bookseller to this University Town in Lower Saxony and what had happened there remained shrouded in mystery.

To my surprise four fat volumes of documents were placed before me in the Göttingen University Archives. This was altogether different from what I had managed to find in Leiden. A metre's worth of archival material dealing exclusively with Luzac; it seemed too good to be true. But when I was confronted with the typical German handwriting, I was no longer happy but bewildered. Archival records

a metre long requiring a letter by letter transcription: researchers have also been known to collapse under their material.

In the end it was not too bad. I got the hang of the scribal hand and the microfilm I ordered allowed me to consult the material in the Netherlands at any chosen moment. Moreover, for my research purposes a selection from the material was sufficient. The years 1753–1756, the period of Luzac's activity in Göttingen, were after all part of a larger study of his overall bookselling career. Those interested in providing a detailed account of Luzac's business dealings in these years are welcome to devote a separate study to the subject.

The Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen also proved to possess a wealth of material. A great number of letters written by or about Luzac went through my hands and slowly but steadily revealed what must have taken place in the middle of the eighteenth century. The authors of these 'ego documents' proved to be animated and ambitious scholars who were nevertheless not averse to backbiting, cheating and finger-pointing. Of course, there was no trace of such character traits in their works, which I consulted in the well-endowed Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek. Luzac had published a number of these works, but more often the names of his German colleagues still featured in the imprints. Gradually I began to find my way around the Republic of Letters in the German lands, with its many internationally renowned scholars and in their wake a group of energetic booksellers who had no need of Dutchmen like Luzac to hawk enlightened ideas.

The present study of Luzac focusses on his Leiden and German bookselling activities. His French, English, Swiss and Italian trade contacts have not been examined because in comparison they proved to be of less significance than his relations with Germany. Further research will have to show whether this decision was justified.

To bring Luzac's political and social context in Leiden in focus, the archives of the Justices of the Peace, aldermen, courts of justice and mayors were examined, an exercise which disclosed the conflicts in which he had been involved, whether as a private person, bookseller or lawyer. In the process the contours of censorship legislation also became visible, giving an idea of the legal confines within which Luzac both wanted and was forced to operate. In addition the ins and outs of the Leiden booktrade, however fragmentarily transmitted, were revealed, allowing me to place his competitive position in context. Then there were the clubs and societies in Leiden, with their members totally committed to bringing about a new civilized world. The numerous societies active in Leiden in the second half of the eighteenth century also proved to be of great signficance for the booktrade. The same is true of the Dutch Patriotic Revolt, which broke out in all its ferocity in 1783 after decades of political discontent. The Leiden archives show a city bitterly divided between Orangists and Patriots. Luzac, one of the leading lights of the Orangist party, fought his ideological battles mainly with the pen, and was demonized and abused by his opponents. How did he manage to keep his bookselling career going all the while? The archives also gave an answer to this question.

Occasionally the Leiden archival records directed me to the Nationaal Archief [National Archives], the Gemeentearchief [City Archives] in The Hague or the Stadsarchief [City Archives] in Amsterdam. I examined the correspondence between Luzac and his Amsterdam colleague Rey in the Bibliotheek van de Koninklijke Vereniging van het Boekenvak [Library of the Book Trade] and scrutinized all sale transactions between Luzac and his Leiden colleague Luchtmans. Although I had copies of Luzac's extant letters to the Berlin secretary of the Prussian Academy of Sciences Jean-Henri-Samuel Formey, it was a boon when the complete correspondence became available in the annotated edition of Hans Bots and Jan Schillings halfway through my research.[4] Additional research trips took me to the Koninklijk Huis Archief [Archives of the Royal Family] in The Hague, the Stadt Archiv Leipzig, and the literary estates of renowned scholars housed in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek. The *Leydse courant*, finally, was thoroughly combed for information relating to the years of Luzac's activities as a bookseller.

The outcome is a study which devotes much space to Luzac's relations with his authors and colleagues. The traditional view of publishers/booksellers is that they were wealthy profiteers living off their authors, who themselves had to eke out a

wretched living, but is this true of Luzac? Was he not much more an editor coaching and assisting his authors as they wrote their texts, and promoting – in Pierre Bourdieu's terms – both material and symbolical production? And what about his relationship with other booksellers: where did friendly rivalry end and competitiveness begin? A central question in this respect is his mission as a conservative enlightened bookseller *and* 'philosophe', and the strategic objectives he envisaged. It is from this angle that subjects like freedom of the press as well as social and political commitment are discussed. Using his own works as a touchstone, I tried to find out why Luzac chose to publish the works that feature on his list. Were they the net result of his enlightend ideals or were they merely dictated by his business sense?

The present work is a book-historical study of one of the most interesting booksellers in the eighteenth-century Dutch Republic. It is emphatically a book-historical study, even though Luzac's book business occasionally fades into the background. More than once the works Luzac published remained on the shelf while I sought instead to retrace how the ideas contained in them came about and why Luzac believed there was a market for them. Apart from the fact that such bibliographical research did not fit my central question,[5] there was also the relative paucity of information relating to the material production of his output, the distribution of stocks and works published by Luzac and the consumption of books sold by him. The emphasis is therefore rather more on the symbolical production of the book, awarding it the place it deserves: in its social and cultural contexts within which authors, publishers-booksellers *and* readers moved.[6]

This choice of angle makes the present study on Elie Luzac different in character from other works on eighteenth-century booksellers that appeared in the Netherlands in the past twenty-five years. There is for instance Berry Dongelmans' dissertation on bookseller and publisher Johannes Immerzeel Jr, the outgoing propagandist of the Enlightenment. Dongelmans pursued the book-historical angle which studies the book 'within the culture in which it originated, influencing it in turn'. In his view the book is 'a carrier of ideas, functioning in this sense within the community in which it is published'.[7] Nevertheless the relationship between Immerzeel's bookselling activities, his position in society and his enlightened ideas remains underexposed. This is also the case for Edwin van Meerkerk's study of the Hague bookseller Henri du Sauzet. Using Du Sauzet's surviving correspondence, Meerkerk chose to provide a description of the daily practice of the booktrade but declined to see his subject against the wider backdrop of the Enlightenment. 'It is, after all, by no means certain what exactly the status was of events we now consider to be so important' he wrote to vindicate his chosen approach.[8] A third study of a bookseller living partly in the eighteenth century which I want to highlight in comparison is Arianne Baggerman's work on the Dordrecht firm of Abraham Blussé & Son. She sought to find the answer to the question of the 'forces motivating the publisher and the social network within which he operated'. She succeeded in fitting the mass of 'contextless material' into an account of Blussé's personal, social and political life. As a result, the image of the man stands out in greater relief than that of Immerzeel or Du Sauzet, even though at times it is so overbearing that the *bookseller* Blussé fades into the background.[9]

To some extent researchers are forced into a certain direction by the material they have at their disposal. The absence of account and customer ledgers for instance frustrates any definitive conclusions about the booksellers' business affairs, the material production of books and their customers. In Luzac's case, information about how he ran his book business became scarcer as the eighteenth century progressed. Until the early 1760s there were his letters to Rey, Formey and several other German scholars to go by, but after that period the bookseller Luzac continually slips out of sight. As far as we know not a single letter has survived of the busy correspondence which he kept up with the French court historian and monarchist Moreau for more than twenty years.[10] His contacts with Marie le Prince de Beaumont, an author popular throughout Europe whose works Luzac published in collaboration with his Hague colleague Gosse, have not left a single trace. The principal source we can draw on when it comes to Luzac's bookselling activities from

Several craftsmen at work in the 18th-century book trade: a bookseller, a typefounder, a bookbinder and a copperplate printer.

the 1760s happens to be his own publications. They appeared in great abundance, but contain almost exclusively Luzac's own opinions on the booktrade and offer hardly any facts about his own business. For the second half of his career in particular I had to concentrate on his own writings, his enlightened conservative ideas and his list so as not to lose sight of Luzac.

However, paucity of material was not the main motive for placing the bookseller in his social and political context. It was also my objective to define the position of the book trade within Dutch society in the latter half of the eighteenth century using Luzac as a case in point (albeit a rather atypical one).

And now for this book. The first chapter introduces Elie Luzac and brings together various biographical data. My main source was the comprehensive biography which Luzac's disciple Hendrik Constantijn Cras, the later professor of law at the Athenaeum Illustre in Amsterdam, produced after his mentor's death. Thanks to this 'Reasoned report', an abridged version of which was printed in Paris, the modern reader is able to form an idea of the Leiden bookseller's character.[11] The biography is followed by an introduction to Leiden's economic situation around 1742, with particular attention to the position of the local booktrade. 1742 was the year in which the twenty-one-year-old Elie Luzac was admitted to the guild of booksellers and was allowed to settle in the city as an independent bookseller and printer.

It was of vital importance for young entrepreneurs to create a network fast. In the case of Luzac, whose professional career was mainly devoted to scholarly books, this meant he had to establish a name for himself in the Republic of Letters. He did so not only in Leiden but also far beyond. His contacts with the Leiden scholar Allamand, the Hague court librarian König and the Berlin savant Formey rapidly earned the still young and highly ambitious bookseller an international name and reputation. This is the subject of the second chapter.

Gradually Luzac's international network materializes. Chapter three describes the brief episode in Göttingen and the difficulties he encountered as a Dutchman trying to gain a firm footing on German soil. He was certainly not the first Dutch bookseller to try his luck with the neighbours to the East. The history of Luzac's edition of the *Fables* illustrates the German booksellers' determination to consolidate their position in their own native country.

The fourth chapter considers Luzac's Dutch business relations. Not only did he print for himself, he also took on work for others. For a while he also collaborated with Rey and Gosse, but these strategic alliances did not lead to lasting partnerships, although he did enter into partnership with Jan Hendrik van Damme, born in Maassluis and a descendant of a renowned Leiden printing family.

As we will see, Luzac exerted himself to offer issues of current interest. Partly they were old political conflicts centring on the relationship with the Stadholder. After a long stadholderless period, William IV had been brought to full power in Holland in 1747, though not to general acclaim. Feelings of discontent grew stronger especially when it became clear that he was doing little to curb the power of the regent class. Luzac participated in the political debate on the Stadholder as a writer and as a bookseller, as he would do later in the case of the so-called 'War of De Witt', when he set out his ideas on what he felt was the ideal consitutional form. One of his fiercest opponents was the Amsterdam local historian Wagenaar. Then there were also the debates on the foundations necessary to uphold society. Freedom of expression, rational religion, ethical sentiment, human happiness, the prosperity of nations and – the underlying foundation – natural law were topics Luzac addressed with his publications.

In the 1780s many of the enlightened ideals appear to have acquired political overtones. Chapter six considers the way in which the printing press was used as an instrument to quicken the citizen's political alertness. Leiden, a city with a large number of dynamic and flourishing clubs and societies, was also a city of sharply defined political contrasts. After renewed acquaintance with the Leiden booktrade Luzac's antipode, Cornelis van Hoogeveen Jr, is introduced. Booksellers were among the most vociferous members of the public during the Dutch Patriotic Revolt, made good money as a result but in the end their involvement also cost them dearly.

The curtain falls in the last chapter. The partnership between Luzac and Van Damme was dissolved and the stock was auctioned after Luzac's death in 1796. Luzac lived to the age of seventy-five.


XXV.

CHAPTER I

'Monsieur Elie Luzac, the Bookseller, Lawyer, Wolffian Philosopher, and I know not what'

1
BRINGING OUT ELIE LUZAC

Early one Sunday morning in November 1765, a maidservant ran into No. 63 Rapenburg, the house of her employer the Leiden bookseller Elie Luzac, to tell him that once again, for it had happened two years before, vandals had covered the entire facade of the house in tar – door, windows, woodwork, everything.

When he saw what had been done, Luzac sent an errand boy to tell his landlord, a regent of the Huiszittenhuis, the charitable organisation of the Dutch Reformed Diaconate which owed Luzac's house.[1] But nobody answered the door. Two hours later, at eleven o'clock, the errand boy called a second time, but again to no avail. In the meantime passers-by must have looked at Luzac's tarred shop front with disapproval. Perhaps the maidservant had already been trying to remove the tar, but it will not have helped much. Some of the passers-by may also have chuckled at the sight.

In the end Luzac, not knowing what else to do, decided to send his shop assistant Jan Cyfveer to Arnoldus de Wilde, another regent of the Huiszittenhuis, with the urgent request to clean the facade and steps in front of the house at the landlord's expense. But De Wilde, too, was not at home that Sunday.

De Wilde could not be told the entire story until the next day, when he came by at eleven o'clock to see for himself, but did no more than express his sympathy. Confronted with so much inertia, Luzac's temper rose. Another day went by and still the facade was pitch-black. Finally, on Tuesday afternoon, De Wilde arrived with a painter and glazier. Cyfveer showed them in, but the visitors declined to act. Instead they turned on Luzac, whose 'quick mouth in the coffee house will have brought about [...] the tarring', and for this, De Wilde added, the regents did not have to foot the bill. Luzac tried to reason with him, but without result. The bookseller was dumbfounded, as the day before De Wilde had shown such kindness when witnessing the havoc wreaked. And now he was denying that the regents had agreed to repair the damages.

A frustrated Luzac now called upon the civil magistrate and his bailiffs to force the Huiszittenhuis to carry out the repairs.[2] On 15 November 1765, five days after the tarring, the conflict was referred to the cause list of the Leiden Justices of the Peace. After a further week it became clear that legal proceedings would have to be instituted.[3] Elie authorized his brother Isaac Elias Luzac to repre-

Frontispiece of a collection of poems published by Elie Luzac on the occasion of the 25th wedding anniversary of his parents in 1744.

sent him before the Tribunal of magistrate and bailiffs.

The proceedings began on 9 December. Hermanus Seppenwolde, acting for the regents, referred to the tenant's obligation to occupy the house 'with cleanliness and care', but Luzac argued that the regents had first agreed to having the building cleaned, only to retract this promise later. His business had suffered as a result of their irresolution. Seppenwolde claimed Luzac himself was to blame for the defacing of the building. Had he not admitted to having fired a maidservant, who – Seppenwolde quoted Elie Luzac – 'even drew a gallows on my door, with nasty comments besides'? She may have been the perpetrator. Furthermore, Seppenwolde continued, De Wilde had consented to having the facade painted, but only after Luzac had removed the layer of tar. Irritated that Luzac had actually taken such a minor affair to court, the lawyer ended with the words that 'the defendants [the regents] had been greatly injured by the extremely impudent and terrible insults with which it appears Plaintiff [is] wont to dip his pen in gall [...].' With his lawsuit Elie Luzac had also seriously disadvantaged the parish poor who relied on poor relief, because the parish had to pay the legal costs. And what was worse, Seppenwolde added, the regents believed Luzac aired dangerous sentiments, acting like an 'home [sic] machine', a man without any sense of moral values, 'by maligning all those who disagree with him in a most scandalous manner'.

When the case was again entered on the cause list the following year, with both parties sticking to their viewpoints and demands, a verdict was reached on 21 July 1766: Luzac was ordered to clean and repair the house at his own expense, and share the legal costs with the regents. Three days later he appealed to the Court of Holland.[4] We shall see later on that he lost this case, too.

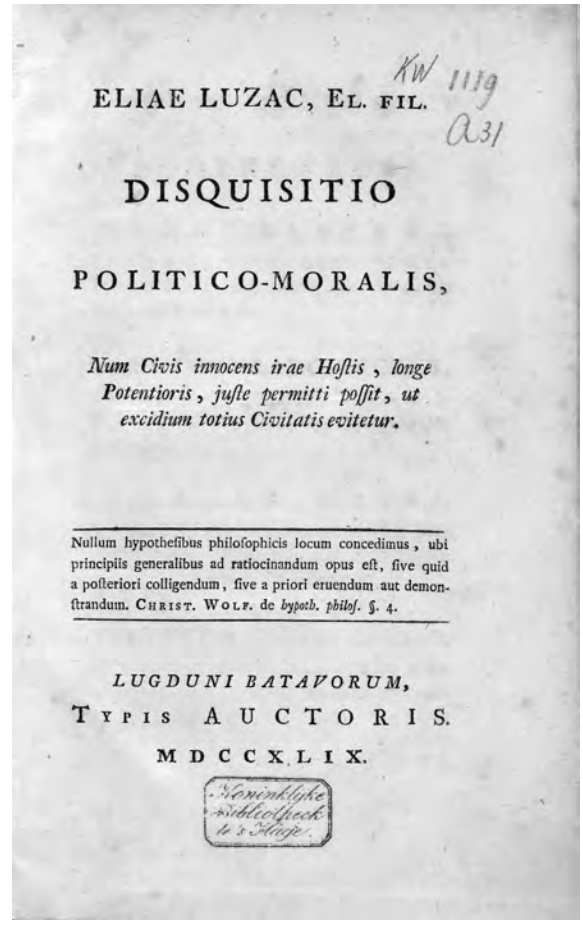
Luzac's Rapenburg bookshop was certainly the stage for strange and unusual events. A dismissed servant drawing a gallows on the door out of spite; coffee-house *habitués* who got so upset during a debate with the bookseller that they proceeded to daub his house with tar at night; a landlord so slow to act that literally the entire city was able to see the besmirched facade. Was this how Leiden's citizens treated their booksellers? And what kind of a bookseller would cause so much offence?

Let us start our acquaintance with Elie Luzac by introducing his family. The Luzac family produced so many celebrities that contemporaries – and later historians – would often confuse the names. In the 1740s, after Elie Luzac had finished his apprenticeship with his uncle, the bookseller Johan Luzac, and had started out for himself, there were no less than three Luzacs active in the Leiden book trade. Another of Elie's uncles, Etienne Luzac, had also made a name for himself publishing what was to become one of Europe's major newspapers, the *Gazette de Leyde*.

It was difficult for the outside world to keep the Luzacs apart. If an address was incomplete, the postman tended to get confused, causing a great deal of nuisance to both sender and addressee.[5] For example, the editor of the learned journal *Nouvelle bibliothèque germanique* (1746–1760) did not print Elie Lu-

zac's name, but that of his uncle Etienne Luzac at the end of a contribution submitted by Elie.[6] To this day various Luzacs are confused with one another without so much as a thought. Kloek and Mijnhardt's standard work on the eighteenth century, *1800: Blauwdrukken voor een samenleving*, lists Elie Luzac as the publisher of the *Gazette de Leyde*, the periodical which later on in the eighteenth century would support the American struggle for independence. This must have caused the conservative Elie Luzac to have turned in his grave. A similar mistake was made by Willem Otterspeer in his study of Leiden University when he classifies Elie as a 'newspaper owner'. Although much can be said about the prolific Elie Luzac, he was anything but a newspaper owner. Here, too, Etienne Luzac's reputation is confused with that of Elie.[7]

The various Jean or Johan Luzacs who gained some notice in Leiden in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also add to the confusion. Although it is tempting to unravel this tangle of family relationships and bring into focus all Luzacs who for one reason or another achieved fame, we will concentrate on the most immediate family of Elie Luzac, printer, bookseller, publisher, lawyer and jurist of Leiden.



ELIAE LUZAC, EL. FIL.

DISQUISITIO

POLITICO-MORALIS,

Num Civis innocens irae Hoſtis, longe Potentioris, juſte permitti poſſit, ut excidium totius Civitatis evitetur.

Nullum hypotheſibus philoſophicis locum concedimus, ubi principiis generalibus ad ratiocinandum opus eſt, ſive quid a poſteriori colligendum, ſive a priori eruendum aut demonſtrandum. CHRIST. WOLF. de *hypoth. philoſ.* §. 4.

LUGDUNI BATAVORUM,
TYPIS AUCTORIS.
MDCCXLIX.

Elie Luzac's academic dissertation addressed a political-ethical issue: 'Must a lesser evil be tolerated to prevent a greater one?'

JUST ANOTHER REFUGEE FAMILY[8]

The Luzac family came from Bergerac in the Dordogne. In 1686, a year after the Edict of Nantes had been revoked, the Protestant merchant Jean Luzac fled along with many other refugees to the Low Countries.[9] Only in 1692 would he be followed by his wife Marguerite Grillier and their children Jean, Elie (the father of the bookseller Elie Luzac) and Marie. Later the couple were to have two more children, Jeanne and Pierre.[10] After Marguerite's death Jean married the young, Paris-born Marie Judith de la Lande in 1701. They had four children: Johan (a bookseller in Leiden), Etienne (the publisher of the *Gazette de Leyde*),[11] Ephraim and Martha. The family lived in Amsterdam and prospered there.

In 1719 the eldest living son of this Jean Luzac, Elie Luzac 'senior', married Anne-Marie Cabrolle. He ran a French boarding school in Noordwijk, near Leiden. At first he was assisted by his brother Etienne, but when Etienne bought the *Gazette de Leyde* Elie Sr had to fend for himself.[12] He soon made a good living, partly because many of his pupils came from prosperous families.[13]

Elie Luzac Sr and Anne-Marie Cabrolle had eight childeren. They are mentioned one by one in the collection of poems which Elie Luzac Jr published on the occasion of his parents' 25th wedding anniversary in 1744.[14] The poem on the couple's eight children has eight stanzas – one for each child – and was written by Elie Sr. Esther was the eldest. Elie Luzac Jr was born op 19 October 1721.[15] He was followed by Elisabeth, Anne-Marie, Isaac Elie, Pieter, Jeannette, and Marthon Luzac.

In 1745 Elie Sr passed on his boarding school to his cousin, Elie Seignard, the son of his sister Marie Luzac, who had been one of his pupils in Noordwijk. Later he would call himself: 'Elie Seignard

Etienne Luzac, Elie Luzac's uncle, made a name for himself as the publisher of one of Europe's foremost newspapers, the *Gazette de Leyde*.

Luzac, French schoolmaster'.[16] Also in 1745, when he was sixty years of age, Elie Luzac Sr enrolled at Leiden University as an 'arithmeticus'.[17] He died on 13 December 1759 at the age of seventy-five, and received a first class funeral.[18]

ELIE LUZAC: 'MORE SUITED TO SCIENCE AND LITERATURE'

Until he was about twelve years old, Elie Luzac Jr is said to have been a surly and sullen child of a retiring nature compared to his brothers and sisters.

Luzac's first biographer, Hendrik Constantijn Cras, noted that he would get up early in the morning, have breakfast and duly attend his classes, although he did not play with the other children.[19]

On 5 December 1735 the fourteen-year-old Elie was apprenticed to his uncle, the Leiden bookseller Johan Luzac,[20] and began to study law, matriculating at the law faculty of Leiden University on 15 October 1738.[21] At first he lived with his uncle, but from 1742 to 1746 he is found living in the house of one Daniel Taayspel, and afterwards with Jan Huback. According to the tax records of 1749 Elie was then living on Steenschuur, at the corner of Boomgaardsteeg.[22]

In the first decades of the eighteenth century Leiden University still enjoyed a considerable reputation, even though its international fame had already faded. German scholars, for instance those at the University of Leipzig, were generally more progressive in promulgating Enlightenment ideals than their colleagues in the Dutch Republic. New universities were founded with great gusto in Germany, for instance in Halle in 1694 and in Göttingen in 1737. Both universities held a strong appeal for domestic and foreign students and professors alike, and as a result came to rank with Europe's top universities in the course of the eighteenth century. Even so, Leiden University in the eighteenth century could still boast many eminent scholars. When Elie enrolled, the renowned professor of medicine Hermanus Boerhaave had recently died; he was succeeded by Hieronymus David Gaubius. In his Leiden student years Elie would attend lectures by the physicist Petrus van Musschenbroek, an adherent of Newtonian teaching, and Johan Lulofs, from 1742 Willem Jacob 's-Gravensande's successor as professor of mathematics and astronomy. From 1744 Lulofs also taught metaphysics and ethics.[23] Thanks to them Elie became acquainted with the ideas of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and his popularizer Christian Wolff, whose *Institutions du droit de la nature et des gens* he published in 1772. He also frequently offered other works by Wolff for sale.

After completing his academic studies Elie wrote his *Disquisitio politico-moralis*, which, in 1749, he printed on his own presses. His academic disquisition addressed the political-ethical question 'Num Civis innocens irae hostis, longe potentioris, juste permitti possit, ut excidium totius civitatis evitetur': can one tolerate a lesser evil to prevent a greater one? Partly because Leiden University would not allow the young bookseller to enrol for further studies – about which more later – he was not able to defend his dissertation, *Specimen juris inaugurales de modo extra ordinem procedendi in causis criminalibus* until ten years later, on 27 August 1759.[24] Ten days after this, on 6 September 1759 he was sworn in as an attorney before the Court of Holland.[25]

In 1742 Elie Luzac, almost twenty-one years old, was made a burgess of the city of Leiden.[26] In the same year he was admitted to the guild of booksellers and printers and was made free of the company as a bookseller and printer. The daily routine of his shop and printing house was supervised by an overseer, and Elie Luzac's main occupation as a bookseller was to be establishing and maintaining relations with scholars in the Dutch Republic and far beyond. As Cras wrote in his biography, Luzac was 'more suited to science and letters than the book trade'.[27]

During his career as a printer, publisher and bookseller – in the eighteenth century these professions were often still combined under the title of 'bookseller' because barter trade still being common, the bookseller had to produce works in order to have something to barter with – Luzac specialized as a seller of scholarly books on the enlightened ideas which emanated mainly from the Dutch Republic, Germany and France. From 1774 until 1791 Luzac worked in partnership with Jan Hendrik van Damme.[28]

Elie Luzac died on 11 May 1796, and his burial took place in the week of 14 to 21 May, in Vrouwenkerk, behind Haarlemmerstraat, where his family had always attended the services of the Walloon congregation. Like his father's before him, his first class funeral cost 30 guilders. Throughout his life Luzac had remained a member of this Church, which he had served as a deacon in the years 1750-1756.[29] Elie died a prosperous man. His private library was auctioned by Haak & Co. and Elie's one-time assistant Mozes Cyfveer in 1799; the stock which had been assigned to Elie upon the liquidation of Luzac & Van Damme was auctioned by Cyfveer alone in 1801.[30]

WOMEN IN THE LIFE OF ELIE LUZAC

Elie Luzac was married three times and had two daughters from his first and second marriage. He also had an affair with a girl which resulted in a 'love child'.

Ernestine Auguste Treu

Elie probably met his first wife, Ernestine Auguste Treu, in 1748, when he was staying in Altona near Hamburg.[31] She was born on 1 January 1725, the daughter of Dorothea de Christon and the otherwise unknown Mr Treu, an officer in the Engineering Corps under the Duke of Brunswick.[32] How well she conformed to Elie's views on the ideal woman appears from the loving words he wrote about her, shortly before they were married in 1750, in a letter to Jean-Henri-Samuel Formey, chief editor of Luzac's *Bibliothèque impartiale* (1750–1758),

> JE PARS DEMAIN pour Leipzich d'ou je reviendrai ici par Hambourg. Je fais ce petit tour pour remplir dans cette dernière ville les engagemens que j'y ai contractés il y a deux ans avec mademoiselle Ernestine Auguste Treu, fille de l'ingenieur-major de ce nom. J'ai pris de l'inclination pour cette demoiselle dès le moment que je l'ai vue, les temoignages que l'on m'en a donnés y ont ajouté d'abord une estime parfaite & ses lettres l'ont augmentée. Je n'ai pas cru que la pauvreté d'une fille bien elevée, de condition modeste dut me faire renoncer à cet engagement. Un bon dot ne me seroit pas mal venu pour m'aider dans mes affaires, mais les choses bien pesées, j'ai pensé qu'une femme vaillante pouvoit largement y suppléer, tandis qu'elle n'aura pas un mari debauché, depensier, ni paresseux.[33]

After a brief stay at the Leipzig book fair from 1 to 20 October, Elie left for Hamburg, where he married Ernestine Auguste on 3 November 1750. Towards the end of November the newly married couple returned to Leiden,[34] where they moved into the house at no. 63 Rapenburg, near Doelensteeg, which Elie had recently rented from the Dutch Reformed Diaconate. His shop and printing house were also established at this address.

A year later the couple drew up a will naming each other as universal heirs and guardians of any children that might be born of their marriage.[35] This was a month before their first child, Anne Marie Dorothee, was born, on 8 September 1751.[36] Ernestine Auguste died in childbirth; her remains were taken to Noordwijk and laid to rest in the Luzac family grave.[37]

Anne Marie Dorothee Luzac

Nothing is known about the childhood of Luzac's eldest daughter Anne Marie Dorothee. In 1780, at the age of 29, she married Louis Stephanus le Jeune of The Hague.[38] On 15 July, in anticipation of her wedding plans, Elie Luzac declared in the presence of a notary public that he was liable for the sum of 10,000 guilders, the amount which Anne Marie Dorothee stood to inherit according to the terms of her mother's will.[39] At the time the marriage was solemnized, Le Jeune was a lawyer at the Court of Justice and also Orphan Master in The Hague. Their marriage remained childless. In 1782 Le Jeune was promoted to a post in the Council for the Domains of William V, a promotion heavily criticized in a number of Patriot libels.

The political revolution at the end of the eighteenth century caused a gradual downturn in the financial fortunes of the Le Jeunes.[40] When her husband died in 1809, Anne Marie Dorothee was forced to earn her own living. She chose the profession her grandfather had once practised in Noordwijk and became a boarding school proprietress.[41]

Anne Danjée

In the first years after Ernestine Auguste's death Elie was fully occupied with his book business, frequently staying for protracted periods abroad, particularly in the years 1753 to 1756, setting up his business in Göttingen and visiting the Leipzig book fair. After winding up his German business interests he focussed principally on Leiden.

In 1759 Anne Danjée, with whom he had an affair, caused Luzac no end of trouble. She had her son Elie baptized in the Walloon Church on 15 June,[42] and named Elie Luzac as the baby's father, which was an implicit demand for financial support. Elie, who was no longer a deacon of the Walloon Church at the time, categorically denied paternity, but was pressed by the consistory to admit to his love affair. Although he submitted a statement a month later, under much protest, that he had indeed slept with Anne Danjée,[43] he refused to pay her anything for maintenance. The Leiden Justices of the Peace had to be called in to make him do so. On two separate occasions, in September and – with Elie Luzac failing to respond – again in October, notary public Albertus Kleynenberg acted *pro bono* on behalf of the unmarried mother to claim the amount of 18 guilders and 15 stivers, being the sum for maintenance for the period of six weeks.[44] The brief affair between Anne Danjée and Elie Luzac – assuming that there had been one – ended in acrimony.

In 1760 Elie was still not prepared to assume responsibility as father of the baby. Accordingly Kleynenberg summoned the Walloon minister and the elders on behalf of Anne Danjée to appear before the Justices of the Peace, to enforce through the mediation of these parties a maintenance order on the alleged father. This time Kleynenberg was successful, but for the rest of his life Luzac maintained a deafening silence on the subject of Anne and his illegitimate son Elie in all his extant letters to correspondents.

Marie Massuet

Elie Luzac married for the second time in 1763[45] and once again, the marriage was short lived. His bride was Marie Massuet, the daughter of the Amsterdam physician Pierre Massuet and his wife Marie Anne Batailhey, who had died in 1761. Pierre Massuet had built up a considerable reputation as a journalist and editor of the *Bibliothèque raisonnée* (1728–1753). He was a member of the enlightened, intellectual circles which Elie Luzac also liked to frequent. In addition to his work as a physician and a journalist, Massuet also kept a boarding school, which was renowned as far away as the Dutch East Indies.[46]

Thanks to his marriage to the Amsterdam-born Marie Massuet, Elie could now in theory have his citizenship rights transferred to Amsterdam. He seriously considered this option, probably because Amsterdam was better placed for international trade and thus had more to offer than Leiden. Amsterdam was also a more attractive city for (international) money transactions and for raising capital. However, as we shall see, he was not granted the freedom of the city of Amsterdam.[47]

Marie Massuet moved into the Rapenburg house where Elie had lived with his first wife, Ernestine Auguste, the house from where he also ran his business. The conflict with the regents about the tarred facade caused the couple to move, in 1767, to another house on Rapenburg (no. 127), beyond Vlietbrug.

The culprits were never found. Perhaps it really had been a student's prank, as De Wilde had suggested. Possibly the matter had to do with Elie Seignard, who had succeeded Elie Sr as a boarding school proprietor in Noordwijk. In 1765 Elie Luzac was involved in a legal conflict with Seignard, little remaining of what had been, initially, a good relationship. That year Seignard's son-in-law, the Leiden lime burner Pieter Willem Righout, proclaimed to all who would hear that Elie Luzac had treated Seignard badly and seriously overcharged him for his books.[48]

On 14 September 1766 Pierre Massuet and his second wife Anne Brians presented their newborn grandchild Anne Luzac for baptism at the Walloon Church in Leiden.[49] Marie Massuet died shortly afterwards, and was buried in Vrouwenkerk during the week of 15–22 November.[50]

Anne Luzac

Little Anne Luzac was raised by her godparents in Amsterdam in the first years after her mother's death.[51] At the age of eighteen she fell violently in love with a good friend of her father's, Willem Bilderdijk, later to become a famous author. Bilderdijk was a regular visitor to the Luzacs in 1784 and, as appears from the letters Anne wrote to Willem, was such an engaging visitor that he soon captured her heart. Because he had not told her about his

relationship with Catharina Rebecca Woesthoven, Anne soon imagined that he saw her as a suitable marriage candidate.

Anne's letters to Bilderdijk show how her affection gradually gave way to amorousness and increasing attachment to Willem. At first he made no attempts to disabuse Anne of her illusions, so it came as a heavy blow when he eventually told her that he was already spoken for and intended to marry Catharina Rebecca Woesthoven. Anne broke off the relationship with a single sharp letter. She called him a hypocrite, who came and 'gave false kisses with fair words'. God forbid she would ever again fall for such 'Judas kisses', she bitterly wrote. Anne Luzac never married. After her father's death and her stepmother's departure for Amsterdam she remained in Leiden on her own.[52]

Geertruy in 't Hout

Elie's third marriage was performed at Hooglandse Kerk, on 2 April 1780, after he had been a widower for fourteen years. This time, at the age of 59, he married Geertruy in 't Hout. Like Elie, Geertruy had been married twice before. She had a daughter from her second marriage, to the music teacher Johan Anthonie Carbrijn, Maria Geertruy, whom she raised on her own before she married Luzac. She also brought to the marriage, courtesy of her late husband, a mountain of debts to the then staggering tune of 52,500 guilders.[53]

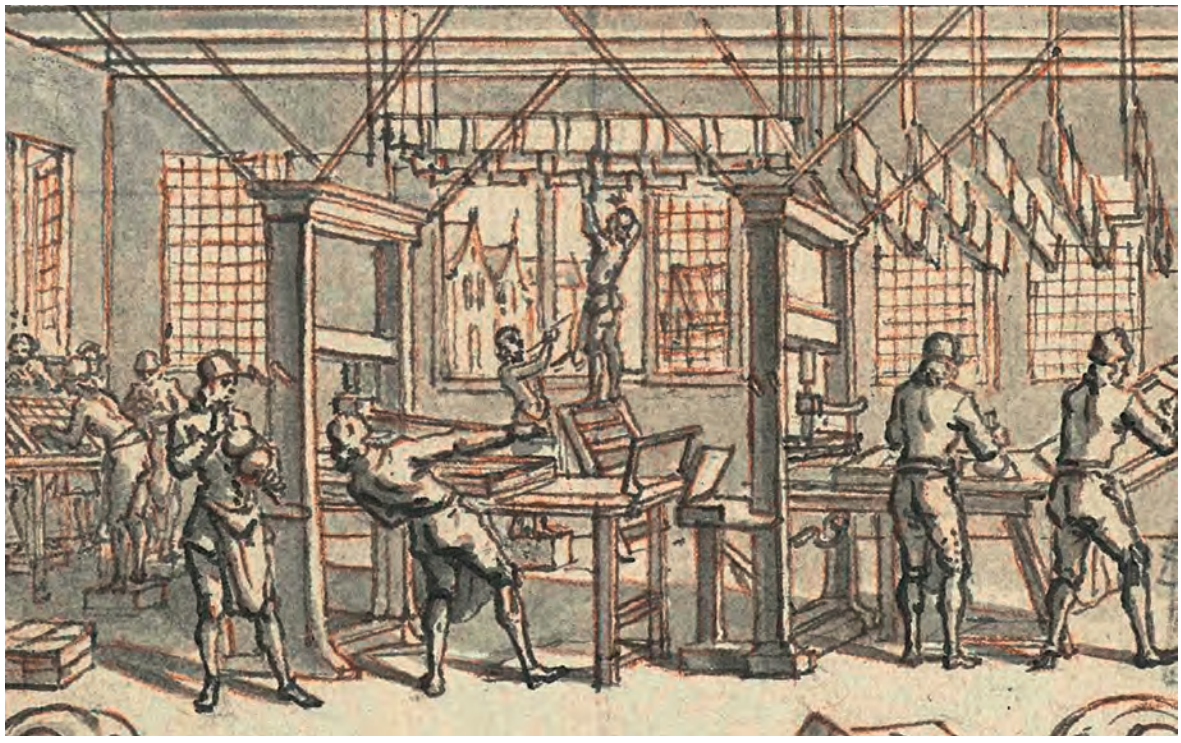
For the first year of their marriage the couple still lived on Rapenburg, beyond Vlietbrug, but in 1781 they moved to Steenschuur – which at the time began at Nonnenbrug – beyond Koepoortsbrug (Doezastraat).[54] It was there that the troubles began. One creditor after another called and demanded payment. The political antagonism between Orangists and Patriots, with Elie as an Orangist coming more and more under attack, may have been working against him. After various court cases peace appears to have descended on the Luzac family, but in 1795 Jewish moneylenders from The Hague made it known that they wished to redeem their bonds – amounting to a total of 30,500 guilders.[55]

Elie drew his last breath the next year. Geertruy followed him three years later and was buried in Amsterdam on 5 April 1799.[56] Luzac's own children Anne Marie Dorothee and Anne Luzac, his son-in-law Louis Stephanus le Leune and Frederik Booij – the latter a co-executor – entertained little hope, in view of the financial predicament caused by Elie's marriage to Geertruy, that they had seen the last of the long line of creditors. Fearing that Elie's debts would far exceed his assets, they resorted to the *jus deliberandi* and delayed acceptance of the portion that was theirs according to the terms of Elie's will of 1789 until they were better apprized of the circumstances.[57] Afterwards, until 1803, his heirs would do battle before the Court of Justice of the department of Holland about the division of the inheritance.[58]

ELIE LUZAC'S PORTRAIT

The two only portraits, identical, known to have survived of Elie Luzac, now in De Lakenhal Museum in Leiden and in a private collection, reveals little about his character.[59] He is soberly and plainly dressed, this apparently being how he wanted to be immortalized. He was of slender build and shows the painter a kind but serious face. Yet he was an intelligent man. In his few spare hours Elie Luzac was a voracious reader, and he was also an avid lover of music. If the instruments that were auctioned together with his library did indeed belong to him, he must have been able to play the violin.[60] According to his biographer Hendrik Constantijn Cras he was an accomplished dancer and skater, and to his circle of friends and acquaintances he was a cheerful and witty man.[61] Cras spoke very well of his mentor: he had, after all, known him personally and had had many conversations with him on various legal issues. Cras admired Luzac's industriousness and his enthusiasm for the academic fields that had captured his interest:

> THE FLEXIBILITY and ever expansive resilience of soul which constantly animated Luzac is almost unbelievable; he worked long hours, he worked incessantly, but tirelessly and without effort. When something came to light relating to his preferred studies, history, philosophy, law or political science, and worthy of his investigation, he would



Interior of a printing-house (c. 1725).

> read it at once, happily, with a deliberative attention, a penetrating judgement and usually with his pen poised in his hand.

According to the biographer, a little fold in a book was enough to call a certain passage to Elie's mind. He was averse to ostentation but, his description of Luzac's character continues, Luzac's lively mind did incline to anger, although he generally managed to control his temper. Luzac would not easily abandon a viewpoint once adopted, but he liked to hear counterarguments and sometimes even provoked them. 'Which in regard to others, particularly scholars, would sometimes cause offence.' Cras in this connection spoke of Luzac's 'Catonian severity' and conceded that Luzac took his 'frankness too far on occasion'.[62]

In 1765 regent Arnoldus de Wilde had also been faced with this constant disputatiousness when he tried to reconstruct who or what had given cause to the tarring of Luzac's house. The doggedness with which Luzac felt he could assert his rights strengthened the officials of the Dutch Reformed Diaconate in their views about their tenant. Ten years later, when Elie in his capacity as a lawyer confronted his cousin Jean Luzac in a case between the consistory of the Walloon Church and the regents of the Loridanshof, Jean referred to what he felt was his uncle's agitated nature, his temper, his obstinacy and his argumentativeness:

> [...] SOMEONE WHO, ever agitated and affected by the least thing, whether real or imagined, using what little powers the Heavens have bestowed upon him to force his notions upon every man at whatever cost, immediately venting his feelings in writing against those who take the liberty to differ. [...] You, my Cousin, are better trained in such quarrels than I [...].[63]

Elie's cousin by marriage, Paulus Jacobus Valckenaer, who corresponded from the distant Dutch East Indies with his brother, the philologist Lodewijk Caspar Valckenaer, spoke in this respect of Luzac's pedantic conceitedness. Paulus was not much taken with Elie. '[...] Monsieur Elie Luzac, the Bookseller, Lawyer, Wolffian Philosopher, and I know not what', he wrote not without a certain irony, 'I have never taken a liking to, because of his pedantic vainglory.'[64]

When we look at the court cases in which Elie Luzac was personally involved, we cannot escape from the impression that Cras to some extent excused the shortcomings of his mentor's character. Luzac's self-assurance more than once landed him in endless disputes and public debates. He engaged in political debates with a volley of pamphlets and articles, and provoked sharp responses with the stand he took. We shall see in a later chapter how this attitude eventually forced him into an active role in the political conflict which in the 1780s resulted in the Dutch Patriot Revolt.

The court cases, conflicts and pamphlet wars were not all that kept Elie Luzac occupied. He was also a writer, translator and editor; his preferred topic being law. Apart from Leiden, where he ran his book business from home, Elie liked to spend time in his country house along the Rhine, between the small villages Koudekerk and Alphen aan de Rijn, in order to work in peace. But the booming call of the bittern bored him. Apparently he was too restless to sit still for long.[65] Even as a young man he had been interested in the latest scientific developments and contributed his share to scholarly debate. Sometimes, during a conversation, an academic question would grip him so much that he would suddenly have a eureka experience, abandon whoever he was talking to and rush upstairs to note down the solution to the problem.[66]

As a practising lawyer he concentrated on giving legal advice. It is unclear how much income Elie derived from his legal career, or how much time he devoted to it.[67]

He also had his daily responsibilities as a printer and a bookseller, although, as we shall see, he mainly concentrated on maintaining his network and looking for new authors for his list. His 'natural alertness and wit'[68] were assets which stood him in good stead, not only in his scholarly work and legal practice, but also as a bookseller.

Most of the Leiden booksellers were to be found in the streets around Pieterskerk, near Rapenburg. (1) Rapenburg; (2) Vrouwenkerk; (3) Breestraat/townhall and (4) Pieterskerk.

2
THE LEIDEN BOOK TRADE

In 1742 Elie had served his seven-year apprenticeship with his uncle Johan Luzac. Johan Luzac was married to Anna Hillegonda Valckenaer, daughter of a Leiden schoolmaster. He himself had been working as a bookseller since 1731, when he began the *Bibliothèque belgique* with his brother Etienne. With the scholarly journal already folding the following year, Etienne's career as the periodical's editor-in-chief was but short.[69] The *Gazette de Leyde*, which was intended for an international public, was another joint project of the two brothers. From 1739 onwards, when Etienne became its owner, Johan Luzac would print an issue of this highly popular periodical twice a week. It ensured him a good and steady income. When he died, Johan Luzac was worth 64,000 guilders.[70] He amassed his capital not only by printing the paper, but also by having his own publications to help build an income. Remarkably enough, his publisher's list consisted almost entirely of orations and dissertations – academic occasional printing which generally did not bring in much money. An author whose works he often published was the Leiden professor of Oriental languages, Albert Schultens. Johan Luzac also dealt in prints, drawings and coins, as appears from the catalogue he published, through his nephew Elie Luzac around 1748.[71] Johan was a long-standing, active member of the Walloon Church, but informed the Church Council in 1759 that for reasons of health he could no longer serve as an elder.[72]

Elie proved himself a good pupil. A month before he turned 21 (19 October 1742) he appeared before the overseers of the guild of printers and booksellers requesting to be admitted and made free of the company as a bookseller. He submitted a statement by his uncle to the effect that he had fulfilled the term of his apprenticeship. A month later he appeared once more before the overseers, again with a statement by his uncle, this time to be admitted and made free as a printer.[73] On 15 November of that year the new master printer and bookseller hired his first staff. With six men working in the printing house he had enough staff to take on printing jobs for others. In 1744 his brother Isaac Elie entered his employment as an apprentice, followed two years later by a third brother, Pieter.[74] Luzac rarely printed at his own expense in the early years because he did not have the funds to finance his own publications, as was common enough in the case of small firms. The Leiden firm of Luchtmans' ledgers for 1746 list Elie only as a 'printer'; purchases by Luzac are exclusively entered on the debit side. Until the year 1755 Elie Luzac advertised in the *Leydse courant* as 'Printer and Bookseller'.

EXPLORATIONS

A suitable source for a quick insight into the Leiden book trade of the 1740s is the *Thesaurus*, which gives the active years of booksellers insofar as their publications have survived.[75] But the dates provided by the *Thesaurus* cannot always be relied upon. Since fledgling booksellers often lacked sufficient capital to finance their own publications and concentrated on barter and the retail trade, the dates on which they started business are sometimes incorrect. We know from the applications for book auctions, for example, that Pieter de Does was already active in 1742, while the *Thesaurus* gives 1745 as the commencement of his active period. The name of the widow of bookbinder and bookseller IJsbrand Buys, who kept a shop in Breestraat, is not mentioned in the *Thesaurus*, although we know that she auctioned bound and unbound books from her husband's shop in 1743.[76]

The Leiden tax records for 1742, the year in which Luzac embarked on his own career, and those for 1748 are now accessible through the Data Archiving and Networked Services (DANS) and may also serve as a source.[77] Every resident with an income above six hundred guilders a year was assessed for an

amount related to the tax category to which he had been assigned. To determine the tax amount, factors like rent (minus rent paid in the pursuance of professional activities) and, for example, servants, carriages and horses were also included. Yet some caution is called for here, too. The tax records contain only the names of taxable Leiden citizens: booksellers earning less than a minimum income remain invisible. Pieter van de Does' name for instance does not occur in this register, nor does that of the printer Isaak van der Mijn, who worked in Zonneveldsteeg, although this may be because he died in 1742.[78] A second reservation concerns the addresses listed in the databank, which occasionally appear to contradict the ones supplied by the booksellers themselves in their advertisements. Further research is necessary to show from which addresses they actually worked.

In the book trade alone forty entrepreneurs appeared to earn more than the fixed taxable minimum income in 1742. Among them were 32 taxable booksellers, two of whom earned annual incomes above 2,000 guilders. They were Hendrik van Damme, from Lange Pieterschoorsteeg (now Pieterskerkchoorsteeg), who together with his son Daniel van Damme was assigned to category 8 (incomes between 2,500 and 3,000 guilders), and Samuel Luchtmans, who was assigned to category 12 (incomes between 4,500 and 5,000 guilders). By 1745 Van Damme's assessment had been reduced because his income had dropped to the income category of 1,200 to 1,500 guilders per annum. In comparison, one of the highest assessed residents on Rapenburg was the affluent merchant Johan Meerman, whose annual income exceeded 12,000 guilders.

Seven booksellers earned between 1,000 and 2,000 guilders annually. They were Johan Arnold Langerak, the brothers Jan and Herman Verbeek together, Pieter van der Eyk, Cornelis Haak, Abraham Kallewier, Isaac Severinus and George Jacob Wishoff. In 1745 the income of Langerak, whose printing house was to be found on the corner of Rapenburg and Houtstraat, increased to between 2,500 and 3,000 guilders. Johan Luzac's income lay between 800 and 1,000 guilders. The French newspaper publisher Etienne Luzac, who incidentally did not fall into the category of booksellers, had annual earnings of 1,000 to 1,200 guilders. The 23 other taxable booksellers earned incomes of between 600 and 1,000 guilders. As we have stated, booksellers below the minimum income bracket do not appear in the tax records.

Only a third of the Leiden booksellers in the middle of the seventeenth century owned printing presses. The situation was not very different a century later. Booksellers almost always doubled as publishers.[79] In addition there were those who specialized exclusively or mainly in printing. There are for instance four printers in the tax records for 1742. Jan Willem de Groot, established in Nonnensteeg until 1749, earned 600 to 700 guilders a year.[80] Jan van Damme, brother of the Hendrik van Damme mentioned before, earned a little more with an annual income of 700 to 800 guilders. He was entered as a printer-shopkeeper with a shop in Lange Pieterschoorsteeg. Master printer Cornelis Heeneman, from Maredorp, was assessed for 800 to 1,000 guilders per annum. Willem van den Berg, a printer's assistant and tobacco seller from the Over 't Hof district, near the Court of Justice, earned 600 to 700 guilders a year. There were also four wholesale paper dealers in the city: Adam Schouten on Breestraat, opposite the Town Hall (income between 600 and 700 guilders); Jan van Huysen, on Vliet (income between 1,000 and 1,200 guilders); Hendrik Haak, on the other side, also on Vliet (income between 600 and 700 guilders); and Jan Gerrevink, in Watersteeg (income between 1,000 and 1,200 guilders).

The tax records for 1742 also indicate where most of the Leiden booksellers were to be found. Fifteen had their shops in the streets around Pieterskerk. This district was called the Zevenhuizen district and was enclosed by what is nowadays called Kloksteeg/Pieterskerkchoorsteeg, Langebrug, Rapenburg and, continuing from there, Steenschuur. No less than thirteen bookshops were located in Nieuwsteeg. The Over 't Hof district also boasted its fair share of booksellers. The tax records list nine bookshops. Both districts were favourably situated in relation to the University, but Rapenburg was an especially attractive site and was traditionally the home of the better, scholarly bookshop. At nos. 71-74, directly adjacent to the University building, the Elzeviers had their premises in the seventeenth century, while in 1713 Pieter van der Aa was established there. The *Gazette de Leyde*, owned by Anthonie de la Font and, later, Elie's uncle Etienne Luzac, was produced at


Samuel and his younger brother Johannes Luchtmans made a great success of the Luchtmans publishing firm.

no. 69A. The firm of Luchtmans was to be found at no. 69B. Bookseller Johann Verbessel ran his business from no. 54 in the closing decades of the seventeenth century and Johannes van der Linden Jr succeeded him between 1705 and 1730. Since the seventeenth century a number of booksellers had already been established at no. 56 Rapenburg. Johannes Coster had his shop there in the early eighteenth century, and was followed by Cornelis Haak, who settled at this address later on. In 1770 the bookselling firm of Dirk Haak & Co. would move into these premises. On the corner of Kloksteeg and what is now called Rapenburg, opposite the University, stood the bookselling firm of Wishoff.[81]

The character of the bookshops varied. Luchtmans, established in Leiden as early as 1683 with the arrival of Jordaan Luchtmans, was the most successful of them. Samuel Luchtmans, the bookseller so highly assessed in 1742, was only a second-generation bookseller. His appointment as Printer to the City and the University in 1730 had rapidly increased sales to unprecedented heights. In 1749 he requested the Masters of the Court to appoint his sons Samuel and Johannes as Printers to the City so that he might retire 'on account of his age and bodily infirmity'.[82] Samuel Luchtmans Sr nevertheless kept a finger in the publishing business and the retail trade until 1755. The Luchtmans brothers continued in business together and were instrumental in bringing the firm to great prosperity. The family never possessed their own printing presses, but did put together a sound scholarly list, which contained not only numerous dissertations, disputations and orations but also medical and theological studies, legal works, Orientalia and classical literature. Their list is altogether more traditional than that of Elie Luzac, who would focus more on current themes, related, for instance, to physico-theology or natural law. The Luchtmans brothers' speciality was the wholesale and retail trade, for which they undertook several business trips to Germany, France and England.[83] Alert, enterprising but rigid, is how the nineteenth-century bookseller and book historian Kruseman characterized the two brothers.[84]

Coenraad Wishoff also had an academic bookshop. He brought out a mass of academic publications and a number of beautifully illustrated med-

A University in decline: from the 1730s, renowned scholars like Boerhaave had been replaced by narrow-minded pedants and compulsive gossips.

ical works, publications which his son George Jacob Wishoff, who had collaborated with his father since 1733, would continue to publish. From their shop in Kloksteeg the Wishoffs, father and son, maintained close relations with scholars such as Carl Linnaeus and, through him, the Swiss physician Albrecht von Haller.[85] In the advertisements which they placed in the *Leydse courant* around 1742, however, they gave Herensteeg as their business address. Their cousins George and Jurriaan Wishoff were established on Rapenburg, as appears from the advertisements, and were also academic bookdealers. The brothers Jan and Herman Verbeek fished in very much the same pond as the Wishoff family. Their firm boasted a list of splendidly illustrated medical works. They also published works of such famous authors as Petrus van Musschenbroek, Willem van 's Gravensande and Isaac Newton.

A bookseller like Adriaan van der Hoeven in the alley Maarsmansteeg was of an altogether different mettle. In 1751 he asked permission to build a five by fifteen foot bookstall in the passage next to the Town Hall. His request was granted, on condition that he kept the passageway tidy, did not stay over, build a fire or hold an auction.[86]

There were even smaller fry in the book trade, printing and peddling ephemera in back alleys further away from the Town Hall or University. The sisters Esther Jacoba and Johanna Dijckhuijzen, for instance, applied for dispensation from the Court to print and circulate the weekly sermons. Their mother, the widow of Andries Dijckhuijzen, had been granted permission by the booksellers' guild, but now that she had died, the daughters were in danger of losing the business.[87] Anna Bouwman, too, wanted to succeed her father, the printer Gregorius Bouwman. In her application for dispensation she referred to the Dijckhuijzen sisters. Little is known about the extent of her activities, as her name occurs only on a number of ordinances of the guilds of button makers, pastrycooks and grocers.[88]

THESE 'STRAITENED TIMES'

Was there really a flourishing book trade in Leiden in 1742? Although the full impact of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748) was yet to be felt – in 1747 there followed the siege and fall of the border

town of Bergen op Zoom, believed to be unassailable – the French occupation of the Southern Netherlands took a heavy toll. Leiden's textile industry suffered great losses in consequence. Cloth production, for instance, had more than halved between 1720 and 1740 due to increased competition, which also had repercussions for people working outside the industry. After 1735 in particular the population declined sharply. While in 1670 Leiden had more than 70,000 inhabitants, the number had dropped to about 37,000 by 1750.[89] Although it was mainly the textile workers who left town, and most of the

remaining populace lived at or around subsistence level, there nevertheless still remained a fairly broad layer of the population able to afford some cultural diversion, such as buying and reading books. The question is, however, whether the demand for books was large enough to keep the many booksellers in town afloat.

There were also the professors and students to help support local trade, but the University, too, was in decline. As the historian Willem Otterspeer has written, renowned scholars of the calibre of Herman Boerhaave, Gerard Noodt, Tiberius Hemsterhuis and Willem van 's-Gravensande had made way for extremely closed minds, self-important provincials and compulsive gossips. University buildings and academic collections were antiquated, dust-covered or even dilapidated. From the middle of the seventeenth century student numbers began to drop. In the period 1700–1724 some 299 students matriculated annually, but for 1725-1749 the annual average had already dropped to 240 students, while between 1750–1774 the average plummeted to 114 students. The decline in the number of foreign students was also greater than that of domestic ones.[90]

The book trade, too, suffered under the recession. Many booksellers in The Hague had gone bankrupt in the 1730s partly as a result of reckless investments in vast publishing projects and a frenzied merry-go-round of mutual auctions.[91] Apparently the consequences for the trade as a whole were limited, because the *Thesaurus* shows that the number of active booksellers in the Dutch Republic increased from 276 to 327 in the years 1730 to 1740. The following period, until 1745, also showed a remarkable increase of no less than 49 in the number of new entrepreneurs. Never before or afterwards during the eighteenth century did so many newcomers enter the bookselling market in such a short space of time.

This may perhaps be explained by the phenomenon, alluded to by the Dutch book historian José de Kruif, that in a saturated market, with a great many active suppliers of 'volatile products', competition and the number of imitations is high.[92] But was the market really saturated? The increase may also have been due to a growing demand for political publications, with which the Dutch could feed their dissatisfaction with government by the ruling classes. Civil unrest slowly but gradually spread in the 1740s, especially after the French had launched their successful campaign in the Austrian Netherlands. Among the newcomers to the book trade there may have been quite a few trying their luck with publications relating to the current political troubles. After all, political unrest does trigger controversial works which are devoured by a newshungry public. But between 1745 and 1750 the book trade received a heavy blow, with 77 booksellers forced to close their doors.[93]

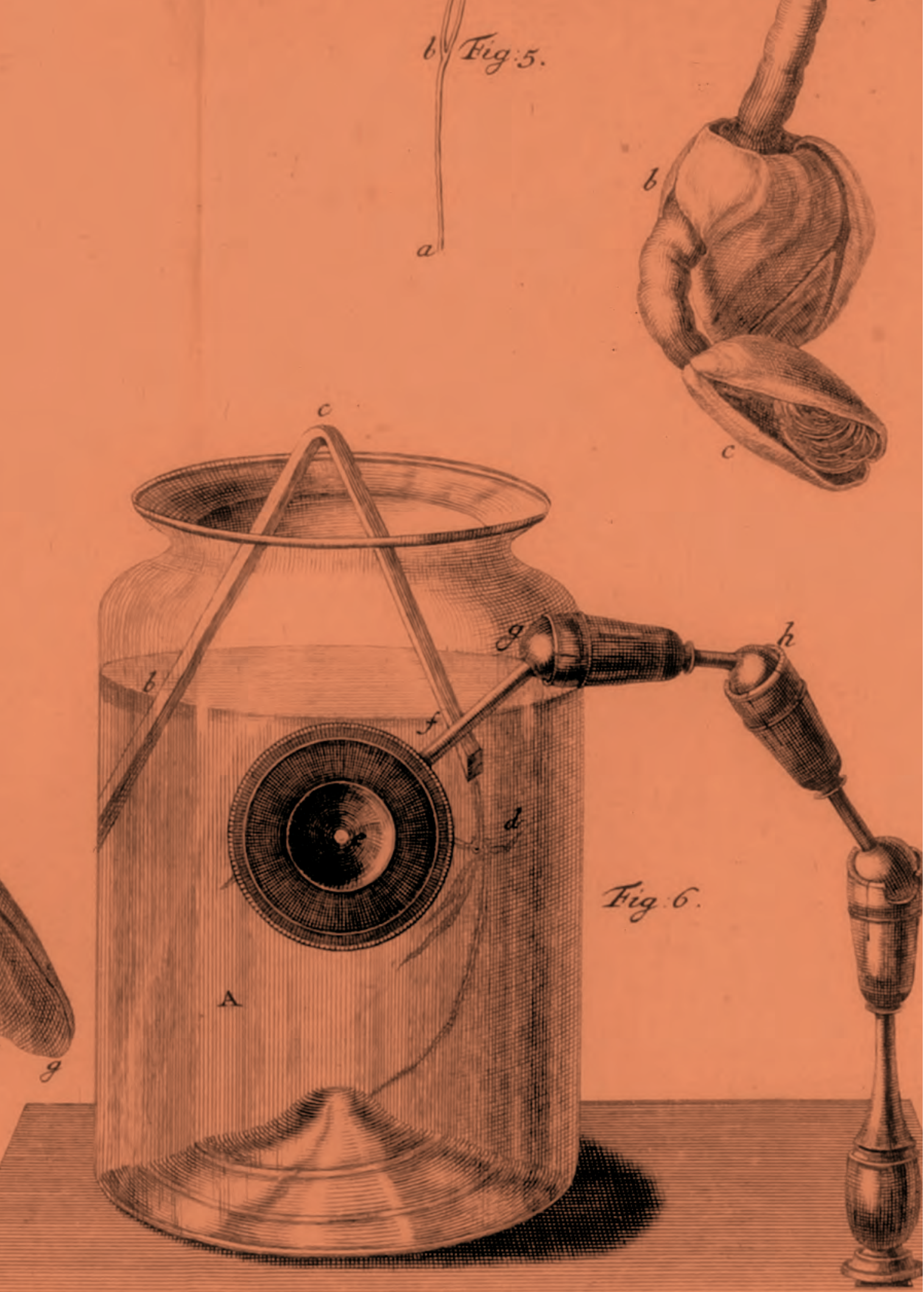
Luchtmans, Langerak, Daniel Goetval and Van der Eyk, the overseers of the Leiden book trade around 1745, themselves spoke of 'these straitened times'. Undoubtedly they will have exaggerated the malaise a little, because in the same breath they petitioned for permission to hold public auctions of unbound books still in stock. A public sale in the form of a book auction had so far only been allowed if the bookseller was closing down his business. Apparently the Court was convinced of the 'steep decline in trade' and consented to the request after consultation with the city's burgomasters.[94] Remarkably enough, the number of book auctions dropped from 156 (in the five preceding years) to 139 in the years 1746 to 1750, a downward trend that continued until 1765.[95]

The sale of books abroad also stagnated because of the continuing hostilities. Trade with countries such as England and France was seriously impeded by the political instability of the day, a circumstance further aggravated by the strong rise in competition from booksellers in Avignon, Trévoux, Geneva, Liège, Bouillon and (later) Neuchâtel.[96] It was only natural that a number of internationally operating booksellers would seek access to new markets in Germany. The combination of a relatively underdeveloped book trade, a growing scholarly market, an almost insatiable appetite for reading and the presence of logistical crossroads in the book fair cities of Frankfurt and Leipzig made Germany an interesting market for Dutch booksellers. Elie Luzac would turn his attention to this market with great vigour.

That Leiden's book trade pulled itself out of the slump fairly quickly can be seen from the booksellers' shop addresses. The directory of Dutch printers

and booksellers before 1700 shows that many of them were located near or across from the University, on Rapenburg.[97] When Haller, who was studying in Leiden in the years 1725–1727, recorded in his travel diary that some of the streets in Leiden were almost exclusively lined with bookshops and printing houses, he must have been thinking of the alleys around Pieterskerk and the Court of Justice.[98] Although the addresses in the tax records appear unreliable, Haller's impressions are confirmed by the individual assessments for 1742. In that year Langerak, Wishoff, Bernardus Jongelijn, Bernardus Severinus and Luchtmans were the only ones left able to afford premises on Rapenburg or on Steenschuur. If we assume that the tax inspectors in 1742 and 1748 used identical criteria and recorded the shop addresses of all taxpayers, it is striking to note that in the intervening six years a good many establishments had moved from the alleys to the rather more upmarket Rapenburg or Steenschuur. In 1748, when the Austrian War of Succession ended with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, Steenschuur suddenly appears to have become popular with booksellers: Abraham Honkoop, Pieter van Kastrop, Johannes van Kerckhem, Wouter Leffen, Johan Luzac, Jacobus Willeke and Jurriaan Wishoff all had their shops there. Another printer to move to Steenschuur was Jan Huback, who had not been included in the tax record of 1742. Elie Luzac was his lodger at the time.

All the same Elie Luzac, new to the book trade, encountered his share of financial problems during his early years. In 1749, when he had already built up a small but high-quality list, he was still forced to turn to his father and uncle for the amount of 1,347 guilders and 5 stivers. He needed the money for the books bought at the Langerak auction of 17 to 22 March 1749.[99] Later Elie signed a promissory note to his father for the amount of 13,000 guilders, the sum total of his loans so far.[100] In that same year he was even forced to delay by a year the publication of *Le philosophe chrétien*, written by the secretary of the Prussian Academy of Sciences, Jean-Henri-Samuel Formey. 'Je suis jeune libraire', Luzac wrote to the author by way of apology, 'j'ai fait des depenses assez considérables cette année.'[101] His Leiden contacts in particular gave him so much work to do in his early years that he had to be careful with his budget.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CHAPTER II

Early years

Establishing a reputation as an enlightened scholarly publisher

1
THE POLYP AND THE LOUSE

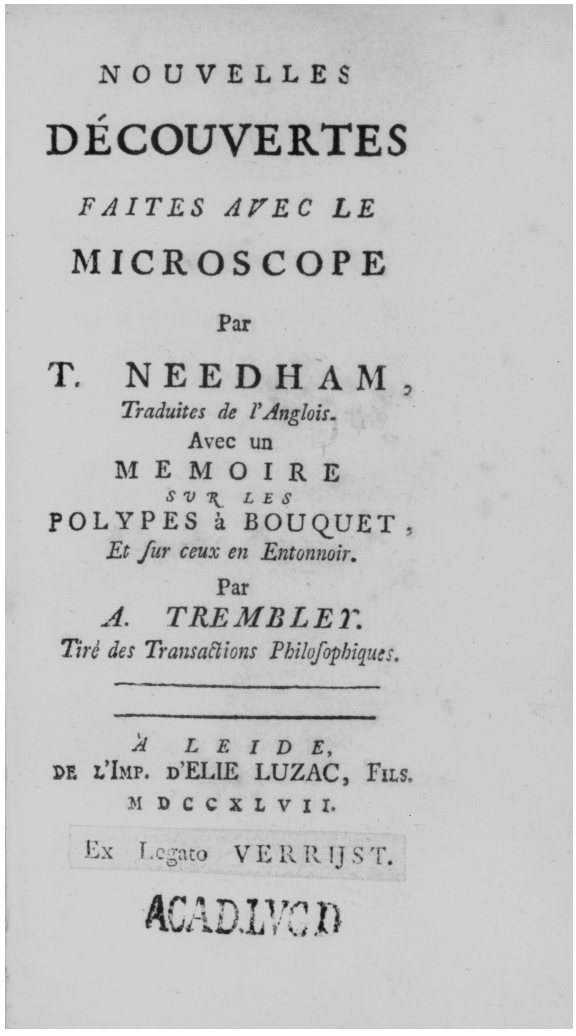
Like any newcomer to any business, Elie Luzac had to generate working capital. The only way to achieve this was to build up a profitable list. Accordingly, Luzac invested much time and energy, particularly in his early years, in building up a network of scholars: authors, translators, correctors and buyers.

An important factor in the success of a scholarly bookshop was its location; the busier the street and the closer its position to the University, the more customers it attracted. For that reason a stroll in the vicinity of Leiden University, where many famous bookshops were located, would have been pure pleasure for a book lover in the eighteenth century. The booksellers would undoubtedly have had many customers. Nevertheless, proximity to the University did not guarantee that the publishing activities, which in those days were still linked to the bookshop, were also a success. When selecting a publisher, scholars weighed up various factors, such as the fees they were offered (which in the first half of the eighteenth century often still took the form of author's copies), international sales potential and the quality of printing. The Dutch classical scholar Petrus Burmannus Secundus for instance wrote about his search for a publisher:

> THE LUCHTMANSES are far too tightfisted.
> I also have my reasons not to go to Schouten;
> he does not have enough connections abroad;
> perhaps Schreuder and Mortier will do,
> provided they carry out the work generously,
> because it will be a costly undertaking.[1]

One criterion not mentioned by Burman was absolutely essential to the publisher wanting to put together an interesting list. A bookseller wishing to be counted as a scholarly publisher had to establish a place for himself in the Republic of Letters. Booksellers who were familiar with the scholarly community either personally or through others were sure to be asked to publish scholarly works. And if they contributed to the current scholarly debates, they were very likely to have an advantage over colleagues trying to access the same market without any knowledge of scholarship.

What was Luzac's position in Leiden's scholarly community? In the early years his shop was located on Steenschuur, a street which continued from fashionable Rapenburg,[2] where from 1750 he would have his own bookshop. Luzac's first publications date from 1743 and initially, he focussed mainly on


NOUVELLES
DÉCOUVERTES
FAITES AVEC LE
MICROSCOPE
Par
T. NEEDHAM,
Traduites de l'Anglois.
Avec un
MEMOIRE
SUR LES
POLYPES à BOUQUET,
Et sur ceux en Entonnoir.
Par
A. TREMBLEY.
Tiré des Transactions Philosophiques.
À LEIDE,
DE L'IMP. D'ELIE LUZAC, FILS.
M DCC XLVII.
Ex Legato VERRIJST.
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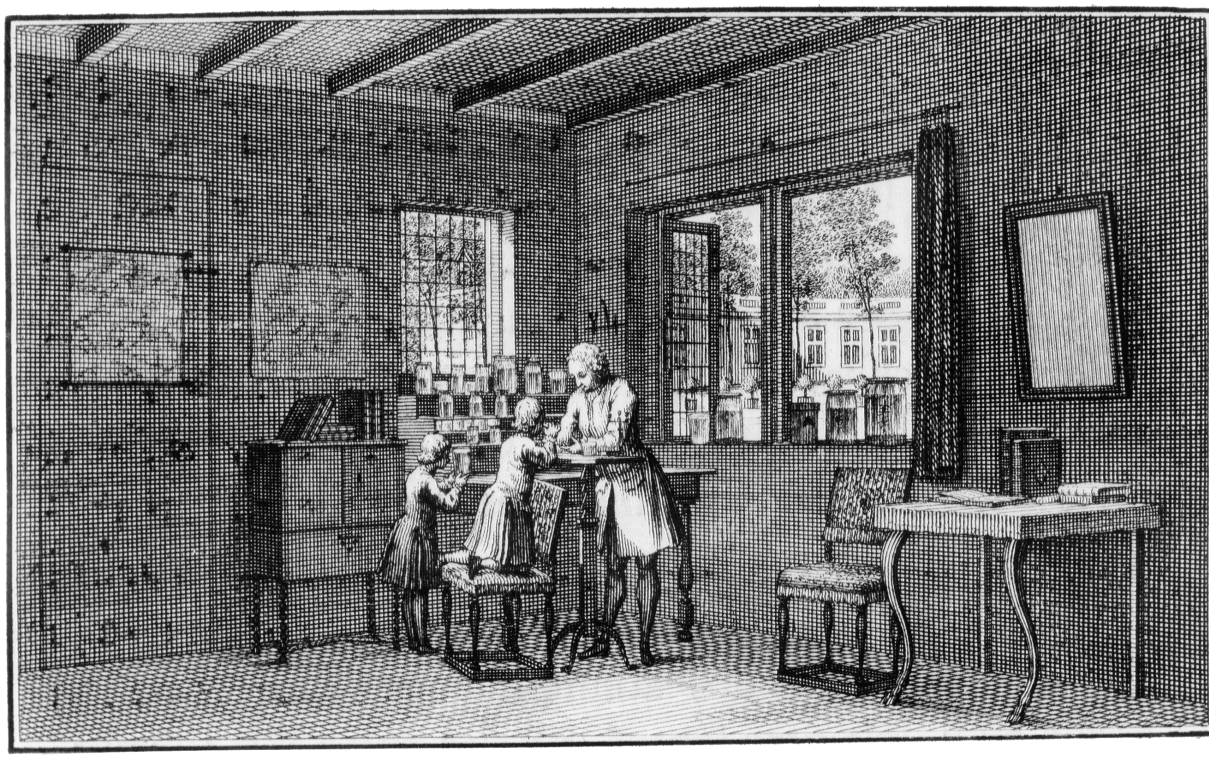
John Turberville Needham's *Nouvelles découvertes faites avec le microscope* discussed spontaneous generation of nematodes and the evolutionary concept of epigenesis.

dissertations and disputations, as did his uncle. Only four years later, in 1747, did he bring out his first important scholarly publication. The young publisher launched himself in the centre of learned European attention by means of a number of physico-theological works by Abraham Trembley, John Turberville Needham and Charles Bonnet. Luzac had made their acquaintance through the scholars he knew in Leiden. Although he certainly knew what he was doing, one publication, Julien Offray de la Mettrie's *L'homme machine* (1748), was to have serious consequences for him. But Luzac did well out of this work also, for it was in great demand and it established his name as a scholarly publisher once and for all. As a publisher-bookseller, he had now contributed to the learned debate on materialism, which may be regarded as almost logically following from the debate on Cartesianism and Newtonianism.

EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY

The story of Luzac's quest for his own niche within the Republic of Letters opens with the pond at Sorgvliet, the country estate owned by the diplomat Willem Bentinck between The Hague and Scheveningen. A brook springing from the dunes fed clear water into the pond. What went on within the pond led to close observations and experimentation. Together with his pupils Abraham Trembley, the Genevan tutor of Bentinck's children, had fished hydras from the pond, cut them into little pieces and to his astonishment witnessed their regenerative powers. While Antonie van Leeuwenhoek still thought they were plants, Trembley came to the conclusion that these creatures were animals and that their reproduction took place in a way altogether different from what one might imagine on the grounds of Church doctrine. Each bit of polyp appeared capable of growing into a new polyp without fertilization having taken place. When the French entomologist René Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur, famous for his *Histoire des insectes* (1735), heard about Trembley's discovery, he immediately grasped its significance. He saw to it that Trembley's observations were placed on the Royal Society's agenda for the sessions of 13 and 20 January 1743. A letter of recommendation by Bentinck was read to the assembly and Trembley's text was included in the *Philosophical Transactions*. The polyp observer could hardly have received a greater accolade.[3]

Since the invention of the microscope in the 1670s, a great many scholars had acquired the instrument. All sorts of objects were put underneath the magnifiying glass. Experiments with lower animal species, too, were popular. The English divine John Turberville Needham, for instance, conducted pioneering microscopic research into the *generatio spontanea* of nematodes (roundworms and small eels) and maggots. His discussions with Trembley on the subject led to the publication of his *An account of some new microscopical discoveries* (1745).



Abraham Trembley and the children of diplomat Willem Bentinck conducting experiments on polyps (1744).

Like Réaumur, whom he knew from his stay in Paris in the forties, and the no less famous French natural scientist Georges Louis Leclerc Count de Buffon, he concerned himself with the evolutionary issue of epigenesis, the development of organisms.[4] Their conclusion was that organs and limbs were gradually formed from the original fluid and that more primitive animal species had evolved into higher developed species step by step. The implications of these discoveries would remain a topic of debate throughout the eighteenth century. The object of physico-theology was to study nature in all its manifestations, and to endeavour to find the correspondences which the Creator must have deliberately introduced. For devout Christians, nature was God's revelation, proof of God's existence, but this was difficult to reconcile with epigenesis, according to which matter itself seemed able to bring forth living creatures.

A follower of Réaumur in Geneva, Charles Bonnet, Trembley's nephew, also carried out natural scientific experiments, more specifically on aphids. In 1740, after weeks of incessant staring at isolated aphids, Bonnet discovered that the little creatures could reproduce without fertilization. Unlike Antonie van Leeuwenhoek before him, he did not explain the phenomenon as a case of hermaphroditism, but attributed it to parthenogenesis (literally: virgin birth). According to Bonnet, each living creature already had to be whole in its embryonic state if it was to develop into a fully-fledged creature. This explanation was inspired by the concept of preformation, according to which man and animal, and all their progeny, were made by God in one single act of creation. All preformed beings, however minute, were already present in their ancestors.

Bonnet, who in the 1750s, after years of staring at aphids, had contracted a serious eye disease and could no longer see much through his microscope, was now forced to turn to the metaphysical implications of his discoveries. He wondered whether the 'souls' of the insects he had studied were also able to multiply at parthenogenesis, without God's intercession. He concluded that the regenerated soul already had to be present in the original female aphid. Bonnet's next questions concerned man: does the human body steer the human soul? To what extent can we still speak of the free will of man and his soul? The scolars in Geneva with whom

Bonnet discussed the findings he had incorporated in his *Essai de psychologie* (1754) warned him that his ideas might be dangerous, because they contradicted Church doctrine. After all, they were not all that far removed from the materialist thinking already expounded by La Mettrie in his *L'homme machine* (1748), a work universally banned by censorship.[5]

To La Mettrie, Trembley's discovery was especially important because the polyp's ability to reproduce after artificial division showed that like matter, the alleged 'soul' was present everywhere in the body. Both matter and soul appeared capable of being divided infinitely. La Mettrie took this as confirmation of Descartes' idea that animals were only made up of matter and therefore to be compared to machines (*bête machine*). La Mettrie linked his conclusion to the opinion Bonnet had reached upon reading Trembley's work, namely that polyps were the missing link between plant and animal, with man being the highest evolutionary stage in the chain of beings. But where Bonnet maintained that souls were preformed and continued to award the soul a central place in the human body, La Mettrie offered a materialistic explanation. In his opinion it was inevitable that man, too, was an automaton, a machine (*homme machine*).[6]

Few books have created such an outcry in ecclesiastical circles as *L'homme machine*. The soul, as is stated in Genesis 2, v. 7, is given by God, and returns to God after death. According to the theologians, La Mettrie's interpretation was Spinozistic in nature: although man does have a soul, it is a vital force and as such part of the material reality of the human body. There exists, therefore, but one substance. The soul is no longer an autonomous entity, as it is in Church doctrine, but a specifically human attribute, responsible for self-awareness, reason and the mind. By denying that the soul was a 'second' substance, La Mettrie negated the idea of the dualism of body and soul. Although he was not explicit about the subject, he believed the logical consequence must be that the soul was transitory. There was consequently no hereafter where man was called to account for his sins. This also undermined the Christian foundation for virtuous conduct; it no longer mattered all that much. Not surprisingly, hell and damnation were wished upon La Mettrie, and he was forced to flee from his country.

A NETWORK OF SCHOLARS

Needham, Trembley and Bonnet shared a mutual friend, Jean Nicolas Sébastien Allamand. He came from Lausanne and had been employed by the Leiden Newtonian scholar Willem Jacob 's Gravesande as private tutor to his two sons since 1737. 's Gravesande encouraged the Swiss, a trained minister, to take an interest in natural sciences. Allamand was allowed to use his employer's instruments and took more and more to publishing his scientific observations. He probably also discussed them at home with 's Gravesande and Willem Bentinck, one of 's Gravesande's closest friends. Through Bentinck, Allamand came into contact with Trembley. In 1739, after the sudden death of his two pupils, Allamand lost his position. 's Gravesande never got over the loss of his sons and died in 1742. Allamand and Bentinck would, however, remain in touch until the latter's death. When Trembley resigned his post with Bentinck in 1747, Allamand was appointed in an advisory capacity to Fréderic Salomon Tavel, Trembley's successor. The following year, 1748, Bentinck saw to it that Allamand was appointed to the chair of mathematics and philosophy at the University of Leiden. This led to an even closer association between Allamand and Bentinck, who was not only a prominent diplomat at the Stadholder's Court but also a curator of the University.

Another admirer of 's Gravesande was Elie Luzac. As a student at the University he had attended the lectures of the Newtonian Petrus van Musschenbroek. Luzac's mentor, Johan Lulofs, who had succeeded 's Gravesande as professor of mathematics and astronomy in 1742, and also lectured on metaphysics and ethics from 1744, occupied a special place in his life. Luzac for instance dedicated Jean-Antoine Nollet's *Essay on electrical attraction* (1748) to Lulofs. He signed the personal dedication with the words 'Your most humble and most obliged servant, Elias Luzac, Jun.' The young bookseller was also well acquainted with Allamand, a regular visitor at the printing-house of his uncle Johan Luzac. Allamand was engaged in the translation of a number of works by Albert Schultens (*Le livre de Job*, 1748, and *Les proverbes de Salomon*, 1752) and published his inaugural address *De vero philosopho* with Johan Luzac in 1749. 'C'est un des plus aimables hommes que je con-

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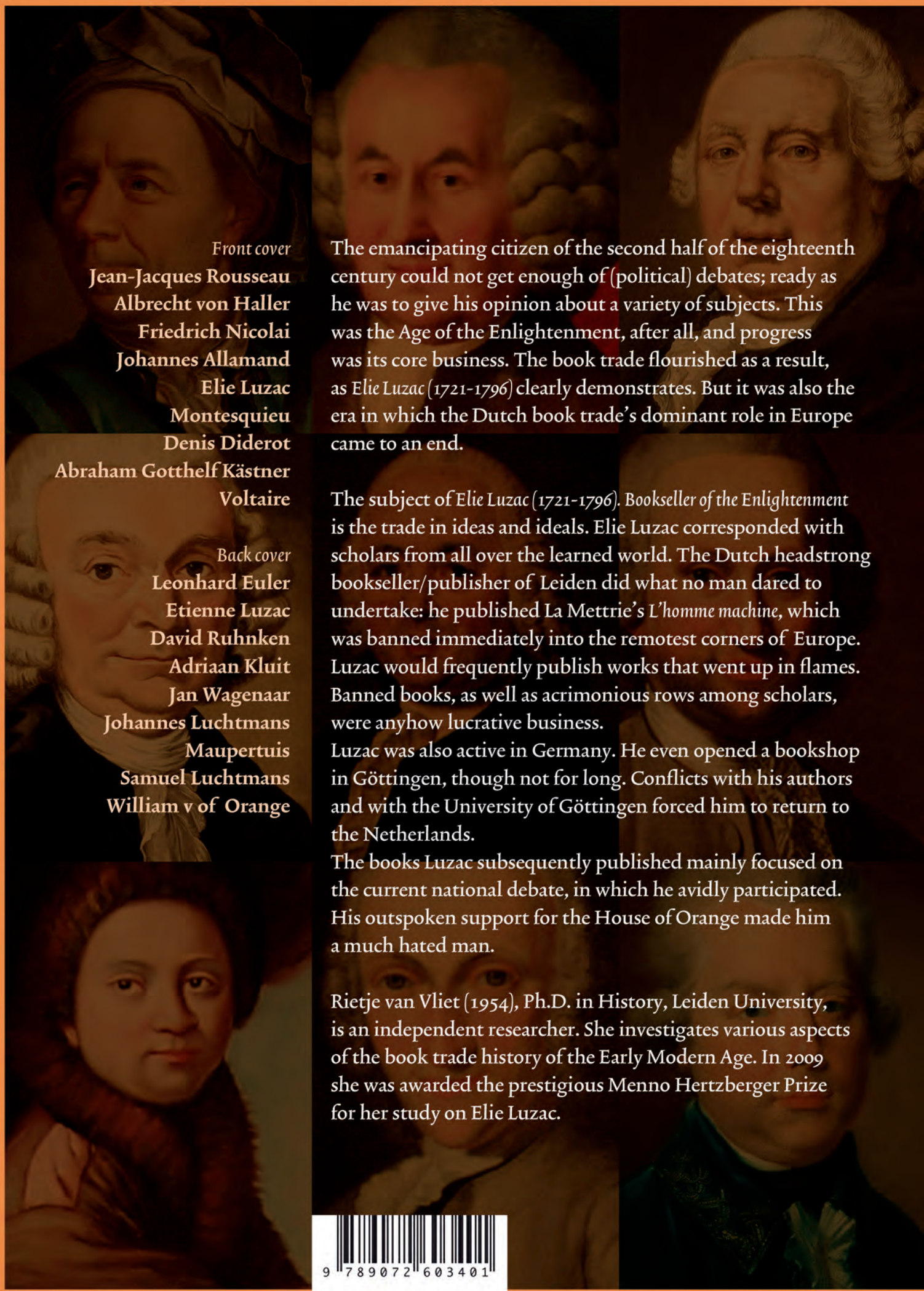

Front cover
Jean-Jacques Rousseau
Albrecht von Haller
Friedrich Nicolai
Johannes Allamand
Elie Luzac
Montesquieu
Denis Diderot
Abraham Gotthelf Kästner
Voltaire

Back cover
Leonhard Euler
Etienne Luzac
David Ruhnken
Adriaan Kluit
Jan Wagenaar
Johannes Luchtmans
Maupertuis
Samuel Luchtmans
William v of Orange

The emancipating citizen of the second half of the eighteenth century could not get enough of (political) debates; ready as he was to give his opinion about a variety of subjects. This was the Age of the Enlightenment, after all, and progress was its core business. The book trade flourished as a result, as *Elie Luzac (1721-1796)* clearly demonstrates. But it was also the era in which the Dutch book trade's dominant role in Europe came to an end.

The subject of *Elie Luzac (1721-1796). Bookseller of the Enlightenment* is the trade in ideas and ideals. Elie Luzac corresponded with scholars from all over the learned world. The Dutch headstrong bookseller/publisher of Leiden did what no man dared to undertake: he published La Mettrie's *L'homme machine*, which was banned immediately into the remotest corners of Europe. Luzac would frequently publish works that went up in flames. Banned books, as well as acrimonious rows among scholars, were anyhow lucrative business.
Luzac was also active in Germany. He even opened a bookshop in Göttingen, though not for long. Conflicts with his authors and with the University of Göttingen forced him to return to the Netherlands.
The books Luzac subsequently published mainly focused on the current national debate, in which he avidly participated. His outspoken support for the House of Orange made him a much hated man.

Rietje van Vliet (1954), Ph.D. in History, Leiden University, is an independent researcher. She investigates various aspects of the book trade history of the Early Modern Age. In 2009 she was awarded the prestigious Menno Hertzberger Prize for her study on Elie Luzac.

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