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A COMPANION TO MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN LEIDEN

Edited by

ARIE VAN STEENSEL
AND ARIADNE SCHMIDT

BRILL

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Leiden in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods

Ariadne Schmidt and Arie van Steensel

Leiden is probably best known for its university, a legacy of the early modern period. Less known but still visible today is its older industrial past. The medium-sized city was embedded in the relatively dense urban network of the premodern Low Countries; as a typical Dutch city it never attained a prominent political, administrative or religious role. Even from a European perspective, key aspects of Leiden's premodern history in many ways resembled those of other cities and towns. Yet, the combination of its two defining characteristics – an industrial and a university city – set Leiden apart, rendering it exemplary of urban processes and a valuable comparative case study. In many ways, the textile industry and, after 1575, the university shaped Leiden's history and society. The pull of Leiden as a place of production, knowledge and creativity attracted people from nearer and more distant places, resulting in an increasingly diverse urban population. But at the same time, Leideners had to cope with the structural political, economic and social inequalities characteristic of the city. This volume aims to reveal, at a high level of detail thanks to the rich documentary evidence, how the tensions between urban opportunities and the realities of urban life came to the fore in Leiden's medieval and early modern history.

The first part of this introduction offers a brief overview of the historiography of Leiden and identifies the key themes, concepts and debates in urban history with which the authors engage, especially the concepts of diversity and inequality. This engagement with historiography should help readers to compare or connect more easily the case of Leiden with other cities and towns. The second part introduces the individual contributions, situating them briefly within the context of Leiden's premodern history and providing some relevant facts and figures.

1 Writing about Leiden

Leiden's historiographical tradition dates back more than four centuries. As urban chronicles were uncommon in the medieval Northern Low Countries, one of the first historical descriptions of a Dutch city was Jan Orlers' *Beschrijvinge der stad Leyden* (1614).[1] This new historiographical genre was influenced by the humanist understanding of history as the light of truth and the teacher of life. Orlers organised his work thematically, starting with a historical topography of Leiden and its region, followed by a chronological narrative of sieges of the city between 1203 and 1574, and, added to the revised edition of 1641, an account of the city's government.[2] In the same tradition, Frans van Mieris wrote the first part of a new laudatory *Beschryving der stad Leyden* (1762–84) a century and a half later.[3] Known for his interest in editing old documents, he carefully described the built environment of Leiden and its legal rights over the surrounding countryside.[4]

According to P.J. Blok, who expressed his admiration for their accuracy, Orlers and Van Mieris' descriptions no longer met the critical standards of the modern historian. Blok adopted a chronological rather than a thematic analysis of urban life in his four-volume history of Leiden, *Geschiedenis eener Hollandsche stad* (1883–1918), covering the city's history from its medieval origins up to the early twentieth century.[5] More than his predecessors, Blok was interested in the social and economic history of Leiden, but above all he wrote the city's history from a liberal perspective. He believed that the Dutch nation-state of the nineteenth century had its infancy in the late medieval town, of which he considered Leiden to be a model.[6]

In contrast to the traditional separation of political and institutional history from social-economic and cultural developments, the strict distinction between city and countryside, and the focus on legal-administrative records, more recent urban histories have developed an integrated approach to the city to understand its dynamics, stemming from its embeddedness in broader contexts and the interlinkages between various events and processes.[7] The most recent history of Leiden, the four-volume *Leiden. De geschiedenis van een*

1 Orlers, *Beschrijvinge der stad Leyden*.

2 Verbaan, *De woonplaats van de faam*, 13, 163–207.

3 Van Mieris and Van Alphen, *Beschryving der stad Leyden*. The last two volumes were completed by Daniel van Alphen after Van Mieris' death.

4 Van Mieris's access to Leiden's archives was restricted, but he published a collection of legal-administrative documents relating to the city in 1759; Van Mieris, *Handvesten, privilegien, octroyen*.

5 Blok, *Geschiedenis eener Hollandsche stad*. He also published an edition of the city's legal-administrative sources: Blok, *Leidsche rechtsbronnen*.

6 Blok, *Geschiedenis eener Hollandsche stad*, 1:VIII–XII; Tollebeek, 'De tien jaren van Blok', 60–63.

7 Blockmans, 'Een eeuw geschiedschrijving'.

Hollandse stad (2002–2004), exemplifies this integrated and interdisciplinary approach. Incorporating more than a century of new research, and departing from contemporary themes and questions, the authors intended to complement Blok's earlier overview by offering a new and broader historical synthesis of Leiden's urban society.[8] Especially the contributions informed by archaeological findings and those on the evolution of urban space exemplify this, and also illustrate the need to involve different specialists in the writing of urban history. This synthesis of Leiden's history was part of a publication wave of city histories in the Netherlands around the turn of the century, often the result of local initiatives, written in Dutch for a more general reading public. Varied in format, they shuttle between the conception of the city as a central place in a network, in which the city is studied as a multifunctional centre of political, economic, social and cultural activities in relation to other cities and the countryside, and that of the city as a closed microcosmos, above all seeking to strike the right balance between these two dimensions of urbanity.[9]

This volume builds on existing research but differentiates itself from Leiden's older 'city biographies' in important ways. It offers a thematic rather than an exhaustive overview of the history of Leiden from roughly the late twelfth century to the early nineteenth century. This thematic approach takes current trends and debates in urban history as a starting point, in order to connect and confront Leiden's history with some of the many perspectives on and aspects of premodern urban societies.[10] By viewing Leiden's society through three lenses – that of spaces, peoples and representations – the intersected evolution of spatial structures, human interactions and cultural representations from the medieval period to the end of early modern times is brought to light. The core aim is to capture some of the diversity and inequalities among the inhabitants of Leiden and their life experiences in their multi-layered spatial, institutional and representational contexts. As a companion, the collection of chapters which draw on diachronic perspectives and thematic case studies and refer to the key literature and sources, provides an overview of the pivotal moments and developments in the premodern history of the Dutch town.

This volume is also the first history in English of a city in the medieval and early modern Northern Low Countries. The wave of urban histories in Dutch a quarter of a century ago was not followed up by translations made for an

8 Van Maanen, *Leiden*. For the most recent historiographical overview on Leiden's past, see the contributions to *Leids Jaarboekje* 100 (2008).

9 Kooij, 'Het format van de stad'.

10 For a recent overview, see the three-volume *Cambridge Urban History of Europe*, ed. Prak.

international academic readership, unlike in Flanders, where urban history has become an academically well-established subdiscipline. The history of the cities in the Southern Low Countries has been more thoroughly unlocked with the publication of exhaustive studies on Ghent and medieval Bruges and a thematic introduction to renaissance Antwerp, all produced in recent years.[11] Yet a recent synthesis of urban society in the medieval and early modern Low Countries leans unevenly on research from and on the south.[12] The contributions to this volume serve as a step towards redressing the imbalance this creates in our understanding of urban life in the Low Countries.

Above all, this volume aims to bring the history of premodern Leiden, incorporating both older and more recent research, to a new generation of readers and students. The chapters focus on key aspects of this rich history, while recognising that the developments that characterised Leiden's urban life were inextricably entwined with broader political, economic, social, cultural and ecological histories. With its comparatively wide array of available archival records, Leiden's history can function as a lens through which to observe the interactions between these processes and small-scale social life, but also as a case study to engage with urban theory on the social context of urbanisation and the urban form.[13] Ultimately, urban history is about understanding how people made complex urban societies work in the past and present, and how urban communities, economies and cultures exist as part of larger ecologies, systems and networks and how they transform them.

2 Themes and Debates in Urban History

How can the case study of premodern Leiden be made meaningful for (urban) historians? The authors of this volume address this challenge by connecting their contributions to current themes in urban history and by engaging with debates in the field. But urban history as a field of knowledge is difficult to delineate and has a diverse research agenda. Many of its themes and debates are not strictly urban, rendering the city incidental to questions about broader historical processes, even if one follows Charles Tilly's argument that cities are ideally suited as 'laboratories' to examine the interaction between global social

11 Boone and Deneckere, *Ghent*; Brown and Dumolyn, *Medieval Bruges*; Blondé and Puttevils, *Antwerp*.

12 Blondé, Boone, and Van Bruaene, *City and Society*.

13 Schmidt, *Mensen maken de stad*; cf. Curtis, Van Bavel, and Soens, 'History and the Social Sciences'.

processes and the routines of local life.[14] Such specialist case studies also feed into comparative approaches to urban history that seek to analyse patterns of urbanisation or aspects of urban life such as migration, citizenship and crime at a continental or global scale.[15] In this approach, however, the city most often disappears as an independent variable that causes or explains broader processes. From a more theoretical perspective, scholars have also questioned both the understanding of the city as a unitary actor and the notion of urban agency.[16] Instead, following the line of thought of actor-network theory, the city is conceptualised as 'made of urban assemblages, through which it can come into being in multiple ways'. The city is assembled by the multiple interactions between human and non-human actors, which in specific networked urban contexts generate new processes, meanings and identities. Agency then becomes an emergent capacity of urban assemblages.[17]

Historians generally subscribe to the idea of the city as contingent, situated and heterogenous, constituted by interactive processes between materialities, technologies, ideas and humans. But the multiplicity of urban assemblages further complicates the issue of what questions and approaches urban historians have in common, how historical-specific urban contexts can be fitted into larger narratives, and how the co-evolution of urban and non-urban assemblages should be understood. Nonetheless, this volume continues along this path by (often implicitly) acknowledging the composite nature of Leiden, achieved and embodied by an evolving configuration of natural, socio-economic, political and cultural elements. This opens up the possibility of thinking in a more refined way about how the city as a microcosm was embedded in larger networks, how broader processes played out within the urban, and how these processes in turn were shaped by it. The emphasis on the urban as 'becoming' also aligns with the proposition of the city as a complex adaptive system, which gives prominence to emergent, co-evolutionary and non-linear processes. Over time, the dynamic interactions between the various material and non-material components, or agents, that constitute the city, including lower and higher-level systems (for example, neighbourhood associations and regional polities, or guilds and trade networks), give rise to new patterns of

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14 Tilly, 'What Good Is Urban History?'

15 Clark, *The Oxford Handbook*. Cf. the critical remarks by Jan Hein Furnée, Manon van der Heijden, Karel Davids, Maarten Prak, Willem Frijhoff and Ed Taverne in 'Dossier: *The Oxford Handbook of Cities in World History*, Peter Clark (red.)', *Stadsgeschiedenis* 9 (2014): 43–70.

16 Gunn, 'Urban Agency'; De Munck, 'Re-Assembling Actor-Network Theory'; Jervis, 'Assemblage Theory'.

17 Farías, 'Introduction', 8–15.

(dis)order, self-organisation, complexity and diversity, whose histories can be charted and analysed to refine our understanding of the urban in its historicity, relationality and socio-natural entanglements.[18]

From this perspective, it is also no longer meaningful to stick to rigid distinctions between the city as a spatial structure (spaces), socio-economic unit (peoples) or cultural formation (representations). The chapters still follow this order but defy explicit classification, as these conceptualisations often overlap. This can be illustrated with the example of the notion of urban spaces, a recurring theme in the chapters. The spatial turn, warmly embraced by historians, boosted a new interdisciplinary interest in the formation of urban spaces, often supported by digital methodologies.[19] From this angle, historians have revisited the evolution of the built urban environment, the use of land in the city and its surroundings, the transformation of the urban landscape, and the perceptions and representations of urban space, which were far less static than had long been assumed.[20] More recently, historians have directed their attention to the question of how the movement of people, objects, knowledge and ideas moulded urban spaces.[21] This movement, in turn, was shaped by power and social relations that set the rules for access. Furthermore, studies on urban social topography and residential segregation now chart in a less structural manner how political and economic inequalities were spatially engrained and reproduced.[22] Thus, a spatial approach is instrumental in integrating various aspects of the city, or urban assemblages, and in understanding how ecological, political, socio-economic and cultural processes co-evolve over time. The contributions in this volume testify to the enrichment offered by this approach, whether with regard to the analysis of urban expansion, public health and services, power relations, economic inequalities, religious institutions, migration or innovation.

This observation brings us to the two related key themes that run through the chapters: the diversity and inequality that characterised urban society

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18 Ulysses, ‘Complexity Science’. See, for the overlap between the theoretical approaches of assemblages, complex adaptive systems and socio-ecological systems, Spies and Alff, ‘Assemblages and Complex Adaptive Systems’.

19 Rau, *Räume*; Colson and Van Steensel, ‘Cities and Solidarities’; Terpstra and Rose, *Mapping Space, Sense, and Movement*; Rodger and Rau, ‘Thinking Spatially’. See, for a recent (digital) analysis of the uses of Leiden’s town hall, Van Kleij, ‘Van wie was het stadhuis?’

20 Boone and Howell, *The Power of Space*; Abrahamse and Deneweth, *Transforming Space*.

21 Van den Heuvel, ‘Gender in the Streets’; Nevola, *Street Life*; Zenobi, ‘Mobility and Urban Space’.

22 Meinhardt and Ranft, *Die Sozialstruktur und Sozialtopographie*; Lesger and Van Leeuwen, ‘Residential Segregation’; Lesger, *Power and Urban Space*.

in premodern Holland.[23] As concepts they overlap in places but are in other ways distinct. Diversity refers to the degree of differentiation within a group or society – in contrast to social homogeneity – that leads to varied life experiences. Inequality often, though not necessarily, emerges from these experiences. It refers to the uneven distribution of resources, opportunities and rights amongst members of a group or society. For the inhabitants of medieval and early modern Leiden inequality was a given: citizenship was restricted to a group of wealthier inhabitants; weavers in the textile industry lived in small, crowded cottages – the 'ants' nest' or *mierennest*, as those homes constructed in the ward of the former convent of Nazareth at the north-eastern part of the town were called at the end of the sixteenth century;[24] and urbanites had unequal access to legal institutions. Interest in these different but intersecting forms of inequality has moved away from older studies on strict economic inequality to raise the question of how such inequalities were produced and reproduced, and how we can measure human well-being in the past.[25] More specifically, the issue here is to what extent specific urban institutional contexts increased disparities or, rather, tempered the effects of inequality on certain groups.[26]

Similar questions are addressed in a recent volume on inequality in cities in the Southern Low Countries, highlighting the multidimensional dynamics of urban inequality. Its authors emphasise the various dimensions and drivers of social inequality, including the common indicators for disparities in wealth and income amongst urbanites. A key issue concerns the interplay between urbanisation and inequality, because the city can simultaneously be a place of social emancipation for some and of social polarisation for others. The editors link this to what they dub 'the Low Countries' paradox': it was exactly the strong middle classes in the cities of the Southern Low Countries that reproduced social inequality.[27] This is an example of a broader tale of two cities: the inequality of the city attracting poor migrants who sought economic and social opportunity, and the social mobility of the city offering its residents mechanisms to accomplish their dreams for a better future.[28] In the case

23 Lesger, *Power and Urban Space*, 139.

24 Noordam, 'Leiden als ideale stad', 18.

25 Leiden is an important case study in the seminal work by Soltow and Van Zanden, *Income and Wealth Inequality*, on wealth and income inequality in premodern Leiden. See also Bisschops, 'Ruimtelijke vermogensverhoudingen'; Van Steensel, 'Measuring Urban Inequalities'; Van Maanen, 'De vermogensopbouw'; Noordam, 'Paupers en plutocraten'.

26 Van Bavel, 'Wealth Inequality in Pre-Industrial Europe'.

27 Blondé et al., 'The Low Countries' Paradox'.

28 Lucassen and Willems, *Living in the City*.

of the Southern Low Countries, the urbanisation process fostered strong middling groups. The economic and political emancipation of guildspeople went together with growing inequality in wealth and income in the later Middle Ages and produced middle-class institutions and cultural repertoires that were highly exclusionary towards 'lower social groups'. The middle classes became a relatively privileged group that profited unequally from redistributive institutions and access to public services, such as welfare and law courts.[29]

The contributions to this volume on Leiden do not chart the long-term evolution of inequalities in this medieval and early modern city, but the question of inequality finds resonance in most of them. Together, they show that urban disparities did not develop linearly and that our understanding of the interrelatedness of different manifestations of inequality still needs refinement. Even a category such as 'middling groups' is difficult to define and obscures how men and women were affected differently by hardship or how newcomers found their way in Leiden in various ways.[30]

The attention paid to power and social relations within the spatial approach to urban society has led to a clear focus on the experiences of city dwellers, which soon faded into the background in structuralist approaches to the history of cities.[31] The focus on the physical and socio-economic structures of the city initially left little room for perceptions of the city or the experiences of urbanites in daily life, as did the emphasis on the embeddedness on cities in wider networks and systems. But what was the meaning of the city 'in and for the lives of its inhabitants' over time?[32] In answering this question, whether from a cultural, social, economic or spatial perspective, attention to both inequality and diversity is crucial.

This brings us to the second key theme of this volume: diversity. For a long time, there was remarkably little attention paid to the fundamental differences between city dwellers in urban history. More recently, diversity, and especially migration-related diversity, has come to the fore in the studies of historians working on migration history, including urban migration.[33] We use this concept

29 Blondé et al., 'The Low Countries' Paradox', 22–23.

30 See, in general, for the need for new social safety nets for urbanites in the premodern urban context, Lynch, *Individuals, Families, and Communities*; Van der Woude, 'Population Developments'; Laslett, 'Family, Kinship and Collectivity'.

31 See, for recent studies emphasising the varied experiences of premodern urban life, Kowaleski, 'Medieval People in Town and Country'; Rubin, *Cities of Strangers*; Van den Heuvel, *Early Modern Streets*.

32 Frijhoff, 'Is een globale cultuurgeschiedenis van de stad mogelijk?'

33 Schrover, 'Superdiversity'; Crul, Scholten, and Van de Laar, *Coming to Terms with Superdiversity*.

to capture the variety of urban life experiences connected to urbanisation and which were expressed in context-specific configurations, interactions and representations. As far as urbanisation produced societies of greater complexity, it resulted in diversification amongst (groups of) urban dwellers. Consequently, city-dwellers experienced urban life in diverse ways, along the lines of gender, socio-economic status, marital state, age, life cycle and ethnicity, and had to negotiate these differences. Hence, diversity can be regarded as an outcome of urbanisation processes with which societies deal differently over time. Diversity among urban dwellers led to varied patterns of urban experiences, modes of behaviour, social relations, and shared norms and conventions, and to differences in the meaning of preindustrial urban life. This is precisely the urban diversity that this volume seeks to explore. Some of the contributions trace its origins or demonstrate how diversity became intersected with inequalities in legal status, social capital, human capital and prestige, which in turn contributed to the vulnerability of urban groups and individuals.

To better understand the emergence of inequalities in cities and the diverse experiences of urban life, a more refined differentiation between city dwellers is a prerequisite. A first, and most notable, difference is made along the lines of gender. Historians working on gender increasingly address this urban variable.[34] They show how gender played a role in the urban past on various levels: it was fundamental to the shape of cities and towns and was a factor in urban change. The city constructed ideas of masculinity and femininity and defined gender roles. Male and female urban dwellers were confronted with such ideological notions. The city also offered women and men different opportunities, and so their experiences of the city differed.[35] This focus has broadened beyond women's lives in the city to include agency and the explanatory power of gender. Gendered patterns of migration, for example, affected the urban demography and markets.[36] The gendered implications of the city as a place for emancipation and threat also explains the significant participation of women in urban crime.[37] Finally, gender was intertwined with class and family hierarchy, and research on the role of singles and widows in the urban past indicates the necessity to differentiate by marital status.[38]

34 Cf. Sweet, 'Introduction'.
35 Simonton, 'Gender and the Urban Experience'.
36 Erickson and Schmidt, 'Migration'.
37 Schmidt, *Prosecuting Women*, 247–55.
38 Hunt, *The Middling Sort*; De Groot, Devos, and Schmidt, *Single Life*.

Other categories were, of course, of influence on the urban experience and – possibly – contributed to urban inequalities. The concept of intersectionality,[39] introduced to show how different categories of identity intersect with empowerment and inclusion, and especially marginalisation and exclusion, has not yet been systematically applied by historians working on the pre-industrial period.[40] A growing body of literature reveals the importance of the multiple and, more importantly, varying combination of categories of identity that shaped the lives of early modern urbanites. These included gender, religion, socio-economic status, ethnicity, age, generation, marital status, migrant status and/or local embeddedness. To gain a better understanding of the different experiences in the city, and to see what differences were important or made so, it can be fruitful to include intersectionality more systematically in researching urban pasts.

Leiden provides an interesting case in this respect: it was not only an important textile city, attracting many men and women looking for employment, and a university city, attracting scholars and students from different places around the world, and a place from where scholars and students fanned out, it was also a refugee and migrant city, a literary city with a long tradition of the transmission of knowledge, the birthplace or residence of artists and philosophers. It was a nodal point in regional and interregional networks, providing markets and social facilities for its inhabitants and for the surrounding region, and a city that, like many others, at various times counted more women than men, as well as many migrants, amongst its population.

3 Leiden, c. 1200–1800

The major developments in Leiden's premodern history can be traced from ecological, spatial, demographic, economic and cultural perspectives. The dynamics the city experienced should specifically be understood in relation to its embeddedness in broader networks of varying scope and intensity. Ecologically or environmentally speaking, Leiden can be conceptualised as a historically specific, ever-evolving configuration of human and non-human actors, an entangled web of relationships between citizens and their material context(s).[41] The contributions of Wout Saelens, who examines Leiden's

39 Crenshaw, 'Demarginalizing'.

40 Montenach, 'Gender and the Underground Economy', 30; Karlsson Sjögren, 'Poor Girls' Schooling', 78–79.

41 Soens et al., 'Introduction', 19–20.

extraordinary energy consumption in the early modern period, and Janna Coomans, who addresses how medieval Leideners sought to mitigate the risk of pollution and disasters, fit into the fast-developing field of premodern environmental (urban) history.[42] 'Nature' in and outside the town walls was both a resource and a risk for urbanites. By addressing the urban metabolism, the energy and material flows between cities and their hinterlands, and by conceptualising cities as socio-ecological systems, the open ecosystems of which urbanites were part, it becomes possible to study the complex and intricate relations between urban society and its natural environment in a more systematic way.[43]

The urbanites' growing consumption of energy, food, water and materials transformed the town's immediate surroundings and even created hinterlands further away. Chrystel Brandenburgh, Edwin Orsel, Roos van Oosten and Ed van der Vlist show in their contribution how the eleventh-century settlement of Leiden originated in Holland's peat area that was reclaimed in the central Middle Ages. This involved the transformation of the landscape by constructing drainage ditches, some of which were later turned into canals. Leiden remained directly involved in the water management of its surroundings, the district of Rhineland. Although the city was represented on the water board, which had its seat in Leiden on the Breestraat from 1578 onwards, tensions were recurrent about jurisdiction, finances and economic interests.[44]

The supply of food, materials and energy has been studied from an economic angle, but its ecological implications or costs for Leiden's hinterland need further exploration. Initially, the town was mostly reliant on its immediate rural surroundings, and throughout the Middle Ages it sought to extend its legal control by obtaining comital privileges to protect its economic interests and by acquiring the neighbouring rural lordships of de Vennip, Leiderdorp, Zoeterwoude and Oegstgeest between 1552 and 1615.[45] At the beginning of the fifteenth century, however, Leiden was also well connected to regional

42 Coomans, *Community*, places public health in this field, too. See, for an archaeological and historical perspective on the cesspit in premodern Leiden, Van Oosten, *De stad, het vuil en de beerput*.

43 See, for an early contribution to this field: Hoffmann, 'Footprint Metaphor and Metabolic Realities'; and, more recently, Christophersen, 'Medieval Urban Environment'. See, for a more theoretical perspective on urban-rural systems, Thomas and Fulkerson, 'What Makes Urban Life Possible?'

44 Van Tielhof and Van Dam, *Waterstaat in stedenland*.

45 De Boer, 'De verhouding Leiden-Rijnland'; Brünner, *De order op de buitennering*; Sluijter, 'De kaart van Leiden'.

and more distant markets,[46] and by this time materials and commodities came from increasingly further away, such as wool from England, timber from Germany, brazilin (a red dye) from Asia and grain from the Baltic region. The demographic and economic development of the city arguably increased its ecological footprint in the medieval and early modern periods.

Returning to a more restricted, physical understanding of the urban space as its built environment, the medieval settlement of Leiden emerged in a fluvial landscape favourable to trade and transport, as the earlier Roman presence and the activities of early medieval Frisian traders confirm. The River Rhine had long been a frontier that had enabled exchange, linking the mainland to the North Sea area. Although the wider region was continuously inhabited from at least 2000 BCE,[47] the settlement was new when it emerged either in the eleventh or twelfth century in the peatland around the comital manor, south of the Burcht, the tenth-century shell keep that is still situated at the confluence of the Old and New Rhine.[48] In spite of the earlier presence of the Romans at different places in the Rhineland region, Leiden has no immediate roots in this period.[49] The medieval settlement gradually evolved into an urban centre. Archaeological evidence shows a distinct phase of building activities in the decades before and after 1200. The first town charter granted by the count of Holland probably dates from the same period, the last quarter of the twelfth century.[50] By that time, the idea of Leiden as a community was firmly rooted. The town's autonomy was expressed by its seal, depicting the eight aldermen from the original four wards and the sheriff, kneeling and looking up at St Peter – the town's patron saint –, who is seated in a gothic church and holds a key in his right hand.[51]

In terms of built area, the size of the town increased approximately from 0.22 km^2, the original medieval four wards, to 1.68 km^2 around the middle of the seventeenth century, as the result of a series of enlargements in 1294, 1355, 1386–1389, 1611, 1644 and 1659.[52] Figure 1.1 shows that the medieval expansions

46 Dijkman, *Shaping Medieval Markets*, 303.

47 Van Lanen et al., 'Exploring Roman and Early-Medieval Habitation'.

48 Verhulst, *The Rise of Cities*; Rutte, *Stedenpolitiek*.

49 Cf. Brandenburgh and Hessing, *Matilo, Rodenburg, Roomburg*; Dijkstra, 'Het raadsel'.

50 Van der Vlist, 'Mist over de stad'; De Boer, 'Die politische Elite', 84–87.

51 Versprille, 'De zegels'.

52 See, for the development of the built environment, Van Oerle, *Leiden*; Taverne, *In 't land van belofte*. The best-studied street of Leiden from a long-term building history-perspective is Rapenburg, which was added to the town at the end of the fourteenth century but had various functions until the end of the sixteenth century; Lunsingh Scheurleer, Fock, and Van Dissel, *Het Rapenburg*; Deneweth, 'Renovating Early Modern Leiden'.

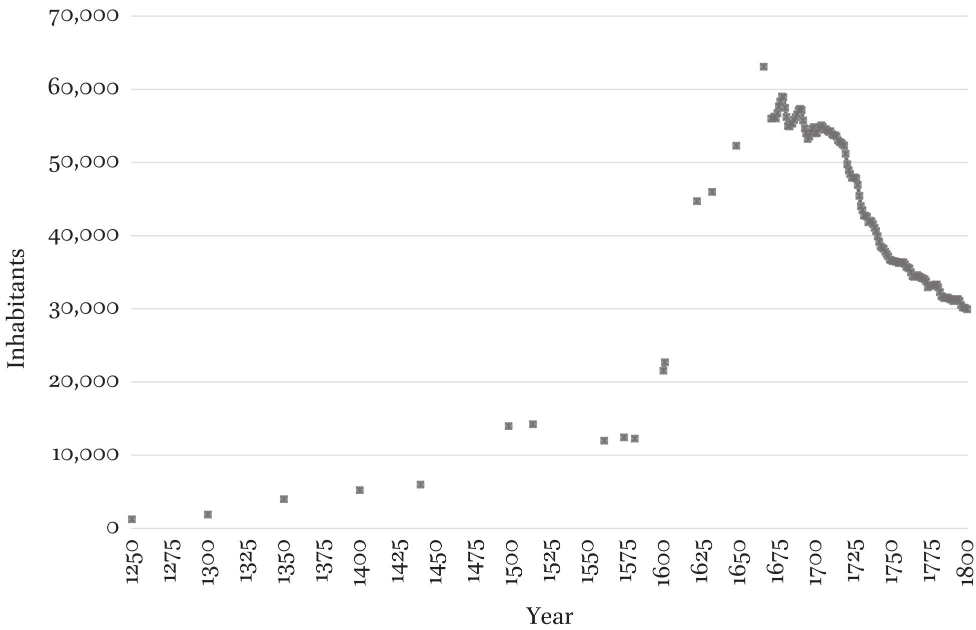

FIGURE 1.1 Leiden's population estimates, c. 1250–1800

SOURCES: De Boer, 'Leiden rond 1300', 54; Brand, *Macht en overwicht*, 29–30; Noordam, 'Leiden in last', 18–19; cf. Van Bavel en Van Zanden, 'The Jump-Start', 507; Van Maanen, 'De Leidse bevolkingsaantallen'; H.D. Tjalsma, Leiden Historical Population Databank 1700–1850, Population Data Leiden 1671–1895 (The Hague: DANS, 2023), https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-xtw-vgtr

coincided with a period of incremental population growth, but they were also intended to extend the town's jurisdiction. The rapid increase of the town's population due to migration from the last quarter of the sixteenth century onwards was initially accommodated within the medieval town walls by increasing the building density and by developing housing on former religious and industrial plots, resulting in a very high population density. Major enlargements to the city were long discussed and eventually materialised in the first half of the seventeenth century when the city's population exploded. A proposal from 1669 to further expand the city eventually became redundant, as Leiden's population gradually decreased until the early nineteenth century.[53] The city experienced demographic decline in the eighteenth century; between 1749 and 1808 the number of houses decreased by more than a quarter.[54] The

53 Noordam, 'Leiden als ideale stad', 16–22.

54 Zweep, 'Haagse groei versus Leidse krimp', 219–21.

municipal authorities had to cope with the effects of demographic decline on the urban space.

Leiden was one of the largest towns in medieval Holland and played a key role in the economic expansion of the region. Together they formed a polynuclear urban system – made up of several closely located towns of moderate size which developed specific economic functions to a certain degree – that remained comparatively un-hierarchical until the ascent of Amsterdam in the sixteenth century. But Leiden maintained its position as the second-largest city of the province in the early modern period.[55] Leiden's growth depended on migration; around 1400 newcomers came mainly from the surrounding countryside, but the city's economy also lured migrants from the Southern Low Countries and further away from the end of the sixteenth century onwards.[56] Together with the other cities Leiden accounted for the exceptionally high urbanisation rate of late medieval and early modern Holland; in the early sixteenth century already an estimated 45 percent of the population of the county lived in cities and towns, and this share would rise to over 61 percent a century later.[57] Leiden and its surroundings were a strongly urbanised region from the late Middle Ages onwards.

External factors just as much as the economic fortunes of Leiden explain the phases of demographic growth, contraction and decline, with the result that the correlation between urban demography and economy was not absolute. Leiden's economy became heavily dependent on the textile sector in the later Middle Ages. The dramatic deterioration of this industry in the sixteenth century due the decline of the medieval Old Drapery and the Siege of 1573–1574, in which some 4,000 people were estimated to have lost their lives, turned around with the arrival of thousands of migrants from the Southern Low Countries. With their knowledge, skill and capital, they stimulated the development of the New Drapery, with which Leiden grew into one of the largest textile producers in Europe. This led to a great economic boom on the one hand, but on the other to a large group of workers being excluded from prosperity. Leiden maintained its status as an industrial city throughout the eighteenth century, but the textile sector was hit hard by the loss of international

55 Van Steensel, 'Urban Hierarchies', 170; Hoppenbrouwers, 'Town and Country'; 't Hart, 'The Dutch Republic'. See, for the place of Leiden in the wider economic and political structures of the Low Countries, Van Bavel, *Manors and Markets*; Blockmans, *Metropolen aan de Noordzee*.

56 De Boer, *Graaf en grafiek*, 144–45; Van Bavel and Van Zanden, 'The Jump-Start'; Noordam, 'Nieuwkomers in Leiden'; Lucassen and De Vries, 'Leiden als middelpunt'.

57 Van Bavel and Van Zanden, 'The Jump-Start', 505; De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 61.

export markets and the shift of production to lower-wage regions in the Dutch Republic.[58] Consequently, Leiden's population number fell steadily to a low point of 28,600 inhabitants in the early nineteenth century.

Leiden's premodern growth was not linear, but still the complexity of its society increased incrementally, as did the intricacy and scope of the political and economic structures and networks in which the town became embedded over time.[59] Developments in the cloth industry that clearly marked out Leiden from the fourteenth century onwards, for example, can be read as a chronicle of its exchanges with the rest of the world. Jori Zijlmans charts these exchanges in her contribution and shows how internal institutional, organisational and commercial transformations were brought about by shifts in the position of Leiden cloth in the international production and trade networks.

Leiden was a key member of the regional body politic of the county of Holland that was integrated into the Burgundian-Habsburg state in the fifteenth century and was the urban political backbone of the Dutch Republic.[60] Both before and after 1574, Leiden was one of the six major cities represented in the States of Holland. Leiden's constitutional position changed, however, with the Revolt and the proclamation of the Republic of the United Netherlands in 1588. As part of a decentralised state, the city maintained its autonomy and shared power with the province of Holland and the States General in supra-urban matters. In this political constellation, citizenship and participative politics gained a new meaning, as Maarten Prak argues in his contribution, giving broader segments of Leiden's citizenry – often organised in corporations such as militia and participating in lively public debates[61] – a voice in political affairs that went beyond the city's boundaries.[62] The authority of Leiden's ruling elite to a certain extent depended on the ability of the authorities to deliver key services and govern adequately. Already by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, for example, the expenditure on public services per capita had increased, levelling off in the seventeenth century.[63] Arie van Steensel argues in his chapter that

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58 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*; Moes and De Vries, *Stof uit het Leidse verleden*.

59 See, in general, Prak and Van Zanden, *Pioneers of Capitalism*.

60 Stein, *Magnanimous Dukes and Rising States*; Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg Rule*; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*.

61 See, for instance, on Johan and Pieter de la Court's political-economic writings in the seventeenth century: Weststeijn, *Commercial Republicanism*.

62 In contrast to the middling groups, the ruling elite of premodern Leiden has been studied extensively: see Van Kan, *Sleutels tot de macht*; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*; Lamet, 'Men in Government'; Noordam, *Geringde buffels*; Prak, *Gezeten burgers*.

63 Rasterhoff, 'Public Spending'.

this development was the result of a system of urban governance in medieval Leiden, understood as a process increasingly coordinated by the town council that took normative ideas about good governance and the interests of various groups into account.

This volume aims to transcend the common chronological division between the medieval and early modern periods. The Relief of Leiden in 1574, however, was a turning point not only in political but also in economic and religious matters.[64] Again, urban dynamics were driven by broader, interrelated processes, not confined to the urban limits. The Reformation and the split of the Catholic Church changed religious relations significantly. Christine Kooi shows in her contribution how a regime of toleration managed confessional coexistence, as a result of which Leiden's early modern religious landscape was characterised by diversity. The turbulent years of iconoclasm and warfare made an imprint on the ecclesiastical landscape of Leiden, too. Elizabeth den Hartog explores how medieval churches, chapels and convents were pulled down or, more often, reconverted and given new purposes in this period. The prime example is the continued life of the former chapel of the convent of the White Nuns, which became the Academy building of the university that was founded in 1575.

The town council had considered the fostering of employment and education already in the medieval period. It deemed the Latin school to be important as a place where 'all youth received their principles to become wise, honourable and worthy of government, by which the good administration, economy and prosperity of towns are maintained', and encouraged citizens to send their sons to this institution rather than to the various private schools that offered a more practical curriculum.[65] Examples of well-read men, situated in urban spaces of knowledge[66] and embedded in various cultural and learned circles such as chambers of rhetoric, and who worked tirelessly for the good of the urban community, included town secretary Jan Filipsz (c. 1420–1509) and his later successor Jan van Hout (1542–1609).[67] The dissemination of knowledge had a long tradition in Leiden's history and was important to the city's development and transformation.

64 Groenveld, 'Korte introductie'.

65 Santing and Van Steensel, 'Family, Community, and Sociability', 85. See, for the option of on-the-job training through apprenticeships in the eighteenth century, Schalk, 'From Orphan to Artisan'.

66 Jacob, 'Lieux de Savoir'. See, for a critical discussion of the notion of urban innovation and creativity, Davids, De Munck, and Burm, 'Innovation and Creativity'.

67 Brinkman, *Het handschrift-Jan Phillipsz*; Brinkman, *Dichten uit liefde*; Koppenol, *Leids heelal*; Bouweman et al., *Stad van boeken*; Bostoen, *Hart voor Leiden*.

The foundation of an academic institution fitted into this tradition. The university was reportedly gifted to the people of Leiden by William of Orange as thanks for their bravery during the Revolt. But similar motives – educating youth for state and church, and for economic benefit – explain why the city council was so keen to host the university within its walls, as Ronald Sluijter shows in his contribution on how the university became entwined with city's history in the centuries that followed. An academic institution increased the prestige of the city, and the university's international reputation soon attracted scholars, students and printers.

It was at the end of the sixteenth century that Leiden truly became a hub of creativity; the joint efforts of the city council and the university resulted in the arrival of high-quality printers and scholars, contributing to the city's fame as a centre of academic book production and distribution.[68] Leiden also became known for the production of fine paintings, but this cultural industry never became as prominent as in some other cities in the Dutch Republic. Claartje Rasterhoff has demonstrated how the urban factor was decisive in the flourishing of both printing and painting.[69] Newcomers gave important impetus to local cultural life. Migrant organisations functioned as channels of cultural transfer and exchange, as Alisa van de Haar and Johannes Müller show, thereby counterbalancing the dominant historical perspective of migration as a story of hardship, expulsion and marginalisation.

The thriving university and the revival of the textile industry, both closely connected to the political and religious upheavals in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, shaped the social relations within the city and its representation to the outside world in the following centuries. Leiden combined the reputation of an industrial city, where capitalist labour relations emerged at an early stage, with that of a university city known both for its culture of knowledge and its cultural impact. The contrast between the proletarian textile workers and the renowned scholars and patrons of the fine arts was stark, expressing the social and economic inequality in the city in the most pressing way. Inequality in the city, however, was expressed in many more ways. Moreover, this dichotomy does not do justice to the diversity among Leiden's citizens, which was much larger.

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68 Close links existed between cartographers and surveyors and the city's (learned) administrative circles in Leiden around 1600, as cartography can also be regarded as part of the creative industries. See, for example, Westra, 'Jan Pietersz. Dou'; Lilley, 'Mapping Sites'.

69 Rasterhoff, *Painting and Publishing*, 41, 173. See, for the corporate organisation of printers and painters in the seventeenth century: Cruz, *The Paradox of Prosperity*; Bakker, 'United Under One Roof'.

Leiden's population was overwhelmingly poor in the premodern period. High wage dependency increased hardship and risks during periods of economic downturn. Leiden was also a comparatively unhealthy place. Morbidity, mortality and lack of family support gave city life a specific dynamic, but various groups were hit differently, as Henk Looijesteijn, Evelien Walhout and Jaco Zuijderduijn show. Children, the elderly and single women were especially vulnerable, each for different reasons. Risks varied and so did the solutions to them. In the second half of the eighteenth century more than ten percent of the population depended structurally on the alms provided by the *huiszittenhuis,* the city's largest, though not the only, charitable organisation. By then, the ideal of a centralised system had already been abandoned for some time and poor relief was characterised by pillarisation, with religious denominations having their own charitable institutions.

Inequality was also reflected in the relative accessibility of other urban institutions. Factors such as socio-economic status and gender, as well as migrant, marital, socio-cultural status or age distinctions, appear to have had an influence, and sometimes in unexpected ways. In the more complex city, social order was an issue of growing concern. Conflict regulation and social control, either exercised by the authorities, churches or among citizens, was dealt with by a broad range of organisations, according to Manon van der Heijden in her chapter on the uses of justice in early modern Leiden. Notwithstanding the absence of formal barriers, civil procedures were increasingly used by men from the upper middle classes, and the poor and newcomers were targeted more often. Thus, legal inequality between Leiden's inhabitants changed over the course of time, along socio-economic, socio-cultural and gendered lines.

Similar dynamics played a role in the accessibility of the labour market, which was characterised by social as well as gender segmentation. However, to understand the functioning of the early modern labour market, it is not enough to contrast women's work with men's work. The importance of the determinants of marital status, migrant background and social embeddedness regarding access to paid work indicates that a more differentiated approach that takes into account the diversity among urban dwellers is crucial, as Ariadne Schmidt argues in her contribution.

This volume lacks a separate chapter on the theme that underlies one of the most fundamental inequalities. For a long time, attention to the colonial and slavery history has mainly focused on port cities or cities with a chamber of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) or West India Company (WIC). Historians are becoming increasingly aware that the local history of other typical industrial cities like Leiden was also intertwined with the history of colonialism and slavery, directly and indirectly.[70] Leiden's connections with colonialism, and its involvement in slavery and human exploitation, were revealed in multiple ways: in the investment in and ownership of plantations by Leiden citizens;[71] in its involvement in the foundation of the Dutch West India Company and the related trade privileges of the city;[72] in its importation of plantation-produced products, which changed consumption patterns as well as affected employment options in the local Leiden labour market; and in the formation and exchange of knowledge at the university. The significance of colonial connections for Leiden's inhabitants varied. More research is needed and will be carried out in the coming years, in order to understand in greater depth the involvement of the city and its citizens in slavery and slavery-related activities, as well as the impact of colonialism in the development of the city and the many ways in which colonial history and local urban history are intertwined.[73]

4 Final Remarks

In many respects Leiden's medieval and early modern history is typical of other towns and cities in the Low Countries and beyond. The settlement originated around a local centre of power and evolved into a durable urban formation that, on the one hand, made an ecological and economic imprint on the immediate landscape and created more distant hinterlands, and, on the other, was shaped by exchanges within the broader structures and networks of a political, socio-economic and cultural nature in which it was embedded. Within its town walls new communities were formed of various kinds – political, economic, religious and cultural – which offered urbanites and newcomers the opportunity to become part of and create complex human interactions guided by emergent institutions and conventions. From this perspective, the city is fittingly conceptualised as a continuous process of multiple enactments of the urban in concrete, historical-specific practices and spaces. In addition to a focus on the material contexts of urban life – its daily rhythms, the formation of new solidarities and the forging of novel identities – this volume draws attention

70 Brandon and Bosma, 'De betekenis van de Atlantische slavernij'.
71 Oostindie and Fatah-Black, *Sporen van slavernij*; Ramackers, 'Daniel van Eijs'.
72 Van Groesen, 'The Anglo-Dutch Lake?'; Oostindie and Fatah-Black, *Sporen van slavernij*, 35–36.
73 Ramackers, Sow, Schmidt, and Schrikker, 'Vooronderzoek koloniale en slavernijgeschiedenis'.

to two specific outcomes of urban processes, inequality and diversity, to refine our understanding of how these intersected, and to show the contours of the workings of urban society. In the case of premodern Leiden, at least four drivers of these processes stand out: the economic attraction of its textile industry, the cultural appeal of the city as place of knowledge and creative industry, the agency of its inhabitants, and, from early on, the coordinating role of the urban magistrates.

To conclude the introduction to this companion, we identify a few starting points for diving into Leiden's rich archives for future research. The sources are mostly written in Middle or Old Dutch, but they are increasingly accessible through editions and digitisation. First, the sources relating to the political interactions of Leiden in representative institutions, the States of Holland and the States-General, have been collated in edition projects and are available online.[74] Next, of great importance to Leiden's economic and social history is the six-volume collection of sources relating to the textile industry, edited by N.W. Posthumus.[75] Third, the Leiden archives provide a rich treasure-trove of primary sources relating to the city's political, economic, social, religious and cultural institutions and actors, often of a serial character, allowing us to chart long-term developments.[76] Some of the older materials have been published, but this is only a tiny fraction of all the materials available.[77] Finally, the archives of Leiden University are curated by its library, the map collection of which also contains cartographic sources relevant to Leiden's history.[78] Over the past years, a digital historical mapping platform has been under development,

74 Huygens Instituut, Amsterdam, Staten en steden van Holland 1276–1544 (https://www.huygens.knaw.nl/resources/staten-en-steden-van-holland-1276-1544), Resolutiën der Staten-Generaal 1576–1796 (https://www.huygens.knaw.nl/resources/resolutien-der-staten-generaal-1576-1625 and https://republic.huygens.knaw.nl).

75 Posthumus, *Bronnen*. Also, accessible online: Huygens Instituut, Amsterdam, Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van de Leidsche textielnijverheid 1333–1795 (https://www.huygens.knaw.nl/resources/bronnen-tot-de-geschiedenis-van-de-leidsche-textielnijverheid-1333-1795).

76 For an overview of the records, see the online portal of the regional archive, Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken (ELO): https://www.erfgoedleiden.nl/collecties/archieven. ELO also curates the city's archeological collection. A list of transcribed or indexed sources can be found on ELO's website: https://www.erfgoedleiden.nl/collecties/uw-verhalen/uw-verhalen/verhaal/id/279. Some sources are also published on the website of the local historical association: Historische Vereniging Oud Leiden (https://oudleiden.nl/werkgroepen/jan-van-hout-archiefonderzoek). This association also publishes an annual review with articles on Leiden's history: *Leids jaarboekje* (https://oudleiden.nl/publicaties/jaarboekje).

77 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*; Meerkamp van Embden, *Stadsrekeningen*.

78 Leiden University Archives (https://www.library.universiteitleiden.nl/subject-guides/leiden-university-archives) and Cartographic Collections (https://www.library.universiteitleiden.nl/subject-guides/cartographic-collections).

Historisch Leiden in Kaart (Mapping Historical Leiden), which offers a longitudinal and parcel-oriented approach. Almost all relevant archival records relating to individual and properties from the second half of the sixteenth century that can be geo-located have been entered into a linked database, offering the possibility of research on the housing market, on residential mobility or on occupational clustering, to name a few topics.[79] This platform will be further developed in the near future and the linked data will be expanded to cover the period up to the early nineteenth century, making it a promising tool for future research on the premodern history of Leiden.

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79 Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken, Historisch Leiden in Kaart (https://historischleideninkaart.nl). A team of volunteers is responsible for data entry and the project is hosted by the local archive. Currently, further investment is required to develop a new platform offering better access to the maps and data. For more background, see Van Steensel, 'Mapping Medieval Leiden'.

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CHAPTER 2

The Urban Landscape of Medieval Leiden

Chrystel Brandenburgh, Roos van Oosten, Edwin Orsel and Ed van der Vlist

The origins and earliest urban development of Leiden have long preoccupied Leiden historians. In the early twentieth century, researchers believed that the Roman *castellum* Matilo was located underneath the motte-and-bailey castle of the Burcht, which led to deep excavations but no conclusive evidence of this Roman fortification. It took archaeologists several years to realise that Leiden was not built by Romans, since Matilo was situated southeast of the city and the keep was of medieval origin.[1] Hugo van Oerle was the first to attempt to write a comprehensive academic history of the urban development of Leiden.[2] For over 25 years, Van Oerle's two volumes were the source of debate and research on the subject. A new survey of the history of Leiden was published in 2002: the first volume of a series of four edited by Jan Marsilje, which include an overview of Leiden's earliest urban development written by Ed van der Vlist. More than twenty years after its publication, this overview remains surprisingly relevant.[3] This is due to the fact that since its publication, little new data on Leiden's origins have come to light. Every attempt to re-evaluate this intriguing phase of the city's history has consisted merely of reinterpreting the available historical sources.[4]

In recent years, however, archaeological and building-archaeological discoveries in various parts of the city have re-invigorated the dialogue about the period in which the city was founded. These new interdisciplinary insights by no means diminish the significance of earlier publications, but they do enable us to better interpret the origins and spatial development of Leiden and compare them with the origins and growth of other cities in the Netherlands. Although no synthesis has been written on the emergence of the urban form and the evolution of the urban landscape in the Low Countries in recent

1 Holwerda, 'Roomburg'.
2 Van Oerle, *Leiden*.
3 Marsilje, *Leiden*; Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte'.
4 Van der Vlist, 'Mist over de stad'; Lugt, *Het ontstaan van Leiden*; De Boer and Brandenburgh, 'De vroegste geschiedenis'.

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years,[5] numerous local studies have appeared that address the various ways in which the urban space and architecture developed and were adapted to new circumstances in the medieval and early modern eras.[6] These studies focus on different aspects, such as the coordinating and regulatory role of urban authorities, the dynamics of the real estate market and the (environmental) impact of land use, yet they have in common an emphasis on the contextual and path-dependent nature of these developments, whose outcomes affected cities and their inhabitants differently. Furthermore, the explanations offered for these processes are less functional and take a wider range of environmental, political, economic, cultural and ideological factors into account.[7]

The chapter below presents the most up to date knowledge on the origins and development of Leiden in a chronological manner. Data from older publications and from more recent studies are brought together as we deal successively with the following topics: landscape, reclamations, origins of the town and urban expansions. Finally, the focus shifts from Leiden's urban structure to the development of construction in the city, covering aspects such as building density and the provenance of building materials and the transition from wood to brick as the most common building material. We conclude by situating the urban development of Leiden in a broader context: how does Leiden fit into the picture of urbanisation elsewhere in the Netherlands? And, at the level of the city of Leiden itself, how does the growth of medieval Leiden differ from the growth of later periods? This allows us to identify avenues for future research on the early urban development of Leiden.

1 A Dynamic River Landscape

Leiden emerged in the central Middle Ages at the intersection of several waterways, the Old Rhine, Mare and Vliet. Even in Roman times, the region's main river, the Old Rhine, was an artery for trade along which dwellings and military structures were built. However, Leiden's Roman past has no link (and continuity) with the medieval city: it arose at a different site, northwest from the Roman castellum Matilo. The landscape is believed to have inspired the

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5 Verhulst, *The Rise of Cities*; Vannieuwenhuyze and Rutte, 'Medieval Urban Form'; Taverne, *In 't land van belofte*.

6 De Vries, *Bouwen in de late middeleeuwen*; Deneweth, 'Building Regulations'; Deneweth, 'Renovating Early Modern Leiden'; Van Tussenbroek, 'The Great Rebuilding'; Abrahamse and Deneweth, *Transforming Space*.

7 See, in general, Lilley, *City and Cosmos*.

name of the medieval settlement, Leithon, which can be translated as 'by the waters'.[8] In making this assumption, we usually fall back on the city's oldest city maps where the Rhine, Mare and Vliet are depicted as following their late medieval course. However, at the time of the city's origins around the twelfth century, the landscape was not as firmly defined and shaped by human hands as it was in the late Middle Ages. If we want to comprehend when and how the city came into being and how the site for Leiden's oldest nucleus was determined, it is necessary to understand the city's pre-urban landscape better. The archaeological research carried out in the inner city of Leiden in the past decade has contributed substantially to this end.

The western coastal area of the Netherlands changed significantly during the Holocene. Because of rising sea levels, several lines of beach ridges formed between Leiden and Katwijk from c. 5000 years ago. At about the same time (c. 3400 BCE), the Old Rhine came into being.[9] The wide estuary at its mouth was the only place where, at high tide, the sea flowed into the hinterland. The land behind the coastal beach ridges and beyond the relatively high embankments of the Rhine was wet and consisted of vast areas of peat land intermingled with thick layers of clay deposited by the flooding Rhine and the sea. Large gullies and creeks also formed in the peatlands during flooding. The Rhine did not always flow into the same place, nor was it always as winding as it is today. In Roman times, as opposed to during the Middle Ages, the Rhine flowed along a fairly straight course, and was probably about 300 metres wide and more than ten metres deep. It thus carried a large volume of water.[10]

Near the end of the Roman era, a new river (the Waal) formed upstream into which some of the Rhine's water was discharged. This decrease in flow weakened the Rhine's current, causing the once-straight river to begin meandering. In the early Middle Ages, the Rhine's river channel shifted continuously within a wide band, with the bends becoming larger and larger. Riverbank deposits built up, creating land suitable for settlement. However, the meandering process also caused the banks of the outer bends to erode, and archaeological remains from the earliest occupation phases from prehistory onward have consequently disappeared completely.[11] The Rhine kept shifting until 1122, when it was dammed at Wijk bij Duurstede. This caused the estuary to silt up even further. When the sea flooded far inland during the St Thomas Flood in 1165, depositing thick layers of clay, the mouth of the Rhine became permanently

8 Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 15.
9 Cohen and Stouthamer, 'Digitaal Basisbestand'.
10 Wilbers, 'De meanderende Oude Rijn'.
11 Wilbers.

blocked. We can assume that the course of the present-day Rhine is more or less the same as it was in the mid-twelfth century, a view also held by Van Oerle. But even so, it has shifted somewhat: archaeological research on both sides of the Rhine has shown that the southern bank of the Rhine at the time was about halfway between the Breestraat and the present bank.[12] We now also know that the entire bank of the Rhine on which Leiden was first established was not uniformly habitable. In the following, we examine the habitability of these banks and the human activities that led to Leiden's emergence.

Living in a coastal area meant that water was an ever-present reality. As a result, the preference was for settlements to be built on high and dry ground. In many places, the banks of the Rhine were suitable for habitation either temporarily or long term, as evidenced by the location of Roman *castella* and settlements in nearby Valkenburg and Matilo. The same is true for the early medieval settlement Nieuw Rhijngeest in Oegstgeest; here people settled on the high ground next to the Rhine and shifted their settlements with the moving river.

Dozens of archaeological surveys of inner-city Leiden show the pre-urban landscape in relief (Figure 2.1).[13] The south side of the Rhine was marked by a wide swath of natural sandy heights, where, in approximately 1200, the Count of Holland established his court and the Pieterskerk was built. But not all places along the Rhine were as suitable for habitation, such as the half-filled dry Rhine meanders or the areas with subsoil that consisted of layers of clay and peat that had been deposited under wet conditions. In the Papengracht and Pieterskerkgracht, for example, remnant gully deposits have been found. This remnant gully was cut off from the main channel of the Rhine at an unknown time. It silted up and was filled in the period 1025–1150. Subsequently, the area of the gully was raised, but building commenced only in the thirteenth century.[14] We must therefore take into account the fact that the area between the count's court and the Rhine was not a uniformly dry bank but required human engineering to make it habitable. The northern bank of the Rhine lay directly adjacent to a lower flood basin with subsoil consisting of clay and peat which was less suitable for habitation. Along the Mare, the subsoil is relatively higher, and older settlements may have formed here. Finally, the Waardeiland, a tract of

12 Van Oerle, *Leiden*; Dijkstra and Brandenburgh, *Leiden-Aalmarktschool*, 27.

13 An important source of information for this is the 2014 underground waste container project in which drilling surveys were conducted throughout the inner city. Various drilling surveys and excavations in the oldest parts of Leiden have also been used. See: Jordanov and Wink, *Oud vuil*.

14 Brandenburgh, *Het archeologisch onderzoek*, 15.

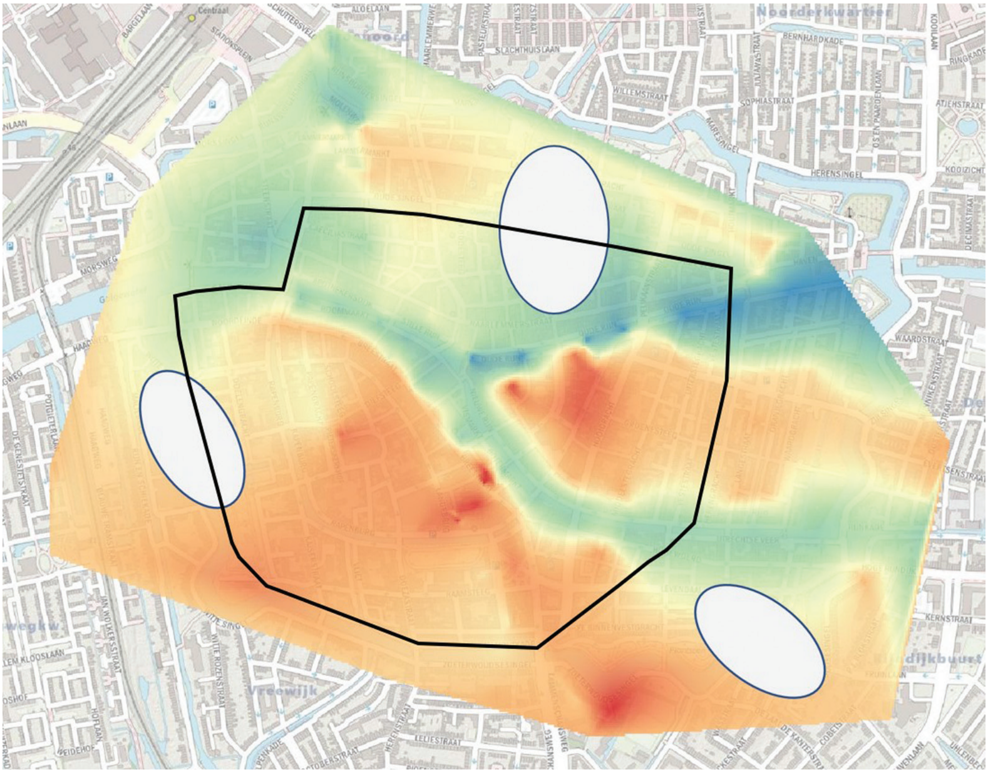

FIGURE 2.1 Pre-urban landscape elevation of what is now Leiden's inner city (colour gradient: red [high], orange, yellow, green, blue [low]). The black line indicates the largest medieval extension of Leiden. The white ovals indicate insufficient data for a reliable reconstruction of the pre-urban elevation
SOURCE: AUTHORS

land between two branches of the Rhine, was naturally elevated, making it habitable even during periods of regular flooding.

2 Leiden in the Ninth to Eleventh Centuries

It is difficult to pinpoint when exactly Leiden came into existence merely on the basis of historical sources. An early source (c. 850), the property list of St Martin's Church in Utrecht, mentions three settlements named Leithon. The location of these settlements has long been debated and the case is still unresolved; the current view is that they existed on the north bank of the Rhine in the vicinity of Leiden/Leiderdorp, and possibly also on the

Waardeiland.[15] However, it is unclear how the location of these oldest settlements relates to the settlement that developed on the south bank of the Rhine in the twelfth century. A second source dates from the late tenth century and concerns a donation of goods to Egmond Abbey by Count Arnulf (988–993). These goods were located in 'Lopsen, iuxta flumen Marne and in villa Leythen'.[16] Archaeological finds from this early period are scarce. In 2017, an excavation at Haarlemmerstraat 101–111, in Leiden's inner-city, uncovered an ancient branch of the Mare with wooden embankments dating from the ninth to the early eleventh centuries.[17]

In the same period, the Burcht was built: a castle on the western tip of the Waardeiland where the two branches of the Rhine and one of the Mare meet. The castle in its present form is a *motte* castle, that is, a castle built on a man-made mound of earth. The age of the castle has also been long debated. After the destruction of the earthwork castle at Rijnsburg in the mid-eleventh century, the count of what would soon come to be called Holland began minting coins at Leitheriburch. This shift is often considered to mark the year the Burcht was built.[18] However, the archaeological discovery of ninth or tenth-century wooded remains at the deepest levels of the castle mound is an indication that the Burcht was probably built before 1050.[19] In its oldest form, the castle may have been a mound where local residents sought refuge from rising flood waters. It has also been suggested that it could have been a ring-wall castle (a fortification consisting of a circular earthen wall), but this is disputed.[20] However, little is known about this earliest period and the following centuries.[21]

It is unlikely that the count built his castle in an empty and uninhabited landscape. The settlement on the north bank of the Rhine bears witness to this, and we can also infer from the *botting* list (a tax record from the eleventh century) that by the end of that century a settlement large enough for taxes to be levied existed there.[22] Whether and how the south bank of the Rhine was inhabited in the eleventh century, however, remains unclear. The oldest settlement traces here date from the twelfth century.

15 Dijkstra, 'Het raadsel'.
16 For sources and dating, see Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 19.
17 Meier and Van Dam, *Archeologische opgraving Haarlemmerstraat*, 22–26.
18 Lugt, 'Het oudste Leiden'.
19 De Boer and Brandenburgh, 'De vroegste geschiedenis', 11–12.
20 Orsel, 'De Burcht'; Van der Ende, 'De Burcht'; Lugt, *Het ontstaan van Leiden*, 52.
21 Van der Vlist, *De Burcht*; cf. Lugt, *Het ontstaan van Leiden*.
22 Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 21.

3 The Count's Court and Twelfth-Century Leiden

Throughout the Middle Ages, the count resided at various places in the county of Holland. The count's court (or *curtis*) in Leiden consisted of a residence, the Gravensteen, which later functioned as a prison, and the count's chapel, which was later designated as a parish church for the residents in the area. It has traditionally been assumed that the Pieterskerk was erected in the county area as early as 1121, but Peter Bitter and Piet de Baar established in 1992 that this dating is questionable.[23] In historical sources, the Pieterskerk does not otherwise appear in the twelfth century. An early dating of the Pieterskerk is in doubt for another reason. The presence of other buildings in the burial area before the mid-twelfth century has not been archaeologically proven.[24] The residential House Lokhorst, excavated in 1966, was of brick rather than tuff, as might be expected for a twelfth-century dwelling.[25] Edwin Orsel dates the oldest phase of the count's castle in which brick was used to be very early, namely before 1200. Moreover, he indicates that the Gravensteen may have originally been built as a residential tower and only later took on the function of a prison.[26] So the count may have moved into the Gravensteen shortly before 1200. Evidence for other twelfth-century stone or brick buildings in Leiden, apart from the Burcht, is as yet lacking. The court in Leiden was important to the counts of Holland, as evidenced by the exclusive right this court had to the *spitwood* (firewood and wooden stakes). This wood was presumably delivered to the Leiden county court from across Rhineland as early as the twelfth century.[27]

Habitation was initially limited to the Breestraat and nearby areas. Merchants and artisans remained living between the Rhine and Langebrug. The Langebrug, or Vollersgracht, was once a moat that functioned as the boundary of the city: the reference *poirtgrafte van Leyden* in a charter from 1341 records this.[28] This oldest urban area must once have belonged to the count's *curtis*, but the date and the method of giving out land for urban development cannot be determined from historical sources. Archaeological research offers a clue: it shows that the oldest settlement on the Breestraat was a small, elongated mound about 125 metres in diameter and only 90 cm

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23 Bitter and De Baar, 'Enkele gedachten', 97. This doubt also resonates with Dröge and Veerman, 'Inleiding', 13, but Van der Vlist, 'Mist over de stad', 13, considers it 'by no means impossible'.

24 Brandenburgh and Orsel, 'Leiden', 99.

25 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:67.

26 Orsel, 'Licht in de duistere Middeleeuwen', 13–14; Brandenburgh and Orsel, 'Leiden', 98.

27 Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 28.

28 Van der Vlist, 26, 70.

high.[29] Archaeologists date this first embankment to the mid-twelfth century (1100/25–1175).[30] It is also worth mentioning that at that time, not only was the mound constructed, but at several places on the south bank, lowlands were filled in (but only inhabited later on).[31] All this testifies to a long-term plan, in which an extensive area was made suitable for habitation and protected from the floods of the Rhine in a relatively short time. In the first decades after the construction of the mound, habitation was concentrated in the area on either side of the current town hall. Subsequently, at the end of the twelfth century, the mound was further raised and extended and continuous revetments were constructed in the Rhine near the town hall, while pits and ditches were dug.[32] This suggests that there was construction along the Breestraat that extended to that point. Moreover, the construction of the revetments in the Rhine was a communal activity that required a well-organised society or active involvement by the count of Holland.

4 Reclamation and Water Control at the End of the Twelfth Century

Reclamations in the hinterland on both sides of the Rhine had been going on for quite some time by the beginning of the twelfth century and contributed greatly to the hydrological problems that occurred in that century. The Rhine's estuary had gradually dried up and, at the same time, the reclamations in the hinterland caused water levels to rise. As this water was unable to drain, major flooding ensued during the twelfth century. This, in turn, led to efforts to make the banks of the Rhine habitable or to ensure that they remained so. Along with the construction and raising of the village on the south bank of the Rhine, the area between the embankment and the water was raised and the Rhine was narrowed by installing revetments and depositing soil. The reclaimed land was immediately put to use, after which individual plots were further raised and built out towards the Rhine.[33] This eventually pushed the south bank of the Rhine some 25 metres to the north. Because the houses on the Breestraat thus lost access to the water, the *waterstegen* – characteristic of Leiden – were created. These were narrow alleys that ran from the backs of the Breestraat

29 Pruissers and Vos, 'Een Hollandse stad', 76.
30 Hallewas, 'Een gat in de Breestraat'; Horssen and Ostkamp, 'Keramiek'.
31 Brandenburgh, *Het archeologisch onderzoek*, 101–4.
32 Dijkstra and Brandenburgh, *Leiden-Aalmarktschool*, 34–35.
33 Dijkstra and Brandenburgh, 324–25.

plots to the Rhine.[34] Also south of the Breestraat, lowlands were filled in and embankments were created during the twelfth century.

5 Urban Development in the Thirteenth Century

Leiden's oldest city charter is dated around 1200.[35] By then, the city was of considerable size, and its growth continued in the following years. In the period 1200–1225 (or 1250), the Breestraat was further raised and resurfaced with wood. Further reclamations caused the plots that ran through to the Rhine to be enlarged plot by plot towards the water.[36] After 1250, densification increased rapidly, and the city grew. At the same time, there were planned and collective land reclamations of the Rhine. The dyke was raised again and around 1250 the first brick houses were constructed along the Breestraat alongside wooden houses.[37]

The elongated village on either side of the Breestraat included four neighbourhoods, which were called *bonnen* in Leiden. The typically Leiden name reveals the strong connection the earliest residents had with the Rijndijk: a *bon* was the part of the dyke for which the residents were responsible. The oldest *bonnen* bordered each other in the heart of the community at the 'blue stone' in the Breestraat. They took their names from the main buildings that stood there: cloth hall (Wanthuis), wool hall (Wolhuis), hospital (Gasthuis) and meat hall (Vleeshuis).[38]

The count retained ownership of real estate throughout the city. For example, he owned a contiguous area south of the Breestraat until well into the fourteenth century. The area south of the Pieterskerk was ecclesiastical land

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34 The word 'watersteeg' means water alley. They were called so because they gave access to water, not because they were waterways themselves.

35 Van Maanen, 'Het Leidse stadsrecht', 48, argues that William I granted the city the right, and did so between 1213 and 1217, while Lugt, 'Het oudste Leiden', 45, dates the charter later. De Boer and Brandenburgh, 'De vroegste geschiedenis', 15, consider it more likely that Dirk VII (1190–1203) granted the first city rights.

36 Hallewas, 'Een gat in de Breestraat', 37–38; Horssen and Ostkamp, 'Keramiek', 72–73; Dijkstra and Brandenburgh, *Leiden-Aalmarktschool*, 37–38; Brandenburgh and Orsel, 'Leiden'; Brandenburgh, *Het archeologisch onderzoek*, 105–6.

37 Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 51–55.

38 The old city along the Breestraat was expanded to include the *bonnen* Over't Hof (count's area) and Zevenhuizen (ecclesiastical area). At the end of the thirteenth century, the wards on the Waardeiland (Burgstreng and Kerkvierendeel) were added, and in the mid-fourteenth century were added those on the north bank of the Rhine (Marendorp and Overmare) and further onto the Waardeiland (Gansoord and Sint Nicolaasgracht).

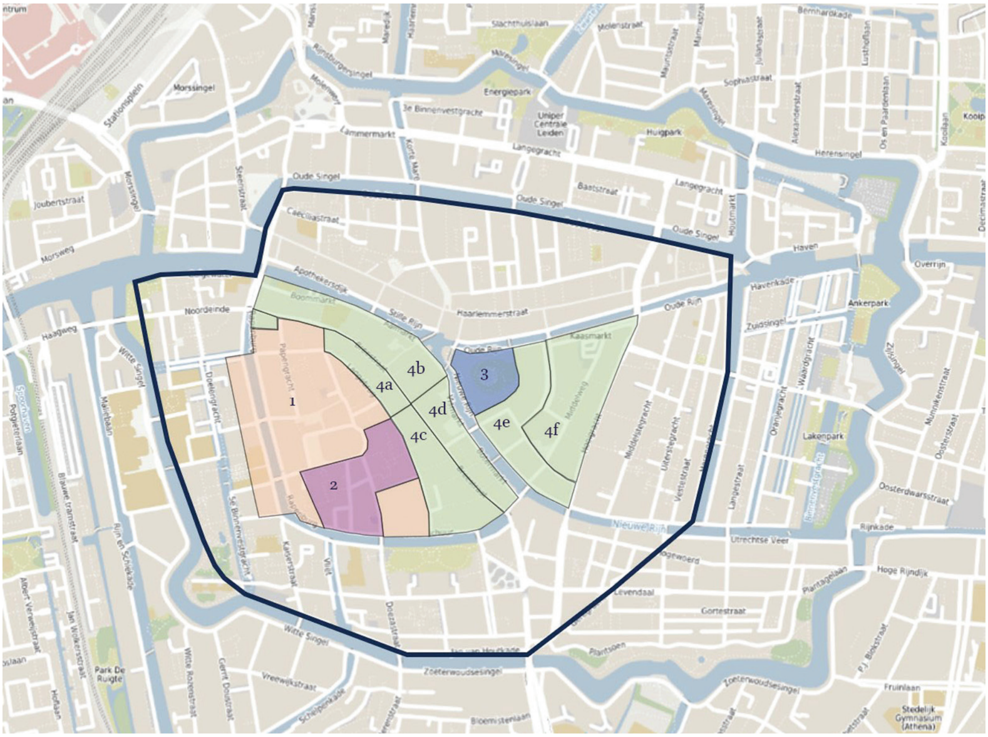

FIGURE 2.2 Leiden around 1300. 1 Area of the count of Holland, 102 ha; 2 Area of the Teutonic Order, 32 ha; 3 The Burcht, 19 ha; 4 Civil area, 183 ha. Later known as the *bonnen*: 4a) Vleeshuis, 4b) Gasthuis, 4c) Wolhuis, 4d) Wanthuis, 4e) Burgstreng, 4f) Kerkvierendeel
SOURCE: AUTHORS

that had been owned by the Teutonic Order since 1268 (Figure 2.2). The city council had no authority here, nor in the count's territory. The expansion of the residential area was therefore initially limited, but, during the fourteenth century, more and more of the count's property was either purchased or acquired through long-term leases and incorporated into the city.

In addition to the houses of citizens, this fledgling town was also home to a variety of other structures. The oldest preserved structure is the aforementioned castle hill, on which the present ring wall of tuff and brick was built in the thirteenth century.[39] The oldest brick building is the earlier mentioned Gravensteen, a square tower dating from the late twelfth century. It is one of

39 Orsel, 'De Burcht'.

the earliest brick buildings in the region. The count's residence was constructed next to it. Its foundation of large bricks has been recovered. Some unusual buildings appeared in the count's court in the thirteenth century. In the area south of the Pieterskerk, the Teutonic Order built a house, parts of which were discovered during building archaeological research.[40] Near the north end of Rapenburg, between the Breestraat and the Voldersgracht or the Langebrug, the foundations of the *Lombardenhuis* (a medieval banking house) founded in or before 1289, have recently come to light.[41] The count also founded the beguinage of St Agnieten, or the Faliede Begijnhof, before 1293, on the current Pieterskerkhof west of the Pieterskerk.[42]

In the urban area on either side of the central Breestraat, many public buildings were built alongside private dwellings. Of the buildings after which the four oldest *bonnen* are named, the Gasthuis is the best known. This hospital was founded in or before 1276, and large parts of the ward of the hospice are still preserved in the Walloon Church on the Breestraat.[43] When the Vleeshuis and Wolhuis were founded and where they stood is unknown. The Wanthuis, whose date of origin is also unknown, stood behind the town hall, which is first mentioned in 1350.[44] Recently, the 'clock house', which stood at the corner of the Breestraat and the Maarsmansteeg, was also the subject of a building archaeological survey.[45] At the beginning of the fourteenth century, Count William III gave Leiden's citizenry permission to hang a bell on this thirteenth-century house.[46] These early buildings were constructed of durable brick, so they are, in part, preserved, but they are also evidence that brick was used as construction material in Leiden already in the thirteenth century.

6 Settlement on Waardeiland and the City's First Expansion in 1294

While the Burcht was probably the oldest (and for a long time the only) building on the Waardeiland, historical sources mention inhabitants on the island only in 1292. In that year a tug-of-war between the Pieterskerk and the

40 Orsel, 'Oude muurdelen'.

41 Lunsingh Scheurleer, Fock, and Van Dissel, *Het Rapenburg*, 2:163–64; Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:76; Brandenburgh, *Het archeologisch onderzoek*, 41–47.

42 Koorn, *Begijnhoven in Holland en Zeeland*, 171–79; Sicking, 'Middeleeuwse bebouwing', 190; Van Maanen, 'De "Witte poort aan de Vliet"', 44.

43 Orsel, 'Een middeleeuwse gevel'; Orsel, 'Kaarnis bevestigt oorsprong Waalse kerk'.

44 Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 52.

45 Orsel et al., 'Onverwachte ontdekkingen'.

46 Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 52.

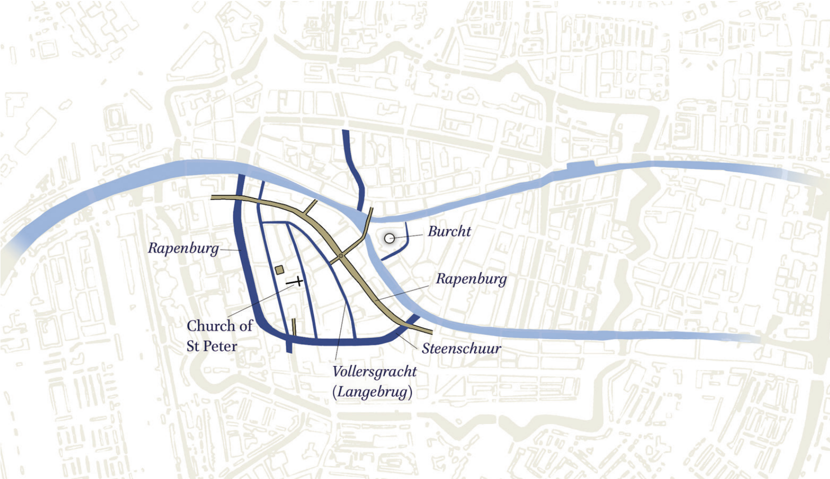

FIGURE 2.3A The boundaries of the city of Leiden, c. 1250
SOURCE: T. LAMMERS, ECHO INFORMATION DESIGN

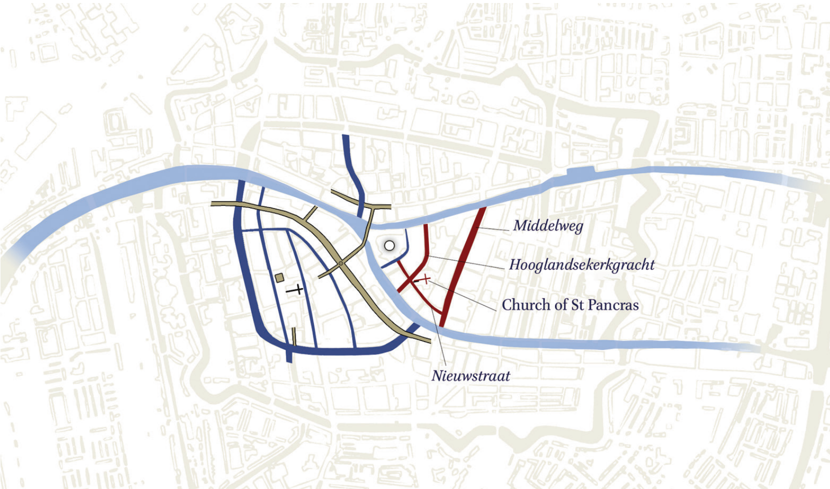

FIGURE 2.3B The boundaries of the city of Leiden, c. 1300
SOURCE: T. LAMMERS, ECHO INFORMATION DESIGN

Leiderdorp church over the parish boundaries on the Waardeiland erupted. The residents of Waardeiland were expected to attend church in Leiderdorp, as it was part of that parish, but the commander of the Teutonic Order and the parish priest of the Pieterskerk, south of the Rhine, wanted them to attend the latter. The Waardeiland's inhabitants will have agreed with them wholeheartedly, albeit for a different reason: they would have preferred to attend

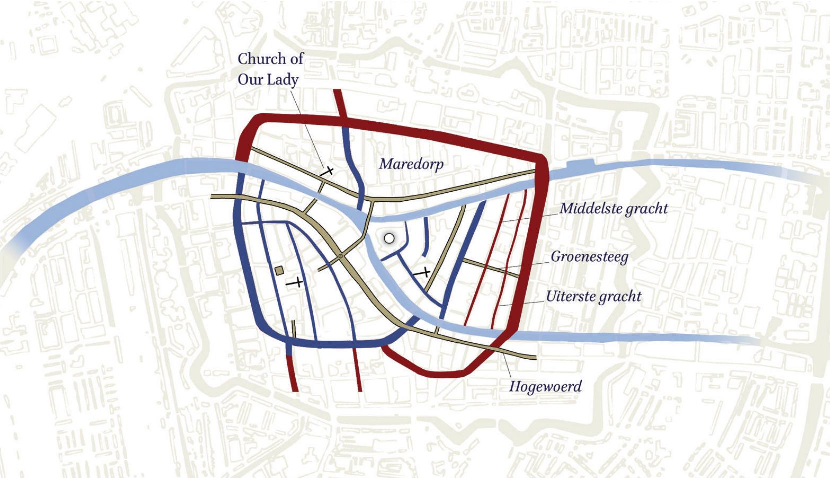

FIGURE 2.3C The boundaries of the city of Leiden, c. 1350
SOURCE: T. LAMMERS, ECHO INFORMATION DESIGN

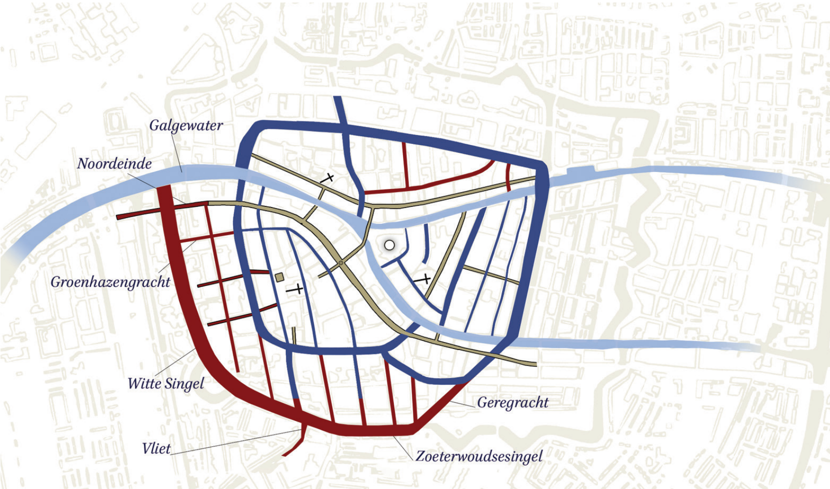

FIGURE 2.3D The boundaries of the city of Leiden, c. 1386
SOURCE: T. LAMMERS, ECHO INFORMATION DESIGN

church closer to home. A large number of people must have been living on the Waardeiland to warrant this disagreement. However, where these people lived and how densely built up the area was at that time is still unclear.

Clearly, there was activity in the final decade of the thirteenth century, indicating that the growth of the city on the south bank of the Rhine included the Waardeiland. In 1294 or 1295, Count Floris V ceded ownership of land 'right next to the Castle' to two brothers.[47] This land grant was an important moment in the urbanisation of the island – the first of a series of expansions: twenty years later, in 1314, the residents of the Waardeiland received permission from the bishop of Utrecht to build a chapel 'in insula Reni, inter duas fossas novas quae sunt in meridionali parte castri de Leyden versus Leyderdorp' (on the island in the Rhine, between two new moats south of Leiden castle towards Leiderdorp).[48] These two new moats might mean Hooglandse Kerkgracht and Hooigracht, but it is more likely that the word *inter* should be understood as 'in the corner of'; in that case, the chapel was built where the Hooglandsekerkgracht and the moat in the Nieuwsteeg intersect at a right angle. Archaeological research has recently established that this moat, which was filled in around 1400, was already there in the last quarter of the twelfth century/first quarter of the thirteenth century.

The moat in the Nieuwstraat appears to be one of the oldest structures on the Waardeiland. The oldest deposits outside the castle site were recently found further down the Nieuwstraat and date from the mid-thirteenth century.[49] Historical sources from the same period show that the area between Burchtgracht and Hooigracht was built up in short order.[50] We also know from archaeological research that the northern branch of the Rhine was narrowed during the same period. Reclamations and the construction of new quays excavated on the Kaasmarkt and in the Koppenhinksteeg mean that the south bank shifted about fifteen metres to the north.[51]

7 Urban Expansion in Marendorp, Waardeiland and Hogewoerd, 1346/1355

The fourteenth century was a time of considerable growth for Leiden. On 1 September 1346 the city was granted permission by Countess Margaret, wife of Emperor Louis of Bavaria and successor of her brother Count William IV, to enlarge the city limits by two hundred *roeden al ommegaende*, that is, more

47 Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken, Leiden (hereafter ELO), NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 81, f. 3r, Privilegeboek 50 (between 16 April 1294 and 1 April 1295); Kruisheer, *Oorkondenboek*, vol. IV, no. 2984; Kort, 'Repetorium', no. 157.

48 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 374 (20 December 1314, in vidimus 16 June 1328).

49 Brandenburgh, *Het archeologisch onderzoek*, 71.

50 Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 36–38.

51 Brandenburgh, *Het archeologisch onderzoek*, 83.

than 750 metres surrounding the city.[52] This would have increased the size of the city tenfold.[53] However, permission to expand the city was almost immediately revoked by Margaret's acting administrator, her son William V. In 1355, the city again received the right to expand, as previously promised, although it took many years for this wide area to be developed.[54]

As part of this expansion, the settlement of Marendorp was incorporated into the city limits. It was located along today's Haarlemmerstraat, north of the Rhine, on both sides of the Mare. The area west of the Mare belonged to the lordship of Oegstgeest, and the area east of the Mare to Leiderdorp. The two settlements (Leiden and Marendorp) were connected by a bridge, which was built of stone in the early fourteenth century. The settlement of the banks of the Mare, as discussed above, began in the ninth to eleventh centuries. The Haarlemmerstraat was probably originally a dyke running along the Rhine. Until recently, it was assumed that the original dyke lay below the southern part of the current Haarlemmerstraat.[55] However, recent research has found that the dyke was not uncovered, which calls into question the earlier assumption.[56] It is unclear whether the north bank of the Rhine remained permanently inhabited after the eleventh century. Excavations on both sides of Haarlemmerstraat have uncovered the remains of settlements and revealed finds from the mid-thirteenth century but nothing from the preceding centuries.[57]

Even before being incorporated into the city of Leiden, Marendorp had urban features. A chapel existed in the settlement in 1300, and many people lived and worked in Marendorp, including artisans. At that time, residents of Leiden farmed land on the north side of the Rhine and bred cattle there. A drawbridge at Vrouwensteeg enabled the townspeople to travel back and forth with wagons in spring and autumn, at harvest time.[58] This link to Leiden boosted construction in Marendorp. Land grants were given shortly after 1355, and the number of residents increased rapidly. In 1364, the Chapel of Our Lady

52 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 81, f. 3r, Privilegeboek A, f. 13r-13v (1 September 1346); Van Mieris, *Groot charterboek*, 2:741; Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:157 (both dated 31 August 1347).

53 Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 39; De Boer, 'De Waard en zijn gasten', 33.

54 Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 39–40.

55 Kistemaker, 'Archeologisch onderzoek'; Bitter, 'Archeologisch bodemonderzoek', 89.

56 Meier and Van Dam, *Archeologische opgraving Haarlemmerstraat*, 250.

57 Meier and Van Dam, *Archeologische opgraving Haarlemmerstraat*; Bitter, 'Archeologisch bodemonderzoek'.

58 Nationaal Archief, Den Haag (hereafter NA), Graven van Holland, 3.01.01, no. 243, f. 48 (9 October 1324) and f. 49v (18 March 1325); Van Mieris, *Handvesten, privilegien, octroyen*, 503–4; Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:181.

was separated from the parish church of Oegstgeest, and in the following year the chapel was consecrated as the parish church of a new Leiden parish.[59]

The mid-fourteenth century urban expansion also included the section of the Waardeiland between Hooigracht and Vestestraat/Herengracht. In this area, archaeological traces of habitation from the third quarter of the fourteenth century have been found.[60] Archival sources mention construction in this urban district around 1360. In this same expansion, Hogewoerd was also incorporated into the city, contrary to earlier assumptions.[61] Some suburban construction also took place, but Hogewoerd cannot be called a suburb at this point. It is certain that around 1350 the Hogewoerd had two gates: the Hogewoerd gate via the Hoge Rijndijk and the St Jorispoort. Archaeological remains of the later gate were found in 1972 near the St Jorissteeg.[62]

8 The City Expansion of 1386

The city area was already relatively large by the mid-fourteenth century, but space was also at a premium, as evidenced by the growth of a suburb beyond the North Gate near the Rapenburg.[63] In 1359, several houses stood on land between the Noordeinde and the present-day Groenhazengracht, which in 1329 was bordered on the city side 'mit der poerte burchwal'. It was not until 1386 that Leiden received permission from Duke Albrecht of Bavaria to formally expand the city. The Witte Singel and part of the Zoeterwoudse Singel replaced the Rapenburg, the Steenschuur and the Levendaal as the outer city canal.

We can follow the city growth in more detail on the south side of the city. According to Jan Orlers, only the 'playgrounds and gardens of the good guys' (St George's training grounds for the militia) and the tenter fields where woollen cloths were stretched to dry on racks, had previously been located there.[64] Little changed there until around 1415. St George's training grounds were owned by the city, but the area between the Vliet and the later

59 De Boer and Vos, 'Van Vrouwekapel tot Vrouwekerk'; NA, Abdij van Rijnsburg, 3.18.20, no. 957 (16 February 1364, vidimus by the bailiff, aldermen and council of Leiden dated on 20 February 1364).

60 Bitter, 'Archeologisch onderzoek', 88.

61 De Baar, 'De voorstad'.

62 Suurmond-van Leeuwen, 'Verslag', 20.

63 Van der Vlist, '"Rapenburg Revisited"'.

64 Orlers, *Beschrijvinge der stad Leyden*, 28.

Zijdgracht was owned by the Pieterskerk and referred to as the Pietershoeve. With the expansion of the city, the Pietershoeve now came within the city fortifications, but its ties to the Pieterskerk remained intact. The accounts of the Pieterskerk leave no doubt about this.[65] According to a 1398 account, the Pieterskerk issued leases for more than a hundred lots on the tenter fields. Houses are not mentioned until about 1415. It is therefore possible that in the first decades of the city's expansion there were no or only a few buildings in this area. This is in line with the results of archaeological research carried out near today's Garenmarktplein, where we only see an increase in buildings around the mid-fifteenth century.[66]

In retrospect, the late start of construction may have been fortunate, because in 1420 the fortifications had not yet been completed when the city was besieged by John of Bavaria in the power struggle for the county, which has gone down in history as the Hook and Cod wars. The situation forced the residents of Leiden to demolish the entire suburb at Noordeinde-Rapenburg.[67] In the years following the siege, the suburb was rebuilt bit by bit and construction began anew in the area south of the Rapenburg.

In the first half of the fifteenth century, wealthy townspeople owned vast plots of land in the new town area.[68] This meant that there was plenty of room to build. Four convents were established here shortly before the mid-fifteenth century, one being that of the Jacobin Sisters, or White Nuns. It is from their convent that the Nonnenbrug and Nonnensteeg take their names. New moats, walls, gates and wall towers had to be built as defences for the urban expansions. This meant that the South Gate near the Hogewoerd, now within the city, was downgraded to an inner gate in 1346, and the two older city gates, the North Gate and St Jorispoort, came to lie within the city walls with the expansion of 1386 and fell into disuse. After this final medieval expansion, the city's fortifications were impressive, with a moat surrounding the city, a city wall with five city gates and several wall towers.[69]

65 Accounts of Pieterskerk, transcription by Ed van der Vlist, https://www.oudleiden.nl/werkgroepen/jan-van-hout-archiefonderzoek/rekeningen-pieterskerk-1398–1428 (accessed 8 February 2024).

66 Verduin, *Ploters, vollers en drapeniers*, 305.

67 Van der Vlist, '"Rapenburg Revisited"', 39–40.

68 Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 206–10.

69 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:251–73. From historical sources, images and archaeological studies, we know much more about the later medieval city defenses. Several more archaeological and building history observations have been made since 2005.

9 Building Construction: From Wooden Farms and Houses to a City in Stone

Securely within its defences, the city was gradually built up. Knowledge about construction in Leiden's past has expanded in recent decades through the systematic application of building archaeological research.[70] In recent years, for example, the physical remains – sometimes entire buildings – of nearly 150 structures from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries have been discovered. By combining this with data from archives, archaeological evidence and surviving buildings, a picture emerges of the 'petrification' of Leiden, the transformation of a settlement consisting of wooden buildings into an urban residential environment of stone structures.[71]

Initially, Leiden was characterised by wide, deep plots with detached buildings, sometimes separated by plot ditches.[72] As the population increased, the

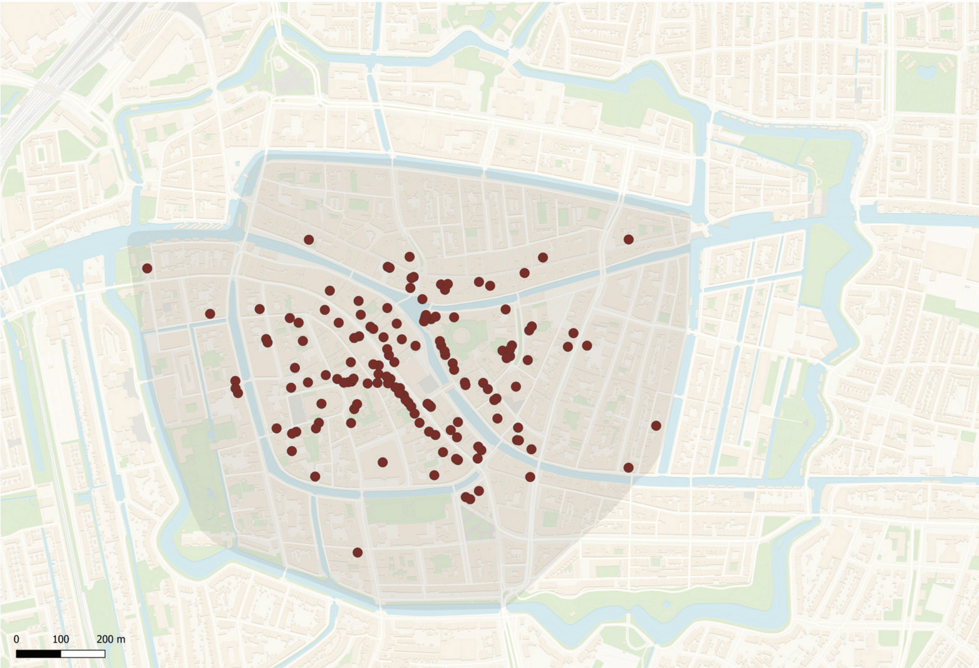

FIGURE 2.4 Building remains from before 1425 found during building archaeological research
SOURCE: MAP BY P.J. DE VOS, ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN

70 Orsel, 'Zijn er nog "veel" middeleeuwse huizen'; Orsel, 'Bouwhistorie'.

71 For brick and 'verstening' generally, see Hollestelle, *De steenbakkerij*; Meischke, 'Huizen en keuren'; Coomans and Van Royen, *Medieval Brick Architecture*.

72 Dijkstra and Brandenburgh, *Leiden-Aalmarktschool*, 322–324, 329, 335–336.

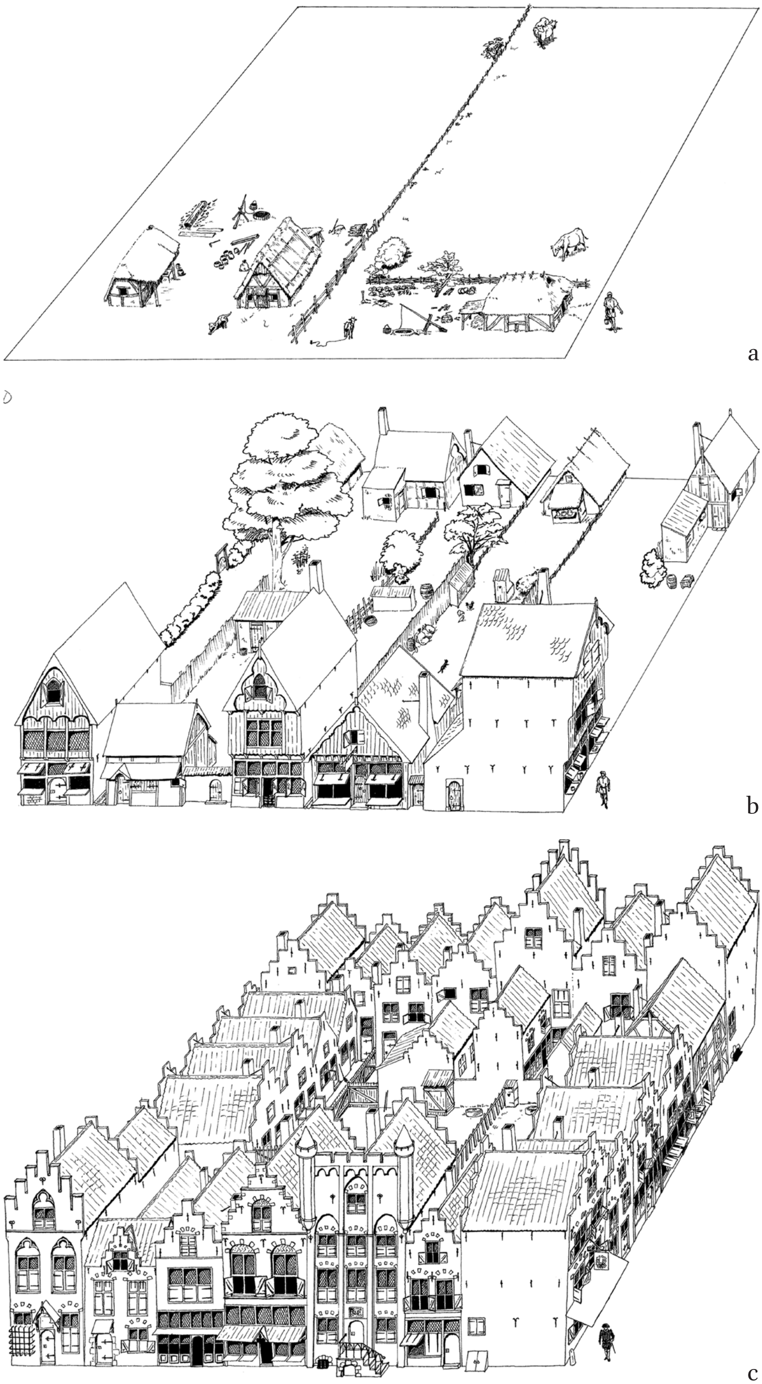

FIGURE 2.5 Densification of Leiden: a. pre-urban period, b. thirteenth century and c. period around 1425
SOURCE: DRAWINGS BY CARL VAN HEES, 2007

large pre-urban plots were subdivided, and the city densified. Thus, by the end of the thirteenth century, the characteristic urban structure of plots surrounded by streets and alleys with buildings facing all surrounding streets, a layout that became clearly visible in outline.[73] Well-to-do burghers generally lived in imposing houses on the main streets, while the less well-to-do lived in smaller housing on the side streets and along back alleys.

An excavation at the Aalmarkt in 2007 provided important insights into the earliest construction in Leiden. In the late thirteenth century, buildings were supported by buried piles, but around 1300 this transitioned to brick foundations in the ground, even while pile foundations were still being used. From the decreasing percentages of loam in the different deposit layers, it can be deduced that until the end of the thirteenth century the buildings had mainly loam-lined, half-timbered walls and thatched roofs, and that thereafter wooden facades became more common.[74] The residents of Leiden initially used local building materials, for example loam, wood and reeds, but by the end of the thirteenth century they began using other building materials. Remains of roof and floor tiles are indications of the 'petrification' of floors and roofs in the fourteenth century. It is these new types of building materials that left their mark on building construction in medieval Leiden.

Building history research shows that thirteenth-century houses had brick side walls. Archival sources from the beginning of the fourteenth century also record these brick houses.[75] Almost no traces of medieval wooden or timber-frame buildings have been found from the same period. This can be explained by regulations passed by the city council as early as 1292 to lessen the danger of fire in the densely built-up city of wooden and half-timbered houses with thatched roofs.[76] By 1406 a 'hard' slate or tile roof was required for a house with walls over 16 feet (about 5 m).[77] In 1450 thatched roofs were banned on new and renovated buildings.[78] Leiden was no exception in this; many other cities implemented similar regulations focused on fire safety.[79] Building regulations, along with the ready availability of brick and ceramic roofing materials that were produced in the immediate vicinity of Leiden, accelerated the

73 Orsel, 'Zijn er nog "veel" middeleeuwse huizen', 117; Dijkstra and Brandenburgh, *Leiden-Aalmarktschool*, 329, 335–36.

74 Dijkstra and Brandenburgh, *Leiden-Aalmarktschool*, 162–171, 321–336.

75 Orsel, 'Zijn er nog "veel" middeleeuwse huizen'; Orsel, *De ordinaire kap*; Van der Vlist, 'De stedelijke ruimte', 51–53.

76 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*; Dröge, 'Bauvorschrift', 271.

77 Meischke, 'Huizen en keuren', 217.

78 De Boer, 'Leiden in de middeleeuwen', 39–40; De Baar, 'Dakpannen', 25.

79 Meischke, 'Huizen en keuren'.

petrification process in Leiden.[80] The oldest mention of a brick oven outside of Leiden dates from 1283.[81]

Durable, fireproof, kiln-baked building materials such as bricks and roof tiles were being made in Holland by around 1200.[82] Brick was locally manufactured and a good alternative to expensive natural stone that had to be imported. Leiden's location was favourable in this regard because directly outside the city, good quality, suitable clay from the Rhine was available as raw material for bricks, as was peat as kiln fuel. Moreover, Leiden's growing population meant that brickmakers could count on sufficient available labour.[83] Brickworks were soon established that produced bricks, roof tiles and tiles on an industrial scale used locally in Leiden, but they were also exported along the river transport route. Leiden brick came to be well-known far beyond Leiden. Using historical building research, including dendrochronological research and archaeological and historical sources, it has been possible to establish a chronology of brick sizes used in Leiden.[84]

In the process of petrification in the thirteenth century, older timber and stone construction techniques were brought together in the timber-framed stone building. The advantage of this building type was that it could be fireproofed with much thinner walls of one – or one-and-a-half stone thickness, with the load-bearing timber frame providing a structurally stable building.[85] Many buildings also had 'hard' roofs. The added advantage of these roofs was that guttering was possible, which made building houses with adjoining walls possible, increasing the built-up area of the city. Around 1400, those who could afford it lived in wood-framed stone houses, whose hard, fireproof roofs were encouraged by the city government. The street pattern of these houses has been preserved to this day, but these old buildings are not visible in the streetscape because they are hidden behind modern facades in today's inner city.

The source of building materials shifted over the centuries. The accounts of St Catherine's hospital show that it used locally available supplies until 1430. In the mid-fifteenth century, this changed and building materials came from elsewhere via (often long-distance) trade. Bricks, however, were still obtained from nearby brickworks along the Rhine. Construction wood was brought in from Dordrecht and finer oak from Amsterdam. Lime, roofing slates and slate

80 Van Oosten, 'De Leidse steen des aanstoots'.
81 Ter Kuile, 'Baksteenformaten'.
82 Orsel, 'Stenen van de Graaf'.
83 Van Oosten, 'De Leidse steen des aanstoots'.
84 Orsel, 'Zijn er nog "veel" middeleeuwse huizen', 127.
85 Orsel, *De ordinaire kap*, 249–63.

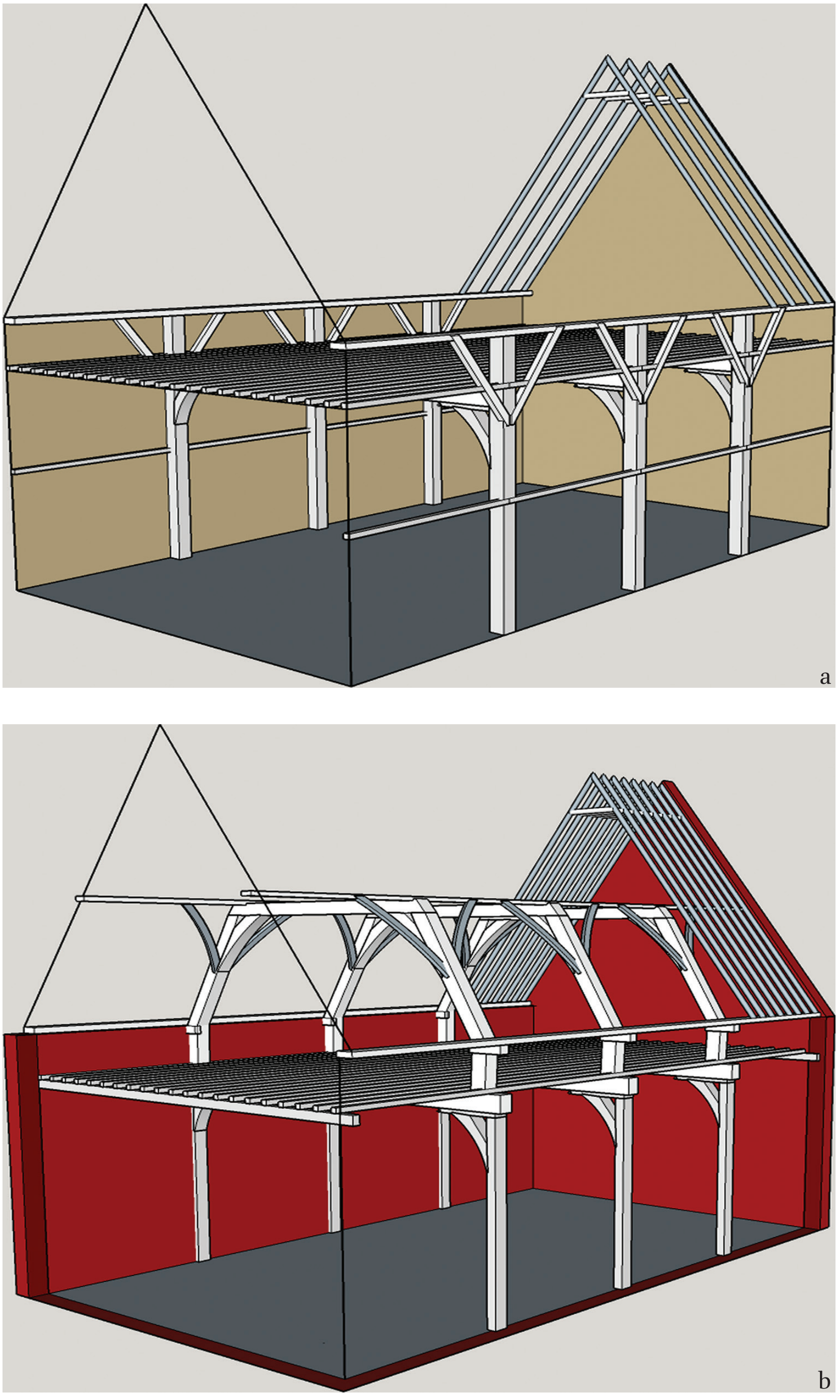

FIGURE 2.6 A wooden or half-timbered house (a.) and a wood-framed stone house (b.)
SOURCE: E.D. ORSEL, 2020, ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN

nails were purchased in Dordrecht and Utrecht.[86] In the Middle Ages, construction timber had been imported from Westphalia or Emsland, and in a few cases from Twente or northwestern Germany. By the mid-sixteenth century, however, timber had to be obtained from further afield: along the Rhine and Meuse and from Scandinavia. Dordrecht was the transshipment point for the timber brought in from the hinterland via the Rhine and Meuse, and Amsterdam for the timber brought in by sea from Scandinavia and the Baltic region.[87]

10 Urban Development in a Broader Perspective

In this chapter we readdressed the origins and spatial development of Leiden. By combining existing insights and new data from recent archaeological and building archaeological research, we were able to reconstruct in more detail how Leiden emerged as an urban settlement and further developed in relation to its location within a river landscape, the presence of a count's castle and that of the count's court. The urban landscape continued to evolve under the influence of the requirements of the expanding urban population.

Leiden emerged from and expanded across a dynamic river landscape where the river and sea played a major role. As such, Leiden's urbanisation parallels that of other urban developments in the Dutch coastal region.[88] Core elements of this shared urbanisation include city formation in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, large land reclamations, the power base of the counts of Holland and the accessibility of water trade routes. Leiden, like Haarlem, Rotterdam, Alkmaar and Dordrecht, emerged in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries from an older nucleus and played an economic role throughout the Middle Ages. Their location on important water trade routes and, in the case of Leiden, its flourishing cloth production, contributed to this.[89] What further links these towns was the active role of their inhabitants and a ruler in the person of the Count of Holland who stimulated town development. Leiden developed from an agricultural settlement into an urban one through a wave of urbanisation in the Western Netherlands in the twelfth and especially the thirteenth centuries.[90] It is as yet unclear how local power relations had an effect on Leiden's emergence and urbanisation process in relation to these

86 Dijkstra and Brandenburgh, *Leiden-Aalmarktschool*, 313–15.
87 Orsel, *De ordinaire kap*, 53–54.
88 See, in general: Rutte and Abrahamse, *Atlas van de verstedelijking*.
89 Carmiggelt et al., 'Mapping Three Towns'.
90 Orsel, *De ordinaire kap*, 249–63.

other cities. Major peat land reclamations in the eleventh and twelfth centuries resulted in an increase in agriculture, resulting in towns increasingly fulfilling a regional market need and carrying out an administrative function. In the fourteenth and subsequent centuries, these same reclamations caused subsidence and rising water levels, resulting in a decreasing amount of arable land. This made the urban population increasingly dependent on the import of basic foodstuffs, which in turn increased the economic strength of the cities located along the trade routes over water.[91]

Medieval urban development in Leiden differed in several ways from the urban expansion that took place in the seventeenth century. In the Middle Ages, urban expansion was politically motivated. Cities received permission to expand from the overlord (count or duke) and rapidly built city defences enclosing their newly acquired territory. Land within the city walls was initially used mainly for the establishment of large monasteries, and it took a long time for the new areas of the city to be developed; green and empty spaces existed throughout this period. Building activities were not conducted according to a spatial plan but followed existing boundaries and waterways. Population growth during this period was modest but steady. It remains difficult to ascertain the exact numbers of inhabitants, despite the fact that the demographic development of cities has been studied by several scholars. During the late Middle Ages, Leiden changed from an agriculturally oriented settlement to a supra-regional centre of trade and (cloth) production, drawing people in from the countryside. As a result, the population increased from (an estimated) 1250 inhabitants in 1250 to 12,000–14,250 by the end of the fifteenth century.[92]

In contrast, seventeenth-century expansion was caused mainly by demographic factors: after the Siege of Leiden in 1574, numerous religious refugees from the Southern Netherlands sought refuge in Leiden. This, together with a boom in the cloth industry, caused the population to grow to about 62,000 post-1574; the city was bursting at the seams and new houses were urgently needed. Newly developed areas were built up within a few years according to a predetermined street, canal and allotment pattern. Social segregation was part of the urban design in its seventeenth-century expansion, unlike the medieval parts of the city where this type of segregation came about naturally. The design of the new quarters provided for expensive housing along the canals. In the side streets, small plots were designated for working-class inhabitants. Poor and rich thus lived side by side, and the location of the front

91 Rutte and Abrahamse, *Atlas van de verstedelijking*, 170–75.

92 Orsel, *De ordinaire kap*, 15.

door determined the size of the lot and thus the price and appearance of the house.[93]

Another difference between the medieval city and that of later periods was where industrial activities were located in the city. Historical sources indicate that in the Middle Ages craftsmen engaged in the various stages of cloth production congregated in the immediate vicinity of the tenter grounds on the southeast side of Leiden. The location of the tenter fields determined where the workers settled; the stench and pollution caused by these crafts were taken for granted. It was not until the end of the sixteenth century that measures were taken to reduce the inconvenience the polluting trades caused to the city; and the fullers, who were by far the greatest polluters in cloth production, were moved to the northern side of the city.[94]

Despite the sometimes detailed information on the spatial development of Leiden, there are aspects of the earliest phases of the city that are not yet fully understood. One concerns a more detailed understanding of the relationship between the count's court and the origin and growth of the city. What exactly was the role of the Count of Holland in the earliest formation of Leiden and the reclamation that took place? The age and function of the motte Burcht also remains a subject of debate. What was the relationship of this castle to the settlement and the court of the count that arose on the south side of the Rhine? The landscape and the shifting location of natural waterways are known only in outline. Adding further detail to this picture would contribute to a better understanding of the origins, location, extent and layout of the earliest settlements in Leiden. Shifting our attention to the thirteenth century and later, much remains to be learned about the reasons for the many urban expansions and densification of Leiden's built environment, possibly in relation to its users, the diverse and changing urban population. Future building archaeological and archaeological research should offer answers to these questions.

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93 Van Maanen, 'Stadsbeeld'.
94 Van Oosten et al., 'Bewoningsgeschiedenis'.

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CHAPTER 3

Fire and Flow: Sanitation, Safety and Community Politics in Leiden, 1300–1570

Janna Coomans

This chapter traces how and to what extent contributions to sanitation and fire safety were institutionalised in Leiden and assesses the impact of such practices on the material layout of the city. While the topics of sanitation and fire safety have received some scholarly attention, what has remained neglected is how such collective efforts, which were clearly part of the routine management of this and virtually all other cities in Europe – and indeed across the premodern globe – shaped a sense of local community.[1] Leiden is an interesting, well-documented case because it had various types of overlapping collectives: administrative wards (*bonnen*), neighbourhood communities (*gebuurten*) and confraternities.[2] The focus here is on the wards and the more informal, small neighbour collectives. The organisation of sanitation and the promotion of fire safety shows how responsibilities were divided between different agents, and how such tasks contributed to building forms of community. Such efforts fit within the broader concept of healthscaping: how communities shaped behaviours and environments to suit their changing health needs.[3]

My argument aligns with a broader revision of the history of public health during the later Middle Ages. This reinterpretation asserts that communities undertook far more initiatives to prevent disease and promote wellbeing than previously assumed. These efforts extended beyond responding to epidemic threats, such as the plague. Rather, public health practices were ingrained as routine, continuous and adaptive to the wide variety of challenges premodern urban communities faced, including famines, war, epidemics and environmental crises.[4] Yet my goal here is not to paint too harmonious a picture of a very clean medieval city. The key argument is that sanitation and fire safety

1 Geltner, Coomans, and Yoeli-Tlalim, *Public Health in the Premodern World*.
2 See, on active urban citizenship and a focus on practice rather than legal definitions: Prak, *Citizens without Nations*; Liddy, *Contesting the City*; Coomans, 'Making Good and Breaking Bad'.
3 See, for the concept of healthscaping: Geltner and Coomans, 'The Healthscaping Approach'.
4 Jones, *Disease and the Environment*; Agresta, 'From Purification to Protection'; Henderson, *Florence under Siege*; Coomans, 'The King of Dirt'; Geltner, *Roads to Health*; Rawcliffe,

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were integrated into what we can call community politics. Governing elites and other collectives with socio-political powers pursued economic prosperity, social order, public wellbeing, health and safety. This pursuit is often referred to in historical sources as the 'common good' (*ghemenen oirbair*).[5]

Striving for the *collective* interests of the city was the central aim here, but we need to reflect critically on the motives of the social groups using this discourse. References to the common good also justified the instalment of mechanisms of exclusion, for instance with specific rules for foreign traders and craftsmen, but also regarding the non-residential poor seeking urban charitable assistance.[6] In practice, the concept of the common good was not meaningless, but it did often serve the interests of the mid and upper echelons of society, and certainly those with a permanent residence in and ties to the city. Governing elites shaped how the common good was understood, often to the disadvantage of people with less political power or economic means, or those with a more temporary connection to the town. For instance, poor migrants who temporarily rented a room likely had fewer opportunities, but also less interest, time, money and energy to keep their lived environment clean and safe. At the same time, the efforts that both the town council and Leiden's inhabitants themselves invested into sanitation and fire safety were remarkably collective in nature and deserve more attention as part of urban history.

I focus on two areas of healthscaping activities that were developed in Leiden: cleaning and maintaining the canals and firefighting. The evidence here is based on archival documents: law codes, council minutes and court records. Most of this material dates from between the late fourteenth and mid-sixteenth centuries, with the earliest regulations from around 1360.[7] After Leiden obtained its city privileges around 1200, the town slowly expanded its municipal apparatus with the appointment of urban officials and the increased

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Urban Bodies; Fay, *Health and the City*; Skelton, *Sanitation in Urban Britain*; Jørgensen, 'Cooperative Sanitation'.

5 Coomans, *Community*; Lecuppre-Desjardin and van Bruaene, *De Bono Communi*; Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*.

6 See examples of Leiden's bylaws: Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 227, 321, 343, 362, 498. Historians strongly debate if guilds either benefitted from or undermined the public interest. See Prak, *Citizens without Nations*, 85–87.

7 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, nos 4, Correctieboeken (1392–1395), 4A-D, Correctieboeken (1434–1491); 41A-D, Kenningboeken (1434–1486); ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, nos 381, Vroedschapsboeken (1449–1458), 382, Vroedschapsboeken (1465–1504). The law codes are published by Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*. The earliest city accounts are published in Meerkamp van Embden, *Stadsrekeningen*. Also, see Marsilje, *Het financiële beleid*.

administration of justice. From 1351 on there were four burgomasters, while in the following decades tasks were further distributed to several public works officials. Among these were the so-called *homans van der bonnen* or *hooftmannen,* later also called *bonmeesters*; I will refer to them as ward masters. These officials supervised fire safety and coordinated waste management.

1 Fire Risk and Waste

The example below gives a first introduction to Leiden's policies around fire risk and waste management. On 14 October 1455, the town council made a public declaration. In front of the gathered inhabitants (as may be assumed) the magistrates voiced concerns over the fact that 'recently there have been many waste heaps, which could cause fire at night because they have been gathered in such large piles'. The nature of the waste was not specified, but likely included ashes, but also used straw and dung. The magistrates ordered 'each ward to inspect the places were waste is collected and clear them, to be done at the neighbours' cost'.[8]

There are many interesting components to this brief proclamation, namely the conception of waste, its hazardous nature in terms of fire safety, and the neighbours' responsibility to remove these nuisances. It targets something that likely routinely happened in the city but was considered a hazard: the presence of too many or too large waste heaps, or heaps building up in the wrong places – a city without waste did, of course, not exist. These waste heaps were problematic not, or in this case not mainly, because they caused stench and were therefore a health risk. Nor because they blocked the flows of traffic, trade and/or people, all reasons for coordinating waste disposal and sanitation to be found in municipal ordinances across premodern Europe, including in Leiden. In this case, the magistrates made an explicit link with fire safety. As it was proclaimed in October, it was likely not drought and hot weather but the increasing cold – leading to greater use of fire inside homes – that caused the town magistrates to issue an extra warning.

8 Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken (hereafter: ELO), NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 381, Vroedschapsboek (1449–1458), f. 49r: 'Item om die gebreke wille vanden vulnisse hopen daer geschepen is by nachte oens brant of te comen mits dat zij bij groten hoopen gegadert wort etc. Soe is dair op overdragen dat tgerecht dair op een ordinancie maken sullen dat elke bonne zijn scouwe hebben sal ter plaetse dairmen die vulnisse in storte brenge ende wech voeren mach opter buyren kosten ende die ordinancie selmen weder brenge bijder vroescip om dair voir in te consenteren.'

Waste heaps created fire risks because households and workshops had large quantities of ash that they needed to dispose of daily. This was a society where all heating, crafting and cooking involved (open) fires. Fire safety bylaws in Leiden's law codes of 1450, 1508 and 1545 therefore contained prohibitions on discarding any hot ashes 'in which there is still fire' in front of somebody's door, on the street, or outside homes or yards. The sixteenth-century versions of the rule mention waste containers installed throughout the city. Inhabitants could also not dispose of ashes in any canals, a rule more likely related to concerns about water pollution.[9]

Another important component of the short public decree above is the proposed solution to these hazards, and who should execute it. Neighbours (*buren*) were the main agents with whom Leiden's authorities, represented by various officials, interacted when it came to urban communal health, safety and sanitation. As this chapter will show in depth, the division of the town into wards and the delegation of tasks to neighbours formed a key part of public health management. The financial burden for the improvement of sanitation was put explicitly on neighbours, who were required to gather a full barge of dredge and refuse.[10] The idea that neighbours had to contribute to public hygiene ties in with recent work on the organisation of public services, a topic which is especially explored for the early modern Low Countries. Manon van der Heijden and other historians have argued that town governments, ecclesiastical institutions and organisations such as crafts guilds and confraternities, as well as private citizens – collectively, within specific networks – organised and paid for community services, including public safety and health. This was certainly also true for the later medieval period. Furthermore, historians see processes of appropriation of tasks when urban authorities had the means to do so, and delegation when they did not. That means there was no clear linear development towards either the centralisation or decentralisation of such tasks and services.[11]

2 A Healthy City: Theories and Policies

Besides being shaped by environmental, economic and political factors, medical insights likely influenced the design and management of premodern cities

9 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 138–40, 371, 469. Ashes were collected separately in early modern Alkmaar and gathered in ash-pits (*askuilen*); Vis, *Van 'vulliscuyl' tot huisvuilcentrale*.

10 On this bylaw, see also Van Oosten, *De stad, het vuil en de beerput*, 214–15.

11 Van der Heijden, *Civic Duty*; Colson and Van Steensel, 'Cities and Solidarities', 5–6.

and stimulated the upkeep of infrastructures and public amenities such as markets, wells and canals.[12] As in many other cities, measures to promote health and cleanliness in premodern Leiden drew upon the medical system of humoralism, also known as Galenism or Hippocratic medicine. By the later Middle Ages, humoral medical thinking comprised a complex and ever-evolving combination of Roman, Greek, Islamic and Christian medical ideas. Until well into the nineteenth century, Galenism remained deeply influential in thinking about health at both a communal and individual level, and therefore in informing urban policies. Most famously, the theory of miasma or polluted air underpinned measures such as quarantine, as well as myriad urban and rural regulations on zoning and waste disposal.[13] Medical practitioners and scholars influenced by Galenic thinking wrote about how external factors interacted with the four bodily humours: blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. Climate and seasonality, and human behaviours such as diet, sleep, exercise and intercourse, were all considered to influence the body.[14]

Urban policies reflected these medical theories. For instance, in the law code of 1545, we find prohibitions copied from Leiden's earlier law codes banning the disposal of refuse in front of other inhabitants' doors or on quays. Throwing lye and other polluting substances from clothmaking into rivers was forbidden, as were the contents of latrines and blood, either from slaughtered animals or from bloodletting. An instruction to bury dead dogs and cats and not throw them into the water likewise sought to prevent stench and corruption.[15] While the bylaws cite no medical authorities, they clearly reflect a wish to prevent pollution of the urban environment based on the idea of miasma.

One group that we are certain possessed this knowledge and brought these ideas to Leiden were medical practitioners, which were contracted by the city authorities.[16] In Leiden, the first statutes on medical officials date back as late as 1481, but city surgeons were standard among city officials from 1390 on. Moreover, between 1400 and 1600, Leiden's authorities hired a total of

12 Rawcliffe and Weeda, *Policing the Urban Environment*.

13 Rawcliffe, *Urban Bodies*; Kinzelbach, 'Infection, Contagion, and Public Health'; Conrad and Wujastyk, *Contagion*; Horden and Hsu, *The Body in Balance*; Bouras-Vallianatos and Zipser, *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Galen*; Porter, *Health, Civilization, and the State*.

14 Nutton, 'The Seeds of Disease'; Jouanna, *Greek Medicine*.

15 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 364–65.

16 Van Steensel, 'Het personeel'; Ladan, *Gezondheidszorg in Leiden*; Netiv, 'Leidse stadsvroedvrouwen'. This was common throughout the Low Countries, see Huisman, *Stadsbelang en standsbesef*; Van Herwaarden, 'Medici in de Nederlandse samenleving'; Bik, *Vijf eeuwen medisch leven*.

31 *doctores medicinae*, physicians with a university degree, and thirteen midwives.[17] Yet while medical practitioners were important in providing health care to the community, they were less prominent in preventative actions to promote communal wellbeing and health – or at least, there are almost no extant sources that confirm their direct involvement. Other practices and agents therefore need to be included if we want to get a closer look at how the city developed prophylactic responses to recurring hazards. In short, the pursuit of public health – healthscaping – in premodern cities can be divided into four main goals or programmes. Urban governments sought to ensure, first, well-functioning infrastructures; second, sufficient and high-quality water and food; third, coordinated waste disposal; and finally, a morally healthy community.[18] These programmes were present in Leiden, and the subsequent sections discuss some of its main aspects. I will mainly focus on the first and third programmes, and on the question of who was responsible for healthscaping tasks, either because they took on that responsibility themselves, or were given these tasks by others.

3 Who Cleaned the City?

Leiden's social-administrative structure consisted of overlapping political and civic collectives. The urban magistrates had divided the city (or used a pre-existing division) into wards (*bonnen*). Parallel to this structure, from the fifteenth century on, the town had a total of three parish churches and several hospitals. The churches hosted most of the town's confraternities.[19] In addition to parish and ward, some residential collectives developed into neighbourhood organisations (*gebuurten*). Between 1480 and 1540, around eighteen *gebuurten* were established, followed by several dozen more over the following decades. Almost all evidence generated by those collectives themselves dates from after 1580. However, the scarce fifteenth-century sources suggest that these organisations in Leiden were mainly engaged in coordinating social gatherings, such as elaborate annual feasts, and administering the requisite presence of neighbours at births, marriages and burials.[20]

17 Midwives were hired from 1463 on, see Ladan, *Gezondheidszorg in Leiden*, 109–36, 187–89; See also Ligtenberg, *De armezorg*.

18 Geltner and Coomans, 'The Healthscaping Approach'.

19 Van Luijk, '"Ter eeren ende love Goodes"', 26–27; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 20–25.

20 Walle, *Buurthouden*, 12–30.

Sanitation and infrastructural maintenance during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were largely left to the wards and their masters (*bonmeesters* or *homans*). Such practices likely existed for a much longer time, before they were put into bylaws.[21] Since the second half of the fourteenth century, in all wards two (later four) ward masters were present. They were to 'supervise all deficiencies in streets, quays, ladders, fire hooks, buckets for extinguishing, (drying) ovens, holes in the ice, and keep the streets and water ways clean'. They also organised the night watch and inspected mandatory grain reserves.[22] The enumeration of tasks in the bylaw is important here, because it confirms the close connections between sanitation, infrastructural maintenance and fire safety at a ward or neighbourhood level.

The ward masters likely cooperated and sometimes conflicted with the competences of other officials, most notably the surveyors (*vestmeesters*) who both managed city budgets and public works.[23] For example, the latter complained in 1449 to the magistrates that the city moat needed to be cleaned, a task to which all residents were supposed to contribute, each in their own ward. Alternatively, they could pay 6 d. gr. (*denarii groot*) to be relieved of this service, in which case the city would hire workers in their place. The example shows the continuous negotiation over and deliberation on how to efficiently organise and finance sanitation. The town government could either demand inhabitants to perform tasks or centralise the execution of works and ask for financial contributions – a precursor to forms of taxation for such services.[24]

Two extant contracts with waste collectors from Leiden, dating from 1404 and 1407, offer a rare insight into the negotiations around the collection of refuse. The 1407 contract appointed a certain Jan Claes Wittenz to gather waste from city-owned and managed spaces, including around the town hall. Wittenz was to heed all calls for sanitation made by the magistrates. For that purpose,

21 Later such cases were also documented by the surveyors (*royeermeesters*), but these records are only extant from the late sixteenth century on. ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 11, 'Royeermeesters' (1575–1795).

22 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 7 (1406), 93 (fourteenth century), 140, 149, 237–38, 477. These *homans van der bonnen* are not to be confused with another type of *homans*: a sort of treasurer; Marsilje, *Het financiële beleid*, 66–67, 81; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 23, 147–49.

23 From the mid-fifteenth century on, the *vestmeesters* were appointed at intervals and had to 'maintain the city moat (*vesten*), gates, towers, and bridges, wherever it is required'; Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 160–62; Marsilje, *Het financiële beleid*, 124; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 153–54.

24 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 381, Vroedschapsboek, f. 6v. On this process of either delegation and centralisation, see Van der Heijden, *Civic Duty*.

he received equipment to transport waste via the waterways.[25] Three years earlier, the town also hired two men for 24 lb. (*libra*) per year (which was a substantial sum, albeit not a full annual salary). They would 'collect and dispose all the waste that people bring to the waters besides the alleys and on the people's streets, without any attempts at deceit (*sonder argelist*)'.[26] The caveat perhaps refers to a general prescription for the dutiful execution of tasks, without further assumptions of bad intent, but it could also imply that they may have been inclined to collect less waste. However, if they earned money by selling it, perhaps they tended to collect *more* and from more (private) places than they were allowed to. The municipal wages of 24 lb. to collect refuse likely only partially remunerated them for their labour. Moreover, sixteenth-century decrees in Leiden note the semi-privatised exploitation of the contents of several public waste containers.[27] A similar dynamic of semi-privatised arrangements and occasional governmental interference can be found with regard to another type of waste: faecal matter collected in cesspits. The wet bog grounds surrounding Leiden had few arable plots. That relative scarcity may have diminished the value of dung as fertiliser compared to its use on sandy inland areas, such as those around Den Bosch and Deventer. Nonetheless, even in Leiden the dung trade was likely sufficiently profitable to exist.[28]

Street paving was another important part of urban sanitation. Leiden's city accounts routinely listed expenses for paving, roadbuilding and repairing. For example, the magistrates here agreed with municipal street pavers in 1384 and 1433 that their main task was 'to fix all the holes of [the roads] belonging to the city'.[29] The latter reference suggests that the upkeep of many other roads fell to religious institutions or private citizens and neighbours.[30] Making and maintaining streets together likely often forced neighbours to coordinate, creating a sense of community, yet since the municipality was not really involved, such socio-material practices are hardly visible in extant sources.

What is visible, however, is that the city routinely delegated the maintenance of bridges to nearby residents. In 1406 they decreed that all costs should be 'paid by the neighbours (*nabueren*) and not by the city'.[31] To name a specific

25 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 84, f. 244v, Stedeboek (1407).
26 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 84, f. 284r, Stedeboek (1404).
27 Van Oosten, *De stad, het vuil en de beerput*, 211; Smit, *Leiden met een luchtje*, 32–36.
28 Van Oosten, *De stad, het vuil en de beerput*, 181–85, 217, 233–35; Smit, *Leiden met een luchtje*, 36–39.
29 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 84, f. 327v, Stedeboek (1384).
30 He was entitled to a uniform; ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, f. 327v, Stedeboek (1384, 1433). See also Van Steensel, 'Het personeel'.
31 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 10 (1406).

example, the neighbours of the Vollersgracht in 1438 had to contribute to the upkeep of a bridge and three piers.[32] With this the magistrates let them (or perhaps forced them to) coordinate these responsibilities. This law was repeated in later decades with the additional clause that if the bridges were properly maintained the town would pay for future upkeep and exempt the local neighbours from paying 'bridge money' (*bruggelde*). Thus, we see a negotiation between the town government and inhabitants, in which the former stimulated some form of smaller community between neighbours. Or perhaps the magistrates simply appropriated what was already there as an informal entity. Such dynamics were highly typical in cities across late medieval Europe. It made maintenance tasks part of the norms of good civic behaviour. Concerns for sanitation and fire safety therefore fit into a broader constellation of civic tasks around communal spaces and infrastructures.

City servants also occasionally performed cleaning activities.[33] One example of a city servant performing cleaning work was Florijs, who is in multiple entries referred to as 'Florijs, who transports the dirt (*slijc*)', and was active as messenger, guard and assistant in public works.[34] And around the 1420s, a certain Meynart, 'the city servant', was paid a little over 10 lb. 'for a year to discard dirt (*slijc*) and clean the city tower and the town hall'.[35] This municipal workman also maintained bridges and fortifications, and later in his life specialised in public works and street paving.[36]

In sum, the sources offer a rather top-down perspective on the organisation of sanitation. As explored in more detail below, this was also the case for firefighting. On the one hand, this partially reflects historical reality: local municipal authorities were preoccupied with regulating nuisances. Through interventions and by taking active steps to prevent pollution and promote health on a communal level, they performed a type of guardianship and governance over the urban community. In other words, such policies contributed to community formation at a city-wide level.

On the other hand, the agency of inhabitants themselves shines through in these measures in several ways. First, authorities clearly left much of the execution of actual sanitary and safety tasks to local residents. Inhabitants likely initiated arrangements and infrastructures that benefitted their living

32 Hamaker, 138, 147 (1456), 359 (1308); ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 84, f. 90r, Stedeboek (1438).

33 Coomans, *Community*, 121–23.

34 Meerkamp van Embden, *Stadsrekeningen*, 1:263–65, 355, 361, 394–98, 406, 408, 492.

35 Meerkamp van Embden, *Stadsrekeningen*, 2:144.

36 Meerkamp van Embden, 2:85, 95, 102, 105, 119, 187, 206–7, 210, 232, 394–95, 397, 400, 402, 426.

environments – including the shared spaces directly surrounding their homes. Indeed, while the activities and supervision of Leiden's town government are most visible – after all, they produced the sources we still have today – the majority of work likely rested upon the shoulders of inhabitants themselves. Municipal agents mainly assumed supervisory tasks. This does make the neighbourhood or ward level important in terms of community politics.[37]

4 Urban Sanitation: the Barge System

Municipal apparatuses for urban sanitation developed in reaction to political and economic, but also environmental and topographical factors. This process carved out specific duties and responsibilities for inhabitants, and therefore also reflected ideas about good citizenship and civic morals. Leiden's 'barge system', as we may call it, exemplifies these dynamics. Like many other Netherlandish cities, Leiden was preoccupied with the continuous need to maintain its waterways. The canals were as characteristic of the urban layout of late medieval Leiden as their seventeenth-century counterparts were of Amsterdam. Wells were not subject to any regulation or administration in water-rich Leiden during the medieval period, nor did that city invest in public wells in this era. This made it even more important to secure the functionality of the canal system. To what extent people used surface water for consumption remains an ongoing point of debate.[38] Yet even if few people drank or cooked with canal water but preferred other sources, such as rain water collected from roofs in tubs and cisterns, they surely used it for all kinds of artisanal processes (such as dyeing, as textiles was a major industry in Leiden) and washing. Moreover, the canals could also be used to import high-quality water for consumption. This increasingly happened in many of Holland's cities in the premodern period, including Delft, Gouda and Amsterdam from the later Middle Ages onwards.[39]

Leiden's magistrates issued a range of bylaws prohibiting dumping waste in canals.[40] The water current may have been considered too weak to carry away refuse and other waste. This was also impractical because often waste still had some function, such as to elevate land, strengthen dikes, or as fertiliser. Waste

37 For a broader discussion on urban communities at various levels, see Colson and Van Steensel, 'Cities and Solidarities', 1–24.

38 Moerman, 'De aanleg van regenbakken', gives a brief historiographical overview.

39 Coomans, *Community*, 52–53; Abrahamse, *De grote uitleg van Amsterdam*. On Brussels, see Deligne, *Bruxelles et sa rivière*.

40 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 7 (1406), 138 (1450), 280. The *Keurboek* of 1406 contained a prohibition specifically aimed at leatherworkers.

collection routinely happened over water in boats or barges.[41] Such limitations on what could be disposed of in the canals and rivers were accompanied by a system to clean them annually. The most striking aspect of this system is that civic contributions to sanitation were calculated according to socio-economic status and occupational group, and thus one's share in causing environmental pollution.[42] All houses worth over 100 *nobel* were obligated to fill one barge (*aelman*) every year 'with dredgings (*baggers*) taken out of the water or raked with nets'.[43] All houses below that value were to fill half a barge. However, some notorious water polluters had to compensate for their activities by paying for more shiploads: tanners as much as twelve; brewers four; and master fullers two. The fine for disobedience remained rather mild. This implies that it could be levied as an additional tax when municipally hired workers had to take over. This is another example of the negotiation mechanism referred to above, in which authorities experimented with ways of enforcing and organising sanitary policies, and with centralising and delegating tasks.[44] In sum, pollution and harm to the community could be converted into a measurable material or physical contribution: the polluter contributed to sanitation according to their ability and capacity to pay and thus contributed to the common good.

A decree issued in 1471 discloses the routine. In July, the magistrates informed all inhabitants that they had summoned the ward masters to the town hall in order to instruct them on how they should go about 'collecting and transporting the dredge [...] from day to day and time to time, as ordained according to the size and number of houses they have in their wards, and to start where they regarded it most needed'.[45] The authorities also reminded all citizens to pay their contributions of 'dredge money' (*baggertgeld*). The existence of such terms (similar also to the term *bruggeld*) implies that these were considered a type of special tax. In this case, the practice of paying for dredging seems to have developed into a more centrally organised system compared to two decades earlier. This is an example of the broader phenomenon of 'buying off' physical tasks.

Such records moreover convey an ongoing monitoring of the state of the urban waterscape. In August 1447, for instance, the magistracy proclaimed that the 'waters are very shallow and polluted by stones, waste and dredge,

41 For example, the magistrates warned inhabitants to keep waste storage at a four-foot distance from the waterways; Hamaker, 120, 125, 272, 277.

42 See also Van Oosten, *De stad, het vuil en de beerput*, 215.

43 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 148 (1458), 280 (1508).

44 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 382, f. 68r, Vroedschapsboek 68r (1471). See also ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 4C, f. 161v-162r, Correctieboek C (1487); Hamaker, 483 (1443).

45 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 4B, f. 220v, Correctieboek B.

and need to be cleared, because there is currently a great drought'. Sufficient water in the canals was thus also important to reduce fire risks. Furthermore, this was also a blessing in disguise, the government noted, because the low water levels made it relatively 'little work and low cost' for everyone to clean the waterways in front of their houses.[46]

Neighbours' non-cooperation in sanitary tasks did at times create tensions and conflicts. Anybody in Leiden disposing of waste 'without consent' in front of other people's doors, streets or quays forfeited 12 s. (*solidi*).[47] That was the general rule, but in 1487 Leiden's magistrates noted that 'great complaints [on illegal disposal] daily reach the court'. Therefore, they repeated in public the bylaw above, which was in place for almost a century. At the usual penalty, the magistrates urged citizens to 'bring [refuse] to the ordained places'. They also empowered all citizens with the jurisdiction to fine 'anybody committing transgressions in front of their houses or yards or quays, as if it was attested by aldermen or witnesses'.[48] Yet such assertiveness by citizens to enforce the regulation was not always appreciated. In 1446, for example, a certain Bolle Ghijse scolded the sisters from a convent in the Jan Vossensteeg after someone had told him that these women had 'piled their dredgings on his pier, which caused him damage'. The magistrates sentenced him to a penal pilgrimage because 'the said Ghijs intended to act as his own judge'.[49] The use of the term 'damage' as referring to both nuisance and social disruption illustrates that for Leiden's magistrates, and likely also many inhabitants, perceived social and harmony and material functionality as intrinsically linked. Likewise, in 'civic' court cases (instigated not by the authorities but by residents themselves) conflicts about waste, hygienic facilities and maintenance at times surfaced. Leiden's *Kenningboeken* documents numerous such cases, attesting that neighbours were keen to uphold hygiene standards in their living environments. The cases attest that neighbours formed collectives around shared facilities – another example of (micro) community formation.[50]

46 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 4A, p. 249, Correctieboek A.

47 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 6, 121, 138, 277 (1396, repeated in 1406, 1450, 1508).

48 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 4C, f. 167r, Correctieboek C (1487).

49 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 4A, p. 254, Correctieboek A.

50 Coomans, *Community*, 170–215; Coomans, 'Making Good and Breaking Bad'; Van Oosten, 'The Dutch Great Stink'.

5 Fire and Material Change: the Roof Subsidy Programme

Fire was as indispensable as it was dangerous in pre-industrial cities. The threat was urgent wherever building with wood and thatch was standard, including in the highly urbanised Low Countries between 1250–1650. In densely built towns, including Leiden, fire was extremely destructive in a society where capital resided in immovable properties and a wide variety of objects, at a time without bank accounts and few forms of insurance. Yet, even more than disasters as such, transformation was created by the politics of prevention. Indeed, Leiden was able to avoid major conflagrations between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, and even during the Siege and the Dutch Revolt it was spared major destruction by fire. Despite the absence of any disaster, the threat of fire seems to have pervaded both inhabitants' and magistrates' minds. During these centuries, a process of policing, improving prevention and fighting fire shaped the urban material fabric and socio-political organisation, here as in other cities of north-western Europe.[51]

The control of fire risk consisted of two main aspects: material adaptations and a streamlined, well-equipped firefighting organisation. The first aspect, fire-safe buildings, focused on prescriptions on the type of roofs used in construction: the use of masonry (bricks especially) rather than wood for walls, and on how to construct ovens and chimneys. Many of such rules can be found in Leiden's bylaws between the mid-fourteenth and mid-sixteenth centuries. For instance, already in the fourteenth century, new roofs had to be built with firesafe materials. While the fire measures from the later fourteenth century were copied verbatim in the new legal code of 1406, around 1450 a string of changes in policy occurred.[52] In 1446, the magistrates made craftsmen working on roofs responsible for ensuring that people indeed chose less hazardous materials. A new interest prevailed in regulating hearths: wooden constructions were no longer allowed, and homeowners had to adhere to a minimal height for chimneys. Here, Leiden may have been inspired by other Netherlandish cities, which prescribed similar restrictions. A year later, in 1447, the city prohibited the use of thatch on all houses, new and old, that were higher than three metres (9,5 *roede voet*). As with the barge system, a differentiation on a socio-economic basis was at play, since the taller homes were likely owned

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51 Building historian Jan Dröge has performed extensive research into Leiden's subsidy programs. See also Van Oosten, *De stad, het vuil en de beerput*, 217–18; Coomans, 'Up in Smoke'.

52 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 7–10, 93–94, 132–39.

FIGURE 3.1 A red, ceramic tile from the roof of Aalmarkt 11, probably from the sixteenth or seventeenth century. In the fifteenth century, the building had a wooden roof construction covered with slates, but these were replaced with cheaper tiles
SOURCE: PHOTOGRAPH BY PHOTO J. LAGAS, ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN

by richer members of urban society.[53] This also suggests that the richer one was, the greater one's civic duty to ensure a safe and clean living environment. As in other cities, magistrates had a clear awareness that poverty impeded initiatives to change the built environment.

Leiden's authorities, like their counterparts elsewhere in the Low Countries, tried especially hard to persuade people to adapt their roofs from thatch to harder materials: mainly rooftiles and slate.[54] To stimulate change, the city government issued a roof subsidy programme. This programme was not unique: at least twenty Netherlandish towns extended financial aid for fireproof roof constructions.[55] Leiden was by no means the first: Deventer had already issued financial assistance between 1337 and 1450. Yet it seems to have been particularly elaborate and relatively successful in Leiden – although

53 Hamaker, 136–37.
54 Koch et al., 'Verstening'.
55 De Meyer and Van den Elzen, *De verstening van Deventer*.

taking a very long time, over a century and a half. Notable also was that in this town such a subsidy programme did not follow a major conflagration, as was the case in, for instance, Deventer in 1334 and Den Bosch in 1419 and 1463.[56] In Leiden, the municipal subsidy for building roofs with firesafe materials existed for more than one hundred and fifty years. The transition to hard roofs was finally pushed to its full realisation after the Siege of Leiden in the 1570s. At that time, the city authorities issued a new, formal obligation to change them rather than merely offered a voluntary financial stimulus. It is important to keep in mind, however, that even with this subsidy the main financial burden of changing roofs and therefore improving fire safety in the city remained in the hands of homeowners. The programme thus came to an end in the second decade of the seventeenth century, when we may assume that almost every single house in Leiden had a 'hard' (slate, tiles or wooden) roof.[57]

The scale of this municipal preventative programme is remarkable. Premodern policymakers certainly did not lack the competence to make any large-scale 'systematic' interventions in the urban environment. They thought preventatively about communal wellbeing. The desire to avoid large-scale fire disasters was shared by all inhabitants. People's awareness was heightened by their knowledge of major fires, either in their own or in other cities. Most likely people also had first-hand experience, and maybe had even suffered the traumas, of smaller accidents and incidents, which were very common. Some fires were also deliberate, as arson was a major and widely used part of premodern warfare. A collective fear of fire therefore seems to have dominated the mindset of Leideners, as it did the inhabitants of many other towns and cities in at least north-western and northern Europe, where building with wood and thatch long remained present because it was easy, relatively cheap and sustainable – despite the fire risks.[58] At the same time, there was a realisation that making changes to reduce fire accidents was difficult because of the financial costs involved. A history of fire reveals how restricted communities were economically, and therefore how difficult it was to reduce the occurrence of something as dangerous as fire outbreaks. Leiden and other municipal governments would not raise taxes (often on beer and wine) to create subsidies unless their necessity was generally accepted. Without such investments, and

56 Coomans, 'Subsidie voor transitie'; Coomans, 'Up in Smoke'.

57 Orsel, *De ordinaire kap*, 139–58.

58 Key contributions to the premodern history of fire are: Zwierlein, *Prometheus Tamed*; Garrioch, 'Towards a Fire History'; Ferragud and García Marsilla, 'The Great Fire'; Bankoff, Lübken, and Sand, *Flammable Cities*; *Destruction et reconstruction*; Bartlome, Flückiger, and Körner, *Zerstörungen durch Erdbeben*. On the premodern Low Countries, see Ryckaert, 'Brandbestrijding'; Vannieuwenhuyze, 'Brandpreventie en – bestrijding'.

without elaborate mechanisms of enforcement, it was very hard to effectuate change, and it was this tension that led to the creation of subsidy programmes and the elaborate supervision of firefighting tools.

6 The Bucket System

The programme for material alterations to the city went hand in hand with a system to supply each ward with good firefighting tools. The archival records reveal snippets of its development. I will start by looking at a moment of increased risk. In July 1525, a drought hit Leiden, and the water levels of the canal dropped dramatically. The water shortage posed all kinds of threats to the community, among which, as the magistrates proclaimed on the fifteenth day of that month, was the fact that 'if a fire would arise now, may God help us prevent it, and if the firefighting tools (*gereescepe vanden brant*) are in poor shape', the damage would be massive. Thus, inhabitants and 'especially the ward masters', would have to prepare themselves for inspection (*schouw*). All ladders and buckets had to be checked and tubs with water placed outside. Tubs had to be ready in case of emergency to supply water to quench the flames which under normal circumstances would likely come from the canals. The barge system protected the quality, availability and accessibility of canal water and therefore also related to fire safety. Additionally, the night watch had to 'oversee all haystacks and dung heaps, and the bakers, brewers and tanners and other dangerous places that need supervision, and if they see smoke they must immediately raise alarm'. The ward masters also had to check if haystacks were 'sufficiently dry'.[59] While this may sound counterintuitive, the danger of spontaneous combustion of hay (*hooibroei* in modern Dutch) was especially high when the heaps were humid. This was a widely known issue, and we find rules on haystacks in many of the fire bylaws in several cities and villages. On other occasions, too, the town paid heralds to go around town reminding people to mind their haystacks or 'by yelling: "put your water and ladders at the door!"'[60]

The ordinance reveals the contours of Leiden's firefighting organisation. It revolved around two things: the maintenance of firefighting tools, which by and large was a task delegated to inhabitants themselves, and the supervision of these tools by the ward masters. The latter's role in firefighting was

59 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 1172, 'Ordonnanties betreffende brand en brandschouw, 1515–1530'.

60 Meerkamp van Embden, *Stadsrekeningen*, 1:291 (1429–30), 424 (1433–34).

long established – as mentioned above, their duties were to supervise 'streets, sanitation, ovens, haystacks' and to create holes in the frozen canals in the winter, as already documented in Leiden's fourteenth-century law codes.[61] Furthermore, Leiden's aldermen had also, at least since the early fifteenth century, inventoried firefighting tools in town halls, hospitals, monasteries and churches. The sight of many dozens of buckets and ladders seems to have been common in public buildings. For example, four 'large ladders marked with the city's sign (coat of arms)' decorated the meat hall.[62] And in 1448 'in the tower at the aldermen's chamber there are 31 buckets, and [...] in the aldermen's chamber, to hand out in case of fire, good as well as bad ones together, a total of 134 buckets'.[63]

The systems for firefighting tools required continuous monitoring and negotiation. In 1515, the city declared that firefighting tools were badly maintained. They were 'lost, rotten, and decayed', which would lead to massive damage when a fire occurred, 'unless the city takes urgent action, as they are obligated to do'.[64] The discourse was a reactionary response to the bad current situation, yet it was also explicitly preventative: focused on avoiding future calamities. The city government thus assumed a key role in preventative action, presenting it as its civic duty. A detailed list of required communal firefighting tools for each of the eighteen wards followed.[65] Each ward had to keep a fixed number of between twelve and 24 buckets (six for the small ward Levendaal); between two and four ladders; and between four and eight 'small ladders' – the main difference was likely that big or regular ladders were high enough to reach a roof. Also required were between two and four beacons (*vuurpannen*) and torches. The latter prerequisite suggests that many incidents likely happened at night when people were sleeping – or perhaps when they were drunk. Finally, two canvasses (*zeylen*) with a minimum length of 30 *el* (over 20 metres), presumably to cover adjacent homes, were needed to prevent further spreading and to protect buildings from sparks flying through the air.[66]

Per ward, six men were elected by the ward masters, who were to carry the tools to the place of an incident 'and set up the torches on the bridges and alleys

61 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 7 (1406), 93 (fourteenth century).

62 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, Stedeboeck, fols. 223v-226r.

63 Another scribe added below on the folio a recount of 107 buckets that were returned in 1518 'after the fire at Frans Geryt's house had been put out'. ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, Stedeboek, f. 223v-226r (1448).

64 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, 1172, unnumbered folios (1515).

65 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, 1172, unnumbered folios (1515).

66 These precise prescriptions per ward, with exact numbers, were repeated in later ordinances as well. See ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, 1172, unnumbered folios (1522).

where they are needed'. If these six men failed to follow up on their duties, they had to pay a 12 *stuivers* fine. These neighbourhood firefighters got something else, too: they were exempt from paying their contribution to maintaining the wards' extinguishing tools.[67] We therefore indirectly learn that all other inhabitants had to pay for such communal tools. Another recurring point of tension was borrowing and using the buckets and ladders for other purposes. This was forbidden. However, the city ruled that all cloisters, brewers, dyers and bakers could keep their buckets within their homes, so they could also use them outside emergencies.[68] Reading between the lines of these instructions, these neighbourhood firefighters likely were a source of local pride, and together with the collective financial effort, in theory they contributed to the formation of social coherence within a ward. At the same time, probably not all residents of a ward were included (or felt included) in the same way in such efforts.

The communal tools per ward were only one part of a more elaborate system of firefighting tools. From 1450 on, households had to keep their own buckets. This demand was reissued in 1515. Homeowners had to mark their bucket with a clear individual sign, linking the bucket to their household, and add the sign of the ward. Bad maintenance was punished by a 40 sc. fine. Not having the right number of buckets or ladders cost much more: 3 lb. Furthermore, in addition to buckets, homes worth over 50 *nobel* were required to have a ladder high enough to reach their roof, as well as a tub (*hoosvat*). Also, houses worth 12 *nobel* had to have one ladder – again, rules differed according to the wealth of inhabitants.[69]

The amount of regulation and documentation around buckets is astonishing. An ordinance dated 1517 offers the most detailed information. The sources reflect a strong preoccupation with keeping firefighting tools in good order and ready to use. The main way for the town government to enforce such precautions was inspections. An extra inspection was thus instigated during the 1525 drought, mentioned above, but in theory inspections were meant to take place once a year. From 1517, the inspections had to be noted down in 'little books' (*boecxkens*), which would document precisely how many buckets there were in each ward. These registers have been extant (in parts) for several years. They form a bulk of loose fragments in the archive, some legible, others barely so.[70] One exception is one of the very first: the 1515/17 inspection

67 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, 1172, unnumbered folios (1515, 1522).
68 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 141 (1450).
69 Hamaker, 140–141 (1450); ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 1172, unnumbered folios (1515).
70 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 1173, 'Memorie van de brandgereedschappen, 1515, 1551, 1556 en 1572'.

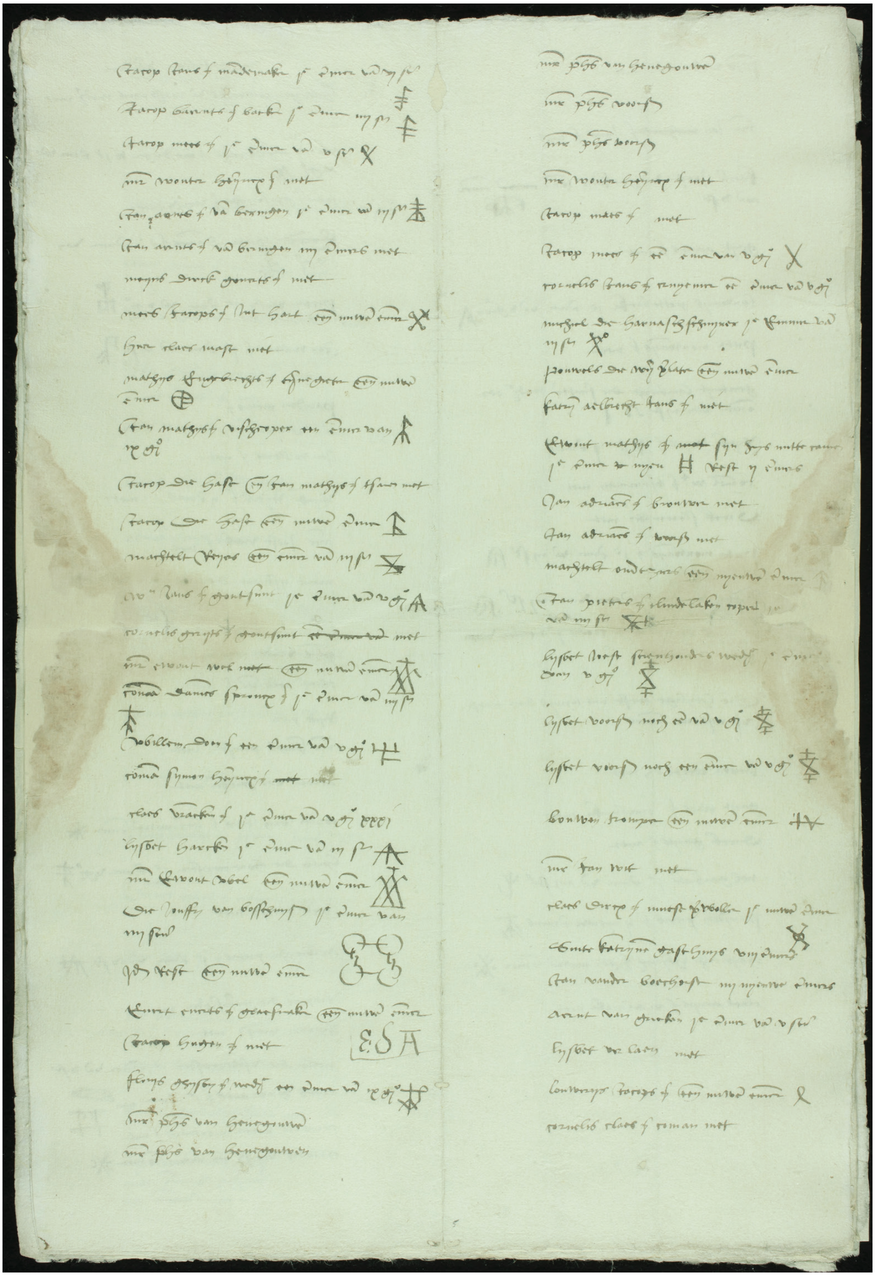

FIGURE 3.2 List from 1515 with number of buckets and their value per household and the household sign that was carved on the bucket (documented in registers per ward). Some households were not required to have a bucket for firefighting
SOURCE: ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN, NL-LDNRAL-0501, NO. 1172

has been completely preserved for all eighteen wards. The lists include names, and the number and value of buckets, but also nearly a thousand home signs, which together create a fascinating collection of 'household hieroglyphs' – almost a language in itself.

This 1517 register of bucket inspections deserves a detailed discussion. In all, the city counted 2,063 households, supplying a total of 969 marked buckets. Thus, 1094 homes did not have to contribute one – they were likely too poor.[71] Further, people were not allowed to keep their 'own' bucket at home and had to hand it over to the ward masters. The latter would collect them and hang them together with the communal tools (those in collective possession of the ward) 'in five or six places, where they can most easily be reached and best [fastest] be brought to a fire'.[72]

How exactly would a town of about 14,000 inhabitants use a thousand buckets? On average, there were about fifty buckets per ward. Divided over five or six places, including the communal buckets that each ward had to maintain, this was about a dozen per location. The core of the firefighting response was to get in line and pass the buckets from one to another from the nearest water points to a fire. One would then need about a bucket per metre. Fifty metres was a reasonable distance to the nearest water point. And because time was of the essence, rather than having many buckets in one central place, keeping them nearby helped diminish the risk of spread.

These lists (Figure 3.2) document how the buckets could be recognised as belonging to which house and how much they were worth, and thus how much a person was entitled to if their bucket got lost in a fire. It suggests that the town needed to give some form of insurance in order to convince people to lend their possession for the common good – and so that no one could falsely claim to have lost a bucket of high value if they actually had not.

What does this elaborate bucket system tell us about the urban society that developed it? What is most striking is, first, the extremely detailed level of organisation and, second, the complexity of financing it. Apparently, most people did not have the means to simply pay for and donate a bucket to the communal ward stash. Inhabitants were furthermore obliged to contribute (8 d.) to the maintenance of the communal firefighting tools in their ward, which were maintained by the ward masters.[73] If neighbours failed to do so, the town government would advance the money and then claim double

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71 The dataset has been transcribed in 1992 by Jan Rustige; ELO, Library, no. 17921/1 f. He has made an overview of the totals, which I cite here.

72 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 1172, unnumbered folios (1515).

73 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 366–67.

the price.[74] The financial arrangement reflects a broader point, namely that, as with urban sanitation, contributing to fire safety through safe building and maintaining firefighting tools was a civic duty that expressed participation and membership of the community. Finally, perhaps most telling of the importance of fire safety practices is that the inventorising of buckets is among the first form of house-to-house administration of the city.[75] While the registers per ward are exceptional, the system in which buckets and ladders were central remained in place across European cities in the premodern era, until larger pumps, hoses and extinguishing machines were introduced – the most famous example being the international impact of the inventions by Jan van der Heijden (1637–1712).[76]

Yet until then, buckets were key. A letter in first person by a certain Clais, who had taken on the distribution of the *emmergeld* and administration of the buckets, offers a final fascinating glimpse into the practical challenges and potential tensions of this bucket system. Clais notes in his formal letter to the aldermen and city council that he wants 'two honourable men to inspect the buckets and assess (*taxerende*) their state, so if any get lost in a fire, I will know how much I will have to pay to reimburse them'.[77] Clais would thereby receive a cloth/uniform 'as the other city servants do'. He also writes that only people living in the two or three nearest wards have to bring buckets, 'unless the fire becomes too big and more are necessary'. Furthermore, in case of a major conflagration 'then I, Clais, will have the right to use a year of rents to pay for the damage to the buckets'.[78] Finally, if someone has lost any firefighting tools that he or she has supplied to help, the town will reimburse them, if that person declares his or her loss under oath. [79]

The value of these buckets, and more generally the firefighting tools, indirectly confirms how grave the loss of goods, (workshop) tools or entire homes

74 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 1172, unnumbered folios (1515).

75 In addition to extant administrative registers from 1438 and a tax register from 1498.

76 See for instance on its impact in Cologne, Zwierlein, *Prometheus Tamed*, 190–95.

77 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 1174, 'Stukken betreffende het emmergeld en de aanbesteding van het onderhoud van de brandemmers, 1525–1575'. Two fragments of a letter.

78 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 1174, 'Stukken betreffende het emmergeld en de aanbesteding van het onderhoud van de brandemmers, 1525–1575', letter fragment.

79 Hamaker, *De middeneeuwsche keurboeken*, 469–470 (c. 1406–1448). Clais' letter noted that 'if someone will come me and complain about damage, and I will not believe his mere words, then that person had to declare them under oath before I am obliged to redeem him'; ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 1174, 'Stukken betreffende het emmergeld en de aanbesteding van het onderhoud van de brandemmers, 1525–1575', letter fragment.

due to fire would have been to inhabitants. Moreover, the bucket system suggests a continuous negotiation over the control and use of firefighting equipment. It suggests that it was not easy to organise firefighting from below. Or at least, that municipal authorities deemed it vital to assume firm control over the supervision of firefighting equipment. It remains unclear to what extent inhabitants' requests spurred them into action, or whether the magistrates were very proactive in this regard. The sources do not refer to any requests whatsoever, but that does not mean that no informal inquiries or demands were made.

7 Conclusion

The organisation of sanitation and fire safety in late medieval Leiden illustrates how urban communities negotiated political, economic, but also environmental factors in relation to the recurring challenges of keeping the city clean and safe. The barge system used to clean and maintain the canals was part of a much broader range of healthscaping activities, including interventions to promote fire safety. These issues were interlinked and subject to complex negotiations between different urban agents – magistrates, ward masters and inhabitants. Leiden's ward masters were key officials, with a broad jurisdiction and a maintenance budget for protecting communal health and infrastructural viability. Inspections in the service of (fire) safety and sanitation extended a governmental gaze into private realms, while at the same time they called for residents' contributions to the upkeep of spaces used by the community.

Various financial contributions were so institutionalised that they had their own terms: *baggertgeld, bruggeld* or *emmergeld.* Yet, people had to do more than simply pay their precursors of municipal taxes. They had to actively help, and such activities were part of what it meant to belong to a community. One of the key insights of this chapter is that inhabitants' contributions were substantial and continuous – as were the daily dangers and nuisances. At the same time, the creation both of subsidy programmes and the elaborate supervision of firefighting tools attests to the difficulties involved in reducing fire risks in particular. Furthermore, we should be careful not to assume that either centralising or delegating forces were permanent transitions. As other studies in civic duties have also pointed out, these were very dynamic processes. Maintaining sanitation and promoting fire safety through safe building and by maintaining firefighting tools, in addition to actually helping to extinguish fires, therefore formed part of citizenship practices: a means to express or perform good civic morals. Although some of these tasks were expensive and probably disliked chores, they also offered inhabitants possibilities to consolidate authority within their direct living environments, and to form important social networks with nearby residents.

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CHAPTER 4

The Fuel of the City: Energy Consumption in Early Modern Leiden, 1450–1850

Wout Saelens

What was the importance of energy in the pre-industrial history of Leiden? How much energy – both renewable and non-renewable – was required to sustain the city's development? Where did this energy come from? To what extent did the available supply of fuel set a limit on early modern urban growth? And, conversely, how did demand from within the city put pressure on the outside environment and, hence, shape the pre-industrial history of energy itself? Historians usually link the transition to a high-energy society – that is, a society with a heavy demand for energy derived mainly from fossil fuels – to cycles of (early) modern economic growth and industrialisation.[1] Especially in the debate on the 'little' and 'great' divergences in Europe and the world, energy has become a key factor in explaining the rise of economic modernity; and economic modernity, in turn, has become a key factor in explaining the intensification of human-induced environmental change over the past couple of centuries.[2] It is not by chance that most of the research has been preoccupied with Britain's 'exceptionalism' in this story of economic and ecological divergence.[3] Indeed, the question why the industrial revolution as well as the roots of global warming were mainly British was answered by its early transition to coal. While other economies remained inherently constrained by the land they lived off, Britain was quick to replace its 'organic' energy basis of renewable biomass fuels, mostly wood for heat and food for labour, with the 'mineral' energy from non-renewable fossil fuels stored underground.

In an attempt to trace the origins of economic growth before the industrial revolution, similar claims have been made for the Dutch 'miracle' of the early modern period. Ever since J.W. de Zeeuw argued that the Dutch golden age was

1 For a general overview of the history of energy, see Crosby, *Children of the Sun*; Fouquet, *Heat, Power and Light*; Vaclav, *Energy and Civilization*.

2 See, for instance, Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*; Parthasarathi, *Why Europe Grew Rich*; Malanima, 'Energy Crisis and Growth'. And on the environmental consequences of modern growth and industrialisation: Jarrige and Le Roux, *The Contamination of the Earth*.

3 See, in particular, Wrigley, *The Path to Sustained Growth*; Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution*. For the British roots of global warming, see Malm, *Fossil Capital*, 2016.

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'born of turf', the Northern Low Countries has often been called an 'advanced organic economy' – one that falls in-between an organic, energy-poor economy and a mineral, energy-rich economy.[4] This advanced status Holland owed to its use of peat, which provided a surplus of energy but ultimately also prevented the Dutch economy from becoming fully industrialised; as peat is, when compared to coal, only a young fossil fuel.[5] Peat, in other words, was both a blessing and a curse for the Northern Low Countries during the early modern period. This is relatively well-known – at the (proto-)national and global level at least. What remains less clear is what particular role peat played in the Dutch history of the city and, conversely, what role the city itself played in the Dutch history of peat.

Indeed, the story of Europe's 'special path' towards economic modernity being rooted in its energy basis may, by now, have become famous, commonly acknowledged in historiography. It is still, however, a story that has remained mostly, if not only, interested in the 'big' patterns of economic growth in world history. The Dutch peat debate is basically another version of the British coal debate, searching for the roots of the 'first modern economy'. The same is true for much of the environmental history of the so-called Anthropocene – the age in which humanity's impact on nature has reached unprecedented and unsustainable proportions, and which is believed to have begun with the advent of modern, steam-powered economic growth or, even later, with the 'great acceleration' during the postwar period.[6] Far less interest has been shown in smaller entities of fuel consumption taking shape before the great divergence and how these established a perhaps more regional, but equally complex, relationship with energy, in both its economic and 'extra-economic' dimensions.[7] Moreover, as a consequence of the narrative on energy as a precondition of growth, the principal question asked until now has been what energy *has done* to the economy (or society, more broadly), rather than the other way around. The main puzzle to be solved is how past societies have been *supplied* by the energy

4 De Zeeuw, 'Peat and the Dutch Golden Age'; Unger, 'Energy Sources'; Wrigley, *Continuity, Chance and Change*; Van Zanden, 'Werd de Gouden Eeuw uit turf geboren?'; Van der Woude, 'Sources of Energy'.

5 Wrigley, *Energy and the English Industrial Revolution*, 216–25; Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution*, 98–104.

6 Merchant, *The Anthropocene and the Humanities*; McNeill and Engelke, *The Great Acceleration*.

7 Exceptions tackling the relationship between energy and urbanity can be found in Galloway, Keene, and Murphy, 'Fuelling the City'; Hoffmann, *An Environmental History*, 227–37; Cavert, *The Smoke of London*, for the premodern period and Krausmann, 'A City and Its Hinterland'; Barles, 'The Main Characteristics'; Schott, 'Energizing European Cities' for the modern period.

produced through wood management, coal mining or peat extraction, but not necessarily how they have *demanded* fuel and, hence, how they made a history of energy of their own.

The focus on one specific city in this book presents a good opportunity to move beyond any kind of supply-side determinism and to ask about the broader aspects of energy consumption, instead of energy production, in (urban) history. Indeed, cities, by their very nature, can essentially be viewed as large consumers of fuel, and thus important drivers of energy transitions. Compared to the rural environment, the demand for fuel in cities is always more pressing and more challenging, relying on a more complex exchange of energy with a hinterland outside the urban boundaries. In this way, cities have exerted a strong 'agency' in historical energy transitions – especially those that preceded industrialisation – representing the places where changes in energy consumption could be observed earlier and were more pronounced than elsewhere. By focussing on one city, moreover, different actors can also be invited onto the stage which otherwise would remain obscured: most notably, the users of energy.

The concept of 'urban metabolism' can be fruitful here; it emphasises the flows of matter and energy between nature and cities.[8] When employing this concept, the question becomes less about how cities were 'blessed' or 'cursed' by the energy basis they rested upon, as if they were passive entities existing by virtue of their natural endowments, and more about how they *actively* interfered in their immediate and more remote ecological hinterland from which fuel was harvested. Seen this way, processes of urbanisation become a motor, rather than an outcome, of past (and present) energy transitions. In this chapter I thus wish to put energy central to the history of early modern Leiden, not only touching upon its economic trajectories but also taking the social, cultural and ecological features into consideration that were characteristic of urbanity at large.

Besides providing new clues on the peculiarity of cities and their inhabitants as energy consumers, an urban micro-perspective also allows new opportunities for the collection of data prior to the emergence of national statistics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This study relies on the (almost) yearly excise duties collected by the city of Leiden on the consumption of

8 For a conceptual outline of society's 'metabolism', see, for instance, Fischer-Kowalski, 'Society's Metabolism'. See several contributions in Soens et al., *Urbanizing Nature*, for an innovative historical exploration of the concept.

fuels and other sources of energy.[9] The tax excises used are those levied on firewood, coal and peat (fuels),[10] beer, grain and meat (food),[11] milling (wind and water)[12] and the ownership of horses (fodder),[13] which were converted into their energy equivalents (in joules). When in 1608–1609, for example, the city council collected a revenue of 3,655 guilders, 10 *stuivers* and 13 *penningen* for the excise on peat, which was taxed at a rate of two *penningen* per tun, a total of 585 tuns of peat (about 80 metric tons) had been sold on the urban market that year – corresponding to an energy quantity of 1,354,194 gigajoules (GJ). Part of the figures presented here have already been published elsewhere, but have been complemented with additional data to include the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and present a more long-term view on the energy history of early modern Leiden.[14]

In terms of energy consumption, Leiden was a typical city at the heart of the 'advanced organic economy' of Holland – yet always with its own specific characteristics. Unlike Amsterdam and Rotterdam, Leiden was not a port city but an industrial city. And unlike Delft (a city of brewers and potters) and Dordrecht (a city of blacksmiths), Leiden was not an industrial city with much fuel-intensive manufacturing activity. Instead, Leiden was a centre for textile production – a type of production that would only become fuel-intensive after the introduction of the steam engine during the industrial revolution. Most of the city's demand for energy must, therefore, have come from its dwellers – or 'urban life' as such. In what comes below, a bird's eye view of the urban energy basis from the mid-fifteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries is presented first – going into Leiden's energy mix in section one and its aggregate energy consumption levels in section two. Then, explanations for Leiden's early modern energy trajectory are sought at both the supply and demand sides, by

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9 On the excise tax system in Leiden and the Northern Low Countries in the medieval and early modern periods, see Marsilje, *Het financiële beleid*; Engels, *De belastingen en geldmiddelen*.

10 The energy conversion used for firewood is 12.5 MJ/kg, for peat 17 MJ/kg and for coal 27 MJ/kg: Afeefy, Liebman, and Stein, 'Neutral Thermochemical Data'.

11 The energy conversion used for small beer is 1 MJ/l, for strong beer 2.1 MJ/l, for grain 14 MJ/kg and for meat 8.8 MJ/kg: Muldrew, *Food, Energy and the Creation of Industriousness*, 118.

12 Wind and water energy consumption is based on the estimation that, in order to produce one kg of flour, 1.2 MJ of wind or water energy was needed: Davids, 'Innovations in Windmill Technology'.

13 The energy derived from fodder is based on the assumption that one horse required about 63 MJ of fodder energy per day: Kander and Warde, 'Number, Size and Energy Consumption'.

14 A more detailed discussion of the methodology behind reconstructing Leiden's energy regime can be found in Ryckbosch and Saelens, 'Fuelling the Urban Economy'.

zooming in on energy prices and Leiden's energy hinterland (the supply side) in section three, and on the city's energy users (the demand side) in section four. Section five concludes the chapter.

1 Leiden's Energy Mix

Following the methodology developed within the LEG (Long-term Energy and Growth) network, four basic types of energy carriers are included in the analysis: (1) food energy for human labour; (2) fodder energy for animal labour; (3) wind and water energy for motion; and (4) fuel energy, both renewable (fuelwood) and fossil (peat and coal), for heat.[15] Food was based on the tax excise on beer, grain and meat; fodder on the tax excise on the ownership of horses; wind and water on the tax excise on milling; and fuel on the tax excise on firewood, peat and coal. In the case of food and fuel, the excises reveal the physical quantity of products that were sold and taxed on the urban market during a particular year, to which a certain quantity of energy was linked. In the case of wind and water, the amount of grain milled was used as an indication of the amount of wind or water energy required to produce a particular amount of flour. In the case of fodder, the number of horses provided an estimation of the yearly requirements of fodder to feed these horses.[16]

It is clear from Figure 4.1, which measures the share of each energy carrier relative to the total energy consumed in Leiden over time, that the transition to peat in Holland had deep roots, going back as far as the late Middle Ages. By the end of the fifteenth century, Leiden already derived most of its thermal energy from the consumption of peat. In 1480, 33 per cent of the total energy mix was supplied by it, whereas fuelwood (both firewood and charcoal) provided a mere four per cent. This means that peat had already become the dominant fuel in Leiden before the middle of the fifteenth century. We know, indeed, from qualitative indications in landscape archaeology, historical geography and environmental history that systematic peat digging began in the provinces of Holland and Utrecht from the fourteenth century onwards.[17] This was also the case, and probably even at an earlier stage, in Flanders and Brabant.[18] From

15 See Kander, Malanima, and Warde, *Power to the People*, 17–34 for a detailed outline of this methodology.
16 The specific energy conversions are provided in footnotes 10 to 13.
17 Diepeveen, *De vervening in Delfland en Schieland*, 10–21; Leenders, *Verdwenen venen*, 245; Cornelisse, *Energiemarkten en energiehandel*, 19–24.
18 Soens and Thoen, 'Mais où sont les tourbières d'antan?'; Jongepier et al., 'The Brown Gold'.

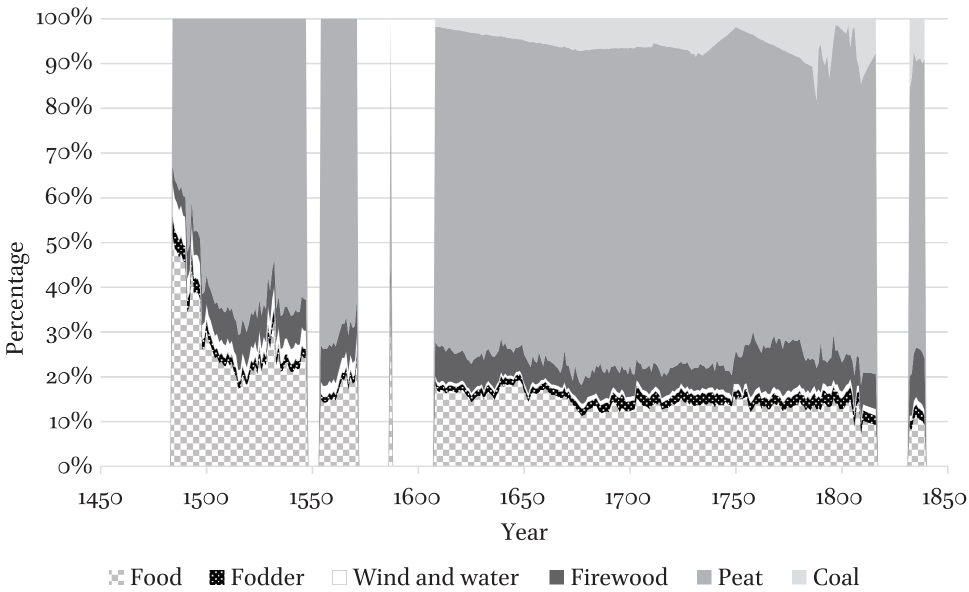

FIGURE 4.1 Energy consumption in Leiden by carrier, 1450–1850

SOURCES: ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, nos. 573–644, Rekeningen van de tresoriers; NL-LdnRAL-0501A, nos. 7475–7516, Rekeningen van de tresorier ordinaris; nos. 9722–10095, Blaffaards van de tresorier ordinaris; NL-LdnRAL-0516, nos. 3486–3533, Rekeningen van de gemeenteontvanger

its very beginning in the central Middle Ages, the urbanisation process in the Low Countries seems to have been closely linked to the exploitation of peat.

This early use of peat did not yet make the Leiden economy fuel-intensive, however. For the entire energy mix, most energy before the sixteenth century did not come from the combustion of fuels but from burning the calories stored in foodstuffs. Around the turn of the sixteenth century, more than half of the energy in the city was still supplied by food (mostly cereals and beer) which fuelled the human body, not only to support its basal metabolism but also to produce mechanical energy in the form of work. Feed for draught animals as well as wind and water power accounted for a relatively high amount of energy as well: about twelve per cent in 1480, taken together. For an urban environment like Leiden's this was indeed high, since most of the animal power, wind and water energy were, for obvious reasons, deployed outside the city, in agriculture, land reclamation or, in the case of sailing ships, over water.[19] In Leiden,

19 The Netherlands is, of course, well known for its historical use of wind energy. See, Davids, 'Innovations in Windmill Technology'; Kaptein, *Nijverheid op windkracht*.

windmills and horse mills were frequently used for grinding grain and, from the seventeenth century onwards, for textile fulling, spinning and fabric pressing as well.[20]

The heavy reliance on food, fodder, and wind and water power meant that the economy in medieval Leiden still largely had a renewable energy regime as its basis – even if it already consumed significant amounts of peat. This changed over the course of the fifteenth century, when the urbanisation process fully started in Leiden and the city's fossil fuel dependence rapidly rose to over sixty per cent of the total energy system (Figure 4.2). During the seventeenth century, pre-industrial Leiden reached its economic and demographic maturity, which was accompanied by an increased percentage of fossil fuels in the energy mix, reaching up to eighty per cent – a number that remained stable thereafter. Even after the urban economy started to decline in the eighteenth century, fossil fuel dependence in Leiden kept on floating around a seventy to eighty per cent level. This was remarkably high, considering that England and Wales, the coal countries *par excellence*, only reached a similar

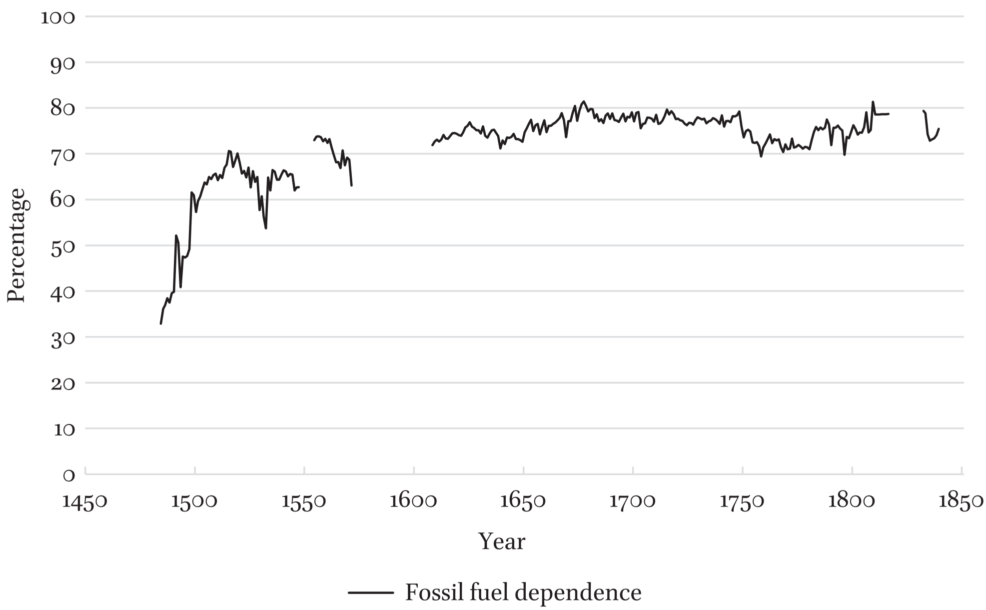

FIGURE 4.2 Share of fossil fuels in the total energy mix in Leiden, 1450–1850
SOURCES: see Figure 4.1

20 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 1939, 2 and 3:953–55; Kaptein, *Nijverheid op windkracht*, 134–69.

fossil/renewable energy ratio around the year 1800.[21] In Leiden, such a ratio had already been achieved by the middle of the sixteenth century. This applied to an urban context, of course. While any other major city in Holland probably attained a similar fossil fuel dependence as the one in Leiden, the fossil/renewable energy ratio must undoubtedly have been lower in the countryside, where firewood was more readily accessible to farmers, wind and water energy was easier to capture, and the labour from oxen and horses was a more important part of work in the fields.

Around 1500, Leiden achieved the status of a fossil energy regime in which renewable, soil-dependent energy sources such as wood and food were to a

FIGURE 4.3 *Turfsteken*, drawing by Claes Jansz Visscher, c. 1600
'Low peat' being cut – a type of turf that was situated below the water table and therefore had to be dredged first. After dredging, the peat was trodden in wooden troughs to make it cuttable. Next, blocks of peat were stacked and left to dry. When ready for burning, the peat was loaded onto ships and transported via a dense network of *turfvaarten* that connected the peateries with their (mostly urban) markets
SOURCE: RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM, RP-P-OB-77.525

21 Warde, *Energy Consumption*, 68.

great extent supplemented by non-renewable fuels extracted from the earth's surface or underground seams. In doing so, the city uncovered new ways in which energy could be produced and consumed – both in time and space. While wood and food were usually produced in close vicinity to cities and provided stores of energy that had been built up for a few days, months or, at most, a couple of years, the transition to fossil fuels drastically increased the metabolic reach of urban energy consumption.[22] Peat stored energy accumulated over thousands of years and could be dug from an area much further away from where it was actually consumed – thus widening both the temporal and geographical distance over which energy flowed from hinterland to city.

In Leiden, this fossil-dependent system was largely powered by peat, not coal – a fuel that provided energy accumulated over millions, instead of thousands, of years, as was the case in England or the Southern Low Countries (later Belgium). Indeed, the use of coal in the Dutch city would never reach a substantial level until the end of the nineteenth century and later. Before 1800, coal consumption hardly ever exceeded a level of ten per cent. Only after 1815 did the consumption of coal in Leiden start to increase a little, when the unification of the Northern and Southern Low Countries improved the integration of Walloon coal into one national market – resulting in a further expansion of the sources of the city's energy provision.[23] By the time of Belgian independence in 1830, however, Dutch access to coal from the south was blocked off once again. As Ben Gales has demonstrated, the coal age in the Dutch Low Countries was very much a phenomenon of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[24] Despite the lack of coal, it is nevertheless clear that an early modern city like Leiden, much like industrial societies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, already relied heavily on a 'stock' of fossilised energy accumulated over millennia and coming from more remote areas.[25] And, as a result, Leiden had abandoned the traditional short supply chain of renewable energy as early as the late fifteenth century.

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22 Hoffmann, *An Environmental History*, 198.

23 Van Zanden and Van Riel, *The Structures of Inheritance*, 206–10.

24 Gales, 'North versus South', 224.

25 Wrigley differentiates between the pre-existing 'stocks' of energy from which mineral economies draw and the contemporaneous 'flows' of energy tapped by organic economies; Wrigley, *The Path to Sustained Growth*, 17–18.

2 Aggregate Energy Consumption

Figure 4.4 visualises the aggregate level of all energy inputs (food, feed, wind and water, and fuels) consumed in Leiden and shows that the transition to peat in the long run also allowed the city to follow a path of growing energy intake. Especially at the height of Leiden's economic development during the seventeenth century, its energy consumption showed a steep rise. After this rise followed a prolonged decline until the level of energy consumption slightly recovered in the first half of the nineteenth century. It is evident, then, that the development in energy consumption was closely intertwined with the general development of the city's economy and demography, and that peat took a leading role in sustaining urban growth in Leiden.

During its golden age, Leiden required well over two million GJ of energy, reaching its phase of 'peak peat' in the middle of the seventeenth century. If all this energy were to be supplied through the burning of firewood, it would have taken the wood annually produced by a forest the size of 700 km^2.[26] With a little over 200 km^2 of large woodlands (excluding small woods such as

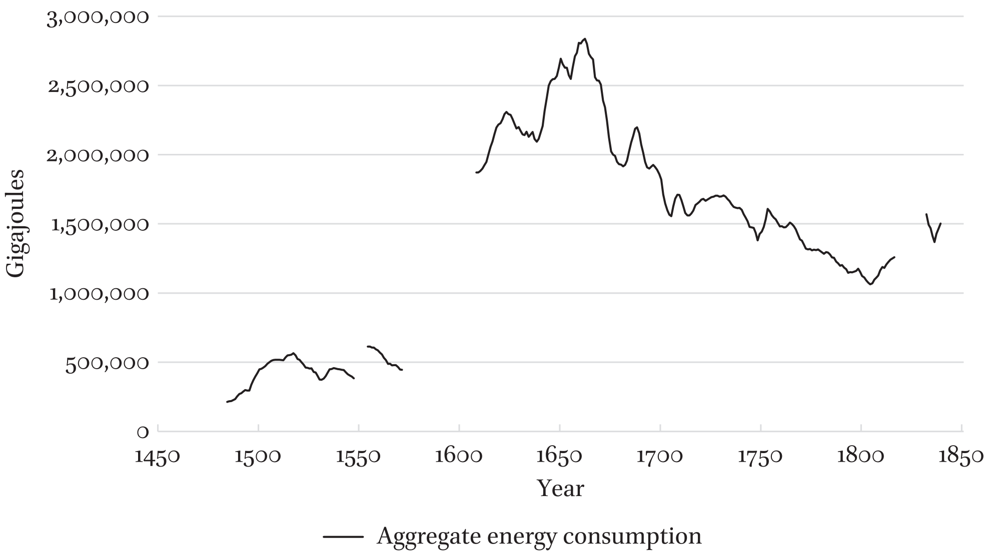

FIGURE 4.4 Aggregate energy consumption volumes in Leiden, 1450–1850
SOURCES: see Figure 4.1

26 Based on an annual firewood production of 3.3 cubic metres per ha: Warde, *Energy Consumption*, 34.

hedgerows grown by farmers) available in early modern Holland, the ecological impact on the rural surroundings of the city would have been enormous if its energy needs needed to be met entirely through the use of renewable fuels. As soon as the city started growing, Leiden found a solution in the stock of energy available in the Dutch peat bogs. And when, conversely, Leiden's economic and demographic growth started to stagnate in the eighteenth century, its energy consumption also went down again. Just as industrialisation in modern England could not have done without coal, urbanisation and economic growth in a pre-industrial city, so it appears, could not have done without peat.

An early modern, medium-sized Dutch city like Leiden thus seems to have been an important exception to the rule that pre-industrial societies characteristically had a low energy metabolism. In the premodern period, energy was costly and always in short supply;[27] but not in Leiden, so it seems. In the fifteenth century, the Holland city annually consumed around 20 GJ of energy per capita (Figure 4.5) – the equivalent of 1.6 metric tons of firewood, which was similar to the level attained in London a century earlier.[28] During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when Leiden had switched to peat, the energy consumption per head rose rapidly to a level of about

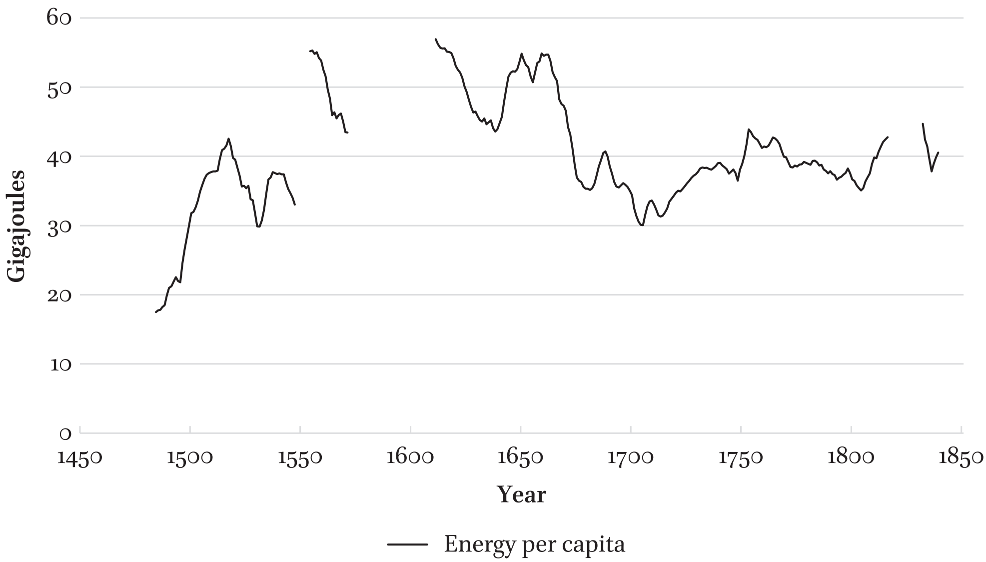

FIGURE 4.5 Energy consumption per capita in Leiden, 1450–1850
SOURCES: see Figure 4.1

27 Hoffmann, *An Environmental History*, 196.
28 Galloway, Keene, and Murphy, 'Fuelling the City', 455.

50 GJ – corresponding to 2.9 tons of peat. After the mid-seventeenth-century zenith, the energy consumed by the average Leidener stabilised, falling back to but still fluctuating around a high level of 40 GJ per capita.

These estimations situate Leiden's consumption, even during its century of decline, as proportionate to the most energy-consuming regions of pre-industrial and even early industrial Europe. Around 1800, England and Wales enjoyed a per capita energy consumption level of c. 50 GJ per annum.[29] By contrast, countries that were poor in fossil fuels and situated in the warmer climate of Mediterranean Europe, such as Italy, Portugal and Spain, achieved an energy input that before the twentieth century hardly ever exceeded a level of 20 GJ.[30] The levels of per capita energy consumption shown by Leiden from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards testify to an extremely energy-rich economy for the pre-industrial period – and one that shows to have been resilient, even after the city's boom of the seventeenth century. Even London, the world's largest coal market in 1750, consumed about 1 metric ton of coal per head per annum – the equivalent of c. 30 GJ (for fuel energy alone).[31] This suggests that the energy regime in Leiden operated within the 'industrial' scale of England and Wales – but began doing so at an earlier, 'pre-industrial' date.

Compared with the level in the middle of the fifteenth century, the consumption of energy per capita – and probably also per economic output[32] – had doubled by the middle of the nineteenth century. Leiden had, as it were, experienced a great acceleration of its own already by the seventeenth century – some three centuries before the 'great acceleration' proper of the 1950s.[33] Between the years 1450 and 1850, the city had followed and maintained a route towards a growing influx of energy into its urban metabolism. Even when the main peat reserves in Holland and Utrecht started to become exhausted in the eighteenth century (see below), Leiden did not return to its starting position in the low-energy bottleneck of the Middle Ages. Once a higher consumption of peat was attained, it seems not so easy to have avoided falling into the 'addiction' to a more energy-devouring trajectory. An early modern, but still pre-industrial, city – at least in the case of the Northern Low Countries and probably in the broader 'advanced organic economy' of the North Sea area – appears to have been less constrained by its energy base

29 Warde, *Energy Consumption*, 134.

30 Malanima, 'Energy Consumption in England and Italy', 99–101; Henriques, *Energy Consumption in Portugal*, 135–37; Gales, 'North versus South', 228–29.

31 Cavert, *The Smoke of London*, 17–31.

32 On the energy intensity in Leiden – that is, the amount of energy consumed per unit of economic output – see Ryckbosch and Saelens, 'Fuelling the Urban Economy', 236–37.

33 McNeill and Engelke, *The Great Acceleration*.

than has often been held before. This base surely was wide enough to carry a high urban demand over several centuries in time. How can we explain these rather spectacular and persisting energy consumption levels in pre-industrial Leiden?

3 Urban Supply and the Hinterland

The most obvious source to search for explanations of these energy transitions is the cost – and hence the supply – of the energy carriers available to consumers. Comparative prices per unit of energy – expressed in the number of *stuivers* needed to buy the means to produce one GJ – are shown in Figure 4.6.[34] It is clear that peat in Leiden had provided a cheap alternative to fuelwood by the second half of the sixteenth century (and probably even earlier). Here again, the exceptional nature of Holland's early energy transition to fossil fuels emerges.

According to Robert C. Allen, fossil energy worked as a so-called 'backstop technology': it provided vast amounts of energy at a constant cost – but one that was initially higher than that of conventional sources, thus putting 'a lid on wood prices'. Once firewood prices started to rise as a result of an acute shortage of wood combined with rapid urban growth – and thus growing demand for fuel – that affected most of early modern Europe, the more or less constant supply (and price) of coal eventually solved the energy crisis. In Britain, this 'backstop model' shift happened around the turn of the seventeenth century – an early date, according to Allen, which explains the 'Britishness' of the industrial revolution.[35] The Southern Low Countries (Belgium) experienced a similar 'narrow escape' – to borrow John Nef's phrase – from a nascent energy crisis through a transition to coal in the eighteenth century.[36]

In Leiden (or the Northern Low Countries, more broadly), it seems that there never was a timber crisis at all. That is to say, there never was such an increase in wood prices as there was in seventeenth-century Britain and the eighteenth-century Southern Low Countries, where there was no (more) peat that could serve as an earlier fossil alternative to wood than coal.[37] In the Northern Low

34 Firewood prices are Amsterdam prices and nineteenth-century prices are national prices. This should not affect the picture sketched here, since firewood consumption was marginal and the market was well integrated throughout all of Holland.

35 Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution*, 88–104.

36 Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, 61.

37 In Flanders, peat resources played an important part in the urbanisation process as well but were rapidly depleted in the late Middle Ages: Soens and Thoen, 'Mais où sont les

Countries, cheap peat simply choked off the demand for other energy sources as early as the fifteenth century, preventing fuel prices from inflating. Peat had worked as a backstop technology for the Dutch since the late Middle Ages and set a ceiling on the price of energy until the later nineteenth century – making it possible to establish a cheap fossil-energy economy well before coal-fired industrialisation. The steady price of peat in early modern Leiden explains the stable composition of the city's energy mix.

Indeed, the peat prices in Leiden hint at the elasticity of the supply of the fuel throughout the early modern period. The other fossil fuel – coal – was significantly more expensive. Since the mining of domestic coal deposits in the Limburg area, where the seams were harder to reach and required more sophisticated technology, was largely non-existent until the end of the nineteenth century, coal needed to travel large distances and across geopolitical boundaries to reach the Northern Low Countries.[38] The imported coal mostly came from Newcastle, Liège, the north of France and the Ruhr area, reaching Holland via the Maas and Rhine rivers through the ports of Rotterdam and

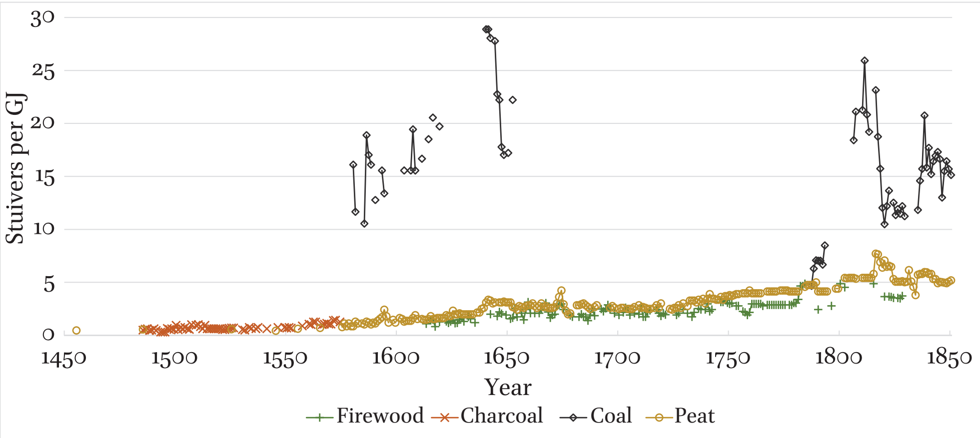

FIGURE 4.6 Fuel prices in Leiden, 1450–1850

NOTE: Firewood prices are Amsterdam prices; nineteenth-century prices are national prices; all other prices are Leiden prices.

SOURCES: Posthumus, *Nederlandsche prijsgeschiedenis*, 45–49, 126–40, 210–16, 286–98, 405–9, 477, 502–5, 631–39, 753–64; Cornelisse, *Energiemarkten en energiehandel*, 183; Dutch national accounts, https://nationalaccounts.niwi.knaw.nl/start.htm

tourbières d'antan?'. In England, peat never really played a major role, except in the north and only during the sixteenth century: Warde, *Energy Consumption*, 22.

38 Gales, *Delven en slepen*, 51–57.

Dordrecht, or via the North Sea through the port of Amsterdam.[39] Transporting goods across these boundaries was burdened with heavy duties, both at home and abroad, inevitably saddling the import of coal with high costs. Only during years of peace in 1784–1795, between the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War and the French Period, and during the period of the unification of the Netherlands (1815–1830), could coal be relatively cheaply imported from England and the Southern Low Countries.[40] Yet, even then, it would be sold at a higher price than peat.

In comparison to cities like London, Antwerp and Ghent, peat was sold in Leiden at an internationally competitive price per unit of energy – also in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[41] Judging from the peat prices, one certainly does not get the impression that the brown fuel was suffering from short supply, even if the most easily accessible peat deposits in the low-lying fens of Holland and Utrecht were starting to reach near exhaustion after the middle of the eighteenth century. The decline in 'low peat' extraction was compensated, indeed, by an increase in the production of 'high peat' from the raised bogs in the north of the Netherlands. As M.A.W. Gerding's research has shown, Dutch peat extraction gained a renewed boost in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the nexus of production was reoriented towards the northern provinces of Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe and Overijssel.[42] Behind this reorientation was a very conscious strategy adopted by the Dutch government, which pursued a protectionist policy promoting the further exploitation of domestic peat and discouraging the import of foreign coal.[43]

Qualitative indications indeed reveal how Leiden expanded its energy hinterland in the eighteenth century from its neighbouring peat bogs in Holland and Utrecht to the more remote peat reserves in the north of the Netherlands. Two ordonnances – one from 1582 and 1592 – regulating the sale of peat on the Leiden market made mention of peat extracted in Veenendaal and Moerbeek, two major peat colonies situated at about 85 and 95 kilometres, respectively, from Leiden.[44] A century later, a new ordonnance from 1692 was the first to regulate the import and inspection of peat from 'over the IJssel, be it from Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe or other peat of that kind, commonly known

39 Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, 84–87; Unger, 'Energy Sources', 236–45; Sneller, *Geschiedenis van den steenkolenhandel*, 216.

40 Van Zanden, 'The Ecological Constraints', 100.

41 Allen, 'Was There a Timber Crisis', 479; Saelens, 'De prijs van energie', 139.

42 Gerding, 'Vier eeuwen turfwinning', 37–41.

43 Van Zanden, 'The Ecological Constraints', 99–102.

44 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0509, nos. 1140 and 1142.

as Frisian peat, or long peat'.[45] The peat extracted in the northern Dutch provinces had to travel at least 200 kilometres to reach Leiden – a venture that was possible thanks to an elaborate and meticulously organised network of waterways, many of which had specifically originated as *turfvaarten,* that had to connect the peat-digging industry with the rest of the country.[46] During the early modern period Leiden used ever-more distant sources of fuel production to sustain its accelerating energy metabolism.

Of course, the constant supply of peat in Leiden throughout the early modern period, though it sold cheaply, came at a high ecological price. Within the city itself, the combustion of peat resulted in more emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2), sulphur dioxide (SO_2) and airborne particles (smog). What entered the urban energy metabolism also had to come out again one way or another – and did so in the form of smoke which polluted the urban air.[47] Most of peat's costs were, however, paid, not by the city itself, but by its ecological hinterland. Even though the transition to peat may have saved the remaining woodlands in the countryside, this merely replaced one ecological pressure for another. During its phase of 'peak peat' in the middle of the seventeenth century, Leiden consumed around 120,000 tons of the brown fuel annually, which was about twenty per cent of the yearly production of all peat-digging industries in Holland and Utrecht combined.[48] Besides the obvious heavy burden on the hinterland to produce sufficient amounts of peat, the high demand for fuel in Leiden was for a significant part responsible for the environmental destruction that was associated with peat digging, such as soil compaction and oxidation.[49]

Growing ecological pressures on an increasingly remote hinterland and a sustained influx of energy suggest again that urban demand was a strong agent in the history of energy. Indeed, the observations made in this section reinforce the idea that the energy consumption of early modern cities was not solely a matter of supplying urban needs but also of cities actively making an environment of their own and displacing their ecological costs to the surrounding hinterland – close or distant. In the case of early modern Leiden, 'urban agency' saddled its supply area with ever-heavier demands.[50] It is time, now, to take a view from the demand side and, thus, from the urban actors behind Leiden's energy regime.

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45 Ibidem, no. 1153.

46 De Vries, *Barges and Capitalism*, 26; Gerding, 'Vier eeuwen turfwinning', 279–81.

47 Hölsgens, 'Energy Transitions', 87–95.

48 De Zeeuw, 'Peat and the Dutch Golden Age', 16.

49 Joosten, *The Global Peatland CO_2 Picture*.

50 Cf. Deligne and Charruadas, 'Cities Hiding the Forests', who accounted for similar findings for the pre-industrial Southern Low Countries.

4 The Energy Users

The principal contributors to the concentrated demand for fuel in cities were private consumers and industrial customers. Other parts of the urban energy consumption came from the heating of public offices, from large institutions such as hospitals, abbeys and monasteries, and from commercial food preparation in hostels and taverns; but the overall proportion demanded by these actors was probably rather small – at least when viewed from the aggregate level of the entire city. Urban consumers mostly needed fuel to warm a home, cook a meal or heat a furnace in a workshop. As we have seen, the use of wind, water and animal power was limited in the city, as it was largely spent outside the urban walls – although cities most certainly also benefited from imported goods and services produced in the countryside.

How did Leiden customers benefit from the transition to cheap peat in the fifteenth century? According to De Zeeuw, the abundance of peat explains the success of many heat-intensive industries in early modern Holland, as it allowed much of the artisanal production to run on 'thermal processes'.[51] The largest fuel-dependent industries before the introduction of steam-powered mechanisation in Leiden were textile dyeing, brewing, bread baking, liquor distillation, brick and lime making, soap boiling, glass making and pottery baking. Calculations of the amount of fuel consumed by these industries are given in Table 4.1. These have been obtained by multiplying a fixed energy to economic output ratio per industry (it took, for example, about 30 kg of peat, or 510 MJ of energy, to produce one barrel of beer).[52]

The first important industrial customers of fuel were bread bakers and beer brewers. As they produced staples and thus had their fixed place in urban society, brewers and bakers also had a rightful claim to the energy necessary to keep their workshops running.[53] These staple industries would, however, quickly be taken over by the textile dyeing sector. This should not come as a surprise. In the century between 1580 and 1680, Leiden rapidly became one of the most important textile centres in Europe, famous for its high-quality dyed cloths. Dyers needed fuel to heat the vats in which textiles were scoured. Since the textile industry was so huge – producing over 130,000 pieces of cloth annually at its peak in the 1660s – the demand for fuel within this sector easily exceeded

51 De Zeeuw, 'Peat and the Dutch Golden Age', 23.

52 Part of the data have already been published in Saelens, 'Industrial Energy Consumption', and has been supplemented here to include the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

53 Radkau, *Wood*, 94–95.

TABLE 4.1 Fuel consumption by industry in Leiden, 1500–1800 (in GJ)

	1500	1550	1600	1650	1700	1750	1800
Bleaching and dyeing	(6,750)	5,400	158,374	249,761	229,514	145,657	79,472
Brewing	14,755	10,881	23,788	71,936	41,106	41,106	(3,184)
Baking	613	339	3,504	4,587	2,806	2,746	2,213
Distilling	(1,410)	(1,128)	(2,969)	(6,612)	(7,152)	4,993	3,669
Brick and lime	(8,206)	6,565	(17,276)	16,538	20,318	(7,653)	6,332
Soap	(7,927)	(6,341)	16,688	22,377	22,691	21,754	23,290
Glass	(42,323)	(33,858)	89,100	30,375	30,375	28,350	28,350
Pottery	(550)	(323)	(849)	1,890	(2,044)	(14,27)	(1,181)
Sum	82,534	64,836	312,548	404,074	356,005	253,686	147,690
Total fuel energy	277,236	269,300	1,534,334	2,189,636	1,536,650	1,188,517	925,953
% industrial	**30**	**24**	**20**	**18**	**23**	**21**	**16**
% rest	**70**	**76**	**80**	**82**	**77**	**79**	**84**

NOTE: Figures between brackets have been extrapolated. The years given are reference years and do not always contain data from that particular year. Sometimes data were only available for a single reference year – as in the case of pottery making – meaning that the extrapolated years should be treated with caution. The table only considers the energy derived from the combustion of fuels – thus excluding food, fodder, and wind and water energy.

SOURCES: Population: Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen'; Tjalsma, 'De bevolking'; ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0516, Generale staat van de bevolking, no. 1059 (1818–1848); Dyeing: Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de leidsche lakenindustrie*, 3:930–31, 1098–99. Brewing: Unger, *A History of Brewing*, 239. Baking and distilling: ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, nos. 573–644, Rekeningen van de tresoriers; NL-LdnRAL-0501A, nos. 7475–7516, Rekeningen van de tresorier ordinaris; nos. 9722–10095, Blaffaards van de tresorier ordinaris; NL-LdnRAL-0516, nos. 3486–3533, Rekeningen van de gemeenteontvanger. Brick and lime: Vries and Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 304–5; Van Bavel, 'Early Proto-Industrialization', 1136; Soap: Zanden, 'De Economie van Holland'; ELO, P.J.M. de Baar, Gilden: namen van meesters, leerlingen enz. 1574–1812. Glass: Klein, 'Nederlandse glasmakerijen'. Pottery: Roodenburg, *De Delftse pottenbakkersnering*, 123

that of any other industry.[54] This made the dyeing sector, without a doubt, into the largest industrial energy customer in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Leiden. The obvious fuel of choice was peat: not only was it available in greater abundance than firewood but it also burned relatively 'cleaner' than coal, as peat had a lower sulphur content and thus emitted less soot which could damage the dyed cloths. The reliance of dyers on peat is evident from

54 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:929–36.

a petition from 1778, when their guild complained to the urban government about the high tax on the fuel, arguing that it compromised the profitability of their trade.[55] Glass makers and soap boilers were also large industrial energy users, but they would never grow as important as the Leiden dyers. Distillers, brick and lime makers, and potters played a more marginal role as industrial energy consumers.

Although it is likely that the availability of cheap peat contributed to the success of Leiden's textile and other industries, and that, *vice versa*, the city's industrial growth was an important driver of the demand for peat, the energy required by industry as a proportion of the urban total was probably rather modest. When grouping all industrial demand together, the energy consumed for manufacturing hardly reached a share of sixteen to thirty per cent within the totality of Leiden's fuel consumption. Even in the seventeenth century, when the textile industry grew to its height, the 'rest', non-industrial category – which, so we can assume, almost exclusively consisted of domestic consumers – used about eighty per cent of all the energy consumed in the city. The vast majority of energy inputs, in other words, was consumed, not by industrial production, but in a domestic setting, for cooking and providing warmth.[56] Ordinary households must thus have been the most important users of energy, especially when the sole consumption of peat was concerned. Many energy-demanding industries, apart from cloth dyers, indeed also used other fuels than peat. While bread bakers usually preferred charcoal – which burned at higher temperatures than peat and came without the foul smoke of coal – brewers, distillers, brick and lime makers, soap boilers, glass makers and potters are known to have been early coal users – also in the Northern Low Countries where the import of the black fuel from abroad was limited but still important to fuel certain industries.[57] Coal gave these industries the advantage not only of producing higher energy levels, but also of offering more compact storage and reduced handling time, consequently enabling them to centralise the labour and capital needed to service a fire.[58]

The shares of industrial and 'other' consumers in Table 4.1 indicate that fossil fuels like peat were mostly consumed in a domestic rather than an industrial context; and that the proportion of both remained more or less the same from

55 Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 6:668–71.
56 And this was also true in early modern London as recent research has shown: Cavert, 'Industrial Coal Consumption'.
57 Saelens, 'Industrial Energy Consumption'.
58 Malm, *Fossil Capital*, 2016.

the end of the fifteenth century until the beginning of the nineteenth. It was, in other words, households that were responsible for the rise in the consumption of fuel. Even in large industrial cities like Ghent or Manchester much of the fossil fuels – in both cases coal – were consumed by households, at least until the later nineteenth century.[59] This suggests that the transition to a more intensive use of the fossil energy from peat in early modern Leiden was not restricted to the city's industrial growth or even its demographic developments. Granted, the energy consumption dropped again in the eighteenth century when Leiden's economy and population fell into a prolonged recession. Yet, the per capita consumption levels it experienced in the final part of the early modern age were still considerably higher than they had ever been in the medieval period or in most other pre-industrial cities in Europe at the time.

For this high-energy pattern to persist throughout the early modern period and after, something must have happened, I believe, in the wider 'culture' of the city, rather than just in its economy. Apparently, early modern urbanites themselves wanted to consume more energy than they had before – and more than their counterparts living in the countryside.[60] Part of this can, of course, be explained by the concentrated nature of urban consumption, where energy could be consumed more effectively and, hence, more abundantly. Once energy was imported into the city, it was easier for industries and households to consume more energy. This explains why urban consumers in Leiden *could* reach a higher energy use, but not why they *actually* did so in the early modern period. The proliferation of energy-demanding industrial activity as well as changes in residential energy use *do* explain this. And considering the greater importance of private consumers over industrial ones in driving Leiden's energy regime, an overall change in urban life then becomes the most convincing explanation.

Recent research has indeed begun to show that historical energy transitions were deeply rooted in the everyday culture of urban homemakers.[61] The expansion of a consumer society during the early modern period, in particular, putting more emphasis on comfort, ease and domesticity, was credited with making the lifestyle of urban citizens considerably more fuel-intensive. Peat

59 Saelens, 'Industrial Energy Consumption'; Mosley, *The Chimney of the World*, 102–4.

60 The difference in energy consumption between town and countryside is hinted at by the difference between national and urban energy consumption levels. Around 1800 the national per capita consumption of energy in the Netherlands was 22 GJ (see Gales, 'North versus South', 245), while in Leiden it was 37 GJ at the time (cf. Figure 4.5) – which already was a lower number compared to the peak in the early seventeenth century.

61 See several of the contributions in Saelens, Blondé, and Ryckbosch, *Energy in the Early Modern Home*.

FIGURE 4.7 A man weighing gold, painting by Cornelis de Man, c. 1670
A Dutch merchant was counting his money with his wife sitting next to him, as a male servant was about to fire the fireplace with peat he had just retrieved from the attic. Middle-class households like the one depicted here were important consumers of peat in early modern Holland
SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

thus enabled private consumers to improve their material living standards. At least this was the case for the bourgeois household, as peat did not eliminate energy poverty among the lower classes.[62] Especially given that the Dutch Republic is thought to have been in the vanguard of a new urban culture, consumer lifestyle and middle-class identity, it is likely that the higher degree of household energy consumption achieved in Leiden was a corollary of the so-called 'consumer revolution' and its attendant 'industrious revolution'.[63]

Probate-inventory evidence from Leiden certainly points in this direction, as middle-class inventories record ever-more fireplaces, stoves, foot braziers and other heating material culture in which peat could be burned.[64] These additional fuel technologies did not simply provide households with more comfort, but also required them to put more diligence and industriousness into maintaining the additional fires these technologies now were burning – work that was usually performed by housewives, or domestic servants if the family was wealthy enough.[65] Early modern households, so it appears, had grown more sensible to the comforts of warmth and were ever more willing to put in the time, effort and money needed to sustain these comforts.

5 Conclusion

The energy consumed in early modern Leiden reached immense proportions. During its golden age in the seventeenth century, the city had a per capita energy consumption of over 50 GJ. Later, in the eighteenth century, it attained a high and stable level of c. 40 GJ – a number that only in the final quarter of the nineteenth century was matched by the average per capita energy consumption in the whole of Europe.[66] It is clear that early modern urban societies, in contrast to pre-industrial rural environments or entire (proto-) national polities, could already have embarked on a high-energy trajectory, accounting for a high input of energy, derived mainly from the combustion of fossil fuels – a trajectory that was similar to the one that industrialised nations as a whole would reach only in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This high-energy economy Leiden owed to the availability of cheap peat. After becoming its main source of heat in the fifteenth century, peat was consumed in growing quantities in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – gradually

62 Saelens, 'The Comforts of Energy?', 172–89.
63 De Vries, *The Industrious Revolution*.
64 Saelens, 'The Comforts of Energy?', 95–109.
65 Cowan, *More Work for Mother*.
66 Kander, Malanima, and Warde, *Power to the People*, 134.

turning Leiden's 'organic' economy into a 'mineral' one. Also, after the phase of 'peak peat' in the middle of the seventeenth century, the per capita energy consumption remained high and never returned to the low-energy bottleneck of the Middle Ages. Peat fuelled Leiden's demographic growth, industrial development and rising domestic comforts.

But this equation could just as easily be turned around: urban demand also fuelled its own supply. Indeed, this chapter has emphasised the still poorly studied importance of 'urban agency' in shaping the history of energy. As large consumers, cities did not produce energy themselves and, therefore, relied on a hinterland to supply their needs. When Leiden switched to peat, it drastically expanded its ecological hinterland from which energy was fetched. Whereas the traditional fuels of wood and food were usually produced in close vicinity to the city and were consumed within a short time frame of a couple of years at most, peat stored the energy that had fossilised over several millennia and could be harvested from more remote areas. When the nearest peat bogs in Holland and Utrecht were suffering from depletion during the eighteenth century, the energy hinterland of Leiden was once again expanded – this time towards the digging industries in the northern provinces of the Netherlands. A little exploration of the most important customers of fuel indicates that demand factors were just as powerful as supply factors in the Leiden history of peat.

It turns out that early modern urban actors – including fuel-dependent industries such as cloth dyeing, but also, and more importantly, middle-class households – *wanted* to consume more energy and that they were no less limited by the structural energy constraints inherent in a pre-industrial economy than is often thought in the historiography. While the demand for fuel was rising in the early modern city, the ecological burdens were, however, mostly imposed on an ever-more distant hinterland. This study of energy consumption in Leiden from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries highlights, in sum, that historical transitions to fossil fuels were not just the result of the potential of energy production, but that they were closely tied to the fuel-demanding culture of early modern urbanity as well. The early modern city fuelled its own energy history as much as it was fuelled by it.

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CHAPTER 5

Power, Governance and Inequality in Late Medieval Leiden

Arie van Steensel

In June 1451, Duke Philip the Good ratified an ordinance issued by the magistracy (*gerecht*) of Leiden together with the town's council (*vroedschap*), the economic elite (*rijkdom*) and the notables of the drapery industry. It stipulated that drapers should henceforth be forbidden from being elected or appointed as magistrates to pursue economic activities in the textile sector during their term of office. Every new burgomaster or alderman was required to publicly show his commitment to upholding this new rule by taking an oath in the town's court (*vierschaar*). The duke, on his part, expressed the hope that the ordinance would advance 'the prosperity and the preservation of our said town and the common good of our citizens and inhabitants'.[1]

The issuing of this ordinance raises several questions, four of which are at the core of this chapter. First, how was the government of medieval Leiden organised? Second, who participated in political decision-making and in what form? Third, how did political participation inform practices of urban governance? And, finally, to what extent did political and economic power coalesce with broader social and economic disparities within the town walls? The answers to these questions provide an insight into Leiden's late medieval political economy, understood here not merely as the dynamic interrelationship of wealth and power, but also as encompassing the actors, ideas, strategies, resources, exchanges, institutions and spaces that together were constitutive of urban politics and governance.[2] This approach to Leiden's political order and governance will explain why the drapers – the town's wealthiest entrepreneurs – assented to the requirement imposed on them in 1451, which was financially disadvantageous for them, and what prompted this measure in the first place.

1 Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 1:281–284 (no. 245): 'die welvaert ende tonderhouden onser voirn. stede ende den gemeynen oirboir van onsen burgeren ende inwoonenden'.
2 This approach draws on recent and older studies on (urban) political economy, see Jenkins and Rubin, *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Political Economy*.

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The formal organisation of Leiden's medieval political and administrative structures is well known.[3] Moreover, two important studies by Fred van Kan and Hanno Brand provide detailed insight into the formation of Leiden's political elite in this period.[4] Drawing on this existing research, the first part of the chapter answers the classic questions of how the main political-administrative institutions evolved and who held power in Leiden. Moreover, the number and share of citizens who held political power will be discussed in light of a recent revisionist take on the trend towards oligarchy in the Southern Low Countries in the same period.[5] The second section ties into current research on premodern urban citizenship and popular politics, discussing why a culture of political participation was less rooted in Leiden than elsewhere in late medieval Europe.[6] The third section analyses how different actors shaped decision-making on economic and social matters and what ideas and interests structured urban governance.[7] The last part connects the question of who held power in late medieval Leiden and what decisions they made with that of the spatial distribution of wealth and income, in order to assess whether political and economic disparities were reflected and reinforced by the town's social topography.[8]

The key objective is to capture a snapshot of the various interest groups that participated in or shaped the governance of medieval Leiden, which is understood as a continuous process of negotiating and managing urban affairs in a context of fragmented authority. It remains unclear to what extent Leiden's political economy also amounted to a 'polycentric form of political organization', as Patrick Lantschner has recently described premodern cities that distributed 'many functions of governance and public organization' to other 'political units'.[9] Other bodies than the town council were certainly involved in urban governance, but polycentric governance assumes 'the idea of multiple centres of decision-making, or multiple authorities, no one of which has

3 Blok, *Geschiedenis eener Hollandsche stad*, Vol. 1 and 2; Marsilje, 'Bestuur en rechtswezen'.
4 Van Kan, *Sleutels tot de macht*; Van Kan, 'Élite and Government'; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*; Brand, 'Les élites de Leyde'.
5 Buylaert, Baguet, and Everaert, 'Returning Urban Political Elites'.
6 Lantschner, 'Revolts and the Political Order'; Liddy, 'Who Decides?'. This literature often highlights revolt and dissent, but see for a focus on ordinary political participation: Prak, *Citizens without Nations*. For the medieval Low Countries, see Dumolyn, 'Guild Politics'; Smithuis, 'Popular Movements'.
7 For the recent historiography on urban governance, see Gunn and Hulme, *New Approaches to Governance*.
8 For the recent historiography on social topography, see Meinhardt and Ranft, *Die Sozialstruktur und Sozialtopographie*.
9 Lantschner, *The Logic of Political Conflict*, 1–10, 200–201, 205.

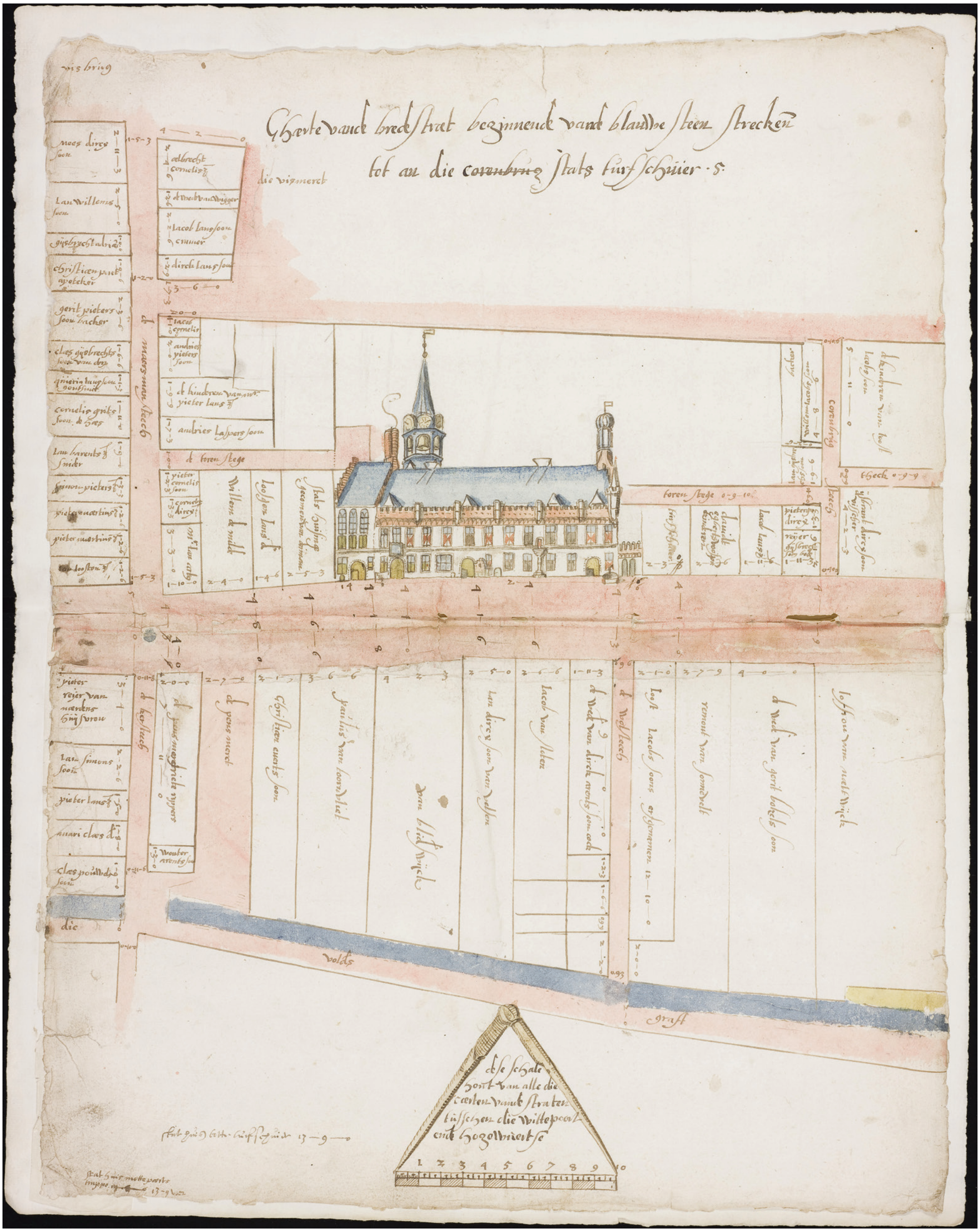

FIGURE 5.1 The town hall of Leiden, c. 1583. Drawing by Salomon Davidsz van Dulmanhorst en Jan Pietersz Dou
SOURCE: ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN, NL-LDNRAL-501A, NO. 5153

ultimate authority for making all collective decisions'.[10] The latter requirement was never met in late medieval Leiden, because the town council, both from the onset and increasingly so, played a coordinating role in the process of governance. By taking collective decisions the town council established its authority, as well as created political hierarchies within the town walls.

1 Urban Government

Leiden's autonomy was not achieved overnight, nor was the authority of its magistracy. The first extant legal records (*zoenboek*) show that Leiden's magistracy (*gerecht*) was sensitive to insults directed against officials. In 1380, 'on a crowded market' (*op eenre volre maircte*), a woman called Aleid questioned the verdict of the *gerecht* and its market inspectors (*vinders*) on the quality of her herring, for which she was sentenced to pay a fine of three pounds and 40,000 bricks for the town wall. Three years later, in two separate incidents, Machtelt Mathijs, as well as Willem Heynenz and Goiswijn Aerntsz, were sentenced for speaking 'evil, useless words' (*quade, onnutte woirde*) against the *gerecht* and ordered to pay fines in money and bricks or, if they preferred, to make a pilgrimage.[11] Questioning the authority of the *gerecht* and its representatives was clearly not tolerated, as it could potentially damage the political legitimacy of those in power.

The authority of Leiden's magistracy and town council was never absolute but the result of a continuous negotiation of power between the count of Holland and the urban community, and between magistrates and citizens. The first extant urban charter, acquired from Count Floris V in 1266, confirmed and extended older privileges – the first of which dates back to the last quarter of the twelfth century at the earliest – to the inhabitants of the urban settlement that sprang up around the comital manor on the south bank of the River Rhine.[12] The charter mainly regulated the military and fiscal duties of the urbanites and provided sanctions on acts of personal violence. Leiden's *oppidani* (townspeople or citizens, *poorters* in Middle Dutch) were subject to what eight *iurati* (sworn men; in the same period already referred to as *scabini*

10 Aligica and Tarko, 'Polycentricity', 252–59; Stephan, Marshall, and McGinnis, 'An Introduction', 40–43; Schneider, 'Historicizing Polycentric Governing'.

11 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 2A, f. 51v, 70v, 71r, Zoenboek A (1370–1390). As an exception, the first *Zoenboek* also contains a few corrections, which were normally recorded in the *Correctieboeken*.

12 Kruisheer, 'Het ontstaan'; Van Maanen, 'Het Leidse stadsrecht'.

or *schepenen*, aldermen) and one *iudex* (sheriff, *schout*) decided for the 'utility and promotion of the city'.[13] This was a common arrangement in Dutch towns; the sheriff represented comital authority and the aldermen the urban community. The town's citizenry as a political body is not mentioned in the charter, but the *iurati* were initially bound by their oath to the sworn association of citizens.[14]

The people of Leiden also had to deal with a castellan (*castellanus* or *burggraaf*). This position most likely evolved from that of the steward of the comital court in Leiden. The castellan achieved a role in Leiden similar to that of the regional bailiffs in Holland. In the mid-thirteenth century he managed to increase his powers by obtaining several legal, fiscal and economic rights over the town, as well as the prerogative to appoint the sheriff and aldermen. This unusual arrangement curbed the autonomy of Leiden, which received the power of high jurisdiction only in 1434. The relationship between the castellan and the urban community was sometimes tense.[15]

A first point to consider is how the ruling body (the *gerecht*, composed of the *schout*, eight *schepenen* and four *burgermeesters*) was formed, what its responsibilities in urban administrative and legal affairs were, and what the appointment procedures of the thirteen officials were. A charter issued in 1299 by 'we, aldermen, councillors and community of the citizens of Leiden' mentions the town councillors for the first time.[16] They were initially called *raden* or *poortmeesters*, but *burgermeester* (mayor or burgomaster) became their title at the end of the fourteenth century. In the same period, the burgomasters gained responsibility for the day-to-day administration of urban life, whereas the aldermen served the town's court, presiding over civil and criminal law. A similar specialisation of tasks recurred in the fifteenth century, when the *homans* took over the town's financial administration from the burgomasters. This office became permanent in 1477 with the appointment of two *tresoriers* (treasurers), as they were called from then on.[17] Several other officials and personnel were employed to support the *gerecht*, ranging from a legally trained pensionary and skilled midwives to keepers of the water gates and cleaners.[18] By the second half of the fifteenth century an administrative apparatus had

13 Kruisheer, *Oorkondenboek*, III:467 (no. 1433).

14 Oexle, 'Friede durch Verschwörung', 127–28.

15 Marsilje, 'Bestuur en rechtswezen', 67–73; cf. for an alternative interpretation of the origin of the castellan Lugt, *Het ontstaan van Leiden*, 57–58.

16 'Wi scepenen, raedt ende ghemeente van der poirte van Leiden …'; Blok, *Geschiedenis eener Hollandsche stad*, 1:157–58.

17 Marsilje, *Het financiële beleid*, 62–84.

18 Van Steensel, 'Het personeel'; Van Steensel, 'De middeleeuwse stadspensionarissen'.

emerged, which was both a means for the magistracy to establish its authority and a response to the expectations of urbanites about municipal responsibilities for providing public services, bringing social stability and ensuring communal welfare.[19]

The authority of the *gerecht* was partly rooted in the procedures followed to elect or select its members.[20] The count appointed the sheriff but ceded this right to the castellan in the mid-thirteenth century. Because of his embroilment in factional politics, castellan Filips van Wassenaar was stripped by Count John of Bavaria of the right to appoint the sheriff and aldermen in 1420. Initially, the count sold off these offices to wealthy citizens, but the town got a better grip on the selection of the sheriff in 1434, when the town council recommended a candidate to the count. Since a candidate had to pay a considerable sum for this office and was required to have been a citizen for seven years, a suitable sheriff was not always easily found. In 1434, the count also granted the right to appoint the eight aldermen to the town itself. A new procedure to select them was established in 1449, when Philip the Good installed a council of forty (*veertigen*) that nominated eight pairs, from whom he chose the new aldermen. The first forty members were selected by the *gerecht* and *vroedschap*; the council renewed itself by co-opting new members. The council of forty reshaped the balance of power between political factions and remained – with brief suspensions – in place till after the first Siege of Leiden in 1573–1574.[21] The burgomasters, finally, were elected by the *vroedschap* annually on 25 July until 1385, and thereafter on 10 November. Apart from an attempt by Duke Charles the Bold – successfully resisted by Leiden – to sell this office in 1472 and 1476 to the highest bidder, the mayoral elections remained an internal urban affair.[22] In the long run, Leiden achieved more control over the appointment of its magistrates, but the counts of Holland and their successors intervened during periods of political conflict or out of consideration of financial gain.

A select group of citizens was involved in government and the nomination and selection of members of the *gerecht*. When the council of forty was

19 Van Steensel, 'The Emergence of an Administrative Apparatus', 60–61.

20 This paragraph is based on Van Kan, *Sleutels tot de macht*, 160–66; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, chap. II and III; Marsilje, 'Bestuur en rechtswezen'.

21 In 1477, the council of forty was reinstated after the death of Charles the Bold, and the political elite of Leiden – six nobles, 67 members of the town council and thirty members of the *rijkdom* and *gemeente* – reached an agreement to end the 'all quarrels, discord and envy' in the town. Yet, no representative of the *gemeente* was chosen as a member of the *veertigen*; Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken, Leiden (hereafter ELO), NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 84, f. 228v; De Boer, 'Die politische Elite', 94–95.

22 Marsilje, *Het financiële beleid*, 89–90.

FIGURE 5.2 A charter granted by Emperor Maximilian, reinstating the council of forty, 1510
SOURCE: ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN, NL-LDNRAL-501, NO. 40

reinstated by Emperor Maximilian of Habsburg in 1510, he stipulated that all of its members should belong to the *vroedschap*, meaning that the membership of both councils effectively overlapped.[23] Earlier, the community of citizens (*gemeente*) was consulted for important administrative matters. This institution evolved into or was substituted by the *vroedschap*, to which former members of the *gerecht* belonged according to a decision made in 1385.[24] A larger group of citizens, the economic elite (*rijkdom*, or the wealthy), was convened in exceptional circumstances, such as in 1451. Until the early sixteenth century, the *vroedschap* convened on a regular basis to advise the *gerecht* on administrative, legal and financial issues and to take decisions on a wide range of

23 Marsilje, 'Bestuur en rechtswezen', 89–92; Lamet, 'The Vroedschap of Leiden', 16.
24 Blok, *Geschiedenis eener Hollandsche stad*, 1910, 1:150–52.

matters. In the following decades, the attendance and frequency of the *vroedschap* meetings declined due to an apparent indifference among its members. The burgomasters relied more often on the less formalised and smaller *secrete vroedschap* (privy council), the members of which were former burgomasters.[25]

The increasing role of the burgomasters in Leiden's government and the decreasing size and involvement of the broader *vroedschap* can be regarded as trends towards a more oligarchic regime – a process that has been observed for other European cities in this period, too.[26] The degree of intensity and causes of this process varied. In Leiden the turnover of the members of the *gerecht* was relatively high and remained stable. In the period between 1340 and 1420, 235 individuals held 926 offices or mandates (an average of 3.94 mandates per individual). This number was almost the same in the years between 1420 and 1510, when 279 individuals held 1104 offices (an average of 3.96 mandates per individual). Although this was a low average compared to other towns in the Low Countries, a high turnover rate does not imply that the mandates were equally distributed. In the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, a political top stratum of about ten per cent of the 139 families participating in Leiden's government held at least 48 per cent of the available offices. Members of these families often served for many years during their career. In the following period, from 1420 to 1510, forty per cent of the mandates were held by merely 14.8 per cent of the total number of magistrates.[27]

In 1385 the membership of the *vroedschap* was restricted to former burgomasters and aldermen, who served for life, but an average of 2.8 newcomers joined the council annually between 1410 and 1520. This number should not conceal the fact that the council's total membership fell from approximately 85 to 45 individuals in the same period.[28] So, the *vroedschap* never became an entirely closed body. Particularly in periods of political turmoil, new men made it in, while a functioning council of forty strengthened the position of families already in power.

The (relative) number of families and individuals that participated in Leiden's government was restricted from early on and, by all measures, gradually decreased throughout the later Middle Ages. The intervention of the Burgundian-Habsburg rulers in the electoral procedures, primarily aimed at establishing a stable and supportive local regime, contributed to the relative closure of the ruling group. One of the two political factions – the Hooks – was

25 Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 54–67; Zuijderduijn, 'De secrete vroedschap'.
26 Buylaert, Baguet, and Everaert, 'Returning Urban Political Elites'.
27 Van Kan, *Sleutels tot de macht*, 98–105; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 49–54.
28 Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 54–60.

effectively excluded from power from the late fifteenth century onwards. The social composition of the political elite did not change markedly in this process. In contrast to cities in the Southern Low Countries, there was no trend towards aristocracy, i.e. more magistrates enjoying noble status. Even if the rather stretched understanding of nobility by Brand is followed, the share of members of noble origin of the *vroedschap* and the council of forty had fallen well below fifty per cent by the early sixteenth century, and this trend continued in the early modern period.[29] It is often hard to socially distinguish noble from non-noble magistrates, as the former were equally involved in urban trade and production, especially drapery. Some urban families, on the other hand, invested in landed properties in the surrounding countryside.[30]

2 Political Participation

The relative exclusivity of municipal office did not imply that Leiden's citizens were altogether unable to participate in politics or influence decision-making. The governance of the town went beyond its government, as multiple actors and bodies were involved in (and sometimes also excluded from) managing urban affairs. In the past decades, historians have shown that a one-sided focus on elites and institutions does not tell the full story of premodern urban politics, as it was as much shaped 'from below' through the consultation of citizens or by their contestation.[31] This raises the question how these forms of political participation manifested themselves in medieval Leiden.

If Leiden's political economy was a complex assemblage of actors with different interests, strategies and resources, then conflict and bargaining were an intrinsic part of it. Factional strife became a structural part of Leiden's political order with the emergence of two parties in Holland halfway through the fourteenth century, the Cods and the Hooks. Leiden sided with Count William (the Cods), in his struggle for power with his mother, Countess Margaret, in 1351, who enjoyed the support of the castellan and some of the town's elite families (the Hooks). The succession crisis spilled over to a local level; subsequently, structural tensions formed between the two urban factions. These were initially rather loose groups, but they often aligned with kinship networks, tying

29 Van Kan, *Sleutels tot de macht*, 37, 41, 51–52; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 253–58; cf. Buylaert, Baguet, and Everaert, 'Returning Urban Political Elites', 582.

30 Van Kan, *Sleutels tot de macht*, 47–51, 93–94; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 211–48.

31 Lantschner, *The Logic of Political Conflict*; Liddy, *Contesting the City*; Prak, *Citizens without Nations*; Eersels and Haemers, *Words and Deeds*.

political strife and sentiments to feuds and acts of vengeance and making them persist. Larger outbursts of violence – exceeding the levels of seditious language, disturbances or fights – occurred when the control over municipal offices was at stake or whenever they were triggered by regional political unrest. In 1350–51, 1391–93, 1417, 1419–20, 1445 and 1481 such conflicts resulted in (temporary) regime changes in Leiden.[32] In more stable periods, the count sought to strike a balance between the political interests of both factions, but Maximilian of Habsburg reinforced the dominant position of the Cods in 1481 by appointing them to the council of forty. At the same time, the parties in Holland lost their political relevance.

The fact that the main conflicts centred on the control of government shows that Leiden's political order was polycentric only to a degree. Only in a few instances did conflicts involve groups that sought to achieve more autonomy in the town's political economy. For example, the Hooks tried to seize power in the spring of 1393 in the wake of a revolt of the community (*gemeente*), mainly guildspeople, of Leiden. The latter were angered by an ordinance issued by the town council earlier that year forbidding mandatory guild membership for citizens. During these events the *gerecht* was forced to give in to the guildspeople's demand to be allowed to organise themselves and to choose their own leaders. Although collective action of disenfranchised labourers, especially the fullers, was not uncommon in Leiden, this was the first of very few instances in which the economic and political interests of different groups coincided.[33] The Hooks' pragmatic support of the guildspeople's quest for more autonomy in order to regain power themselves was thwarted by the count, who retracted all of his earlier promises made on 4 June 1393, exiling many of those involved or condemning them to a pilgrimage. He also appointed a new bench of aldermen, who were overwhelmingly associated with the Cods.[34]

The period of unrest after the death of Charles the Bold in 1477 opened another opportunity for political change in Leiden. On 21 June 1477, the *vroedschap* promised the Burgundian governor (*stadhouder*) support if an uprising of the commons (*gemeente*) occurred in one of the Dutch towns.[35] Early in 1481, a Hooks army seized Leiden and a new local government was installed.[36] On

32 Van Kan, *Sleutels tot de macht*, 132–44, 167–68; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 109–10.

33 Boone and Brand, 'Vollersoproeren en collectieve actie', 182–86.

34 Van Mieris, *Groot charterboek*, 1755, 3:595–97; Overvoorde, 'De Leidsche ambachtsbroederschappen'; Van Kan, *Sleutels tot de macht*, 150–53.

35 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 382, f. 92v, Vroedschapsresoluties (21 June 1477): '… enige uprijsingen in den lande gebuerden van der gemeenten die uprijsen tiegen den gerechte, rijken ende notabelen van den steden om gilden en diergeliken te hebben …'.

36 Van Gent, *Pertijelike Saken*, 281–84, 289, 306–8; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 95–98.

14 February, a new council of six members was elected by 36 representatives of the town's eighteen wards (*bonnen*). For advice, the councillors were to consult the ward representatives, who in turn could seek the opinion of the inhabitants of the ward. Shortly thereafter the council was extended to eighteen members, eight of whom belonged to the *vroedschap* and *rijkdom* and ten to the *gemeente* (commons).[37] This experiment in broader political involvement – for some assemblies over 200 citizens were convened – was cut short by a forceful princely intervention in the summer of 1481. Although it was another instance of factional conflict, the Hooks sought to involve two bodies – the wards and the commons – more formally in political decision-making.

Both events show that the Hooks sought to mobilise wider political support for their coups, but broader political participation by guilds and citizens remained incidental to their objective. In 1393, the guildspeople's main concern was to secure autonomy for their collective organisations. Guilds (*ambachten*) had long been suppressed by the town council with the help of the count, who had issued a charter in 1313 forbidding the formation of associations that acted against the town's honour and profit. This was not an outright ban on associations, unless they hindered the town's law or administration.[38] This was likely a response to a wave of so-called 'guild revolutions' in the early fourteenth century in cities in the Southern Low Countries and in Dordrecht and Utrecht.[39] This opportunity for political emancipation came too early for the guilds in Leiden, as elsewhere in Holland, where a strong urban corporate tradition never developed. Throughout this period, the Leiden town council was particularly wary of disruptive collective action by the fullers, even though their discontent was always economic in nature, not political.[40]

Although evidence for the fourteenth century is scanty, traders and artisans organised themselves in guilds. Initially, these associations mainly fulfilled religious and social functions, making them sometimes difficult to distinguish from other religious confraternities.[41] If an occupational group organised itself into a guild or confraternity, membership was not obligatory, nor were members allowed to elect *hoofdmannen* (headmen), who could implement economic rules and ensure compliance. This right was reserved for

37 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 573, f. 19r-19v, 22r-23v, town account (14 and 16 February and 14 and 22 March 1481); Blok, *Geschiedenis eener Hollandsche stad*, 1912, 2:82.

38 Van Mieris, *Groot charterboek*, 1754, 2:122; Marsilje, 'Bestonden er in het middeleeuwse Leiden'.

39 Prak, 'Corporate Politics in the Low Countries', 75–81.

40 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 1:363–67.

41 Van Steensel, 'Identifying Contextual Factors', 50–51; Van Luijk, '"Ter eeren ende love Goodes"'.

gezworenen (deans) appointed by the town council. Discontent about these two issues caused the guilds to revolt in 1393.

In the fifteenth century, guilds or confraternities acquired some form of autonomy, as many of them obtained a charter from the *gerecht*. Even membership sometimes became compulsory. For example, the charter of the confraternity of St Aubert from 1512 stipulated that all men and women baking and selling bread should enrol.[42] At least 31 guilds can be identified for the period before the Siege of Leiden (1573), but the town council denied them any form of formal political participation, except that they had to participate in the annual Corpus Christi procession, in the hope that God would grant the town 'peace and harmony, as well as trade and prosperity'.[43] Returning to the events of 1481, it is telling that the Hooks did not regard the guilds as representatives of the *gemeente*, but rather consulted the *bonmeesters* (wardens of the wards) who generally belonged to the political elite and were appointed by the town council.[44] In sum, the guilds in Leiden did not evolve into a vehicle of popular politics, and they were not regularly consulted by the town council – unlike the militias in the period after the Siege.[45] The question then remains if and to what extent citizens who wished to have a say in politics were able to exert this right in late medieval Leiden.

In some instances, the *vroedschap* summoned the *rijkdom* for consultation, mainly in important political and fiscal matters. For example, the town council invited the *rijkdom* in 1486 to consult them concerning their intention to impose a forced loan on the more affluent citizens, in order to pay the count for the right to appointment a new sheriff.[46] It was even less common for the town council to consult the commons. A few years earlier, in 1483, a new tax was raised by the *vroedschap* to cover military expenses, but the appointed committee of eight members of the *vroedschap* and eight of the *rijkdom* and

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42 Overvoorde, 'De ordonnanties', 552–55.

43 Van Steensel, 'Identifying Contextual Factors', 61–62; ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 387, f. 35r, Aflezingenboek A (January 1513): '… ende verlenen ons paysse ende vrede, getijdich weder neringe ende welvaren'.

44 Walle, *Buurthouden*, 15–18. Initially, the aldermen might have represented the four oldest wards. In the later Middle Ages these administrative districts had administrative and fiscal purposes: fire prevention, the maintenance of streets and ramparts and the organisation of a night watch.

45 See the chapter by Maarten Prak.

46 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 382, f. 204v-205r, Vroedschapsresolutie (15 and 20 September 1486). The sum of 1528 *Rijnsgulden* had to be paid by the eighteen wards in proportion to their ability to contribute.

gemeente advised to opt for a forced loan instead.[47] The minutes of the town council do not refer to a consultation with guild organisations or to petitions by these associations. Incidentally, the town council did seek the advice of professional groups and respond to their requests, without reference to guilds. The drapers were most often consulted, as they represented the most important economic sector. In 1465, for example, the town council decided to convene forty to fifty drapers, in order to discuss a new ordinance regulating the industry.[48]

The butchers, in 1493, requested lower rents for stalls in the town's meat hall. Even though they argued that they 'might well give up butchering out of poverty', the cash-strapped town council turned down their request.[49] In 1526, the *vroedschap* decided that the brewers should brew no more than 33 barrels per brew ('broute'), a protective limitation on brewing capacity in response to complaints about brewers who brewed 'higher or longer'. This measure was proposed by the burgomasters and ratified by the town council.[50] The very few (written) requests sent to the *vroedschap* say little about the political leverage of occupational groups, but they make clear that guild members or citizens made use of other channels to address their problems. The *gerecht* rather than the *vroedschap* was the main entry point for them to raise their concerns.[51]

The minutes of the meetings of the *gerecht* are not preserved, but its announcements read out publicly are, from which some interactions with occupational groups, citizens and residents can be established. For instance, one matter on which the magistracy decided was the maximum wage in the cloth industry.[52] It was also involved in the election or appointment of deans (*waardijns*) and inspectors or arbitrators (*vinders*). Furthermore, the statutes of the Leiden guilds were issued by the *gerecht* without being approved by the

47 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 382, f. 143r-v, Vroedschapsresolutie (16 August 1483). In 1508, a total number of 290 households contributed to a forced loan; ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 587, f22v-28v. If they are regarded as forming the *rijkdom*, it constituted about ten per cent of the total number of households (3,010 households were counted in 1498).

48 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 382, f. 2v, Vroeschapsresolutie (10 November 1465).

49 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 382, f. 312v and 317v, Vroedschapsresolutie (19 March and 30 April 1493): '… of sij sullen t vleyshouwen van armoede moeten laten …'.

50 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 384, f. 78r, Vroedschapsresolutie (9 February 1526). For the brewers, see Ladan, 'Leidse brouwers'.

51 In 1565, for example, the town council addressed the frequency of leather markets in the town. A matter that was earlier raised between the shoemakers and the burgomasters; ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 386, f. 4r-v (20 March 1565).

52 The main sources are the so-called *Stedeboek* and the *Aflezingenboeken*; Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 1:136 (no. 121: fullers, 1435); Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 2:340 (no. 932: blue dyers, 1526).

larger town council, granting more autonomy to occupational associations.[53] Although it is difficult to chart the interactions between the magistrates and the guilds, they regularly negotiated about the organisation of trades and crafts.

For citizens and other residents, guilds were not the only vehicle of daily interactions with the magistrate. In some cases, the town council turned to the wards to address issues of governance. In 1491, for example, it was decided to ask the *bonmeesters* to organise a collection for the poor, as the regular poor relief fell short in this period.[54] Furthermore, there are examples of citizens raising issues concerning public infrastructure, medical care and education with the town council, for which it issued regulations and appointed personnel.[55] In 1519, for example, the *gerecht* made a proclamation instructing citizens to send any of their children under the age of seventeen to the Great or Latin school, arguing that it was now run by a 'good schoolmaster' who would be better able to teach the children how to write than the private schools.[56] This argument reveals that the citizens complained about the quality of the Latin school, of which the curriculum was also insufficiently tailored to the needs of children who required a more practical education.

3 Urban Governance

As in other towns in Holland, broader political participation did not become institutionalised in Leiden, and the evidence of the interactions between the magistrates and guilds, or other bodies, and citizens is limited. Nonetheless, the well-being of its inhabitants was a major concern of the town's governance, in which the town council played a coordinating role. Martha Howell has already argued that until the Siege the town's urban economy was characterised by a system of 'small commodity production', since the policy of the town council favoured small, independent master artisans – sometimes organised in guilds – who controlled their own means of production and worked in shops, individually or with the help of family members or workers. This economic system would have enabled growth by means of greater labour input or innovation, but at the same time would have protected what the ruling elite – in

53 Overvoorde, 'De ordonnanties'.
54 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 382, f. 297v, 307v and 309r, Vroedschapsresolutie (28 November and 7 December 1491). A regular tax was earlier, in May 1491, deemed too risky, as it could lead to commotion and uproar.
55 Van Steensel, 'The Emergence of an Administrative Apparatus', 49–50.
56 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 387, f. 85v-86r, Aflezingenboek (27 February 1519).

Leiden dominated by the large drapers – regarded as the core values of the urban community. It enabled a flexible and market-oriented system of production in accordance with the magistracy's objective to maintain social and political stability by ensuring full employment, a reasonable income and a limited level of inequality.[57] Even though not all historians are convinced that this hybrid form of craft and capitalist production effectively captures the nature of premodern urban economies,[58] Howell and Robert Duplessis raise the important question as to how distinct political economies did shape urban governance in premodern times.

Criticising Howell's understanding of Leiden's medieval economy, Brand follows the older reading of N.W. Posthumus that the town's textile industry was already capitalist in nature. Brand argues that strong ties existed between the political and economic elites of Leiden, ensuring that the town council protected the main industry through regulation of the quality of cloth, shop size, production and wages. When Leiden's cloth production faced increased competition from the second half of the fifteenth century onwards, the town council, in consultation with the drapers, sought to maintain the existing economic relations, resulting in a repressive wage policy and denying artisans the right to make their own economic decisions. At the same time, Leiden's protectionist strategy served to cushion the effects of the market on small artisans and labourers, as the safeguarding of employment and general welfare was part of it.[59] This argument assumes that the decision-making by the town followed the logic of merchant capital,[60] i.e. the (regulatory) control of the drapers over the production process of cloth. This would have limited the leeway of artisans to increase their productivity or to adapt to economic change, while the drapers continued to make profits and passed on possible risks to the producers. The question is whether the lack of political clout of the guilds in Leiden really gave the drapers the opportunity to exert such a strong influence on urban governance, or whether the outcome of the latter placed limits on the logic of capital.

The effectiveness of medieval towns in developing social and economic policies, as well as their impact on urban life, is a matter of debate. Sheilagh Ogilvie, for example, argues that urban political elites and guild members

57 Duplessis and Howell, 'Reconsidering the Early Modern Urban Economy', 51–63; Howell, *Women, Production, and Patriarchy*, 34–39, chapter 3.

58 See, De Munck, *Guilds, Labour and the Urban Body Politic*, 181–82, 236, especially the egalitarian policies of the authorities are questioned.

59 Brand, 'Urban Policy or Personal Government', 27–32; Brand, 'A Medieval Industry'.

60 Soly, 'The Political Economy', 46–47, 63–65.

formed a coalition to profit disproportionally from the economy through rent-seeking.[61] If her assertion holds, then Leiden's town council and the *rijkdom* – the political and economic elites – should have bargained to serve their economic interests at the expense of those not included in this process (and, as a consequence, would negatively have affected the economic fortunes of the town writ large). The workings of economic institutions were indeed dependent on Leiden's political institutions and the underlying distribution of political power.[62] The concentration of power in the hands of a limited group of citizens in Leiden, however, did not necessarily mean that they could choose the economic arrangements they wished for, nor that their policies affected the growth of wealth and its distribution amongst individuals in different ways.[63] Both internal political dynamics and external factors put constraints on the ability of the magistrates to prioritise the economic interests of the *rijkdom*. Understanding Leiden's economic and social policies as a dichotomy between those who had formal power and those who lacked it is also too reductive. On the one hand, it ignores the impact of contemporary discourse on good governance that emphasised the primacy of the common good; on the other, other bodies – guilds, occupational organisations, confraternities, wards, neighbourhood associations – beside the magistracy were to a greater or lesser extent involved in the town's governance.

The economic policy of Leiden's late medieval magistracy and town council was motivated by the conviction that the town's prosperity depended on the cloth industry. The decisions were generally justified by referring to the common good of the town (*ten meesten oirbair ende profijte van der stede*). Tellingly, in a by-law concerning the fullers from 1363, the magistracy claimed that the 'common good sprouts from and is increased by government and policy'.[64] By the early sixteenth century, some disgruntled citizens indeed held the magistrates responsible for their poor economic fortunes. On 14 February 1523, the *gerecht* cautioned those who had stuck small abusive notes on the doors of magistrates and deans on which were written the words, 'make industry, it's time': a reminder that 'those who were in charge of the town could not make

61 See, e.g. Ogilvie, 'The Economics of Guilds'.

62 Acemoglu and Robinson, 'De Facto Political Power'.

63 One methodological issue is the question if towns are the right units of analysis to establish differential effects of economic institutions, as they were closely interrelated through various networks. Cf. Casson, 'Reputation and Responsibility'; Blondé et al., 'The Low Countries' Paradox'.

64 Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 1:7 (no. 11): '… welc gemeen goet sprutende ende merende is van regimente ende beleyde …'.

industry by their words or will', especially not as trade had come to a standstill due to warfare.[65]

The language of the common good was prevalent in the reasoning of Leiden's magistrates. Good governance meant that collective interests should prevail over sectional interests, even if the common good was sometimes defined differently and opinions varied about the way to achieve it.[66] It is from this perspective that the ordinance from 1451 mentioned at the beginning of this chapter – prohibiting drapers from practicing their trade during their tenure as burgomaster or alderman – can be understood. In 1465, this prohibition was extended to the dyers, who were always represented in the town government, but who often hindered proper regulation of the textile sector by 'putting their own profit above the common good'. The town council decided to uphold this ordinance in 1525.[67] These stipulations made it unattractive for drapers and dyers to accept honorary municipal offices. But it also implies that no interest group succeeded in controlling the town's governance. Moreover, the interests of the entrepreneurs and artisans in the textile sector often competed with each other. The blue and red dyers, for example, avoided coming under control of the drapers, but found it difficult to work together.[68] The cloth industry was certainly the main concern of the magistracy and town council in terms of policy-making: not because the drapers controlled these institutions, but rather because the industry was regarded as the backbone of the well-being of its citizens.

The magistracy was aware that the urban economy had to respond and adapt to changing market conditions, even if the circumstances seemed out of their control. For example, they sought the support of the count for decades in suppressing competition both from the rural surroundings and from other Dutch towns.[69] The supply of high-quality wool from England via the staple of Calais was also a returning concern. War in particular was a constant threat to

65 Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 2:319 (no. 905): '… inhoudende: "maect neringe, tys tijt", alsof diegene, die de stede bevolen is, neringe mogen maecken tot hoir selfs seggen ende wille …'. It was also common for labourers to express their discontent in the form of defamatory songs. In 1544, the mocked and insulted drapers by singing song on the street and in the front of their houses; Brinkman, *Dichten uit liefde*, 58.

66 Lecuppre-Desjardin and Van Bruaene, *De Bono Communi*.

67 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 1:352; '… sy voerstellen hoir eygen profijt voirt gemene oirboir …'; Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 1:412–413 (no. 362); Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 2:337 (no. 928). The same prohibition applied to the *waardijns* of the drapers and dyers.

68 Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 170–74.

69 Brünner, *De order op de buitennering*.

the supply of raw materials.[70] Finally, the fiscal pressure of the Burgundian-Habsburg state on the town increased incrementally, creating a financial crisis in Leiden over the last two decades of the fifteenth century. The town was no longer able to meet its financial obligations (in particular, to pay the rents of its public debt due to its comital monetary policies) and had to cut its expenses, remaining under the supervision of a curator appointed by the count from 1496 to 1510.[71] In general, however, the regional authorities only intervened in urban economic matters on the request of Leiden's magistracy.[72] Good relationships with the Burgundian-Habsburg officials were of great importance for the town if it was to promote its political and economic interests at the level of the regional and central authorities.[73] In economic matters of regional significance Leiden often teamed up with the other Dutch towns, which they met regularly during assemblies of the States of Holland.[74] In specific cases, the town council sent representatives on special diplomatic missions, especially with regard to relations with the Hanse cities and to secure English wool from the staple in Calais.[75]

4 Spatial Inequalities

An important but difficult question to answer is how the political economy of Leiden and its governance affected the well-being of its inhabitants or cushioned the effects of economic fluctuations. For example, the cumulative effects of political instability, warfare and economic headwinds at the end of the fifteenth century created a crisis of urban public finance, disrupted the supply of English wool and pushed up the prices of food commodities.[76] The wage workers in the cloth industry were hit particularly hard economically and the town's system of social assistance did not suffice to support all those who had lost their employment.[77] The differential effects of this crisis on the urban

70 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 1:183, 207; Blockmans, *Metropolen aan de Noordzee*, 520–31.

71 Hamaker, 'De stad leiden'; Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg Rule*, 24–30; Zuijderduijn, 'De schuldvraag'.

72 Ibelings, 'Economie en politiek', 269–70.

73 Damen, 'Tussen stad en land'; Damen, 'Giving by Pouring'.

74 Kokken, *Steden en staten*, chap. 6; Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg Rule*, chap. 2.

75 Sicking, 'Leiden and the Wool Staple'.

76 Brand, 'Leiden rond 1500'.

77 Van Steensel, 'Variations in Urban Assistance'; Brand, 'Sociale omstandigheden', 114–17; Noordam, 'Leiden in last', 19–20; Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche*

population are difficult to gauge, but two fiscal records give some insight into the relative economic position of households in this period. The information from a tax on wealth estimations from 1498 and a tax on annual rental values from 1561 has already been used multiple times by historians to shed light on the question of economic inequality and social segregation.[78] To summarise this research, the distribution of wealth and income were both skewed in late medieval Leiden. The distribution of wealth in 1498, if expressed as a Gini coefficient, was 0.85, while the distribution income in 1561 was 0.45. Capital holdings were clearly more unequally distributed than income. As far as these numbers can be meaningfully compared to calculations for other European cities, wealth was slightly more unequally divided in Leiden and income slightly less.[79]

Economic inequality was rising incrementally again in this period across Europe, and historians point at various factors relating to the ratio between the returns on capital and labour and the systems of redistribution that might explain this development.[80] In the case of Leiden, the weak political position of guilds and labour relations, especially in the textile sector, might explain the capacity of the town council to suppress wages in spite of recurrent protests by workers.[81] The low wages for labourers did not directly result in a general income inequality greater than in industrial cities with a strong guild presence, as for example Ghent. Furthermore, Howell agrees that Leiden's wealth distribution at the end of the fifteenth century was negatively skewed, but compared to other cities in Germany and the Low Countries the most affluent entrepreneurs in Leiden were not exceptionally wealthy.[82] It is unclear what, if any, role the town's policy of suppressing wages and limiting workshop size, as well as taxation, played in wealth accumulation and income redistribution.

Notwithstanding the methodological issues involved in using fiscal records, the information from the registers gives some insight into the relative

lakenindustrie, 1:362. For health care, social assistance and charitable institutions in general, see Ladan, *Genzondheidszorg in Leiden*; Ligtenberg, *De armenzorg*.

78 Soltow and Van Zanden, *Income and Wealth Inequality*, 38–39, 50–54; Noordam, 'Leiden in last'; Bisschops, 'Ruimtelijke vermogensverhoudingen'.

79 Van Steensel, 'Urban Hierarchies', 181.

80 See, for this debate, Alfani and Tullio, *The Lion's Share*; and more specifically for the Low Countries: Ryckbosch, 'Economic Inequality'; Blondé et al., 'The Low Countries' Paradox'.

81 The nominal day wage of a fuller rose with 33.5 per cent between 1432 and 1497, but the rise of the real day wage was much lower; Brand and Stabel, 'De ontwikkeling van vollerslonen', 212–16, 221; Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 1:294–95, 318–31.

82 Howell, *Women, Production, and Patriarchy*, 65–68.

distribution of resources in late medieval Leiden, especially when the spatial patterns of economic inequality are charted. Studies on premodern urban social topography generally do not reflect on the political context or implications of the spatial distribution of population density, housing quality, type of residence and ownership, occupations and trades, or wealth and income.[83] For Leiden it can be argued that a clear clustering of magistrates created a spatial distance between those in power and ordinary citizens, thereby impeding political interactions.

The tax roll from 1498 is exceptional in its inclusion of the wealth estimates of the poorer part of the population (29.4 per cent of the total population) exempted from the one per cent wealth tax. Of those paying the tax, 25.3 per cent reported capital holdings worth less than 24 pounds, while 28 citizens (0.9 per cent) were worth more than 5,000 pounds.[84] Among the last group were at least eight clothiers or drapers, in two cases of noble origin, who served as members of the *vroedschap*.[85] On a side note, the fact that the anonymous widow of the clothier Klaas Alwijnsz, living in the ward of Marendorp Rijnzijde, was the wealthiest citizen, with an estimated wealth of 14,400 pounds, provides an illustration of the complexity of Leiden's political and economic elites. He had been a member of the short-lived Hook council of eighteen in 1481, working on behalf of the commons, but was no longer politically active after the restoration of the power of the Cods.[86]

It is not possible yet to map household wealth at a parcel or street level, meaning that its spatial distribution can only be shown at the level of wards (Figure 5.3). This crude visualisation suggests a concentric configuration with a concentration of wealth in the central wards and poverty in the peripheral ones. Such strict social segregation did not actually exist, because if one zooms into the wards a more heterogeneous picture emerges: not all and not only the rich lived in the oldest four wards of Zevenhuizen, Kerkvierendeel, Wanthuis and Burgstreng, where the more expensive residential properties were located near places of political, religious and economic importance. Moreover, the distribution of occupations shows no strong patterns of clustering,

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83 Denecke, 'Soziale Strukturen im städtischen Raum', 129–32.

84 Noordam, 'Leiden in last', 22–23; Van Steensel, 'Urban Hierarchies', 179–80.

85 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 578, town account (1498). Also available as dataset: A. van Steensel, Historisch Leiden in Kaart: Vermogensbelasting, 1498. DANS (2016), https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-zfa-srjh. The names of the magistrates are identified on the basis of De Boer, 'Die politische Elite', 106–7; and Brand's data: https://oudleiden.nl/werkgroepen/jan-van-hout-archiefonderzoek/stedelijke-elites-1420-1510 (consulted 4 September 2023).

86 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 578, f. 83v, town account (1498); Van Gent, *Pertijelike Saken*, 484–85.

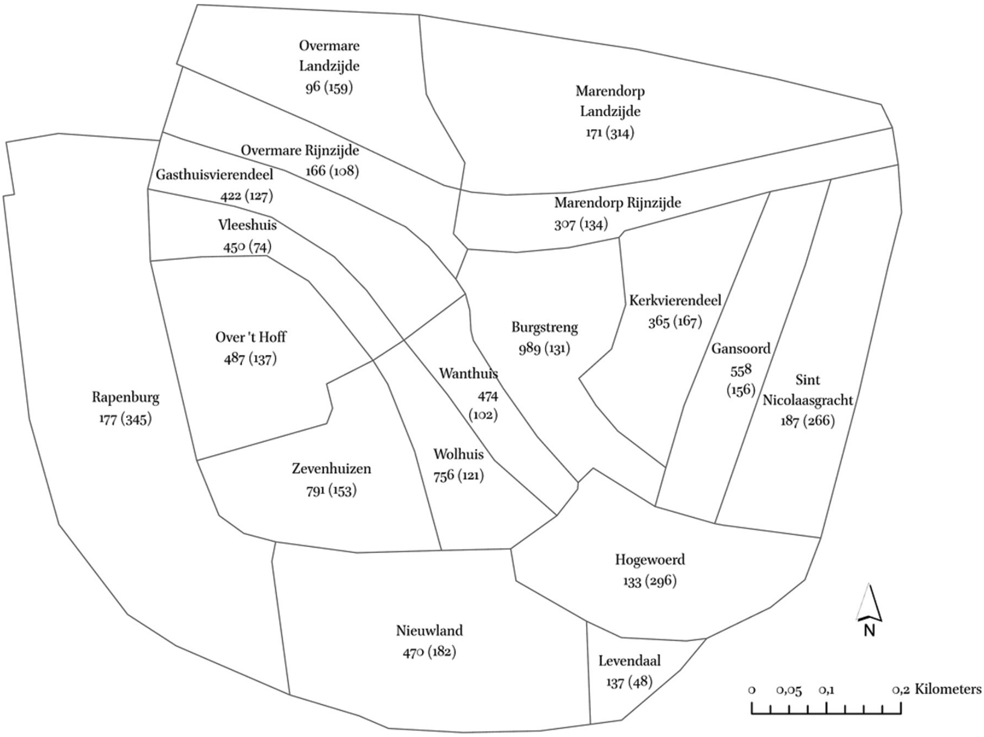

FIGURE 5.3 The average wealth per household (in pounds) and the total number of households per ward, 1498
SOURCE: AUTHOR

adding to the heterogenous nature of the wards.[87] In times of economic and demographic expansion in the fifteenth century, social segregation tended to increase, while it remained more or less stable during the period of contraction in the first half of the sixteenth century. Even though residential mobility may have been relatively high in late medieval Leiden,[88] residential patterns were more or less stable due to ownership structures, housing market dynamics and the economic function of certain locations.

The tax roll from 1561, giving the rental values of residential properties, allows for a more refined picture of social and economic disparities.[89] This was a tax of ten per cent on the (estimated) annual rental values of properties (Figure 5.4). Assuming that the cost of housing was proportionate to

87 Van Steensel, 'Measuring Urban Inequalities', 374–79; Bisschops, 'Ruimtelijke vermogensverhoudingen', 125–29; Brand, 'Leiden rond 1500', 109–13.
88 See, for the last quarter of the sixteenth century, Daelemans, 'Leiden 1581', 167–68.
89 Draft version: ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 993, tax register (1561); and the final version: Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Staten van Holland voor 1572, no. 1330, tax register (1561).

FIGURE 5.4 The relative rental value per property (in pennies), 1561
SOURCE: AUTHOR

FIGURE 5.5 The occupation status of private properties (tenant or owner-occupied), 1561
SOURCE: AUTHOR

expendable income, these values can be taken as a proxy for the total income per capita.[90] All houses were assessed, even if they did not meet the threshold of six pounds, allowing for geocoding properties and their owners and, if applicable, tenants. The parcel-level analysis, firstly, confirms the observations made on the basis of the wealth tax from 1498: a graded distinction between central wards and peripheral wards; but the distribution of dark dots, i.e. higher rental values, at the same time shows the mixed nature of both wealthier and poorer wards. A similar mixed pattern, secondly, can be observed with regard to the spatial distribution of owner-occupied and tenant-occupied properties (Figure 5.5). Overall, 60.5 per cent of the 2,771 households lived in an owner-occupied property in 1561. The average value of owner-occupied properties was 1.58 times higher than that of tenant-occupied houses. Although rental properties were more prevalent in the peripheral wards, owner occupancy was not consistently higher in the central wards. For example, 52 per cent of the houses in the ward of Gasthuis were owner occupied, but this was lower than the 59 per cent found for the eastern ward of Nicolaasgracht. Despite these housing inequalities, the majority of the heads of households owned a property in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. Moreover, tenants were not necessarily poor, because renting could be a choice. The rapid growth of Leiden later in the same century would affect the housing market significantly through an increase in cheap rental properties.[91]

Finally, earlier research has shown that around 1500 the members of the Leiden *vroedschap* mainly lived in the central wards and in the adjacent parts of the wards of Rapenburg and Nieuwland.[92] Geo-locating the members of the *veertigen* (from 1509 till 1572), as well as the aldermen and burgomasters (1535 till 1572), confirms that this pattern holds for the sixteenth century (Figure 5.6). The 91 magistrates lived in the central wards and along the main waterways, the Old and New Rhine and the Rapenburg.[93] The political elite of Leiden were clustered more densely than any of the occupational groups in the town. Moreover, hardly any of the town's magistrates were residents

90 This method was developed by Soltow and Van Zanden, *Income and Wealth Inequality*, but see the earlier critical remarks by Boeschoten and Van Manen, 'Een welstandsverdeling van Haarlem'. The valuation of the rental value of owner-occupied properties tended to be lower than the market value. Moreover, individuals with a high income tended to spend proportionally less on housing costs.

91 See Van Steensel, Van Oosten and Hooymans, 'Housing Inequality and Social Segregation'.

92 De Boer, 'Die politische Elite', 101–2, 108; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 115–16.

93 The data was geo-located by Martin Hooymans, as part of the on-going Historisch Leiden in Kaart-project.

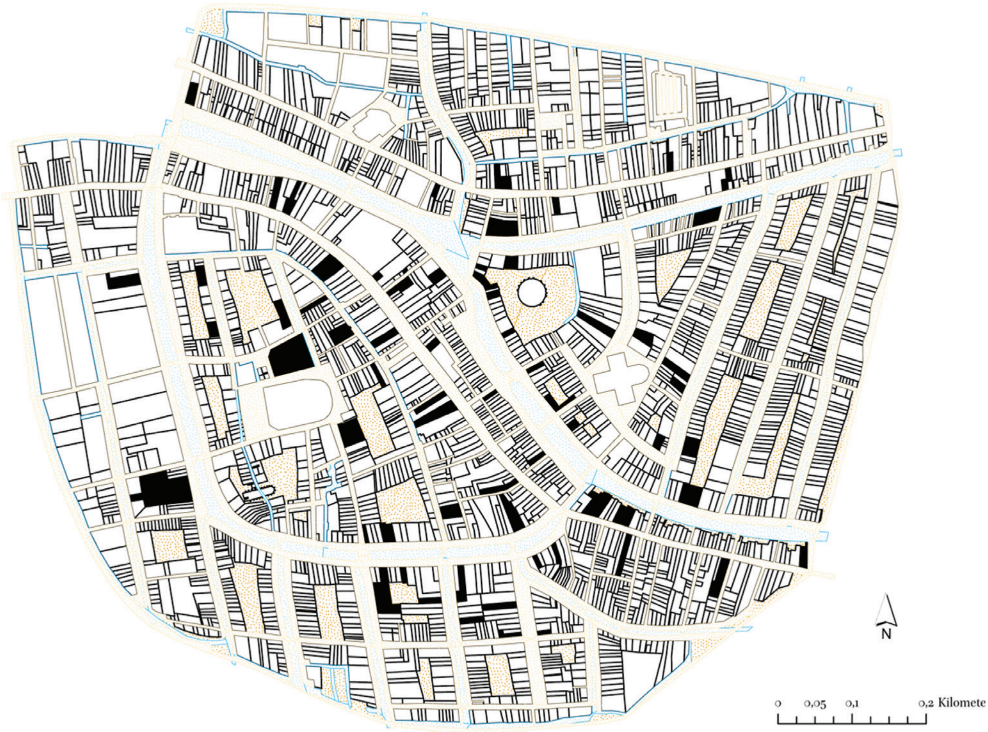

FIGURE 5.6 Residences of magistrates (in black) in Leiden, 1509–1572
SOURCE: AUTHOR

of the poorer wards, like Overmare Landzijde and Marendorp Landzijde in the north and Nicolaasgracht in the east. It is assumed that the aldermen originally represented the oldest wards proportionally,[94] but geographical representation had disappeared by 1400.

Some of Leiden's ruling families were long-time residents of the central wards and proximity to the town's places of power might have been relatively important to them. Nonetheless, the spatial clustering of the political elite reinforced the more graded patterns of inequalities in terms of wealth, income and housing. From a political point of view, the greater social distance from those in power meant that the citizens – and (temporary) residents even less so – in the peripheral wards had fewer opportunities to make their voices heard in political matters. Again, the *bonmeesters* and other municipal officials

94 Marsilje, 'Bestuur en rechtswezen', 78.

fulfilled a bridging function between residents and the *gerecht*, but this was a less direct way of participating in the town's governance.[95]

5 Conclusions

The ordinance issued in Leiden in 1451 making office-holding less attractive to drapers was meant to avoid the ascendancy of one interest group in the town's government. Leiden's political economy could withstand the economic power of the clothiers by putting a mechanism in place that mitigated the risk of sectional interests in governance. Even though the drapers were represented in the town's magistracy and council, and their influence on economic policies overshadowed the interests of other occupational groups, the town's governance was never solely dependent on those who held political or economic power.

In fact, the size of the group of citizens who held formal power gradually decreased over time and the larger town council, composed of former office-holders, lost some of its political edge in the course of the sixteenth century. At the same time, due to the town's comparatively late development, the potential political ambitions of occupational groups could be suppressed, and practices of broader political participation were never institutionalised in medieval Leiden. Moreover, the main political conflicts were fought out between members of the political elite competing for power, while popular discontent generally concerned economic rather than political issues. Political and economic inequalities were structural, and these disparities were spatially engrained in the town's topography, enlarging the distance of many citizens and urbanites from those in power and from places of political decision-making.

Leiden's political order was strictly speaking not polycentric, given the early coordinating role of the *gerecht* and *vroedschap* and the lack of autonomy of other bodies in the town. At the same time, magistrates, citizens and interest groups did subscribe to a set of overarching rules, conventions and institutions that guided their interactions and decision-making processes at different

95 In 1506–7, the burgomasters in a top-down manner instructed the militia, guilds and neighbourhoods (*gebuurten*) to participate in the Our Lady procession. The neighbourhoods were requested to portray their favourite count or countess of Holland. In the end, the burgomasters decided not to make a 'bad judgement' by choosing three winners, but 'to keep the peace' by awarding wine and beer to all six participating neighbourhoods; ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 585, f. 47v, town account (1505–6); no. 387, f. 7r-v, Aflezingenboek A (1507); Brinkman, *Dichten uit liefde*, 74–75; Van Steensel, 'Identifying Contextual Factors', 61–62.

levels. The shared language of the common good and the town's benefit was a recurrent ideological expression of this form of urban governance. The seeming acceptance of the particularities of the political economy was arguably also the result of Leiden's magistrates' efforts – at least at a collective level – to serve the interests of the urban community as a whole, even if the effects on well-being were probably not very tangible for many.

In the process of governance, the magistrates interacted with citizens and responded to their demands. This form of political participation gradually expanded and justified the regulatory and coordinating responsibilities of the town government. The Leideners also increasingly expected the magistrates to solve their problems – even to the extent that the town council, for example, publicly proclaimed in 1521, in answer to demands made by the weavers, that 'every person of mind and reason knows and should know that trade, production and prosperity principally comes from God (…) and that at this time it is impossible to foresee [the external circumstances] better by human reason, except to pray to God Almighty'.[96] The complainers were reminded that the prevailing warfare and pestilence, disrupting the wool trade and production, were beyond the magistracy's control, suggesting it might be god's way to make people grateful and submissive again.

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96 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501, no. 387, f. 104r, Aflezingenboek (15 October 1521): 'Alzoe eenen ygelicken mensche die verstant ende reden gebruyet, kennelicken is ende behoert kennelicken te wesen dat alle comanscepe, neringe ende welvaeren principalicken compt van gode almachtich (…) ende en is niet wel mogelijck by menschelicken verstande up desen tijt dair breder in te voirsien, dan alleenlicken gode almachtich te bidden, dat hy doir zijn godlicke gracie tarme volck wil ontfarmen, vertroesten ende de neringe ende comanscepe beteren, opdat tarmen volck mach etende bliven'.

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CHAPTER 6

Civic Militias and Urban Politics in Leiden, 1600–1800

Maarten Prak

In December 2022, the Leiden Municipal Museum De Lakenhal acquired a seventeenth-century portrait of the ensign of one of the town's militia companies.[1] The portrait, painted by Ary de Vois, shows a young man with a white banner draped across his shoulder. It is a high-quality painting and was bought for almost half a million euros, a substantial sum for a painter who is not a household name. The painting complements the museum's collection of six other so-called militia pieces, all portraying groups of men in their militia uniforms. These collective portraits – the individual ensign is a bit of an exception – belong to the same tradition as the most famous work from the Dutch school of painting, Rembrandt's *Night Watch*, painted in 1642. Both de Vois' and Rembrandt's work put on display a phenomenon that was characteristic of urban communities in the Dutch Republic, and in fact all over Europe.

This is not to say that either *The Portrait of and Ensign of the Leiden Civic Militia* or *The Night Watch* are ordinary pictures, because they are not. Of such collective militia-pieces some 135 now survive, all of them originating in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland – one particular region in the Dutch Republic.[2] These paintings would be donated to the *doelen*, or militia hall, where they would be displayed to the members of the various militia companies – and there would be some competition about who had the best. Most of the collective portraits would either show the militiamen at rest, or even making merry. Rembrandt's *Night Watch* is unique in that it shows its subjects 'in action': the scene depicted in *The Night Watch* was played out 'live' every night in dozens of Dutch towns, where thousands of militiamen performed some of the activities displayed by Rembrandt on his famous canvas. Their actions were framed within a specific urban context and helped further the reproduction of specific local identities. This contribution, however, will focus on another aspect of the civic militias: their involvement in urban politics.

1 An earlier version of this chapter was published as Prak, 'Milicia cívica y política urbana'; that text has been revised and adapted for the present book.

2 On these so-called militia pieces, see Carasso-Kok, Levy-van Halm, and Van den Bergh-Hoogterp, *Schutters in Holland*.

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For a very long time, politics before the French Revolution (1789) was seen as the privilege of a small group of people. Elites – the nobility in the countryside, patricians in the towns and cities – occupied all the important posts. Nobles inherited their positions but the patricians, too, kept their ranks closed and became 'oligarchies'. This view of premodern politics began to change in the 1960s, when historians began to investigate upheavals, rebellions and revolutions during the early modern period. Milestones were the datasets created by the American historical sociologist Charles Tilly and his collaborators, documenting such events in France and Britain.[3] Gradually, historians started to realize that behind those tumultuous incidents lurked a more continuous story of 'popular politics', in which citizens were routinely involved in the making of local political decisions.[4] In this new historiography of premodern politics, civic organisations like guilds and civic militias have come to play an important role. Again following Tilly, we see that disaffection alone remains ineffective without some form of organisation. In modern times, political parties and labour unions provide such institutionalised settings. Guilds and civic militias did the same under the Old Regime until they were abolished in the wake of the French Revolution that, among many other things, sought to replace local politics (seen as the hotbeds of 'privilege') with national politics in a new, presumably more democratic guise.

This chapter focuses on one such civic organisation in Leiden. I will describe their routine activities, but to highlight their political role this contribution will focus on three major upheavals: the so-called Year of Disaster 1672, when the country was under attack from four foreign powers; in 1748 in the wake of another French invasion; and during the 1780s when the Fourth Anglo Dutch War (1780–84) precipitated yet another domestic crisis. All three were national events that affected many more communities than Leiden. Given the decentralised nature of the Dutch Republic, however, they inevitably also had a local flavour. I will not only analyse the actions of the militias, but also the political ideas and social ideals put forward in several political pamphlets written in connection with these disturbances. It is the purpose of this contribution to demonstrate that, long before the French Revolution, not only were 'ordinary people' regularly involved in politics, but they held well-articulated views on the political system of their own society.[5] I want, moreover, to show how civic militias could be instrumental in the articulation of these views and how

3 For a summary, see Tilly, *European Revolutions*.

4 An example of this new historiography is my own Prak, *Citizens without Nations*. See also Hamon and Laurent, *Le pouvoir municipal*; Colson and van Steensel, *Cities and Solidarities*.

5 On the role of 'ordinary people' in politics before the French Revolution, see Te Brake, *Shaping History*; Friedrichs, *Urban Politics in Early Modern Europe*, chap. 4.

FIGURE 6.1 Portrait of the ensign of one of the town's militia companies, painting by Ary de Vois, 1664
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, E 129

they helped to put them into practice. In this sense, the chapter highlights a phenomenon that can be observed in almost every town and city of the time; although the examples come from Leiden, there is very little specifically *Leids* about my story.

I use the word 'ordinary people' here as a very loose definition of 'non-elites'. However, several caveats are in order. The first, and most obvious: civic militias were an exclusively male environment. This was not true to quite the same extent for parallel organisations like the guilds, which did have female members, albeit almost always a small minority.[6] Not so the militiamen. As we will see further down, the militias were also not representative of the adult male population, with both the working and the upper classes under-represented. Their participation in local public affairs is nonetheless designated 'popular politics'.

1 Early History of Civic Militias

Initially formed as shooting guilds, Europe's first citizen militias seem to have originated in Flanders and Brabant in the late thirteenth century.[7] They quickly spread to adjacent regions, first in the Low Countries and France. Around 1400 shooting guilds had already been established in the Rhineland and from there they spread further: to the Hansa towns in the Baltic area, as well as to the eastern and southern parts of the Holy Roman Empire. By the end of the fifteenth century, they had reached the Austrian lands. In that same century they spread to Burgundy, through its contacts with the Low Countries. In the sixteenth century, English towns finally adopted the same institutions.[8] Shooting guilds were created with a military purpose in mind, but they were not, in themselves, military units. Their objective was to train civilians in the use of arms, to prepare them for military service. Particularly the rise of the arbalest contributed to the widespread emergence of the shooting guild, because the foot bow was so difficult to handle. Shooting guilds provided training grounds – in Leiden these were located close to the ramparts behind the Rapenburg canal, in the area around the Doelensteeg – and once a year there was an opportunity for members to demonstrate their skill in competition, by shooting at a wooden bird, normally a parrot, raised on a tall vertical pole. The man who managed to hit the parrot would be the guild's king for the next year. Women were not by definition excluded from shooting guilds, but they did not, as far as we know,

6 Schmidt, 'Women and Guilds'.

7 Reintges, *Ursprung und Wesen*, 58–60.

8 Reintges, 50–74.

participate in the competition. For males too the shooting guilds exercised exclusivity; as in the craft guilds, only those with full rights of citizenship were accepted as members.[9] This already suggests the potential for shooting guilds to position themselves as representatives of the citizen community.

There is some early evidence to suggest that in the late Middle Ages, shooting guilds were sometimes consulted by Dutch urban governments in times of crisis.[10] However, their great opportunity came with the Dutch Revolt in the second half of the sixteenth century. Local authorities, torn between the Habsburg authorities and the restless citizens, were desperate to establish legitimacy for their decisions, which one way or another were bound to be controversial. In Leiden this happened on the very first day of the Revolt in August 1566, when the support of the militia was required to restore order after a wave of iconoclastic rioting. Whereas normally the militia would be ordered onto the streets by the burgomasters, it was now considered better to first consult not only the officers but also the regular members. In Leiden the militia officers were involved by the council in its decision to stop the iconoclast riots. The militiamen responded to the burgomasters' call for help to restore the peace by saying that they were only willing to save the artworks, not intervene in the religious dispute. In Haarlem, militiamen volunteered their advice on how the most important posts in the city should be filled in September 1566, and in Delft the council summoned the militiamen to a meeting on October 6, referring to them as 'members of the town'.[11] In Amsterdam, which sided with the Habsburg government until 1578, it was thanks to a coup by the local militias that the catholic council was finally forced to make way for a protestant successor, which was elected by representatives of the militia. One of its first acts was to organise a huge dinner for the revolutionary militiamen, 'to plant and let grow once more the love and unity among the citizens'.[12]

2 Leiden's Civic Militias

In Holland, most urban communities formally established militia guilds around 1400, during a prolonged period of civil war known as the Hook and Cod Wars (1350–1490). In Leiden this happened in 1392. The early militia guilds (*schutterijen*) came in three varieties, depending on their weaponry: archbow

9 Reintges, 299.
10 In Amsterdam this is demonstrated by Van Iterson and Van der Laan, *Resoluties*.
11 Grayson, 'The Civic Militia', 41, 45, 47 (quote).
12 As quoted in Lievense-Pelser, 'De Alteratie', 49.

(*voetboog* in Dutch), bow (*handboog*) and handgun (*klove*, hence *kolveniers* or *kloveniers*). In Leiden the archers, under the patronage of St George, were initially the most prestigious, while the bowmen, whose patron was St Sebastian, were seen as second-rate. Next to these organisations, Leiden had a *Jonge Schut* for boys up to eighteen years. With the rise of firearms, the arch and bow became increasingly obsolete, and in 1578 the Leiden town council formally abolished the old names, at a point in time when all militias were already using the modern weapons.[13]

But before we turn to this next stage in the history of Leiden's civic militias, it is worth considering three issues. The first is the organisational shape of these early militias: they were militia *guilds*. This made them distinct from their successors because they were socially exclusive. Members of these militia guilds were required to have formal citizen status. In 1581, the militiamen had twice as many live-in servants as the average Leiden household, suggesting they were recruited from among the wealthier inhabitants.[14] The second point is that many people currently believe that Leiden had no guilds. This misunderstanding arises from the fact that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the town's most significant industry was organised differently, without guilds.[15] The rest of the urban economy, however, was like that of any other town in Holland, and indeed almost everywhere in Europe: Leiden had dozens of guilds in the late Middle Ages as well as in the early modern period.[16]

Third, it is useful to understand the governance context in which the civic militias were operating. Like all late medieval and early modern towns, Leiden was self-governing, albeit under the aegis of the sovereign. The sovereign was at first the Count of Holland, but with the Abjuration of Philip II in 1581 that position became vacant. Most politicians agreed that the States of Holland then acceded to the count's authority. Leiden was one of six and later, from 1579, eighteen towns with a seat in the States. It was therefore in some sense its own sovereign. This could only contribute to the autonomy of the local institutions of governance. Among these, the most important was the town council, known as *vroedschap*, or in Leiden also *veertigraad* (council of forty), after the number of its members. The members of this council sat for life and were citizens of the town. The council of forty selected new members when a vacancy arose; unsurprisingly, these new members tended to come from the established ruling families, known as *regenten*, or regents. From the council, nine members

13 Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, 27–30.

14 Daelemans, 'Leiden 1581', 197.

15 Davids, 'Neringen, hallen en gilden'.

16 Marsilje, 'Het economisch leven', 97–99.

would serve for one or two years as aldermen, while another four would serve equally short terms as burgomasters.[17] Although these institutions were not democratic in the modern sense, there were intensive interactions with the local population, which was organised into a variety of civic institutions: neighbourhoods, craft guilds and indeed civic militias, to whom we must now return.[18]

During the Dutch Revolt, twenty years of turmoil led to a fundamental overhaul of Leiden's civic militias.[19] In 1567 the old militia guilds were formally disbanded by the central government in Brussels, as in the rest of Holland, following their failure to act against protestant disturbances. This order was probably never implemented in Leiden. With Leiden joining the rebel side, its militias were recreated as military defence forces; participating in the resistance against the Spanish siege of the town, their stand earned them a reputation for heroic resolve.[20] The militias' transformation was consolidated in a new set of regulations introduced in 1579 by the local council. In the seventeenth century, however, their military prowess was hardly ever tested. Rather, their main duty was to serve on the night watch, which started at nine in the evening and lasted until daybreak: at least six or seven hours in summer and more than nine hours in winter.[21] Over the course of the watch, for which the militiamen were notified only 24 hours in advance, one group guarded the town hall, where the keys of the various town gates were kept, whilst the rest were distributed among several guard rooms across the town. From these rooms they were required to make the rounds of their district four times a night, to see if all was quiet. On average, a militiaman would be called up for duty about once every two months.

By the middle of the seventeenth century, Leiden's civic militias had grown to approximately 1,700 men; about one in every eight adult males was a member. The precise conditions of their recruitment are still somewhat unclear, but we can safely say that the requirement of formal citizenship had been dropped; mere inhabitants of towns were also drafted into the militias. Service was compulsory for all males between the ages of 18 and 60, but obviously the majority were excused. Some paid a hefty fine to escape the bi-monthly deprivation of a good night's sleep. Others were excused on the grounds of their

17 Prak, *Gezeten burgers*, 43.
18 Prak, *Citizens without Nations*, pt. 1.
19 Kolff, 'Libertatis Ergo', 126–31. Unless stated otherwise, the rest of this section is mainly based on Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, chap. 4.
20 Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, 87. On the Holland militias during the Revolt, see also Grayson, 'The Civic Militia'.
21 Lesger, *Power and Urban Space*, 11–12, 114–15.

financial situation. Militiamen had to pay for their own equipment, including their weapon and a helmet, or 'iron hat'. At the annual parades, militiamen might be fined because the latter piece of equipment was missing, possibly because they tried to provoke their superiors, or simply because they could not afford it.[22] Financial problems were a distinct possibility in a town like Leiden, where the majority of men were working class, employed in the town's well-known textile industry. By the middle of the seventeenth century Leiden had, after all, grown into Europe's largest centre for the production of woollen cloth.[23] However, the policy also seems to have been deliberately intended to keep out the workers as much as possible and to ensure middle class dominance among the militiamen. Even if the militias had no formal say in local politics, with the well-to-do buying their exemptions, the social composition of the militias was bound to be a delicate issue.[24]

Given the fact that Leiden's regular police force was quite small, the authorities had to rely on the militias to maintain order in times of serious disturbances. They were as a result determined to keep the militias under close supervision. Half of the 1579 regulations' sixteen articles were devoted to regulating the militiamen's behaviour. The board of the militias (*krijgsraad*) met almost every week, and its main business seems to have been fining violations of these various regulations. Moreover, the militias' commissioned officers were almost without exception members of the town's ruling families, and the commanding officer was by definition the presiding burgomaster.[25] Such intensive supervision proved, however, to be of little avail during moments of political crisis.

3 1672: Militias in Revolt

In 1672, the Dutch Republic, which had been so successful in almost every area throughout most of the preceding century, experienced a very serious setback. In the spring of that year, it was attacked by the combined forces of England, France, Munster and Cologne. French and German troops invaded the country, encountering only superficial opposition from the Dutch army, and the Dutch

22 Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, chap. 6.

23 The standard history of the industry is still Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*. For a more recent history, see Moes and De Vries, *Stof uit het Leidse verleden*.

24 For the composition by profession, see Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, 202–3.

25 Prak, *Gezeten burgers*, 43.

navy narrowly avoided defeat on the high seas.[26] William III of Orange, who had been excluded from power after his father's coup d'état and subsequent death in 1650, was first given supreme command over the armed forces in February, and then was elevated to his forefathers' office of stadtholder in various provinces on a wave of popular protest against the republican regime. This elevation of the Prince of Orange, however, did not satisfy the popular mood, and during the summer more rioting broke out in many towns of the provinces of Holland and Zeeland in particular. The civic militias played a crucial role in these riots.[27]

One reason for the militias' involvement in the turbulent events of 1672 is that the military actions affected them directly. The Dutch army had been neglected in previous years, and when the French and Germans invaded, auxiliary troops were required at very short notice. In Leiden, the town council was able to raise professionals in early May, to take the place of the 400 citizens it had been ordered to supply by the States of Holland.[28] In late June, however, the 'militias and other citizens and inhabitants' had to be called up for front-line service, albeit on a voluntary basis.[29] In the meantime, the night watch had also been doubled, requiring the militiamen to spend more nights away from their beds but also providing them with excellent opportunities for engaging in political debate with kindred souls. The well-known legal scholar Simon van Leeuwen, who was a captain with one of the companies, noted in his journal how he was on duty on 19 June and again one week later, which suggests an intensive schedule.[30]

The importance attached by the authorities to the militias' loyalty was underlined when on 2 July the announcement of the Prince's elevation to the stadtholderate was printed and distributed among the officers of the Leiden militias 'for the satisfaction of the citizens'.[31] This seems merely to have encouraged the local militiamen to make claims on the town council, such

26 For a brief summary of events in English, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, chap. 31.

27 These riots have been first described and analysed by Roorda, *Partij en factie*. Roorda, whose book became a modern classic of Dutch historiography, pictured the militias as instruments of rival elite factions, and gave them no serious independent role in the political turmoil of 1672.

28 Erfgoed Leiden en Omgeving (hereafter ELO), Library, no. 645, *Kort Verhaal van't gene in't Jaar 1672, binnen Leyden is voorgevallen, begrepen in de verantwoordinge van Mr. S. v. L. Rg. Aan den Agtbaren Wijsen Raad der Stad Leyden*, 19.

29 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0534A, no. 10, f. 75v, Notulen van het bestuur van de schutterij (22 June 1672).

30 ELO, Library, no. 645, *Kort verhaal*, 23.

31 Ibidem, 24.

as for example to be granted supervision of the keys to the town gates during the night, which was normally the privilege of the presiding burgomaster.[32] Symbolically, the militias were claiming the town for themselves, at least at night. Over the following weeks, armed citizens regularly came to the town hall to discuss various political issues with the authorities. On 23 August men from several militia companies mutinied against their officers, and more specifically those officers who were members of the town council, refusing to serve under them. More armed visits to the town hall and public meetings culminated in large-scale disturbances in early September.[33]

On 6 September, crowds, among which the militiamen were prominently in evidence, forced the forty members of the town council to resign collectively, creating in effect a local power vacuum – or, rather, leaving the town in the hands of the militias.[34] On the eighth, the burghers presented a brief and somewhat under-articulated programme, which turns out to be highly interesting nonetheless. It was titled 'Some claims the citizens of Leiden present with good reasons during these times'.[35] Its main purpose was to demand a restoration of privileges to which the citizens had been entitled since times immemorial. This sweeping definition sometimes referred to specific documents, but more often to the idea that citizens once had rights that they had subsequently lost – and were now determined to regain.[36] The first on the list were connected to the militia halls. What exactly these rights entailed remained unclear, but the reader of the short pamphlet in which this programme was summed up would have been left in no doubt that they were very important. The main thrust of the argument was to establish the citizens' entitlement to these rights. The burgomasters were in fact 'burghermasters', it was claimed, i.e. the 'primes inter pares' of the civic community. Citizens paid taxes – and in Leiden even more so than in other towns – and were therefore entitled to a say in local government. Burgomasters should treat citizens on the basis of 'respect and friendliness', and to that end carefully preserve citizens' privileges. If the town council behaved like this, the citizens would no longer bother them.[37]

32 Ibidem, 25.

33 Ibidem, 26–32; Roorda, *Partij en factie*, 172–73.

34 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 485, Notulen van de vroedschapsvergaderingen (6 September 1672).

35 Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Den Haag (hereafter KB), KW Pflt 10543, *Eenige Pretensie die de Borgerye van Leyden met Reeden pretendeeren na den state en gelegentheyt deses Tijdts* (Leiden, 8 September 1672).

36 Woltjer, 'Dutch Privileges'.

37 Woltjer.

The originators of this thinly veiled threat followed through on it as early as the following day, when a list was presented of eighty names from which the stadtholder was supposed to select forty new members for the town council. Two days later, on 11 September, the stadtholder decided to reappoint 25 members of the former council whose names also appeared on the burgher list.[38] Another ten were reappointed at a later date, and only five were ultimately replaced by new members, also selected from the list submitted by the citizens. Although this may look like an almost complete restoration, in fact it was not. Crucially, the citizens had made their opinions known, and the reappointments were sanctioning their proposals. Rather than the process of self-selection normally practised by the regent members of Holland's town councils, the 1672 elections had been shaped by the citizens' – or rather the civic militias' – interventions and opinions. It was well-understood that it was their approval that provided legitimacy for the council in its new composition.

4 1747–48: Militias in Charge

In the middle of the night of 10 November 1748, the inhabitants of Leiden woke up to a loud banging on their front doors.[39] Members of the civic militia were calling the burghers to arms, with a significant degree of success. According to eyewitness reports, by three o'clock in the morning as many as 1,000 burghers had assembled in the militia halls, though the banging continued. Burghers who expressed a wish to stay in bed were pressured to come out anyway.

The meeting at the militia hall was presided over by a burgher committee, which had been set up the previous year and was now acting as the leadership of the popular movement. At the meeting, five demands were laid down, the most important of which was the restoration of the autonomy of the militias and the complete recognition of their privileges. This would turn the militias, at least potentially, into an independent political force in the city. Another demand was for the keys to the town gates to be transferred to and from the town hall under militia supervision. In effect this was a claim by the militias to the urban territory and its defence.[40] The meeting was the apotheosis of

38 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 485, Notulen van de vroedschapsvergaderingen (11 September 1672).

39 For this section, see also Prak, 'Burgers in beweging'.

40 These events are described in detail in a manuscript written by J. Akerval, which is kept in ELO, Library, no. 735.

months of political wrangling in Leiden, a conflict in which the militias were once again the key players.

It had all started a year earlier, in the spring of 1747, after a brief invasion of Dutch territory by French troops. This invasion ended decades of republican rule and restored the House of Orange to the power from which it had been excluded since 1702. The events were unnervingly reminiscent of 1672. To prevent a similar course of events, Dutch politicians in 1747 volunteered to share power with the Orange stadtholder before another popular movement raised its head. However, the weakness of the regime was clear for everyone to see, and trouble was already stirring. In Leiden, angry discussions had been triggered by a doubling of the night watch, which the authorities had thought advisable with an eye on possible disturbances. Instead of every two months, shopkeepers and small industrial entrepreneurs, as well as surgeons and schoolmasters, were now spending a night every month on guard duty. On top of that, compulsory exercises had been introduced that were intended to make the militias look smart for an expected visit of the stadtholder and his entourage, a visit that customarily included a parade by the militias as representatives of the local citizens. Not only were the militiamen complaining about these extra claims on their time, but it reminded them that one of their demands from 1672 had never actually been realised. They had then asked for a 'free militia council', meaning that they wanted to have their officers elected by the rank and file, rather than by the town council. This demand was now raised again, at least implicitly, when the militiamen asked the town council to revive 'the ancient privileges of the militias'.[41]

Initially, only a small minority of the militiamen was involved in these discussions, mostly 'publicans and other insignificant people', but at a meeting in the militia hall a much larger number of men turned up. This meeting refrained from making radical demands, but it did request a reduction of the watch, as well a change in the penalty regime. A nervous town council immediately acceded to these demands.[42] For the time being, this was enough to appease the militias. The next year, in 1748, however, another tidal wave of protest swept over much of the country. Angry crowds attacked the homes of urban tax farmers, who were held responsible for the high price levels of daily necessities. In Leiden, the violence started on 17 June 1748. This was the work of the labouring classes, but they could count on the sympathy of broader sections

41 This and the following paragraph are mainly based on Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Stadhouderlijke Secretarie, reference number 1.01.50, no. 852: Memorie, anonymous (10 July 1747).

42 ELO, Library, no. 787: Aantekeningen Frans van Mieris, appendix 6.

of the population. The militias, called to arms, refused to intervene, and even insisted that rioters who had been arrested should be released immediately. The militiamen informed the town council that they were willing 'to shed their blood for their legal government and fellow citizens, but not for tax farmers'.[43] That very night, the first discussions were held among the militiamen about certain 'proposals' they wanted to put before the town council on behalf of Leiden's citizens. Even a representative of the stadtholder was unable to persuade the men to help stem the violence. When he hinted that their demands would be looked upon favourably by the Prince of Orange, the Leiden militiamen answered sceptically that such promises had been made to the militias of Rotterdam, to no avail.[44]

The next day, however, the militiamen did stop the plundering of the home of a grain merchant who had nothing to do with tax farming but who had made himself unpopular previously, by hoarding grain during a period of great shortage. The militias also manned the gates when rumours had it that new rioters would be arriving from Haarlem. But the following day they again refused to protect the homes of tax farmers – though they were, nonetheless, plundered with remarkable care; when the windows of a neighbouring house were damaged, the plunderers offered immediate compensation to the victim.[45] In subsequent meetings, moreover, the militiamen drafted a set of proposals that not only aired their immediate concerns, but in actual fact set out a complete political programme. This programme was printed, in early September, as a short pamphlet, under the title *Investigation of the complaints, which the citizens and militiamen and other inhabitants of the town of Leiden have, and why so*.[46] Its contents can tell us much about the concerns of a sizable portion of Leiden's inhabitants, and perhaps also reveal something of their views on their own society and the particular place of the militias in that society.

The 'complaints' were listed in ten separate points, each of which was argued at considerable length. For obvious reasons, some of these points were related to the specific circumstances of 1748. But the majority had a much wider horizon and seemed to suggest a reform of society in quite specific ways. The first two points were concerned with religion. The *Investigation* urged the town council to strictly uphold the laws concerning Sunday observance, and

43 According to *Waaragtig en naaukeurig Verhaal, van de Onlusten voorgevallen binnen de stad Leyden*; ELO, Library, no. 757 (1748).

44 NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 204, Notulenboek van de burgemeesterskamer, f. 93r–94r.

45 Noordam, 'Het Leidse pachtersoproer', 94–95.

46 KB, KW Pflt 18088, *Nasporing van de Beswaarnissen nevens de Redenen der Zelve, welke zeer veele van de Burgers en Schutters en verdere Ingezetenen der Stadt Leyden, vermeinen te hebben* (Leiden, 1748).

those against swearing. It also favoured the appointment of a greater number of orthodox ministers in the Calvinist Church, next to the current majority of liberal preachers. The third point insisted on the observance of another set of regulations: those related to the guilds and occupational organisations that were perceived as the mainstays of society.

This was also true for another institution that was discussed at great length in the next point: the civic militias. It was argued that the fact that the officers were appointed by – and recruited from the ranks of – the town council, made it impossible for these officers to genuinely represent the interests of ordinary militiamen. Therefore, the *Investigation* argued, the militiamen should get a greater say in the selection of their superiors. In the other points of the programme it was argued that when it came to appointing public officials, locals should be preferred over aliens. Those who drafted the *Investigation* wanted to see the Chamber of Bankruptcies (*Desolate boedelkamer*) reformed – a demand that suggests again that their constituency was mainly middle-class property owners. It was insisted that tax contributions, as well as the ways in which tax money was spent, should be more transparent – after all, this was money supplied by the citizens, who were entitled to know that the burden was imposed fairly. And finally, the *Investigation* insisted that the privileges of the community of Leiden should be made public, as had already been promised in 1672.

This last point was argued in a particularly revealing way. The privileges had been granted in the past to the community as a whole, i.e. to citizens and regents alike.[47] They regulated the relationship between the inhabitants and those in positions of authority. The latter, moreover, were citizens themselves, and therefore members of the community they ruled. In fact, they were not rulers, the *Investigation* insisted, but rather had been selected by the citizens 'to administrate the community in their [i.e. the citizens'] name and interest'. The members of the ruling families were, like any other citizens, required to pay their taxes, to obey the law, and more generally to do everything that was required of ordinary citizens. For that reason, not only the privileges but also the entire financial administration should be open to inspection by all citizens. This was a well-known claim, and it was quite common in towns all over Europe for parts of its accounts to be read out in public, or to have representatives of the community inspect them annually.

The *Investigation* thus strongly suggests a particular profile of the civic militias and their constituency. Socially, the community of citizens consisted of propertied males. Economically, it consisted of the membership of the

47 Incidentally, these privileges were indeed made public some years later in Van Mieris, *Handvesten, privilegien, octroyen*.

guilds – shopkeepers, artisans, entrepreneurs. Religiously, the typical citizen was portrayed as an orthodox Calvinist. And politically, citizens were members of the militia companies. This was, in other words, a community defined in local terms, ordered by its corporate institutions, consisting of a membership of essentially equal individuals whose local roots ultimately defined their various identities.[48]

In October, two representatives of the stadtholder came to visit Leiden to sort out the problems. By then, the town was completely in the hands of the so-called Ten Men, who acted on behalf of the rebel militia forces which had in effect become Leiden's new rulers over the summer. Although they must have had high hopes of the Prince of Orange's intervention, the outcome proved to be hugely disappointing for the rebels. Some small concessions were made, most of them identical to those already granted in 1672; in fact, the wording used by the Prince's representatives was in places identical with that of 1672.[49] Thus, the printing of the town's privileges was announced once again. The militia officers also obtained the right to propose new candidates for vacancies in their ranks, but this was, of course, not quite the same as elections by their men. Other demands were simply turned down. Instead, the town council was dismissed, then reappointed, apart from four members who were replaced. But unlike in 1672, the militias had been excluded from the process, although there were persistent rumours that behind the scenes the Ten Men had been involved in this change of personnel. Clearly, the Prince, who had been the militiamen's best hope, had sided with the local elites, leaving the citizens emptyhanded. This happened in many other Holland towns as well.[50]

No doubt as a result of this disappointment, Leiden experienced another wave of disturbances in November. On 10 November, the council was to make the annual appointments to a large number of minor offices. But in the preceding night the militias were once more called to arms – not by the authorities but by the Ten Men. At the rowdy meeting in the militia hall, held in the middle of the night, five new demands were agreed upon, the first of which was, again, the free elections of militia officers. The next day Leiden's inhabitants woke up to find strategic locations occupied by armed citizens. The regents saw no other way out than to call in the army. On Saturday, 16 November, at seven

48 This picture of early modern urban society has been strongly influenced by the work of two German scholars: Blickle, *Deutsche Untertanen*; Blickle, *Kommunalismus*; Schilling, 'Gab es im späten Mittelalter'.

49 That this was no coincidence can be seen in Haarlem, where the exact same thing happened: De Jongste, *Onrust aan het Spaarne*, 268.

50 De Jongste, 240.

in the morning, more than one thousand soldiers entered the town. A publication was read out by the town crier, prohibiting all public assemblies. As one commentator summed up the situation: 'it was now better for everyone to remain quiet, because the power of the burgher estate had been shattered'.[51] Militiamen were called up by investigators from The Hague to give testimony; members of the Ten Men committee were arrested over the following days. Little notes were still circulating, suggesting the militias would rise up and throw the soldiers out, but realistically this would be impossible; it was well understood that amateur militiamen were no match for professional soldiers.

Another episode of Leiden's popular politics thus ended in disappointment. As in 1672, the citizens of Leiden had achieved a change of personnel, but

FIGURE 6.2 The *Sint-Jorisdoelen* in Leiden, the militia's hall and training ground, drawing by Abraham Delfos, 1763–1770
SOURCE: RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM, RP-P-AO-10-98

51 ELO, Library, no. 735, manuscript by J. Akerval (16 November 1748).

this had been as much the result of the prince's intervention as anything else. Moreover, as in 1672, it looked as though the Prince and his court were the real beneficiaries of the disturbances. Very few of the more substantive demands were implemented, in 1672 or in 1748. More would be needed to achieve real change.

5 1785–87: Revolutionary Militias

During the 1780s, the Dutch Republic was once more in the grip of popular politics. This time it reached an unprecedented fever pitch. The troubles caused by this so-called Patriot Revolution were more radical and lasted much longer than either those of 1672 or 1747–48. They really began in 1781, when an anonymous appeal *To the People of the Netherlands* was distributed in a great many towns, calling for radical reforms and more particularly a restriction of the powers of the stadtholder. In 1747–48, William IV of Orange had obtained wide-ranging powers to determine the selection of local and regional office-holders. Although technically he was the servant of the provincial states-assemblies that appointed him, the stadtholder had in effect become their master through these rights of recommendation and appointment.[52] His successor William V had inherited these rights, which were deeply resented by many of the very politicians he appointed. One of them was one Joan Derk, baron van der Capellen tot den Poll, who has since been identified as the author of *To the People of the Netherlands*. In Van der Capellen's analysis the Orange stadtholders were not the saviours of the fatherland they had been taken for, but rather petty tyrants who abused their position as commanders-in-chief of the army to suppress the liberties of the Dutch people. To restore these liberties, Dutch citizens would have to arm themselves, or rather use their defence organisations, which were in actual fact the civic militias. *To the People of the Netherlands* was a wake-up call precisely to these militiamen to start practicing their drills and thus become the storm troops of the reform movement.[53]

The political climate was favourable to such far-reaching proposals. In that same year, 1781, John Adams was whipping up support in the Netherlands for the American War of Independence. Because of their support for the American rebels the Dutch became embroiled in the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War, in which their navy was completely humiliated – reinforcing speculations of gloom about the future of the Republic, whose Golden Age was so manifestly over. In

52 Gabriëls, *De heren als dienaren*.
53 Van der Capellen tot den Poll, *Aan het volk van Nederland*.

the Overijssel towns massive petition campaigns in favour of the Americans first helped mobilise significant sections of the population. This was followed by the establishment of Burgher Committees, and, in 1782, the creation of so-called exercise societies, consisting of 'patriotic' militiamen who volunteered to undertake extra drill exercises.[54] These Overijssel examples were soon copied in other places all over the Republic, including Leiden.

The events of the Patriotic period were so manifold and complex that I cannot recount them here in great detail.[55] Instead, I will concentrate on the role of the civic militias in Leiden. In March 1784 an exercise society was created, under the slogan 'For Fatherland and Freedom'. In July it received official recognition from the town council, which thus actively encouraged the revolutionary activities of its own citizens. 'For Fatherland and Freedom' soon had several hundred active members, as well as 400 or so honorary members, many of whom belonged to the most distinguished regent and to business families in town.[56] Although technically a separate organisation, the exercise society became closely intertwined with the official civic militias, as the minutes of the latter clearly demonstrate.[57] Petitions fitting the Patriotic bill were filed in the name of the civic militias, blurring the distinction between this institution of the urban community and the political reform movement. And most significantly, in September-November 1786, and again in May 1787, the official militias took charge of the detachment of dozens of Leiden militiamen to Utrecht, where they were to help defend the Patriot heartland (Utrecht and Holland) against a possible attack by the stadtholder's troops from the East.[58]

Another new development was the collaboration between local militia exercise societies in provincial and even national meetings, where policies were coordinated. National meetings were held in December 1784, and in February and June 1785. Moreover, exercise societies and Patriot militias in the various provinces also started to meet.[59] In Holland such meetings were held in June 1785, and again in October. At this latter meeting, which lasted four days and happened to take place in Leiden, a programme was discussed which was

54 Te Brake, *Regents and Rebels*.

55 For the general developments in Leiden, see De Jong, *Weldenkende burgers en Oranjeliefhebbers*.

56 ELO, Library, no. 64203, *Naamlijst der Honoraire Leden van de Sociëteit van Wapenhandel, onder de spreuk* Voor Vryheid en Vaderland *binnen Leyden*.

57 ELO, Archief van de Leidse Schutterij, NL-LdnRAL-0534A, no. 27, Notulen van het bestuur van de schutterij (1786–1789).

58 NL-LdnRAL-0534A, no. 189, Lijst met namen van schutters die in 1786 en 1787 naar Utrecht uitgetrokken zijn (1787).

59 Klein and Rosendaal, 'Democratie in context', 80–81.

subsequently published as *Draft to make the Republic, through a salutary union between regents and burghers, inwardly happy and outwardly strong*, colloquially known as the *Leiden Draft*.[60]

In this and other documents, the militias expressed themselves more radically than they ever had before. The *Leiden Draft* was an attempt to identify the shortcomings of the Dutch Republic and to suggest remedies for these shortcomings. The problem, as perceived by its authors, was that the original constitution had been perverted. That constitution had 'a certain degree of soundness, of perfection, yes even clarity'.[61] For a constitution that has usually been portrayed as muddled in the extreme, this was a somewhat surprising point of view. But the authors of the *Leiden Draft* had sound reasons for their praise. They saw as the genius of the Dutch constitution that it was firmly founded upon the principles of popular sovereignty and that it had devolved political power to the smallest units. Thus, local societies could look after their own affairs, while provinces and the central state only involved themselves with issues that could not be taken care of by local institutions alone. The corruption of this constitution was, first of all, and unsurprisingly, a result of the increased powers of the stadtholders. However, the regents also had become too independent from the people they represented. As a result, the freedom that had made the Dutch Republic great was now endangered, and this was the root cause of both its economic decline and its loss of Great Power status.

The remedy was plain and simple: if and when the relationship between burghers and regents could be restored, ancient liberties would then return and prosperity would more or less automatically follow. The connection between the authorities and the burghers would be the civic militias. They should be given a central role in the election of local officeholders, who, moreover, had to be former militiamen.[62] Thus, the spirit of the militias would inspire those responsible for local government, and because the Dutch Republic had a bottom-up political system, this would automatically have a beneficial effect on the other institutions, at the provincial and central government levels.

In Leiden, the *Draft*'s vocabulary and general argument were much in evidence over the following months. Take a petition submitted by the local militias in August 1786, against extra taxation on bread.[63] It contained a powerful mix of points. On the one hand they were connected to the current state

60 *Ontwerp*.
61 *Ontwerp*, 9.
62 *Ontwerp*, 65.
63 NL-LdnRAL-0534A, no. 27, Notulen van het bestuur van de schutterij (22 August 1786).

of Leiden's economy, which was much depressed and could ill afford a price increase for primary necessities. But on the other, they were firmly grounded in the idea of popular sovereignty, which was now evoked much more strongly than it had been in 1748. As a matter of fact, the petition of 1786 claimed that in the Middle Ages, under the rule of the counts of Holland, the citizens were always required to give their consent before new taxes could be introduced. According to this argument, the provincial states were portrayed as a parliament representing the citizens' interests. And because the States assembly was composed of the representatives of local communities, including the city of Leiden, the local burghers were in effect entitled to give their consent to new taxes. This operated through the town council; but in former times, the petition went on to argue, the council had been a non-permanent representation of the burgher-community. Since it had evolved into a permanent institution, the council had become an integral institution of the undivided sovereignty that had been invested in the States of Holland since the Dutch Revolt had done away with the office of the Count. The militias were bound by oath to watch over the peace and quiet of the burgher community. They therefore also had to share with the authorities any concerns they had that might undermine this peace and quiet. If one could see this participation in the political process as a privilege of the militia officers, it followed logically 'that the militias, which are bound to watch over the interests and safety of the burghers, are also expected to oppose any transgressions of those interests'.[64] This argument in effect defended a level of popular – and more specifically militia – participation unheard of in Leiden for at least 200 years.

An interesting aspect of this 1786 petition is the elaborate use it made of historical arguments. History and precedent were in these years very much on the minds of the militiamen. In the book of resolutions of the board of the Leiden militias, the secretary had bound the decision taken by stadtholder William IV in 1749 in response to the claims laid down by the militiamen of 1748.[65] The 1786 petition referred back on several occasions to the publication of Leiden's privileges by Frans van Mieris from 1753, which itself was another outcome of the 1748 disturbances, when such a publication had been explicitly called for.[66] The potential of this type of historical knowledge was effectively exploited in 1786 to underpin claims for a popular sovereignty based on positive, rather than natural rights. Old-fashioned as this may seem to some

64 Ibidem.
65 Ibidem.
66 Van Mieris, *Handvesten, privilegien, octroyen*.

historians,[67] it still proved to be a powerful weapon in support of radical reforms. And however novel the use of terms like 'popular sovereignty' – and indeed the whole idea of 'citizens in arms' – may strike others, they too were firmly rooted in political traditions that went back a very long way.[68]

In the summer of 1787, the Patriots and their militias were effectively in charge of the towns of Holland, including Leiden. In September, however, an invasion of 20,000 Prussian troops ended the revolutionary experiments and restored the Orangist regime. After 1795 the rules of the game changed fundamentally, and popular politics became institutionalised in revolutionary clubs and societies. The militias were reformed and militarised; their heyday as hotbeds of popular politics was over.

6 Conclusion

The foregoing seems to suggest two major conclusions. First and foremost, Leiden's civic militias were a powerful instrument of popular politics. This was so for a variety of reasons. Perhaps the most important was the lack of a substantial alternative police force on which the local authorities could rely. This made them more or less dependent on the militias in times of crisis. On top of that, the militia halls provided spaces for mass meetings, and the militiamen were armed, a fact that gave a special edge to their political claims. But there was also a deeper reason why the political claims by Leiden's militias were difficult to refute for the local authorities. These claims, as we have seen, were the product of a particular vision of the local community and how it should be governed. In many ways the regents subscribed to that same vision. They might not have liked some of the implications pushed by the militias, especially the idea that citizens, or militiamen for that matter, should be granted rights of political participation, but they did not have many arguments to refute even that particular claim.

A second conclusion concerns the connections between the three events analysed in this contribution, or what we might call the local tradition of sedition. As we have seen, contemporaries were well aware of such connections and pointed them out in their own writings. The consistency in the claims is also quite striking. At the same time, we can discern a pattern of radicalisation. Demands that were articulated vaguely in 1672 had become more focused in 1748. And the demands for limited reforms in 1748 had expanded into a

67 E.g., see Leeb, *The Ideological Origins*.
68 These roots are underestimated, in my opinion, in Klein, *Patriots republikanisme*, chap. 5.

demand for a complete overhaul of the political system by 1785. One reason for this was the lack of long-term success on previous occasions. As soon as order was restored, the authorities felt that popular sentiment had been sufficiently placated by the replacement of a handful of town council members, without further need for more structural changes. Surveying the results of previous events, the militias tried to think of means to consolidate their political gains, and this inevitably drove them in the direction of systematic, rather than incidental changes.

To what extent were these events unique to Leiden? The short answer is: they were not. All three episodes were caused by national, and indeed international, events. Similar responses to these events were taking place throughout Holland and the rest of the Dutch Republic.[69] More broadly, such citizen movements were common all over Europe at the time. Depending on local circumstances, the civic militias, guilds or other civic organisations were taking the lead.[70] However, contemporaries were more likely to underline specific local circumstances and define their actions as part of a local tradition, rather than in the context of a regional or even a national movement. In Leiden, and other Dutch towns, this only changed during the Patriot upheavals of the 1780s.

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69 Discussed more systematically in Prak, *Republikeinse veelheid, democratisch enkelvoud*, chap. 11.

70 Prak, *Citizens without Nations*, 63–79, 157–59; Rogger and Schmid, *Miliz oder Söldner?*

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CHAPTER 7

Working for Export: Five Centuries of Leiden Cloth Industry, 1300–1800

Jori Zijlmans

Around 1600, the Leiden mayor and painter Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg painted an allegory of the extraordinary economic and social transformation his city had undergone in a very short time (Figure 7.1).[1] The panel, nearly 1.5 metres high and 2.5 metres wide, shows three women, symbolising respectively the city itself, the medieval cloth industry of the past and the lighter fabrics of the future. The young woman on the throne can be identified as the *Stedemaagd*, the virgin personifying the city, by the Leiden arms of two crossed red keys on her torso. An elegant woman stands at her left hand, backed by Father Time depicted as an old man with wings. She is an incarnation of the new era and the new fashionable fabric, the light, worsted woollen cloth known as *saai* (say) which in the previous few years had rescued the city from its economic depression. A tired old woman and a soldier stand on the right, respectively symbolising medieval textile production and the recent war. The Leiden skyline forms the background. The old woman makes it very clear that her days are over: she is leaning heavily on her stick and is holding an empty hourglass in her left hand. This painting expresses the institutional and organisational discontinuity between the medieval types of broadcloth, the 'Old Drapery', and the modern *saai*, the 'New Drapery'. It had been commissioned by the town council, and its message at the time was clear to all: continued good governance and peace will bring growth to the cloth industry, along with trade, and thereby prosperity to the city.

The transformation of the cloth industry captured in the allegory had begun with a wave of immigrants from the Southern Low Countries from 1580 onward, and was eventually to result, by the middle of the seventeenth century, in a repressive system of quality control, with seven inspection halls performing the

1 The chapter is available via open access by financial support of the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The research is carried out within the framework of the project "Black Magic – (Re)discovering the development and changes of black woollens quality standards in the 18th-century Leiden's staalmeesters sample books" granted by NWO (grant no. 628.007.042), Museum the Lakenhal and the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands.

FIGURE 7.1 *De Stedemaagd met de Oude en Nieuwe Neringhe,* painting by Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg, 1596–1601
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. 423

checks on 158 types of woollen fabrics that were mostly intended for export.[2] More and more, a small group of merchant-entrepreneurs concentrated the capital among themselves and imposed a 'putting-out system' with increasingly unequal power relationships. This capitalist production system brought about the intensification and globalisation of the Leiden cloth industry from 1630 onward. This chapter analyses and elucidates how the Leiden cloth industry evolved and what impact this had on the city. The analysis links developments within Leiden to its position in regional, supra-regional, European and global (colonial) networks. Combining the internal urban perspective with an external global perspective adds a new dimension to the study of Leiden's cloth industry.

1 Leiden Cloth and Broadcloth

From the late Middle Ages to the early eighteenth century, Leiden and its specialised *laken* industry participated in an extensive international network of production and trade involving labour, raw materials, skills, capital and finished goods. The term *laken* (cloth or broadcloth) covered a wide variety of woven wool goods. Their amounts, nature and quality evolved over the centuries and always depended on the available wools, dyes and techniques.

2 Van der Wee and Munro, 'The Western European Woollen Industries', 450.

During the seventeenth century, Leiden's growing trade contacts with Asia and America added silk, cotton and angora to the materials it processed, widening its range of products.

Textiles for clothing are basic commodities and their production is labour intensive. Being robust, flexible, portable and wearable, from early on they became valued trade goods and defining factors of social power.[3] Textile production was the first large scale industry in human history and the most important one in the late medieval and early modern periods.[4] Its luxury products were among the most valuable consumer goods of their time, traded over very long distances.[5] Leiden's products played an important and constantly changing role in this network over a period of five hundred years.

The pioneer of research into Leiden's historical textile industry, N.W. Posthumus, wrote his great three-volume work between 1908 and 1939, in addition to a six-volume edition of source materials.[6] His hugely influential work was followed by a lull in new research. Six decades later, when Jan de Vries and Ad van de Woude analysed the impact of the textile industry on early modern Dutch economy, they still relied almost entirely on Posthumus.[7] In the 1990s, Hanno Brand sought to connect the economic trends of the Leiden textile industry with the policies of the city authorities. The early sixteenth-century decline had been attributed by Posthumus to external factors such as the supply, price and quality of the wool. Against this, Brand argued that the decay that set in from 1530 was caused by depletive taxation, repressive wage policies and the conservatism which led the city authorities to ban the cheapest kinds of wool.[8] Brand's intended research on the diversity of production and wool usage was published by Herman Kaptein. His study of the Dutch textile industries 1350–1600 refined and added to the long-established image of the position of Leiden's products, their high quality and the city's dominance over the other textile producing cities of Holland.[9]

Martha Howell modified Posthumus' image of an urban society polarised into capital-owning *drapeniers* and merchants versus the labourers, artisans and craftspeople working for wages. She asserts that the Leiden authorities stimulated and monitored small-scale production, with the agreement and cooperation of the textile entrepreneurs, to protect the employment of small

3 Cf. Postrel, *The Fabric of Civilization*.
4 Riello, *Cotton*; Kaptein, *De Hollandse textielnijverheid*, 15.
5 Howell, 'Pirenne, Commerce, and Capitalism', 306.
6 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*; Posthumus, *Bronnen*.
7 De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*.
8 Brand, 'A Medieval Industry'.
9 Brand, 'Crisis, beleid en differentiatie'; Kaptein, *De Hollandse textielnijverheid*.

craftspeople and labourers and prevent social unrest. In Howell's view, both urban organisation and the autonomy retained by the weavers and *drapeniers* until 1630 were obstacles to a capitalist production process and not the first stage of that process. The Leiden authorities legislated extensively to preserve a form of small-scale production.[10] Brand, on the other hand, reads this enforced small-scale production as a capitalist development, because it enabled a group of influential entrepreneurs to employ many small *drapeniers*.[11] Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, examining female labour in the early modern Dutch textile industry, shows that until 1750 the importance of the textile industry was considerable in both urban and rural contexts in the Netherlands, with a significant contribution from the female workforce. She observes that the loss of independence of the spinners and weavers in the late sixteenth century, as production became more concentrated, was a more gradual process than is outlined in Posthumus' description.[12]

To connect the developments within Leiden to the city's place in (supra) regional, European and global networks, a number of topics need to be collated and tracked from the late Middle Ages into the early modern period: the organisation of the production process, the control mechanisms, the working conditions, the fashions of dress, the quality of the products, the distribution system and the trade in Leiden *laken*. Networks prove to be key factors, at first within the Northern and Southern Netherlands and then across Europe; finally, these networks interacted with colonialism and slavery to span the world through a global chain of production and supply. Leiden wanted to become and remain a market leader in this international trade and, for five hundred years, the city authorities attempted to achieve this through ever-tightening quality control. The resulting evolution in the implementation and organisation of quality control policies gradually concentrated the production process into the hands of a small group of merchants, a development that reached completion in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. The *keurhallen* (literally 'proving halls'), the municipal institutions implementing the quality assurance procedures, became large, specialised enforcement organisations, exerting more and more compulsory quality control and thereby fostering higher quality levels and greater diversity in Leiden's products. This evolution in turn affected urban working conditions. After 1725, the Leiden *laken* finally lost its pre-eminence: to foreign competition, changing fashions and the growth of the international cotton industry.

10 Howell, *Women, Production, and Patriarchy*; Howell, 'Women's Work'.
11 Brand, 'Urban Policy or Personal Government', 18–27.
12 Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*.

2 Interregional Links in the Late Middle Ages

In the fifteenth century, the Leiden textile industry became the largest in Holland. The city, set in an extensive agricultural hinterland, served as a regional central market. Labourers flooded in, looking for work, transforming Leiden into the most populous city of Holland: from about 6,000 inhabitants c. 1440 to an estimated 11,000–14,000 by 1500.[13] The late medieval textile industry peaked around 1480, by which time Leiden was importing over 300,000 fleeces and turning out 25,000 *lakens*, each 28 metres in length and weighing 32 kilos.[14] According to the tax registers for 1498, over 500 male artisans working at home participated in their production, some 35 per cent of the total working population. Female workers were not included in these registers; adding these women, employed in spinning, combing, napping and burling, raises the percentage even further.[15]

Much of the cloth was meant for export. It was sold at the great fairs and *lakenhallen* (cloth halls) or made to order. The Oude Rijn and Nieuwe Rijn met in the middle of the city and linked Leiden to other waterways, and so to the large-scale economic system of staple markets in the industrial, commercial and financial centres of the Middle Ages, such as Arras, Bruges and Antwerp. The Cologne Staple farther up the Rhine distributed luxury textiles throughout the Rhineland, and also served as a transfer point for the trade to the Hanseatic towns in the north of the Netherlands and Germany.[16] In the second half of the fourteenth century, the Leiden textile industry was able to increase its output and expand into international markets following economic changes in north-western Europe.[17] Demand for Leiden cloth increased, particularly in the cities of northern Germany, and this boosted the opportunities for exporting to the Baltic markets. Leiden took advantage of the growth of shipping to the Baltic ports, where freighters delivered cloth and took on cereals.[18] The *voorwollen laken* from Leiden was particularly popular with the prosperous middling class of the Baltic countries. From the third quarter of the fifteenth century on, Leiden cloth followed the trade routes of cereals, but

13 See, for a discussion of the various population estimates, Van Maanen, 'De Leidse bevolkingsaantallen'.

14 Carus-Wilson and Coleman, *England's Export Trade*, 122–23, 138–39; Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 1:403.

15 De Boer, 'Leiden in de middeleeuwen', 43.

16 Blockmans, *Metropolen aan de Noordzee*, 107–17, 236–48.

17 Brand, 'Crisis, beleid en differentiatie', 53.

18 Blockmans, *Metropolen aan de Noordzee*, 292.

in reverse. Travelling mostly on Amsterdam freighters, it was sold in Prussia, Lithuania, Poland, Finland, Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia and Russia.[19]

The Flemish textile industries influenced Leiden in many important ways. In the thirteenth century, Bruges developed into the main commercial centre where foreign merchants settled to buy and sell cloth, as it was also the staple for the import of English wool.[20] From the mid-fourteenth century, Leiden merchants were travelling to Flanders regularly to buy wool. They attempted to imitate the high-end products of their Flemish competitors.[21] The 1498 Leiden tax register lists 114 such *drapeniers*.[22] The Leiden *drapenier* was simultaneously a merchant who bought the raw materials and sold the finished goods and the manager of the process by which the former were transformed into the latter by the artisans to whom he entrusted the separate steps. Many *drapeniers* belonged to the economic elite, while some were less wealthy.

The municipal authorities attempted to enforce high standards of quality by legislating control of wool, dyes and tools.[23] The oldest Leiden *keur* (a by-law) on cloth regulating its sale dates from 1363, the year the staple for the importing of English wool was moved from Bruges to Calais.[24] The *drapenier* was in control, and he segmented production in such a way that the artisans working at home had no access to the sales market. Maintaining the quality of the wool was a high priority for the Leiden authorities, because it was seen as the defining element of Leiden textile products. This made the economy of Leiden dependent on the importing of English wool, with Calais as single authorised point of entry on the continent until 1558. After that date, as Bruges and Middelburg took over the staple, the Leiden *drapeniers* got their supplies from closer to home.[25]

3 From Prosperity to Decline, 1350–1574

Leiden had always needed to deal with competition from other cities in both Holland and Flanders. The rivalries were often fierce, as success for one city meant loss for another. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, specialisation, division of labour, exchange of knowledge and skills, imitation and innovation

19 Brand, 'A Medieval Industry', 122.
20 Blockmans, *Metropolen aan de Noordzee*, 117.
21 Cf. Brand, 'Crisis, beleid en differentiatie', 53.
22 Van Oosten, 'Het vestigingspatroon', 42.
23 Brand, 'A Medieval Industry', 124.
24 Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 1:39; Blockmans, *Metropolen aan de Noordzee*, 255.
25 Brand, 'A Medieval Industry', 121.

generated an unprecedented range of fabrics of varying quality and price for the international market.[26] The leaden seal set on each bolt was the buyer's guarantee of its place of origin, dye and dimensions.[27] Local shifts in politics and the economy affected both production and markets, repeatedly causing migrations of workers and shifts of textile production to regions where working conditions were more favourable. Thus, Leiden and other towns in Holland may have benefited from the mid-fourteenth century emigration of workers following riots in the major Flemish textile centres. Leiden also profited from the 1358 boycott by the Hanseatic towns of textiles and other products from Flanders, Antwerp and especially Mechelen, which was one of the main producers of luxury woollens until the early sixteenth century.[28] The *laken*-producing towns did their best to cope with the fierce competition by constantly reorienting and reorganising their production processes. This forced them to keep enhancing the variety and quality of their fabrics and implementing innovations.[29] This continuous striving for excellence and the introduction of ever more fashionable fabrics was helped by the fact that transport and labour costs represented a relatively low percentage of the selling price, so that profits were high.[30]

Leiden chose to produce high quality fabrics too. The highest class was called *puiklaken*, and the next, still very costly material was *voorwollen laken*. The Leiden economy kept growing until the middle of the fifteenth century, helped by being spared from wars, trade blockades, epidemics, famines and the like.[31] But from then on it was to suffer severely from crop failures in the Baltic, blockades across the Sound, wars in Germany and heavy taxes. The supply of wool from Calais often failed because of trade bans as the English waged war in Flanders and France.[32] At Calais, the Flemish buyers had the advantage over the Leiden *drapeniers*, who, like their city, were deeply indebted to the staple until 1504 and forced to buy inferior wool for full price. Again and again, Leiden *drapeniers* were caught using inferior wool in *voorwollen* cloth.[33] The shortages also drove them to reduce both the density of the weaving and the standard length per cloth. The end result was a drop in quality: the opposite of the Leiden authorities' aim. Leiden cloth was repeatedly found to be inferior

26 Cf. Franceschi, 'Woollen Luxury Cloth', 184–85.
27 Cf. Endrei and Egan, 'The Sealing of Cloth'.
28 Stabel, 'The Move to Quality Cloth'.
29 Blockmans, *Metropolen aan de Noordzee*, 243.
30 De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 290; Franceschi, 'Woollen Luxury Cloth', 184.
31 Noordegraaf, *Hollands welvaren?*, 75–77, 171–73.
32 Brand, 'A Medieval Industry', 132.
33 Brand, 'Crisis, beleid en differentiatie', 56, 65.

to the products of its neighbouring cities in Holland, such as Haarlem, Gouda, Amsterdam or Delft. Unlike Leiden, Haarlem did start producing a variety of cheaper popular fabrics from lower quality worsteds.[34]

All in all, Leiden was more affected by the economic crisis than other cities in Holland.[35] Its taxation policy was a major cause. At the end of the fifteenth century, the town council, in which rich entrepreneurs were well represented, levied heavy taxes on imported English wool and marketable Leiden cloth, to be paid by the small *drapeniers*.[36] The resulted in a rise in costs of 25 per cent or more, which was transferred to the subcontracting artisans by a repressive wage policy. Artisans and small *drapeniers* barely made a living wage and many sought better living and working conditions elsewhere. The response of the Leiden authorities was to levy heavy fines on people quitting their jobs and to repeat and tighten the infamous *Order op de buitenneringen*, which forbade rural production of *laken*, thereby attempting to prevent *drapeniers* and their workforce from moving to the neighbouring towns and villages.[37]

To make matters worse, England's abundant quantity of raw wool was going more and more to its own local industries, whose finished or half-finished products were then sold at home and abroad; and the English king's embargoes on importing cloth were disastrous for Leiden fabrics.[38] Protectionism and competition combined to rob Leiden of her place on the international market, in spite of a post-1498 increase in production. From 1498 to 1510 the city suffered several plague epidemics, which resulted in hundreds of victims and paralysed the economy. Wages were so low that recurring strikes broke out among weavers and fullers in 1528–1545, with many of them leaving to seek their fortune elsewhere.[39] After 1530, as the Baltic trade dropped off, Leiden merchants looked south for opportunities, and consignments of *laken* were sent to Spain, Portugal, Italy and France in 1531, 1535 and 1551, but they did not sell satisfactorily.[40] The 'Old Drapery' was as good as dead. Production plummeted from 20,000 cloth in 1520 to 5,000 in 1560.[41] The changes and growth in distribution and consumption of light luxury fabrics, unperceived by the Leiden authorities, had plunged the city into a deep depression.

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34 Kaptein, *De Hollandse textielnijverheid*, 106, 110, 124–29.
35 Cf. Munro, 'Spanish Merino Wools'.
36 Brand, 'Urban Policy or Personal Government', 18–20.
37 Brand, 'Crisis, beleid en differentiatie', 61–64.
38 Munro, 'Monetary Contraction', 114–18.
39 Brand, 'A Medieval Industry', 135, 142; Brand, *Over macht en overwicht*, 57.
40 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 1:251.
41 Van der Wee and Munro, 'The Western European Woollen Industries', 405.

This was the period in which Antwerp grew to serve as staple for the whole world.[42] It traded excellent dyes from Southern Europe and the Ottoman Empire, and distributed fabrics made from all kinds of wool, silk, cotton and precious metals.[43] It was also a period in which the amount and diversity of fashion fabrics grew very fast, as did their consumption. Estimates for the middle of the sixteenth century put the total textile production of the Southern Netherlands at two million metres of fine *laken* and over 3.5 million metres of 'New Drapery' fabrics such as *saai* (say) and *baai* (bay).[44] At this point, nobody could have predicted the dramatic political changes that were about to throw this strong lead into the lap of Leiden.[45]

4 Renewal of Dynamism and Civic Pride, 1575–1676

The outbreak of the Dutch Revolt, in which the Northern Netherlands threw off the reign of Philip II of Spain, brought Leiden great benefits. The first phase of the conflict was chaotic, with Leiden enduring a yearlong siege, but the outcome was unprecedented. In 1579, seven provinces of the Northern Netherlands formed an alliance which, nine years later, seceded to form the Protestant Dutch Republic. The southern provinces, including Flanders, were lost and stayed under Spanish rule. The result was a massive migration from the southern provinces to the open and relatively tolerant North, where an estimated 100,000 arrivals increased the population by over ten per cent. Their impact was greatest in Leiden, Haarlem and Amsterdam, which received the largest numbers.[46] Some of these refugees were simply fleeing war and destruction, while others saw or sought out economic opportunities. The stream peaked in 1582, after the Spanish retook Hondschoote. This Flemish city, now in northern France, had had some 20,000 inhabitants and been famous for its say production, which reached some 90,000 pieces per year shortly before the brutal Spanish re-conquest.[47] The Leiden authorities turned its disaster to an advantage by offering particularly favourable settlement conditions to its specialised textile artisans. Religious and economic refugees continued to pour into Leiden for decades, their numbers only falling off as late as 1676.[48]

42 Van der Wee, *The Growth of the Antwerp Market*.
43 Molà, 'A Luxury Industry'.
44 Jenks, 'The Missing Link'.
45 Van der Wee and Munro, 'The Western European Woollen Industries', 428–39.
46 Lucassen, 'Holland, een open gewest', 200.
47 Van der Wee and Munro, 'The Western European Woollen Industries', 430.
48 Van Maanen, 'De Leidse bevolkingsaantallen', 60.

Leiden was particularly attractive to woolworkers because of its long-standing trade contacts and its reputation as the greatest *laken* producer in Holland. The largest numbers came from Hondschoote, but many men, women and children also immigrated from Ronse, Ypres, Poperinge, Bailleul and Tourcoing.[49] The demographic effect on Leiden was spectacular, with many migrants settling there between 1577 and 1670. In spite of successive plague epidemics, Leiden's population had grown from about 12,500 in 1574 to 45,000 in 1622. At its economic peak, about 1666, she was a dynamic hub with 61,000–63,000 inhabitants.[50]

Between 1594 and 1612, the Leiden mayor and painter Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg celebrated the transformation of the textile industry in a series of giant paintings, linking idealised views of the city to the work done by large numbers of men, women and children in the flourishing say industry.[51] One shows the *Oosterlingenplaats*, a marketplace where men and women trade bundles of yarn skeins.[52] In another, woolsacks are being moved on wheelbarrows along the canals and over the bridges and quays near the *Saaihal* on the Steenschuur. In a third, Swanenburg pictures the quality control procedures going on inside the hall. In the first quarter of the seventeenth century, the production of *saai* exceeded that of all other fabrics in Leiden. Its growth may be called explosive: from something over 2,000 pieces in 1579 to no fewer than 40,000 in 1601. Say was a diverse product class, varying from *herensaai* ('gentlemen's say'), with a worsted warp and a fine carded weft, to *monnikkensaai* ('monk's say') entirely made of carded rough skin wool. The Leiden say industry was so productive at this point that it made the city the foremost European producer of wool textiles.[53] Swanenburg depicts the city as one big workshop where everyone works together in harmony. Men, women and children look well-fed and prosperous, dressed in handsome, colourful clothes worn over snowy white linen. Each contributes his or her part to the making of the piece of say that will be sold on the international market.

This image does not quite match the facts from other sources, however. The *drapenier* was the actual owner, from the raw materials to the finished product.[54] It was he who bought the wool and managed the production process, subcontracted to artisans who worked at home. At the end of each successive step, the material was subjected to mandatory quality control by municipal

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49 Lucassen and Vries, 'Leiden als middelpunt'.

50 Van Maanen, 'De Leidse bevolkingsaantallen', 63.

51 Ekkart, *Isaac Claesz. van Swanenburg*.

52 Lucassen and Prak, 'Leiden: Garenmarkt', 66–67.

53 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:105–30.

54 Noordegraaf, 'The New Draperies'.

FIGURE 7.2 *Het spinnen, het scheren van de ketting, en het weven*, painting by Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg, 1594–1596
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. 421

FIGURE 7.3 *Het wassen van de vachten en het sorteren van de wol*, painting by Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg, 1607 or 1612
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. 419

FIGURE 7.4 *Het vollen en verven*, painting by Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg, 1594–1596
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. 422

FIGURE 7.5 *Het ploten en het kammen*, painting by Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg, 1594–1596
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. 420

inspectors, sometimes in the workplace, sometimes in the *Saaihal*. To make a bare living, all members of a family had to work long hours: the children teasing wool and winding bobbins, the women spinning yarn and the men weaving at the loom. They lived and worked in unhealthy houses, cramped and built close together in filthy streets, the front room usually occupied by the loom.[55]

Van Swanenburg understandably did not depict this aspect of inequality and poverty, since the paintings were commissioned by the city authorities. Their priority was promoting the image of an industrious city and its favourable working conditions, to which end they put the works on display in the new *Saaihal*. The institution had been established just two years previously in the former convent of Nazareth, moving in 1585 to the Jacobsgasthuis (present-day Lodewijkskerk), a former hospital on the grand Steenschuur. Hundreds of merchants and workers frequented it for quality control or trade, and so were able to admire Swanenburg's work.[56]

5 The Production Process

Van Swanenburg's depictions of say production, though idealised, are accurate and instructive, a visual source for the work done by thousands of men, women and children.[57] The division of labour was a main feature of New Drapery production, which was split into a large number of process steps subcontracted to artisans working at home.[58] After each step, the *drapenier* had the intermediate product carried by hand, wheelbarrow, boat or cart to the next address.

The first phase was the preparation and checking of the fleeces. This was an important step, as the quality of the wool was the main factor in the quality of the end product and may have been done in part at the *drapenier*'s house. Say producers made much use of skin wool, i.e. wool from butchered sheep.[59] Such fleeces were brought in by ship, skin and all, and washed in the city canals. Van Swanenburg shows the removal of the wool from the skin, by hand or with shears (Figure 7.5). Fleeces shorn from live sheep were also used, and the painting depicts the huge woolsacks being brought in by barge (Figure 7.3). The wool was then washed in a canal, dried, spread on a rack and beaten with

55 Van Oosten, *De stad, het vuil en de beerput*, 229–234.
56 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:197, 331–32.
57 Van Deijk, 'Een ooggetuige van belang?'
58 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:299–301; Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*, 46–55.
59 Van Deijk, 'Een ooggetuige van belang?', 16.

rods to open the fibre and to detach residual dirt (Figure 7.5). The beaten wool was then teased out by hand to open the lumps of wool further – often by child labour – and greased to compensate for the lanolin lost through washing (Figure 7.5). The grease was indispensable for protecting the fibres in the next step, which was either combing or carding, depending on the quality and intended use of the wool. Combing the longer-staple wool yielded long rovings of parallel fibres to be spun into the smooth and dense yarns called *kamgaren*, or worsted (Figure 7.5). Shorter-staple and softer wools were carded and spun into fluffier *kaardgaren* yarns, somewhat confusingly called 'woollen' in English.

The prepared wool was then distributed to the spinners. The spinning wheels shown by Van Swanenburg are hand-powered – in reality, spinning was done with one hand only. Two spinners are shown (Figure 7.2). In the painting, the one sitting down makes woollen yarn, drawing the fibres from a little cage as she holds the carded wool atop her distaff. The other works standing up at the 'great wheel' or 'walking wheel' used for worsted; her distaff is not pictured, though its use was mandatory for worsteds. Van Swanenburg does not show the yarn being wound off the spinning bobbin and into skeins for the intermediate washing that removed the grease. The third wheel in the painting is a bobbin wheel, used for transferring the wool from a skein back onto a bobbin. The warper is shown drawing the warp yarns from all the bobbins on the warping rack in a single movement, to measure off exact lengths on the pegs of the warping frame. In the background, three men are shown rolling such a warp onto the beam that will be set in the loom. The weaver sits at his loom on which the warp is being stretched in place. He holds up his shuttle with its bobbin of weft yarn (Figure 7.2).

Say was woven by a single weaver, as the standard widths were between two and three ells. The density of the fabric was determined by the number of warp threads per unit of width, and of weft threads per unit of length. Once weaving was complete, the raw fabric was taken off the loom and entrusted to the fullers (Figure 7.4). Fulling (later also called milling in English) meant submerging the fabric in huge vats of warm water with such additives as soap, fuller's earth and/or urine, and by pounding hard. The effect was to felt the wool fibres together into a denser structure. From 1316, fullers' workshops had clustered on a canal in the city centre, but they moved to the northern edge of town after the 1611 extension. The site was favourable, as there waste water could be easily pumped out by mills. The windmills proved even more of an asset when fulling mills started replacing manpower and horse-mills after the middle of the seventeenth century. In Van Swanenburg's day, however, fulling was still done by trampling with bare feet. After fulling, the fabric was carefully washed with soap and thoroughly rinsed. This was done outside the ring of moats that encircled Leiden, to ensure clean water and to prevent contamination that would spoil the subsequent dye process. The fulled and cleaned piece was then taken to the tenter ground on the edge of town, there to be stretched to its prescribed length and width on the wooden frame called a tenter, and firmly held until dry by the multitude of close-set sharp hooks called tenterhooks. Once dry, it was taken down for post-processing – in the case of says, mainly dyeing and burling, as a say was not napped.

6 Tight Control, Quality and Fashion

The Leiden authorities consulted specialists to record all the steps in the production process of the export fabrics and incorporated them into their *keuren* or by-laws. For instance, on 10 November 1465, the council asked a selection of over forty *drapeniers* to draw up rules 'such as will best help the Drapery flourish'.[60] Unsurprisingly, such policies tended to prioritise the interests of the entrepreneurs. New by-laws were put into effect with a formal public reading at the town hall. Isaac van Swanenburg depicts such a scene in his allegory of the *Neringhe*, or Industry, embodied as a young woman, receiving the book of by-laws from the hands of the City, personified by the *Stedemaagd*. In the background, the town hall is represented by an imaginary Renaissance façade with monumental steps, at the top of which the city council is grouped around the town secretary (*stadssecretaris*) who is reading from the book of by-laws.[61] A cornucopia carried behind the *Neringhe* emphasises the message: let everyone obey the rules, and our industry shall prosper.

There was a quality control location in Leiden at least as early as 1366: the *Wolhuis* (wool house), which opened onto the Breestraat in front and the Voldersgracht at the back.[62] The use of leaden quality markers is attested by a Leiden cloth seal found by archaeologists in the Warmoesstraat in Amsterdam and dated between 1300 and 1350.[63] In the fifteenth century, part of the town hall was used for quality control procedures. The *Lakenhal* as a dedicated quality control centre and marketplace was a characteristic feature of early

60 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 1:413–414 (no. 363): 'zoals voor haar bloei het meest bevorderlijk zal zijn'.

61 Ekkart, *Isaac Claesz. van Swanenburg*, 48–51.

62 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 1:16.

63 Orsel, 'Oudste Leidse lakenloodje'.

FIGURE 7.6 *Het verlenen van de keuren aan de Neringhe*, painting by Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg, 1596–1601
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. 424

modern textile industries on the continent.[64] It was a place where the producers brought their fabrics for inspection, where the buyers came to acquire them, and where the officials appointed by the city supervised them and collected taxes and fines. This strict organisation was stringent as well as compulsory, and totally controlled by the city council. It hardly changed at all in five hundred years, enforcing regulations that shackled workers and entrepreneurs alike. Each piece of fabric was subjected to a double examination, once after weaving and once after fulling. The inspectors appointed by the city examined the fabric for flaws in quality, width and length by drawing it over the wooden *pers* or *paertse*, a word derived from the French *perche*, meaning a pole or bar.

After the immigrants had brought the New Drapery to Leiden just before 1600, its quality control organisation became more specialised and more

64 Kaptein, *De Hollandse textielnijverheid*, 42–43.

FIGURE 7.7 *De kleermakerswerkplaats*, painting by Quiringh Gerritsz van Brekelenkam, 1661
SOURCE: RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM, SK-C-112

rigorous than any other in Europe. It moved from the town hall into various chapels and monasteries expropriated after the Reformation. By 1660, the quantities produced had increased to the extent that no fewer than seven distinct halls were operating to perform quality checks on over 150 types of fabric. They were the *Saaihal* (1583), the *Baaihal* (1583), the *Fusteinhal* (1587), the *Rashal* (1596), the *Lakenhal* (1640), the *Warphal* (1653) and the *Greinhal* (1654).[65] There was one hall for each of the main families of fabrics, or *nering*, as such a branch of industry was called.[66] Besides its quality control function, the hall was also the meeting place for the board that directed each *nering*, which was recruited from the city's elite.

A new group of fabrics was developed about 1630 by the Leiden entrepreneurs and quickly proved successful in the competition against foreign competitors. This was broadcloth, an innovative product which probably owed a good deal to the techniques and knowledge brought by the immigrants from Wallonia. Imitating foreign products, with or without improvements, was a feature of the textile industries, one which made them extraordinarily adaptable and dynamic.[67] The new high-quality *laken* was almost as light and supple as the new says, while retaining the firm, dense texture of the medieval cloth. A robe, gown or uniform made by a tailor from this reinvented Leiden broadcloth became a status symbol for clergies, universities, urban elites and armies all over Europe and the world.[68] It soon came to dominate the market for this type of fabric, and production increased so much that in 1638, the city authorities enacted a new by-law to regulate it, the *Keur betreffende de lakennering*.[69] The wool for this specialist product was merino, imported from Spain. Around 1650, Dutch traders accounted for something like eighty per cent of all Spanish merino wool.[70] This fine, curly fibre lent itself particularly well to tight fulling, followed by a successive round of raising and cropping the nap, to yield an ultra-fine, dense, supple fabric with a blind finish, not unlike the cloth used today on snooker and billiard tables.

The city authorities were so proud of the new *laken* that they commissioned a purpose-built *Lakenhal* for it. They asked the city's architect, *stadsbouwmeester* Arent van 's-Gravensande, for a design that would reflect its strength, premium quality and international reputation. The building, inaugurated on

65 Van Maanen, 'Stadsbeeld', 21–22; Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:469–70.
66 Davids, 'Neringen, hallen en gilden'; Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*, 159–63.
67 Franceschi, 'Woollen Luxury Cloth', 190–93.
68 Chorley, 'The Evolution of the Woollen'.
69 Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 4:329–47.
70 Phillips, 'The Spanish Wool Trade'.

FIGURE 7.8 *Gezicht op de Lakenhal in Leiden*, painting by Susanna van Steenwijck-Gaspoel, 1642
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. 410

8 August 1641, must have been a very impressive sight to visitors and passers-by alike. Its exterior remains largely unchanged to this day: a secular temple to broadcloth. The tympanum displays the Leiden coat of arms surmounted by a ram's head, and on the pedestal that crowns the pediment, two proud and realistic tutelary merino sheep stand guard and represent the source of the city's wealth. Five cartouches are placed below the pediment. The middle cartouche, over the main entrance, shows the inspectors scrutinising the cloth. Another shows how the new fabric was woven: on a double-width loom manned by two weavers. The new hall was strategically placed by the waterway that had been the northern town moat until the extension of the city in 1611. This ensured high visibility and easy access by boat for weavers, dyers and traders transporting goods. The former moat was also the direct route to the river harbour outside Zijlpoort, for shipment to Amsterdam by the great lakes, the Kaag and the Haarlemmermeer.[71]

71 Zijlmans, 'Nieuwe lakens, nieuwe wegen'.

Between 1640 and 1672, the *Lakenhal* released an average of over 20,000 pieces of broadcloth per year, each cloth being 44 metres in length by two and a half metres wide. Production fell to 10,000 after the disastrous year 1672, but recovered to reach a record of 28,000 pieces in 1698, or over 500 finished pieces of cloth each week.[72] Each piece had to pass several quality control checks at the *Lakenhal*, making it one of the busiest buildings in Leiden. The broadcloth industry employed over a thousand weavers, who had to bring in each piece for inspection as it came off the loom.[73] The burlers and fullers, too, were required to present their work there for quality control. All in all, some two hundred artisans came in every day.

As the quality of the textile reached new heights, so did the colours, mainly thanks to the huge influx of new dyes through the Amsterdam Staple.[74] Before the sixteenth century, the dyers were confined almost entirely to dyes grown in Europe, such as madder (*Rubia tinctorum*), woad (*Isatis tinctoria*) and kermes (*Kermes spp*). Woad was gradually displaced by indigo (*Indigofera tinctoria*) once colonial plantations started to cultivate this in large quantities, relying heavily on slave labour. Kermes from Southern Europe was supplanted in the seventeenth century by cochineal (*Dactylopius coccus*), a Mexican scale insect producing similar coccid dyes.[75] A special *Staalhof* (sample hall) was established in the *Lakenhal* in 1645 to guarantee top quality results from these new dyes, manned by special inspectors who tested all blue and black broadcloth for depth and the fastness of the colouring.[76]

The success of the new, high-quality broadcloth encouraged the Leiden entrepreneurs to invest in the development of another new group of luxury fabrics called *grein* in Leiden, and usually known in English as camlet. *Grein* was made from angora goat's wool, sometimes mixed with varying proportions of camel's hair, silk or both. All these materials were imported from the Levant, hence such alternative Dutch names as *Turks laken*, *Leids Turcx* or *Camelot* – the first two referring to Turkey and the last to a related but not identical Eastern fabric. The main component, goat's wool, came from a specific long-haired species which at the time was found only in the Ankara region of central Anatolia in the Ottoman Empire. Its name, Angora, is a variant of Ankara.[77]

72 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:931.
73 Posthumus, 2 and 3:642.
74 Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 117, 141, 199–200, 325, 401, 410.
75 Ortega Saez, 'Black Dyed Wool'.
76 Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 4:430–434 (no. 336).
77 Vrolijk, Schmidt, and Scheper, *Turcksche boucken*, 63–68.

The Dutch Republic maintained good diplomatic relations with the Ottomans, and a trade agreement guaranteed Leiden's supply of raw wool and yarns.[78] Leiden cloth could even be used in barter, as it was a popular product in the empire.[79] Once the yarn had been spun, it was shipped to Leiden by the Dutch merchants in Smyrna (present-day Izmir). Production of *grein* increased to the point where, in 1654, a separate *Greinhal* was established on the Hooglandsekerkgracht, next to the orphanage.[80] The strong, shiny, thin and silky fabric quickly became a popular export to Southern Europe, Africa and Asia. Production rose from 30,000 pieces in 1655 to about 63,000 pieces in 1671. The turnover was considerable, too: in 1665, the revenues from *grein* amounted to over 3 million guilders, over 100,000 guilders more than the revenue from the production of *laken*.[81]

This highly profitable trade was damaged by the two naval wars with England (1625–1654 and 1665–1667); then, in 1672, France took control of the Levantine trade.[82] This forced the merchants from the Northern Netherlands to buy their angora wool and yarns from middlemen in the Southern Netherlands and pay heavy import duties.[83] The Leiden *grein* could no longer compete in the European market.[84] Increasing exports to Asia proved insufficient to compensate for this, and by 1699, *grein* production had dropped to 37,000 pieces.[85] Its decline continued in the second half of the eighteenth century, even though the city authorities had forced a quota deal with the VOC, the Dutch East India Company, which guaranteed a market.[86] At the same time, *grein* was losing its popularity as a fabric, as printed cottons from Asia were becoming more fashionable.[87]

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78 Bulut, 'The Role of the Ottomans'; Tütüncü, Swart, and Ari, *400+ jaar vriendschap*; Slot, 'De handel tussen Nederland'.

79 Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 225–26.

80 Noordegraaf, 'The New Draperies', 187.

81 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:940–42.

82 Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 207–13, 269–79.

83 Deceulaer, 'Between Medieval Continuities and Early Modern Change'.

84 Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 307–13; Veluwenkamp, 'De buitenlandse textielhandel', 75.

85 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:930–31.

86 Gaastra, 'De textielhandel', 54, 65–66; De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 459; Schenk, 'Een naare en bedroefde eeuw'.

87 Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken, Leiden (hereafter ELO), NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 6716, f. 22 and 24, Rapport van stadsecretaris David van Royen betreffende de VOC (1740).

7 Globalisation and Inequality, 1650–1725

The second half of the seventeenth century saw the Leiden textile industry developing more and stronger trade connections to distant parts of the world, as global demand for its *laken* continued to grow. Production reached its height at 28,000 pieces in 1698.[88] This was possible because *laken*, unlike other Leiden products, could not yet be imitated by foreign competitors. Large investments were needed to build the costly windmills for the rigorous fulling of the fabrics.[89] The large investments demanded by the *laken* industry led to the rise of powerful merchants, the *reders*, who dominated trade from the last quarter of the seventeenth century.[90] The *drapeniers* became mere subcontractors to the *reders*, who ran a vast international network of middlemen who sold their fabrics and coordinated orders. The merchants also had so much capital that they could afford to stockpile fabrics when the market was slack.[91] Already in 1654, the industry was run by about thirty *reders* and 280 *drapeniers*.[92] The merchants employed 14,000 men, women and children, working on about 450 looms and producing about 20,000 *lakens* per year. The value of their output for this year alone has been estimated at four million guilders.[93] This represents nearly half of the total value of the entire Leiden textile industry. The production costs for one *laken*, 44 metres long, are described in detail by the merchants and *drapeniers* in a 1663 document.[94] The wool cost about 200 guilders and its processing 184 guilders, so the cost of a finished piece was nearly 400 guilders. This price fluctuated as conditions changed, however, and could rise to as much as 500 guilders. An average artisan, meanwhile, earned only about one guilder a day, which illustrates how valuable the Leiden *laken* was.[95]

The concentration of the production process into the hands of a small group of merchants can be illustrated by four examples of successful families of *reders*, whose economic activities also exemplified the growing entanglements of Leiden's cloth production with global networks and colonialism. One of the first merchants to start operating globally was Daniël van der Meulen (1554–1600), originally from Antwerp, who had a clear impact on both the textile industry and the politics of Leiden. After six years of working from

88 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:931.
89 Kaptein, *Nijverheid op windkracht*, 134–69.
90 Noordegraaf, 'The New Draperies', 180–81; Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'Textile Workers', 114.
91 Jonker and Sluyterman, *Thuis op de wereldmarkt*, 75–104.
92 Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 5:10.
93 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:940–41.
94 Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 5:39–50 (no. 30).
95 Van Deursen, *Mensen van klein vermogen*, 14–15.

Cologne, Bremen, Haarlem and other bases, serving mostly the German market, he moved his business to Leiden in 1591. His wife was Hester della Faille, of a powerful Antwerp merchant dynasty, and this greatly helped his international network of commerce and intelligence.[96] Van der Meulen became a leading citizen of Leiden and was often sent on diplomatic missions by Prince Maurits or the States General.[97]

Van der Meulen's exports were largely of Dutch and English woollen fabrics. In return, his ships brought goods such as cereals from the Baltic, or silk and *grein* yarns from the Levant.[98] He had middlemen, often family members, in the cities of the Hanseatic League and in all main ports from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean. Such intermediaries lived in international merchants' settlements and received commissions or yearly stipends. Van der Meulen died of the plague in 1600, aged 45. His widow, Hester, backed by her family, successfully took over the business.[99] An extensive correspondence shows her running the international trade network from her office in her residence on the Rapenburg. Her position was not exceptional: in the Dutch Republic, widows often had sufficient experience, knowledge, networks and capital to replace their husband as head of the firm.[100] The family network extended as far as Asia, both sons going to live in the East Indies to learn the business.[101] Her elder son Daniël died in the East, not yet thirty years old. The younger son, Andries, had better luck: in 1613, he signed up for over 60,000 guilders in VOC insurances.[102]

Daniël van der Meulen pioneered investment in merchant ships to the Gold Coast as early as 1593, shortly after settling in Leiden. This is exceptionally early, as Africa did not start to play a regular role in the transatlantic trade until the second half of the seventeenth century.[103] The transformation this brought to commerce is illustrated in an allegorical painting commissioned by the Leiden authorities for the governors' chamber in the *Lakenhal*. It was made in 1650 by the Leiden *laken* merchant and painter Abraham van den Tempel and shows the *Stedemaagd* receiving the *Lakenneering*, personified as an elegantly dressed lady. Behind the *Stedemaagd*, a black boy is shown holding a folded piece of red *laken*: a clear reference to the emerging trade in enslaved Africans,

96 Lamal, 'Meertalige tijdingen', 47–50.
97 Kernkamp and Van Heijst, 'De brieven', 180.
98 Van der Wee and Munro, 'The Western European Woollen Industries', 432–33.
99 Jongbloet-van Houte, *Brieven*, IX.
100 Van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship*, 224–26.
101 Versprille, 'Hester della Faille', 94.
102 Jongbloet-van Houte, *Brieven*, XV.
103 Den Heijer, *Expeditie naar de Goudkust*, 16–17; Den Heijer, 'Een Afrikaan in Leids laken'.

FIGURE 7.9 Portrait of Daniël van der Meulen, painting attributed to Bernaert de Rijckere, 1583
SOURCE: THE PHOEBUS FOUNDATION, ANTWERP, ON LOAN TO MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. B 1337

FIGURE 7.10 Portrait of Hester Della Faille, painting attributed to Bernaert de Rijckere, 1583
SOURCE: THE PHOEBUS FOUNDATION, ANTWERP, ON LOAN TO MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. B 1338

FIGURE 7.11 *De Stedemaagd ontvangt de Neering*, painting by Abraham van den Tempel, 1651
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, NO. 427

shipped by the tens of thousands on ships to the Caribbean and the America's in general to work on plantations of sugar, tobacco and indigo.[104] Textiles were regularly bartered in the slave trade, as shown in a 1639 letter from Fort Elmina in Guinea to the Amsterdam chamber of the Dutch West India Company, in which Leiden was represented. The letter states that only Leiden textiles were wanted in Guinea, not those from Delft or from England.[105] It was a lucrative trade. Calculations based on data for the eighteenth century have shown the plantation economy made up over ten per cent of the gross domestic product for the combined provinces of North and South-Holland.[106]

Gomarus van Craeyenbosch (1624–1681) is a second example of a *reder* making enormous profits on the world market. He is one of four Leiden *staalmeesters* (the highest officials of the *Lakenhal*) depicted in their 1675 portrait

104 Brandon and Bosma, 'De betekenis van de Atlantische slavernij'; Van der Ham, *Dof goud*, 243; Emmer, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse slavenhandel*, 200–201; Oostindie and Fatah-Black, *Sporen van slavernij*, 30–31.

105 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 6699.

106 Brandon and Bosma, 'De betekenis van de Atlantische slavernij'.

FIGURE 7.12 *De Staalmeesters*, painting by Jan de Baen, 1675
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. 12

by Jan de Baen. Van Craeyenbosch is shown standing, holding swatches of black and blue cloth in his right hand and a piece of blue *laken* in his right. These refer to the *staalmeester*'s important responsibility: assessing the quality of the fabric by comparison with the standard reference swatches. Until the beginning of the eighteenth century, Leiden *laken* was famous for the excellent quality of its blue and black dyeing.[107] A *Stuck Boeck* (register of transactions) kept by Van Craeyenbosch survives and tells us much about his business in the 1670s and 1680s.[108] Most of his *lakens* were shipped to Lisbon, then onward to other destinations. He mentions three pieces sent back by his agents in the East Indies because they were damaged, and twelve black *lakens* sent to his agent in Antwerp and sold onward to Dantzig. Interestingly, he appended snippets of the sold fabrics to his notes: most of them black, but some red or beige. Generally speaking, he sold his textiles for about two and a half the price of production. He thus also made considerable profits on the world market, while

107 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:465–68.

108 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-1612, no. 340, Monsterboek van Gommarus van Craeyenbosch betreffende zijn lakenhandel (1661–1671).

FIGURE 7.13 Portrait of Pieter de la Court, painting attributed to Willem van Mieris, c. 1685
SOURCE: AMSTERDAM MUSEUM, NO. SB 2546

FIGURE 7.14 Portrait of Catharina van der Voort, painting attributed to Willem van Mieris, c. 1685
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, NO. E 128

the artisans and labourers producing his wares were condemned to poverty.[109] The weekly wages paid to the anonymous spinners made up about forty per cent of the total cost of labour, and the *reders* did everything to keep these wages low. Spinning was slightly better paid in the *laken* industry than in other branches, and was thus done mostly by male spinners.[110] Single women found it hard to earn a living wage by spinning. These difficulties grew worse in the countryside around Leiden, where wages were twenty to thirty per cent lower, and in the Tilburg and 's-Hertogenbosch region, prompting *reders* to outsource the spinning. This growing cottage industry left more and more Leiden spinners and weavers unemployed and living on charity.[111]

Pieter de la Court (1618–1685), the third example, was a second-generation Leidener who was also able to achieve business success. His father Pierre (1593–1663) had come from Ypres as a staunch Calvinist seeking asylum in Leiden, where he married Jeanne des Planques (1595–1663) from Lille. Together, they built a prosperous textile business. Their two sons, Pieter and Johan, followed their example. As students at the university of Leiden, while still in their twenties, they set up their own firm, which came to supplant their parents'. Their strategic business acumen allowed them to accumulate enormous capital. They financed weaving and dyeing workshops and controlled every step of the business, from buying the raw wool to selling the finished *laken*. This allowed them to fill foreign orders efficiently and fast. In 1660, Pieter de la Court married Catharina van der Voort (1622–1674). This gave his network another boost, as her father was an Italian cloth merchant who had moved first to Antwerp and then to Amsterdam. After his death, Catharina helped her mother and two brothers run the Van der Voort firm in Amsterdam. Their business correspondence shows them trading in cloth and indigo in Europe, the Levant, South America and the East Indies. The marriage resulted in a huge accumulation of capital and extended their worldwide networks of production and trade. The inventory of Catharina's dowry lists 10,000 guilders invested in the Dutch West India Company, or WIC, as 'capitael in Westinische actien in de Caemer van Amsterdam'.[112]

109 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:1017; Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*, 300–302.

110 Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*, 310–11.

111 Van Gurp, 'Proto-Industrialization and World Trade of Textiles', 293; Smit, 'Leiden op stoom', 53.

112 Inventaris van Catharina van der Voort, behorende tot de huwelijkse voorwaarden van haar en mr. Pieter de la Court, (26 January 1661); Notariële scheiding overlijden Catharina van der Voort (8 August 1685), published in: Kernkamp, 'Brieven', 144–48; 180–86.

The De la Court business employed orphaned children in their spinning workshops to make up the shortage of cheap labour.[113] This large-scale use of child labour was unusual in the Dutch Republic. Thousands of children were sent out to work in Leiden each year, but they were normally employed individually and in a home setting.[114] The city authorities had set a limit of six looms per workshop to reduce such large-scale abuses.[115] This was an attempt to stabilise competition and employment. Pieter de la Court fiercely opposed such measures, which he believed weakened his position against foreign competitors. He also wanted the quality control procedures abolished to allow him to respond more quickly and efficiently to fluctuations in international markets and fashions. But his warnings and demands could not alter the course of events. Both England and France followed mercantilist policies, cheap foreign textiles flooded the market, and, from 1725 onward, there was little profit to be made in Leiden.[116]

Exploitation of the powerless took on a whole other dimension through the De la Court family's investments in the WIC at a time when the company was becoming active in the trade in enslaved people. For a few decades, the Dutch were the foremost slave traders in the world. Until her death, Catharina saw her capital grow enormously, including through its shares in the Dutch East India Company, the VOC. Her husband Pieter and her brothers Willem and Jan van der Voort also invested heavily in both the VOC and WIC. Their correspondence also shows that they regularly sent *laken* to their cousin Nicolaas de la Court, who acted as their agent on Curaçao, with their goods being shipped via Africa on slave transports from Angola, Guinea and the Gold Coast.[117]

Finally, Daniel van Eijs (1688–1739) was one of Leiden's most important *laken* merchants in the eighteenth century, through the family network into which he had married. The rapid decline of the industry hit him very hard, though he tried all he could to withstand it.[118] His thousands of letters to contacts and firms in France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Russia, the Levant and South America

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113 Kernkamp, 45–46; Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 6:255; Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*, 133–35, 151–52, 177–80.

114 Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'Werken om te leren?'

115 Davids, 'Neringen, hallen en gilden', 107–8.

116 De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 287; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 382.

117 Letter from Johanna de la Court to P. de la Court (30 March 1668); Letter from Nicolaas de la Court and Dirk Otterink de Jonge to P. de la Court (10 September 1672); Letter from Nicolaas de la Court to P. de la Court (12 September 1672), published in: Kernkamp, 24–25, 51–55.

118 Ramackers, 'Daniel van Eijs'.

FIGURE 7.15 Portrait of Daniel van Eijs, painting attributed to Martinus de la Court, c. 1709
SOURCE: COLLECTION HOF MEERMANSBURG, LEIDEN

show the extent of his commercial network. Like other *reders*, Van Eijs outsourced spinning and weaving, using workers in Hilversum and Oisterwijk (in Brabant). Only the finishing of the cloth was done in Leiden. Van Eijs shipped his fabrics all over the world, but faced increasing import taxes and trade blockades. He suffered from competing products made in Achen, Verviers and Eupen, where production costs were significantly lower.[119] And he was held back by the onerous quality control procedures at the *Lakenhal*: every time he tried an innovation, the *staalmeesters* and the board cut it short.[120]After ten years, he gave up and quit the textile industry. In 1735, he teamed up with three family members to buy four plantations for the production of coffee, cocoa, tobacco and cotton in Rio de Berbice (present-day Guyana), a Dutch colony on the north coast of South America. His plantations employed the forced labour of at least 110 enslaved persons. Van Eijs ran them from his mansion on the Oude Singel in Leiden, by means of letters to his local steward. His correspondence shows that he never visited it in person, and considered the enslaved labourers not as human beings, but as means of production.[121]

8 Conclusion

The Leiden *laken* reached a peak of quality, productivity and export in the second half of the seventeenth century, under the stringent quality controls established by the city.[122] The large investments necessary for production and trade allowed for increasing dominance of the industry by the small group of *reders* able to operate on an international scale. Their goal was maximising profits; they felt no strong link to the city. This mercantile capitalism made Leiden a node in a worldwide production system, in which colonialism and slavery increasingly played an important role in the early modern period. Increases in the scale of production shifted the balance of power from the makers to the merchants, and this in turn increased the mobility of people and goods. The *reders* increasingly outsourced parts of the production process to villages outside Leiden where piecework was cheaper. Employment in Leiden began to go down in the first quarter of the eighteenth century and people

119 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:1120–21; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 382.
120 Davids, 'Neringen, hallen en gilden', 118; Posthumus, *Bronnen*, 6:449–50.
121 Ramackers, 'Daniel van Eijs', 84.
122 Chorley, 'The Evolution of the Woollen', 24.

started emigrating.[123] Many went south, taking their skills with them, so that a town like Verviers was able to produce cheaper imitations of the Leiden *laken*. One of Verviers' assets was the centralisation of production in workshops, an innovation which the Leiden system of *hallen* had blocked.[124] The *hallen* and their strict control had long managed to regulate production, employment and prosperity in Leiden. But international competition, protectionism and mercantile capitalism turned it into a trap. The breakdown of the Leiden textile industry, once it began, could not be stopped. Unemployment and great poverty followed.[125] The Leiden *laken*, once the symbol of the city and its pride, was now socially and economically too expensive.

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123 Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'Textile Workers'; Van Gurp, 'Proto-Industrialization and World Trade of Textiles', 281–309.

124 Chorley, 'The Evolution of the Woollen', 25; Van der Wee and Munro, 'The Western European Woollen Industries', 465.

125 Van Maanen, 'Stadsbeeld', 40–41.

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CHAPTER 8

Health, Social Care and Old Age Provisions in Medieval and Early Modern Leiden

Henk Looijesteijn, Evelien Walhout and Jaco Zuijderduijn

When Sir William Temple (1628–1699) visited the Dutch Republic, the diplomat was amazed to see densely populated cities full of canals and waterways. In his *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, he argued that crowded canal cities would contribute to 'general and infectious diseases; which they hardly escape three summers together, especially about Leyden, where the waters are not so easily renewed'. For preventing outbreaks, Temple believed, 'Leyden is found to be the neatest and cleanliest kept, of all their towns'. But unfortunately to little avail: even though the Dutch kept their environments clean, they had short lives 'and begin to decay early, both men and women, especially in Amsterdam'. Temple explained that 'the Diseases of the Climate seem to be chiefly the Gout and the Scurvy; but all hot and dry Summers bring some [diseases] that are infectious among them, especially in Amsterdam and Leyden'.[1]

Writing in the seventeenth century, Temple was unaware of some of the chief drivers of infectious disease. Yet, he was probably correct in identifying stagnant water as a problem: Holland's *polder* landscape with its many ditches was a breeding ground for disease-carrying mosquitos.[2] Moreover, in cities such as Leiden, by the early modern period canals had been turned into 'open sewers' that contributed to high morbidity and mortality rates.[3] Public health issues were exacerbated by population pressure: Leiden's premodern population density peaked at more than 350 inhabitants per hectare in the seventeenth century.[4] To compare, today the city centre houses a little over one-hundred people per hectare.[5] Leiden's unhealthy environment contributed to a typically premodern urban demographic regime which required

1 Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces*, 95–96.
2 De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 49.
3 Van Dam, 'Stinking Canals', 60.
4 Van Oosten, *De stad, het vuil en de beerput*, 30–31.
5 Kadastrale kaart, Gemeente Leiden, https://kadastralekaart.com/gemeenten/leiden-GM0546 (data 2021; accessed 13 November 2023).

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constant immigration to replace those who died. This demographic regime also led to Leiden's inhabitants often living in small households consisting of incomplete families or singles who were at risk of impoverishment.

In this chapter we will first discuss how the urban disease environment led to a specific demographic regime with constant replacement migration. We will then move on to explain how this demographic regime contributed to the formation of small households that often lacked a family safety net and, as a result, put many Leiden residents at risk of impoverishment. Third, we will discuss how an array of social care institutions offered protection, and in a fourth section we will focus on the type of premodern eldercare that is still prominent in Leiden's streetscape: admission to one of the city's iconic *hofjes* (almshouses).

Although the picture we are painting of premodern Leiden is not without dynamics – the city's population increased from around 10,000 in the later Middle Ages, to more than 50,000 in the centuries that followed – in many respects the lives people lived did not change fundamentally until modern medicine brought humanity into the 'age of receding pandemics'.[6] The lives of the medieval residents of Leiden looked similar to those of early modern inhabitants, with a life expectancy at birth varying between twenty to forty years. This range applied to all premodern inhabitants, including those of the early medieval settlement of Leithon and those who had lived in the Leiden area much earlier, in the Roman fortress of Matilo, which was established at the beginning of the Common Era. A fundamental shift leading to increased life expectancy of between thirty and fifty years only gradually emerged towards the end of the eighteenth century with the demographic transition. Life expectancy continued to increase up to today, when Leiden's inhabitants can expect to reach the age of around eighty years.

1 An Unhealthy, Crowded Canal City

It is difficult to provide premodern life expectancy rates for Leiden because demographic data are unavailable. However, data for Amsterdam, comparable as a densely populated canal-city, suggests that early modern new-borns could be expected to reach on average the age of 25 to thirty years.[7] To compare: this figure is substantially lower than the average life expectancy at birth of the modern world's least developed countries, and even than the thirty-six years

6 Omran, 'The Epidemiologic Transition', 738–39.
7 Van Leeuwen and Oeppen, 'Reconstructing the Demographic Regime', 87.

Ethiopians could hope for during the disastrous 1980s.[8] Life expectancy in premodern cities was low because many young children died: for Leiden the earliest available figures cover the period 1819–1850, and indicate infant mortality rates of twenty to 25 per cent.[9] Between one in five and one in four children died before their first birthday, and many others died before reaching maturity: eighteenth-century burial registers indicate more than half of the deceased were children and the remainder 'large corpses' (*grote lijken*).[10]

Even though there are no earlier figures available, the situation before 1800 was probably not much better because Leiden's early-modern disease environment was particularly bad. First, environmental degradation hindered the flow of waterways, causing the problems Temple described. To prevent matters getting worse, until 1750 magistrates had to swear an oath that they would oppose any initiatives by higher authorities to drain the crucial lake Haarlemmermeer.[11] Second, not only canal cities but all premodern cities faced serious public health problems that contributed to the so-called 'urban graveyard effect'.[12] High population density contributed to poor hygiene among often malnourished urban populations, causing high mortality levels. Urban fertility levels were low because many women were young, single migrants with no intention of staying and raising a family; or they were young widows; or they were lifetime celibates who never married. Since fertility was highly connected to nuptiality – most children were born in wedlock – this surplus of singles in the city greatly reduced fertility levels. The combination of fertility below replacement level and high mortality resulted in a 'model of natural decrease': premodern cities generally depended on the continuous influx of migrants to keep the population at the same level[13] – and, as we will see in section two, this was also true for Leiden.

Mortality rates were high in premodern Leiden: c. thirty-five deaths per 1,000 inhabitants from 1671 until the 1880s (Figure 8.1). This figure was substantially higher than national mortality rates. Compared to these, levels of mortality in Leiden also fluctuated wildly, which seems to confirm that the

8 Dattani et al., 'Life Expectancy'.

9 Tjalsma, 'De bevolking', 43, 46.

10 Davids, 'De migratiebeweging', 143. Infant mortality in water-borne cities was high: in that other famous canal city, Venice, 24 to 61 per cent of children born in the first decades of the seventeenth century did not reach their first birthday; Malanima, *Pre-Modern European Economy*, 30.

11 De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 44–45; Prak, *Gezeten burgers*, 40.

12 Also known as the 'urban penalty' in terms of life chances; Kearns, 'The Urban Penalty'; Reher, 'In Search of the "Urban Penalty"'.

13 Van der Woude, 'Population Developments', 55.

city had a relatively unhealthy disease environment. Urban inhabitants faced 'mortality crises': sudden spikes in death rates. These feature prominently in the theory of population growth of Thomas Malthus (1766–1834).[14] Malthus posited that populations increase exponentially, whereas resources increase linearly. Inevitably, populations outgrow resources, causing 'positive checks' – famine, war, and disease – to emerge and restore the balance between populations and resources. The disastrous fourteenth century has been considered as a series of positive checks brought about by overpopulation: the Great Famine (1315–1317), the Hundred Years War (1337–1453), and the outbreak of the Black Death after 1346 may have reduced the European population by as much as sixty per cent.[15] In his later work Malthus acknowledged that positive checks are not unavoidable but can be averted by applying 'preventive checks': restricting the number of births by postponing marriage, or refraining from marrying and having children at all. Preventive checks can be applied when economic downturns cause employability and real wages to decline. For instance, in Leiden up – and downswings in the textile industry influenced decisions to marry: there was a strong correlation between annual textile production and number of marriages because lower textile production depressed future perspectives.[16] Married couples could respond to this by using contraceptive techniques as a means of birth planning.[17]

The image of the premodern city as an urban graveyard that lost its inhabitants to waves of mortality crises and that therefore had to welcome migrants is based on studies on the demography of cities in history. To sharpen this image for Leiden is difficult due to a lack of sources. Malthusian forces have been suggested for 1438–1439, when a combination of war, famine and disease may have caused a Malthusian crisis in Leiden.[18] Likewise, Dirk Jaap Noordam has suggested that the mortality crisis during the Siege of Leiden (1573–1574) was the result of a combination of war, famine and disease – although war and famine should perhaps rather be seen as intermittent variables that weakened the population to the extent that disease – the real killer – could strike ferociously.[19]

Mortality crises were frequent: analyses of early modern burial records of Leiden's churches and churchyards reveal frequent spikes, yet, even though it

14 Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 47.
15 Hatcher and Bailey, *Modelling the Middle Ages*, 21–65; Benedictow, *The Black Death*, 383.
16 Pot, *Arm Leiden*, 280.
17 Haks, *Huwelijk en gezin in Holland*, 26, 81–82.
18 De Boer, 'Graaf en grafiek', 26, 81–82.
19 Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 47.

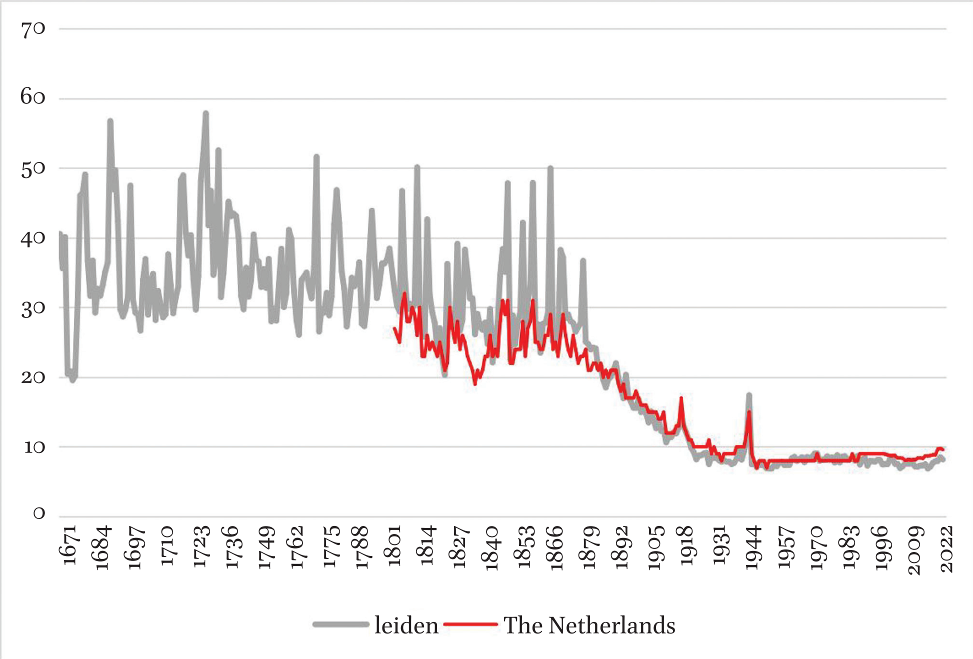

FIGURE 8.1 Mortality in Leiden and the Netherlands, 1671–2022 (deaths per 1,000 inhabitants)
SOURCES: Dataset H.J. Tjalsma, 'Leiden Historical Population Databank 1671–1895' (The Hague: DANS, 2023), https://b2find.eudat.eu/dataset/78a2715a-26d7-5163-b3b1-4e535d9d2a90; *Handelingen van de gemeenteraad van Leiden* (1896–1919); *Leidsch Dagblad* (1920–1941); https://opendata.cbs.nl/#/CBS/nl/dataset/37259ned/table?ts=1698849937253 (accessed 27 October 2023)

seems that most should be ascribed to infectious disease, determining which of the many diseases struck is much more difficult.[20] Figure 8.2 shows years when mortality exceeded the average of the previous nine years by at least fifty per cent. To compare: in 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic caused mortality to reach sixteen per cent higher than in the previous nine years.[21] The most important disease in history was the plague (*Yersinia pestis*) which emerged in Europe in 1346. The disease can be traced for the first time in the Leiden hospital records of 1399–1400, and it subsequently struck about every ten years until the early sixteenth century, after which the frequency declined to about one outbreak

20 Ladan, *Gezondheidszorg in Leiden*, 58–61; Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 47–50.
21 https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/visualisaties/dashboard-bevolking/bevolkingsgroei/overlijden (accessed 26 October 2023).

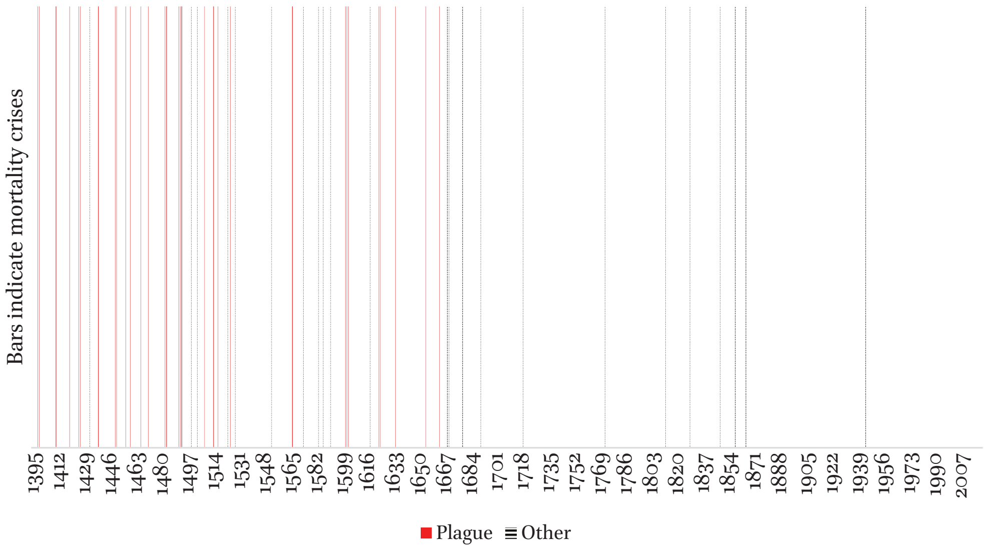

FIGURE 8.2 Mortality crises in Leiden, 1395–2022

Mortality crises: years with mortality fifty per cent higher than the average of the previous nine years. The mortality crises that may have been caused by malaria and typhoid fever in 1669–1670 do not show up in the death registers because registration is lacking for 2 March 1669 to 10 January 1671. These mortality crises have been added.

SOURCES: Ladan, *Gezondheidszorg in Leiden*, 59 (1395–1599); Curtis, 'From One Mortality Regime', online appendix (1600–1700); Tjalsma, 'Leiden Historical Population Databank' (accessed 27 October 2023)

every twenty years.[22] After the final plague outbreak in 1665, other epidemics continued to torment Leiden's population. In 1669 and 1670 an epidemic, whose course suggests malaria in combination with typhoid fever, may have infected as many as 40,000 people and killed 6,000 – three times as many as otherwise would have died. Epidemics became less lethal in the eighteenth century but returned in the nineteenth century, when the Leiden population suffered recurring cholera outbreaks. The final mortality crisis was the 'Hunger Winter' of 1945.

With the city suffering frequent epidemics, public health was on the agenda of the urban authorities. Research by Janna Coomans shows that urban authorities in the Low Countries often demonstrated an awareness of what we might call urban hygiene, and maintained, as well as institutionalised, various sanitary facilities.[23] Also, authorities kept a close eye on the flow and use of public

22 Brand, 'Sociale omstandigheden', 118–19; Ladan, *Gezondheidszorg in Leiden*, 58.

23 Coomans, *Community*.

spaces regarding the disposal of waste. In times of plague, legislation regarding isolation (of houses and individuals) by Leiden's authorities was common practice.[24] However, even though urban authorities were aware of the health hazards, and did take specific 'public health' precautions, the impact of these should not be overstated, as evidenced by frequent mortality crises and high mortality levels.

Additionally, there has been a debate on who were most likely to be victims of an epidemic. The phrase 'all equal in death' is certainly not applicable to the early modern period, or in fact any society. The idea of the 'universality' (everyone was at risk of dying, regardless of age, gender or social class) of plague epidemics has been revised by recent research. Usually, the lower classes tended to be hit hardest, although oddly enough in 1669–1670 there was a high incidence of illness and death among the Leiden elite. That year the sheriff, three of the burgomasters and six of the 25 university professors died, as well as no fewer than 26 of the forty members of the city council (*vroedschap*). This came as a major shock to the Leiden population, as during earlier – and much more severe – plague epidemics, elite casualties were restricted to five or six councillors at most. Also, pregnant women were strongly at risk, with many pregnancies of ill women ending in miscarriage: the 1669–1670 epidemic caused a steep decline in natality, the absolute all-time low in seventeenth-century Leiden.[25]

Usually, women seem to have been better able to withstand epidemics and famines than men,[26] but Daniel Curtis' recent study of the female experience of epidemics in the early modern Low Countries suggests they were more vulnerable than men. This is remarkable because women in Leiden and other cities in Holland experienced high levels of agency and independence (measured through high ages at first marriage, high number of lifetime celibates, and high level of participation in economic activities and presence in collective or public spaces), and therefore should have been in an equally good position to take precautions as men. It seems that explanations must be sought in epidemics exposing the female burdens and hardships experienced in the early modern period in cities such as Leiden, possibly born out of structural inequalities and vulnerabilities obscured from view in 'normal times'. In this respect Curtis discusses the expectations of care inside and outside the

24 Ladan, *Gezondheidszorg in Leiden*, 61–67.

25 Noordam, *Geringde buffels*, 75–77; Van Maanen, 'De Leidse bevolkingsaantallen', 54, 57; Van Maanen and Van Maanen, 'De grote epidemie'.

26 Zarulli et al., 'Women Live Longer'.

household, the social controls implemented via authorities from above and internal regulation within communities from below.[27]

2 Households and the Family Safety Net

For women in premodern cities independence and agency also came at a price: widows and singles lived in small households and lacked a family safety net. We know about household composition thanks to a limited number of contemporary surveys, which were usually taken for the purpose of taxation. These surveys lacked a uniform approach, which makes comparing between various years difficult or altogether impossible, but they nevertheless provide snapshots of domestic life. The earliest, from 1498, reveals that 26 per cent of households were headed by a woman (sixteen per cent by singles, ten per cent by widows). A later source from 1574 shows that female-led households accounted for 38 per cent, and in 1581 this was 36 per cent. That year only six per cent of households were headed by a single or widowed man. Men profited from skewed sex ratios that caused premodern cities to have a surplus of women, and, as a result, this provided men with plenty of opportunities to marry or remarry.[28] Women faced a much more competitive marriage market, and many ended up living in one-person households. Since women earned lower wages than men, female-led households clustered in poorer neighbourhoods.[29] Without a spouse, and often also without children old enough to work and earn, female-led households were among the most vulnerable. They were likely to be poor: in 1749 female-headed households made up 25.5 per cent of all households, and 47.9 per cent of the households were labelled 'poor'. Whether headed by females or males, poor households were relatively small, at about two persons on average, whereas Leiden's average number of household members was three.[30] The poor were less able to afford to marry, or to have many children, meaning that their households offered few 'spares' who were able to step in in case of disease or unemployment of a household member.

Much like in other premodern cities, households in Leiden were relatively small, usually consisting of either nuclear-family households, consisting of one or two parents and their offspring, or singles. The prevalence of nuclear families

27 Curtis, 'The Female Experience', 12.
28 Daelemans, 'Leiden 1581', 147, 155.
29 De Boer and Van Maanen, *De volkstelling van 1574*, 21.
30 Tjalsma, 'Een karakterisering van Leiden', 32; Noordam, 'Gezins- en huishoudensstructuren', 89.

has been associated with the European Marriage Pattern, which is characterised by 1) high age at first marriage, 2) many lifelong celibates (singles) and 3) neolocality, so an absence of extended family households that include, in addition to parents and children, other relatives. Data on age at first marriage are scarce for Leiden: Frans van Poppel cites research on early nineteenth-century Leiden suggesting 26.8 years among wage-earners and 27.6 years for self-employed (*zelfstandigen*).[31] Earlier data are only available for elites and the poor and indicate that they usually were in their twenties when they married. However, we should point out that generalising is difficult because, as has already been explained above, age at first marriage depended to a large extent on economic opportunities, which in Leiden were closely related to the economic trend in the textiles industry. Unfortunately, information on lifelong celibates is also limited: we only have data on Leiden's early modern elites, of whom ten to fourteen per cent never married.[32] In the nineteenth century one in ten men never married, and among women this was one in eight.[33] Although further premodern evidence is lacking, the large share of female-headed households suggests that many women never married.

Whether neolocality was practiced in Leiden can be determined by looking at the number of families cohabiting with kin not belonging to the nuclear family such as grandparents, siblings and children in law. In 1581, 13.3 per cent of households had in-living siblings and brothers and sisters-in-law. Three-generation households with grandparents, children and grandchildren were rare though, which seems to suggest that children were supposed to move out when they married.[34] Elderly men and women were also not supposed to move in with the nuclear family of their adult children: a 1622 tax survey in fact shows that widows cohabited with other single relatives.[35] This situation prevailed until at least 1808, when only 5.6 per cent of households were neither one-person nor nuclear households.[36] The general image is that households were small, usually comprising three to four members, and nuclear, although apprentices and maidservants were quite common.[37] Compared to later, nineteenth-century data, early modern inhabitants lived in small units: in 1749 the average number of household members was 3.1; in 1808 this was 3.3; but in the second half of the nineteenth century 4 (1849) to 4.5 (1899) became more

31 Van Poppel, *Trouwen in Nederland*, 129.
32 Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 50–51.
33 Tjalsma, 'De bevolking', 45.
34 Daelemans, 'Leiden 1581', 158–60.
35 Schmidt, *Overleven na de dood*, 192.
36 Latour, 'Leiden in 1808', 21.
37 Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 52.

usual.[38] For premodern Leiden, Noordam concludes that 'most households were nuclear families consisting of a couple or a single parent, possibly with children'.[39] Such small households were at risk of what the sociologist Peter Laslett calls 'nuclear hardship': 'difficulties imposed upon individuals when social rules require them to live in nuclear families'.[40] Usually there was only one, or even no-one, to step in when the main wage-earner fell ill or passed away. In addition, separations drove up the number of single-parent households: up to ten per cent of marriages in the eighteenth century did not last, especially among the poor.[41]

Nuclear-family households may have found support from family members. However, many inhabitants of Leiden were newcomers who had left their family behind when they moved to the city. Leiden had attracted migrants from outside the County of Holland since the later Middle Ages,[42] but the move to the city accelerated during the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when wages in the Dutch Republic were relatively high and the country was a popular destination for immigrants. Some of them only came for a few months, some for several years, while others settled permanently,[43] looking for a safe haven away from the prosecutions of the Wars of Religion and the disastrous Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). The proportion of people born outside the Dutch Republic peaked in the industrial cities of Leiden and Haarlem at more than fifty per cent, while in Amsterdam foreigners could reach forty per cent of the city's population.[44] When we focus not only on migrants who came in from abroad but also on those from the Dutch Republic, the proportion is even higher: Jan Lucassen has estimated the share of migrants in the population of Leiden and Haarlem was almost seventy per cent in 1600, and then gradually declined to seventeen per cent by 1800 (Figure 8.3). Newcomers would have had a variety of experiences when they first entered the city. Some had moved individually, others *en groupe* – Piet de Baar writes about entire villages moving from Artois and Walloon Flanders to Leiden during the final decades of the sixteenth

38 Tjalsma, 'De bevolking', 45. This is in line with a peak in the incidence of the extended family in the Netherlands, in the second half of the nineteenth century, as indicated by Kok and Mandemakers, '"Je zoudt maar last van mij hebben"'.

39 Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 52.

40 Laslett, 'Family, Kinship and Collectivity', 153.

41 Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 51.

42 De Baar, 'Leiden', 237.

43 Lucassen, 'Immigranten in Holland', 12–13.

44 Van Lottum, *Across the North Sea*, 93.

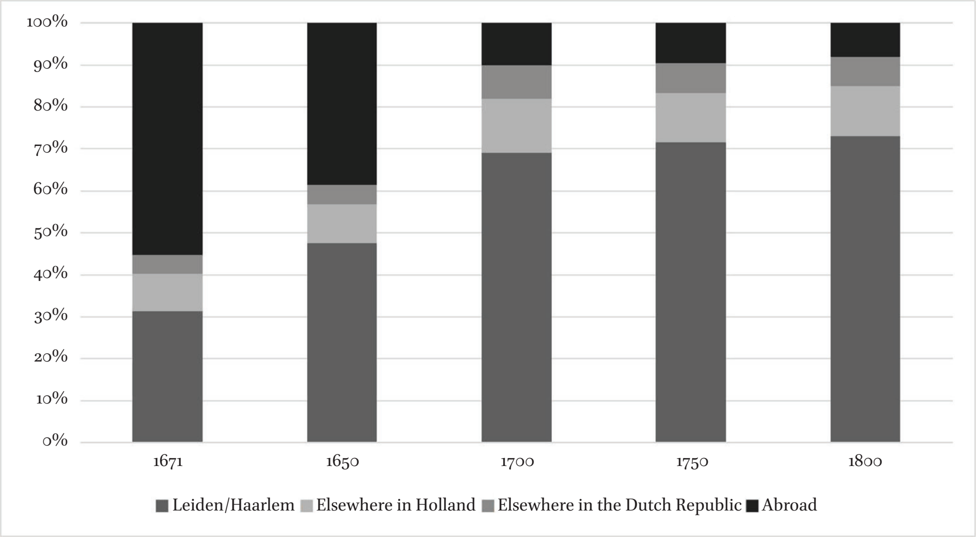

FIGURE 8.3 Origins of inhabitants of Leiden en Haarlem
SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM LUCASSEN, 'IMMIGRANTEN IN HOLLAND', 26–27

century, out of fear of religious prosecution – still others would have followed family who had moved earlier.[45]

The latter 'chain migration' provided newcomers with a support network to turn to when they first entered the city gates. But others would have had to start from scratch because they had left their family safety net behind in their place of birth. We can get a more precise image of these newcomers by looking at the 1581 census, which gives the birthplace of one-third of the population, mostly men. Of 4,833 adults, 944 (19.6 per cent) were not from Leiden and its immediate surroundings, but from elsewhere in the Dutch Republic or from abroad.[46] It is conceivable that many more were not born in Leiden, because the population had increased by several thousands in the years prior to the 1581 census.[47] The city continued to attract newcomers in the years to follow: N.W. Posthumus has demonstrated that in the 1590s migrants mainly came from present-day Belgium and France; French-sounding surnames are still quite prominent in Leiden today. In this respect the city differed from Amsterdam, which then attracted mostly migrants from the area of present-day Netherlands.

45 De Baar, 'Leiden', 238.
46 Daelemans, 'Leiden 1581', 165–66.
47 After the end of the Siege in 1574 Leiden counted c. 9,000–10,000 souls, when the 1581 census was taken, the number of inhabitants had increased to c. 12,000–13,000; Daelemans, 148; Van Maanen, 'De Leidse bevolkingsaantallen', 51.

Marriage acts from 1622 provide additional data: only 42 per cent of the grooms and brides in that year were from Leiden and its surroundings, while the rest came from further afield. Around 1645, the percentage of newlyweds from Leiden and its surroundings had even dropped to 33 per cent.[48]

Regardless of whether they were newcomers or were born and raised in Leiden, inhabitants faced a competitive labour market. Young men in particular were often forced to seek employment outside the city walls. The Dutch East India Company, established in 1602, became an important employer, and the same goes for the Dutch West India Company from 1621 onward. The Dutch Republic's military and navy also attracted young men. They set out, only to return after many months or even years; and many never returned at all. They left behind their parents, siblings and their own immediate families: Dutch cities were home to grass widows (*onbestorven weduwen*) whose husbands were alive, but absent, while other women did lose their husbands to the sea or to war. Both widows and grass widows had to develop strategies to make a living in the absence of an adult male wage earner.[49] To survive, many women had to resort to crime or were forced to apply for poor relief.[50]

Apart from structural poverty, a large group of Leiden inhabitants was at risk of cyclical poverty: they usually managed to get by, but would drop below the poverty line as soon as something went wrong. Successive economic cycles resembling the biblical seven years of plenty and seven years of want, contributed to frequent waves of unemployment. And family life could also lead to episodes of poverty: as soon as couples started having children, they had more mouths to feed, and usually had to do so with lower income because the mother was too occupied with child-rearing to work for wages.[51] This 'life-cycle squeeze' ended once children were old enough to contribute to the household income, which could be as early as six years old.[52] At a later stage in the life cycle old age impairments presented seniors with yet another squeeze. We know little about the age structure of Leiden's population, so perhaps it is best to compare it with Amsterdam: Marco van Leeuwen and Jim Oeppen's reconstruction of that city's premodern population suggests that eight to ten per cent were over sixty years.[53] For many of them it was difficult to make a living.

48 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:72–75.

49 Van der Heijden, Schmidt, and Wall, 'Broken Families', 227–28.

50 Schmidt, *Prosecuting Women*, para. 5.2; Schmidt, *Overleven na de dood*, 179–80; Pot, *Arm Leiden*, 263–64.

51 Van Bochove and Zuijderduijn, 'Years of Plenty, Years of Want?'.

52 Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Schmidt, 'Between Wage Labor and Vocation', 721–22.

53 Van Leeuwen and Oeppen, 'Reconstructing the Demographic Regime', 88–89.

For many inhabitants poverty was temporal rather than structural, and as a result, poverty was a common experience. Noordam cites late-medieval estimates of 5,000–6,000 'poor', but it is difficult to say whether these people were merely at risk of cyclical poverty or had actually dropped below the poverty line and were unable to feed themselves and their families. The number of inhabitants that actually received poor relief in the later Middle Ages was lower, between c. 1,500–2,500: between one in four to one in eight inhabitants received hand-outs of bread with bacon or ryebread.[54] Because poverty could come and go, the poor could be found all over the city. Yet there are clear patterns visible: in the later Middle Ages central districts such as Wanthuis, Wolhuis and Burgstreng were among the five districts with the highest average tax assessments both in 1498 and 1561. In these years the districts with the lowest average tax assessments were to be found closer to the city walls: among the bottom five we find Levendaal, Hogewoerd, Nicolaasgracht, Overmare Landzijde, Maredorp Landzijde and even Rapenburg – nowadays the most prestigious of Leiden's canals.[55]

Almost two centuries later, in 1749, the central districts were still among the wealthiest, while the poorer continued to be mostly found against the city walls: Zuid-Rapenburg, Oost Nieuwland, the recently added Vrijdomme and Havenbon (Figure 8.4). The only exception was Nicolaasgracht, which, thanks to urban expansion, no longer bordered the ramparts; but it was still among the poorest districts in terms of average tax assessments.[56] Although these assessments may hide variation, it seems safe to state that the poor were mostly to be found on the periphery: only ten out of 1,592 households labelled 'poor' in the 1749 tax assessment lived in the centrally located Gasthuis.[57] In general, in the city centre less than ten per cent of households were 'poor', whereas in many districts near the city walls this was between ten to thirty per cent.[58]

54 Noordam, 'Leiden in last', 18–20. Low estimate based on 1,600 on poor relief of a population of 12,456 (12.8 per cent of the population or about one in eight), high estimate based on 2,530 on poor relief of a population of 11,000 inhabitants (23 per cent or about one in four).

55 Noordam, 26.

56 Districts with average tax assessments over 15 guilders included Wanthuis, Wolhuis, Burgstreng, Overmare Rijnzijde, Gasthuis, Vleeshuis and Over het Hof; Tjalsma, 'Een karakterisering van Leiden', 40.

57 Consisting of Wanthuis, Wolhuis, Burgstreng, Vleeshuis, Gasthuis Vierendeel, Over het Hof and Zevenhuizen.

58 Tjalsma, 'Een karakterisering van Leiden', 31–32.

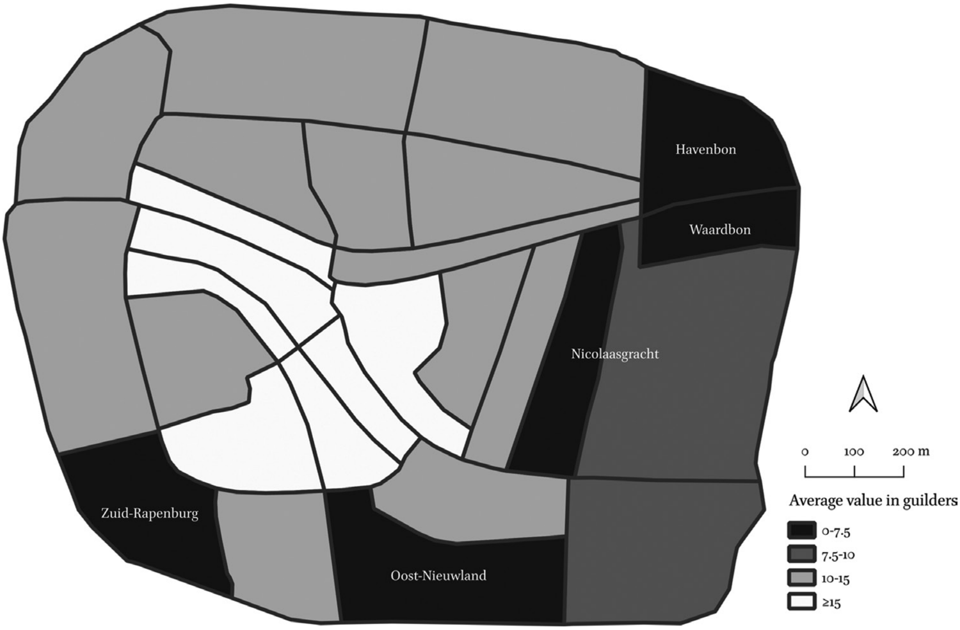

FIGURE 8.4 Average taxation per ward (*bon*) in 1749
SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM TJALSMA, 'EEN KARAKTERISERING VAN LEIDEN', 40

3 Social Care

Seeing that so many lived in small households, numerous inhabitants of Leiden were at risk of impoverishment. Singles could not turn to offspring for a helping hand, and many recent migrants had left their family safety net behind in their place of birth. Falling on hard times was a general problem in the highly urbanised Dutch Republic, where almost one in three lived in cities comprising more than 10,000 inhabitants,[59] which attracted migrants from far and wide. They were granted access to poor relief, not only because of religious or humanitarian motivations, but also to maintain social order and prevent food riots.[60] As a result, the Dutch spent substantial sums on 'formal' poor relief, provided by public authorities and religious and charitable institutions and associations: usually this amounted to one to two per cent of the Gross Domestic Product. Charity may have peaked at almost four per cent in the eighteenth century. Bas van Bavel and Auke Rijpma suggest that the usual percentages perhaps sufficed to assist

59 Malanima, *Pre-Modern European Economy*, 245–46.
60 Brand, 'Sociale omstandigheden', 133.

five per cent of the population – impressive, but not enough to support the large proportion of the population that experienced structural or cyclical poverty.[61]

Apart from formal poor relief, those who needed assistance could turn to a large number of informal types of poor relief: premodern welfare was arranged 'within a broad, complex and varied spectrum of different kinds of caregiving, that were not mutually exclusive'.[62] These included 'individuals and families, neighbours and communities, mutual-aid organisations, charities and commercial organisations' that together made up a 'mixed economy of welfare'.[63] There can be little doubt that many of Leiden's inhabitants relied on informal care provided by people in their personal networks. Ariadne Schmidt and Peter Pot give many examples of how family, friends and neighbours featured in the 'survival strategies' of the inhabitants of Leiden.[64] Neighbourhood organisations had a role in overseeing the poor and sometimes gave extra support, for example by providing a proper burial.[65]

In late medieval Leiden formal poor relief was initially provided by the Catholic Church and private benefactors. Poor relief had been relatively generous in the later Middle Ages, in part because almsgiving was part of the good works of Catholicism, so giving and working on salvation went hand in hand. This system seems to have worked well until Leiden's textile industry entered a period of crisis at the end of the fifteenth century and the city government was forced to step in.[66] Its reorganisations were in part inspired by the emergence of more restrictive ideas about social assistance. Juan Luis Vives' (1493–1540) book *De subventione pauperum* suggested that a distinction should be made between the deserving poor (orphans, widows and the elderly) and the undeserving poor, who were able but unwilling to work. In Leiden, Vives' ideas are echoed in the *Armenrapport* written by town secretary Jan van Hout (1542–1609) in 1577.[67] In the report he suggested how to deal with the poor, but also provided a new analysis of the causes of poverty, including the observation that the wages paid to textile workers were too low.[68] To make sure that the deserving poor received assistance, Van Hout proposed a thorough reorganisation of poor relief. Institutional care should target orphans, lepers and the

61 Van Bavel and Rijpma, 'How Important Were Formalized Charity'.
62 Verbeke, 'Lonely Last Days?', 123–24.
63 Harris and Bridgen, 'Introduction', 1.
64 Schmidt, *Overleven na de dood*, chap. 6; Pot, *Arm Leiden*, chap. 4.
65 Walle, *Buurthouden*, 86–89; Sluijter and Schmidt, 'Sociale verhoudingen', 124.
66 Brand, 'Sociale omstandigheden', 133.
67 De Boer, *Tussen 'Goidscameren' en hofjes*, 28–29.
68 Van Maanen, 'Jan van Hout', 22.

elderly and impaired, whereas outdoor care should be provided to the other deserving poor.[69]

Van Hout's reorganisation first led to centralisation, but eventually gave way to the decentralised system organised by various religious denominations that came to characterise poor relief in the early modern Dutch Republic. Medieval poor relief was initially provided by the *Tafel van de Heilige Geest* (or: *Heilige Geest*), which was probably already active in Leiden in 1316 and used the gifts it received to provide general poor relief. In addition, around 1400 three *huiszittenhuizen* were established in Leiden's three parishes; these supported inhabitants who did not go out begging in the streets.[70] In 1577 the three merged to become one *huiszittenhuis*; five years later this was joined by the brand-new Dutch-Reformed deaconry. Henceforth this combined institution, run by the wardens and deacons, looked after most of Leiden's poor, for example by assisting women in maternity with money and diapers. The centralised system functioned well as long as the Leiden economy was booming, but after the onset of economic decline the city government abandoned the ideal of centralised poor relief. The *huiszittenhuis* continued to look after the Dutch-Reformed poor, but the several other denominations were encouraged to look after their own poor. Over time a Walloon-Reformed deaconry, an English-Reformed deaconry, a Mennonite deaconry, a Lutheran deaconry and, in the eighteenth century, also Catholic and Jewish poor relief institutions emerged.[71]

Apart from the general poor, authorities considered foundlings and orphans an important separate category. To prevent these parentless children from growing up to become an uneducated burden on society, it was necessary to provide them with shelter and education. To this end the Leiden *Heilige Geestweeshuis* was established in 1450. The slump in the textile industry after 1490 caused the number of foundlings and abandoned children to increase and forced the wardens to begin placing boys and girls with families.[72] In 1583 the orphanage moved to its present location in a large building at Hooglandsekerkgracht; the façade still displays the statues of the orphans nicknamed 'Kaatje' and 'Kootje', dating from 1609. Kees van der Wiel has connected orphanages to the predominance of the nuclear family household and recent migrants' lack of family support networks.[73] Indeed, nearly half the orphans taken in between 1598 and 1615 were of Flemish origin, many of whom had virtually no kin in

69 Prinsen, 'Armenzorg te Leiden', 145–46.
70 Brand, 'Sociale omstandigheden', 133, 140–41.
71 Sluijter and Schmidt, 'Sociale verhoudingen', 119–21.
72 Brand, 'Sociale omstandigheden', 135.
73 Van der Wiel, *Dit kint hiet Willem*, 20–21, 25, 27, 29–30.

Leiden. This is probably also why Leiden, as one of the few cities of the Dutch Republic, did not restrict access to the orphanage to the children of burghers but also extended care to the children of recent immigrants without citizen rights. Unsurprisingly, the number of newly taken-in orphans increased during epidemics. Many orphans would eventually succumb as well because mortality in the Leiden orphanage was high. Most male orphans were prepared for work in Leiden's textile industries or in other artisanal work; female orphans were also taught housekeeping skills. Presumably this was in keeping with their background as children of members of the lower (middle) classes. It took until the nineteenth century before the number of orphans began to decline thanks to reduced parental mortality. By then, various religious denominations had begun to look after their own orphans: in the eighteenth century a Walloon, a Lutheran and a Catholic orphanage were all founded.[74] Apart from the young, authorities also had to take care of Leiden's older women and men who were unable to make a living because of old-age impairments. Ideally, they would have prepared themselves for old age: in 1577 Jan van Hout lashed out against Leiden's inhabitants who did not save but spent their hard-earned cash on drink and prostitutes 'without anticipating the cold winter' that lay ahead.[75] Saving for a rainy day was not at all unusual: Leiden's inhabitants did so by contributing to the coffers of social institutions, such as craft guilds. This gave them a right to assistance when they fell on hard times. In 1811 perhaps 55 per cent of Leiden's male labourers were covered by some type of mutual insurance that often provided sickness benefits; in addition, such institutions covered burial costs, and thus they also protected wives and children against financial ruin. Pensions sometimes existed for widows, but only a few old age pensions were handed out. Providing a safety net for those who had lost their livelihood was expensive because the so-called 'incurables' would have to be supported over many years;[76] in addition, handing out pensions came with the risk of fraud by people pretending to be unable to work. In Leiden it appears that the guild of the journeymen wool-combers was one of the few providing old age pensions at the level of thirty five per cent of regular wages; this eventually dropped to twenty per cent towards the end of the eighteenth century.[77] In this respect it is important to realise that craft-guild membership was not only attractive because it provided monetary insurance but also because it provided mutual assistance: according

74 Sluijter and Schmidt, 'Sociale verhoudingen', 122, 124; Van der Wiel, *Dit kint hiet Willem*, 32–41, 50–55, 61, 151.

75 Prinsen, 'Armenzorg te Leiden', 132–33.

76 Gleeson, *Geographies of Disability*, 95.

77 Van Leeuwen, 'Guilds and Middle-Class Welfare', 63.

to Katherine Lynch, urban inhabitants could build a support network by joining a craft guild or confraternity which served as a 'surrogate family' that could also lend a helping hand during old age.[78]

In 1577 the elderly and impaired found refuge in Leiden's three hospitals: St Catherine's, Our Lady's (in 1583 turned into the city orphanage) and St Elisabeth's. Van Hout suggested unifying the hospital organisation and enlarging the capacity by seizing Catholic convents. One convent that was indeed turned into a hospital was the St Cecilia convent – today's Boerhaave museum – which was added to St Catherine's hospital. Only a small number of Leiden residents were accommodated by the city's hospitals. Jan Orlers (1570–1646) estimates that the combined hospital of St Catherine and St Cecilia's had 300 inmates in 1612, both healthy and sick people.[79] Some of them would have shared a bed or bed-box (Orlers counted 217 beds for 300 people). Both St Catherine's and Cecilia's and St Elisabeth's hospital also had a *baaijert* providing short-term accommodation. In Orlers' 1612 investigation – although incomplete with respect to St Elisabeth's hospital and the inhabitants of almshouses or *hofjes* – we may assume that altogether c. 800 inhabitants lived in social institutions. It is difficult to estimate how many inhabitants would have had access to these beds: Leiden's population increased rapidly over the course of the early seventeenth century, but we do not know at what pace. If we assume a population of 30,000–40,000[80] this would mean that in 1612 2–2.7 per cent of the population received care in a hospital. For unknown reasons, this figure was lower in 1749, when 340 people lived in hospitals (one per cent of the total population) and another 907 in orphanages, 42 in *minnehuizen*[81] and 556 in *hofjes*: altogether 5.7 per cent lived in institutions.[82] Hospitals held a larger share of the population in 1808 (3.1 per cent), while *hofjes* housed another 2.1 per cent.[83]

The level of care in retirement homes varied: the elderly poor who were unable to live independently, and lacked a family safety net, could end up living in *minnehuizen* – commercially run hospitals whose entrepreneurs received a sum per inmate and were supposed to take care of up to forty individuals. Unsurprisingly, this type of commercial care frequently led to abuses: in 1771,

78 Lynch, *Individuals, Families, and Communities*, 14–15.

79 Orlers, *Beschrijvinge der stad Leyden*, 102.

80 For the estimates, see Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 43.

81 We assume five households with eight to nine *minnekinderen* (altogether 42) should be considered as institutions similar to the *minnehuizen* for the old. In addition, sixteen households reported one *minnekind*.

82 Leiden Historical Population Databank: https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-23u-3ex (accessed 6 December 2023).

83 Latour, 'Leiden in 1808', 78–79.

the inhabitants of *minnehuizen* were described as living 'like animals in a stable'. The city government reacted with a merger and the creation of a centralised home for the elderly in 1782.[84] On the other end of the spectrum we find retirement homes for people of the 'middling class' who were willing and able to pay the equivalent of two to three years' wages of a craftsman to enter into a contract that gave them the right to lifelong food and lodging.[85] Writing about St Catherine's hospital, the chronicler Frans van Mieris (1689–1763) described the situation as 'cozy cohabitation' (*gezellige saamenwooning*) in 'spacious halls'.[86] In Leiden the hospitals of St Catherine, St Cecilia and St Elisabeth allowed paying customers to spend their final years. These so-called 'corrodians' would typically enter around the age of sixty and go on to spend on average another ten years sleeping in a hospital bed or living in a small apartment. Even though corrodians had to be fed well, hospital directors preferred paying customers over the poor, who therefore risked ending up in the dreaded *minnehuizen*. Indeed, it seems that hospital directors negotiated entry sums that usually sufficed to cover their stay. They did so, amongst other things, by estimating how many years corrodians were likely to continue to live and adjusting the price accordingly.[87] The price had to be right in the capitalist Dutch Republic, and this was true both when it came to selling corrodies and when it came to accommodating elderly women and men in *minnehuizen* at a fixed – and often too low – daily budget.

4 *Hofjes,* or Almshouses for the Elderly

Leiden's eldercare was socially stratified, with *minnehuizen* for the elderly poor and corrody-contracts in hospitals for the more affluent. The latter could also hope to gain admission to one of Leiden's many *hofjes*. Already in the later Middle Ages, Leiden had many of these almshouses – second only to the much larger Utrecht.[88] As we will see, they were home to up to one in ten of Leiden's elderly population, and likely a much larger share of the members of the lower middle class for whom these institutions were established. Almshouses were never intended to alleviate the poverty of the destitute, though, but rather

84 Sluijter, 'Gelijk beesten in een stal', 164; Sluijter, *Tot ciraet*, 122; Sluijter and Schmidt, 'Sociale verhoudingen', 122.
85 Pelzl and Zuijderduijn, 'Or Do You Prefer Cash?'
86 Van Mieris and Van Alphen, *Beschryving der stad Leyden*, 173.
87 Pelzl and Zuijderduijn, 'Saving the Best for Last?'
88 De Boer, *Tussen 'Goidscameren' en hofjes*, 29.

granted rent-free living and extras in the shape of fuel and food to the so-called shamefaced poor for whom it was degrading to depend openly on poor relief agencies. This sensibility to status could be found throughout Europe. Leiden can boast that most of its *hofjes* – 35 in total – have survived to the present day, a source of local pride already in the early modern age when they were described in loving detail by local chroniclers.[89] However, similar institutions can be found throughout predominantly urban environments: other concentrations could or can be found in, for example, Amsterdam, Haarlem, Alkmaar, Utrecht and Groningen. Nor are they confined to the Netherlands, though the spread of the phenomenon is still imperfectly known. Similar institutions can be found in regions that welcomed many immigrants, especially Flanders, England and Northern Germany; fewer existed in Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and Denmark and Norway.[90]

In Leiden, almshouses typically consisted of a limited number of small one-room houses arranged around a rectangular courtyard. They were mostly founded by wealthy benefactors and were on the whole private institutions. Often, they were prominently placed in the cityscape, access being provided by lavish entry gates with memorial plaques and coats of arms honouring the founders. Some were managed by a board of elite family members or dissenter churches; others were managed by poor relief officials of either the city (*huiszittenmeesters*, almoners or poor wardens) or, after the Reformation, the Reformed Church (*diakenen*, deacons). In all cases, access was controlled, and one needed good connections – either with the elite regents or with one's church officials – to procure a place. In almshouses the social layers comprising the top twenty per cent of early modern society thus provided an escape from the poverty trap that caught the sixty per cent of society belonging to the lower middle class and the class of wage-dependents. Aware of their actual and symbolic importance, in Leiden the city government usually monitored the *hofjes* closely.[91]

Most *hofjes* were established to house older women, who were at particular risk of impoverishment during their final years: singles running one-person households and widows who, unlike widowers, had few opportunities to remarry. Unfortunately, we do not know much about the inhabitants of almshouses in premodern Leiden because few kept registers of their inhabitants,

89 Looijesteijn, 'Funding and Founding', 199–203, 221–23. The shame of a public decline of poverty was very strong, sometimes inducing people to prefer death over seeking help; Schmidt, *Overleven na de dood*, 187–91; Pot, *Arm Leiden*, 177–79.

90 For a preliminary foray see Looijesteijn, *Hofjes over de grens*.

91 Looijesteijn, 'Funding and Founding', 202–3, 223.

and even those that did rarely give data beyond the names and dates of entry. The exception is an elaborate register kept by regent Pauwels Pauwelsz van Thorenvliet († 1627) for the St Anna Aalmoeshuis, covering 1606–1627. During these 21 years 45 women lived in the thirteen apartments comprising the almshouse. They were almost equally divided between widows (23) and spinsters (twenty). Only one woman was still married on entry, because her husband was cared for in St Catharine's hospital, and another one entered as the daughter of an elderly woman. Typically, no occupations were registered for the women and the professions for only sixteen of the 23 husbands of married or widowed women are known. These occupations were typically lower middle class, with the exception of a soldier, a farmer and a linen merchant.[92] It is likely that the widows nevertheless contributed to the household budget in some way. Whether the women had children was not recorded, save for one widow whose daughter also lived in the almshouse.[93] Most spinsters probably had worked, presumably among the scores of single women who were active in long-term domestic service. Their employers had a moral obligation to provide for them if they had aged in their service and usually some provisions were made for them, either as a bequest allowing them to enter an almshouse, or by seeking a suitable almshouse place for them. Thus, the wealthiest members of society, who also often ran the almshouses in one way or another as regents, poor wardens or deacons, could make sure that their aged personnel were reasonably well-off in retirement.[94]

Van Thorenvliet also generally recorded the ages of the women (Table 8.1). Although there were large differences in age of entry – one woman entered early, aged forty, while another one did so at the venerable age of 89 – most did so around sixty, so at the threshold of old age. There was no clear difference in age of entry between unmarried and married women, but it is probably no coincidence that all the women who were over seventy on entry were widowed; they were clearly only eligible after their husbands died. The women lived in the almshouse for about ten years on average, although this figure is inflated by one who entered the almshouse at the age of fifty and died there aged 84, and another who moved in at age 57 and left the almshouse after 32 years to

92 Prins, 'Twee stichters, één hofje', 33–34, writing about the final decades of the eighteenth century and modern era, indicates the women of Coninckshof had a similar background.

93 De Baar, *Sint Annahofje*, 91–96.

94 Looijesteijn, 'Funding and Founding', 217, 219–22. Unfortunately, little research has been yet undertaken on Leiden elderly spinsters, but that almshouses could accommodate former domestic servants is for example anecdotally attested for Haarlem and Rotterdam; De Haan and Stam, *Jonge dochters en oude vrijsters*, 64, 149–50; Palmen, *Dwaze liefde*, 45–50. For Leiden widows and work, see Schmidt, *Overleven na de dood*, 121–68.

TABLE 8.1 Inhabitants of St Anna Aalmoeshuis, 1606–1627

	N	Average	Median	Range
Age at entry	42	60.8	60	40–89
Age at death	12	77.3	78.5	59–99
Age at moving to St Catherine's hospital	9	77.3	75	60–95
Age at moving out	19	70.6	73	41–95
Length of stay	31	10.6	6	1–34

SOURCE: ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN, NL-LDNRAL-01513, NO. 143+2, REGISTER OF NAMES OF CONVENTUALS (1606–1627)

go to St Catherine's hospital, probably to receive the fulltime care the almshouse was unable to give. This also happened to another twelve women in Van Thorenvliet's register, who did so at age 77 on average; eventually, moving to a hospital became common practice in other almshouses as well.[95] It is probably telling that the women who died in the almshouse also did so at 77 years on average.

Other women left the almshouse for different reasons: one 'secretly ran off into the night' and three were expelled for their behaviour. Others may have moved in with family to be taken care of. They may have been able to do so because seventeen of them came from Leiden and another seven from the surrounding countryside. Three came from Haarlem and two came from Gouda. Of the other women whose origin are known, nine came from the Southern Netherlands and one from the German Lands. Two came from other places. Even for women who were born outside Holland and had migrated to Leiden it was possible to spend their old age in an almshouse, most likely as a reward for many years of faithful service in elite households.

The question now remains: what was the relative importance of this 'elite charity'? How much of Leiden's elderly population could be accommodated in almshouses is not easy to establish. There was no universally accepted definition of old age, but in the Dutch Republic this was usually thought to have begun between fifty and sixty years. In Leiden, the population over 55 may have been something along the line of 18.7 percent in 1680, 19.9 per cent in 1750 and 18.8 in 1795. The share of Leiden's elderly of over fifty who could be accommodated in almshouses may have been about 2.7 per cent in 1670

95 Schmidt, *Overleven na de dood*, 191, 284 (note 102).

and 9.7 percent in 1795. The large increase was only partly attributable to the founding of new almshouses, but was primarily a consequence of the great population decline Leiden underwent in the eighteenth century. Since not all almshouse residents were elderly, for Leiden in 1795 a percentage of 8.7 seems more likely. Many elderly men and women will not have been eligible, however, either because they were too wealthy or – the largest part – too poor to qualify. Nevertheless, at the end of the eighteenth century, perhaps as much as one third of the elderly in need of assistance lived in a *hofje*. Other types of care for the elderly seem to have supported smaller numbers of people.[96]

5 Conclusion

We began this chapter with William Temple's observation of the unhealthy living environment in typically Dutch canal cities. Today, Leiden's historic city centre has 28 km of waterways; since many canals have been drained, we know that before 1800 this number was even greater. The abundance of water can be connected with another observation of Temple, namely that 'charity seems to be very natural' among the people of the Dutch Republic.[97] Perhaps even more so than in many other European cities, canal cities, with their high mortality and morbidity rates, their high replacement migration rates and their subsequent weak family support networks, required a substantial system of charities to support inhabitants who suffered structural or cyclical poverty. But what Temple probably did not realise was that charity was not universal but reflected social inequalities: whereas in Leiden the safety net protecting middling groups from impoverishment made for a soft landing, this was different for the poor. In the absence of universal social security, they probably knew all too well that they should brace for impact.

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96 For the calculations of these numbers, see Looijesteijn, 'Funding and Founding', 203–5; Sluijter, 'Gelijk beesten in een stal', 20–21.

97 Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces*, 116.

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CHAPTER 9

Differences at Work: Migrants, Men and Women in the Leiden Labour Market

Ariadne Schmidt

> Anna Maria Elisabeth Zeelis, aged about thirty-seven years, born of Soets in the Marksland [Prussia], last living in this town, having served as a kitchen maid before and afterwards as a bleacher's maid [...] was reproached that although she was able to earn her living and meet her needs with her own manual labour, she had indulged in thievery.[1]

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In 1775, Anna Zeelis stood trial before the Leiden criminal court. On April 28 of that same year, she was found guilty of stealing of a coat and a pillow during a visit to the nearby city of The Hague, and of two psalm books from the Hooglandse kerk in Leiden. Anna was charged that she had committed this dishonest act even though she was perfectly capable of supporting herself through 'her manual labour'. It was a standard formulation by which both men and women who appeared in court in the eighteenth century were accused.[2]

The accusation is significant. It seemingly clashes with the contemporary prescription that a woman's place was in the home and taking care of the family, which was articulated more often in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[3] It also nuances the long held assumption in historiography that

1 Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken, Leiden (hereafter ELO), NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 3+54, f. 21v, Crimineel vonnisboek (28 April 1775): 'Anna Maria Elisabeth Zeelis, oud omtrent sevenendertig Jaaren, geboortig van Soets in het Marksland, laatst gewoond hebbende binnen deeze stad, hebbende tevoren gediend als keukenmeid en naderhand als bleekersmeid [...] haar aanzeggende dat zij gevange schoon bequaam en in staat om met haar handen arbeid haar bestaan en noodruft te zoeken, egter zig heeft overgegeeven tot het pleegen van dieverijen.'

2 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 10 KK, f. 21, Confessieboek (14 March 1775); no. 3+54, f. 21v-23r, Crimineel vonnisboek (28 April 1775).

3 Schmidt, 'Labour Ideologies'.

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women's participation in productive work declined during the early modern period.[4] Most women worked, and in practice were also expected to work to maintain themselves if they could not live off their own wealth or their husbands' income. Yet access to the labour market was by no means equal for all, as will be shown in this contribution. Gender played a role, and also one's origin.

Why Anna Zeelis had travelled from Prussia to Holland is unknown. But once in Leiden she had to find a way to make a living. What were her options? The interrogation reveals that Zeelis had served at various addresses within the ten months between her arrival and her arrest in March 1775. She first worked as an apprentice (*leermeid*) at the bleachery of Gerrit Dorsman, later as domestic servant with Reinier Spoor, and lastly as a kitchen maid for the merchant Salomon Elias on the Pieterskerkstraat.[5]

As a newcomer in search of work Anna Zeelis was no exception. Urban labour markets attracted people from the nearby countryside as well as from further away. Early modern cities grew only through the arrival of newcomers, women as much as men. Anna Zeelis was at a disadvantage though. She was a woman, she came from elsewhere, she was unmarried and of low social status, and she had arrived in a city that was suffering economic decline. The urban labour market had great appeal but did not provide golden opportunities for everyone. It was a place par excellence where people came together, participated and interacted, but also one characterised by exclusion, inequality and segregation. In the labour market, distinctions were made and differences between city dwellers came to the fore. For access to work it mattered whether one was a migrant, a resident or a citizen, a male or a female, married or not, without resources or rich.

Next to personal characteristics, economic conditions also impacted access to work. The city in which Anna Zeelis arrived had changed immensely in the two centuries that had passed since the Siege of Leiden in 1574. After the Relief, Leiden grew into *the* European centre of textile production. The urban economy prospered, the labour market expanded and so did the city's social amenities. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century conditions changed. The textile industry faced competition and economic stagnation, and decline set in. Leiden's population grew impoverished, and the occupational and organisational structure of work changed. This chapter explores the developments in the early modern Leiden labour market. In particular, it examines how migrants

4 Influential publications on the decline thesis include Clark, *Working Life of Women*; Tilly and Scott, *Women, Work, and Family*; Wiesner, *Working Women*; Howell, *Women, Production, and Patriarchy*.

5 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 10 KK, f. 21, Confessieboek (14 March 1775).

and women gained access to paid work, which factors were of influence, and how mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion changed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. First, however, I will address some methodological issues relating to the reconstruction of the early modern labour market.

1 The Leiden Labour Market

Leiden was an industrial city. The secondary sector was and remained the largest employer in the premodern era – with the textile industry foremost, even after it fell into serious decline in the eighteenth century. In addition, Leiden's function as a regional and interregional market centre and as a hub of trade relations was important for the urban economy. It stimulated retail and wholesale trade and the rapidly expanding transport network that connected Leiden with a large number of villages and towns. The non-economic services sector was third largest employer of heads of households. Numerically, the sector was not significant. The presence of the academic community since 1575 may have been small, it nevertheless left its mark on the occupational structure with, for example, the emergence of a significant book trade. The agricultural sector was small and declining in the early modern period but had not entirely disappeared.[6] No significant shifts took place in the distribution between the economic sectors. Changes did occur, though, in the occupational structure, which became more differentiated, and in the organisation of work, as will be shown below.

Migrants and women were active in all economic sectors and all social layers of the labour market, but they were not evenly distributed: the labour market was segmented. Segmentation of the labour market and occupational segregation have received quite some attention in historiography. Social norms, institutions, capital requirements and economic trends, but also the organisation of work, contributed to the occupational crowding of migrants and women into certain sectors of the urban economy.[7]

What work migrants and women did is not always easy to determine. The reconstruction of the early modern labour market encounters several methodological challenges. Citizenship registers usually provide information on the

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6 De Vries et al., 'Het economisch leven', 96, 105–6; Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*, 328. See also the chapter by Ronald Sluijter.

7 There is a vast literature on the gender division of work in the early modern labour market. See, for example, Ogilvie, *A Bitter Living*; Macleod, Shepard, and Ågren, *The Whole Economy*; Schrover, Van der Leun, and Quispel, 'Niches, Labour Market' or more specifically: Knotter and Van Zanden, 'Immigratie en arbeidsmarkt'; Knotter, 'Vreemdelingen in Amsterdam'; Lucassen, 'Labour'.

occupations of migrants, but only very occasionally on women, and also leaves out the large groups of migrants for whom citizenship was too expensive or simply not attractive to obtain. Marriage registers, another widely used source for migrants' occupations, cover a much broader segment of the population in terms of socio-economic status, but only provide occupational information on men who migrated as singles and who married after they arrived.[8] For Leiden, an early population census (1581) and a number of tax registers have survived. These sources provide information on occupations, but places of origin are, if recorded at all, often incomplete. Moreover, contemporaries often identified women by their marital status rather than by their occupational status. Much work by women was carried without an occupational identifier; multiple employments were common, and among the lower social classes both women and men often changed occupations,[9] as is shown in the aforementioned example of Anna Zeelis, who in a short period of time worked as a kitchen maid, at a bleachery and as a domestic servant.

That these sources do not capture the full breadth of work activities does not make them useless. When carefully interpreted and used in conjunction with other sources, the Leiden population census of 1581 and the tax registers compiled in 1674, 1742 and 1749, provide valuable information on changes in the early modern Leiden labour market, as has been shown by the various publications that are used for the analysis presented here.[10]

2 Citizenship as a Barrier to Work

Not everyone had equal access to the labour market. The best positions were reserved for the most settled inhabitants. Migrants were at a disadvantage, and since citizenship (*poorterschap*) was defined locally, this applied to anyone

8 For an extensive discussion of the methodological problems relating to the identification of occupational activities of female migrants, see Erickson and Schmidt, 'Migration', 171–81.

9 For discussions of census data and tax registers, see Humphries and Sarasúa, 'Off the Record'; Schmidt and Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'Reconsidering the "Firstmale-Breadwinner Economy"'; Higgs and Wilkinson, 'Women, Occupations and Work'. For discussions of the concept of work, see Sarti, Bellavitis, and Martini, *What is Work?*; Macleod, Shepard, and Ågren, *The Whole Economy*.

10 Leiden had a central place in the research project Women's Work in the Early Modern Northern Netherlands, at the International Institute of Social History, resulting in various publications by Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, Danielle van den Heuvel and Marjolein van Dekken and Ariadne Schmidt. This chapter makes grateful use of the research results and publications that came out of this project.

born outside Leiden. Since the Middle Ages, urban by-laws had prohibited non-citizens from practicing crafts and trades. In effect this meant that independent masters and entrepreneurs had to be citizens or were required to obtain citizenship as wage labourers, and journeymen were exempted from this rule.[11] Recent literature indeed has identified citizenship as the 'main policy instrument' for inclusion and exclusion in cities in the Northern Netherlands.[12]

As in other Dutch cities, guilds required citizenship as a condition of membership. The long held assumption that there were no guilds in medieval Leiden, has long since been refuted.[13] The ongoing differentiation of occupations resulted in the growth of the number of guilds during the seventeenth century, from seventeen corporations in 1607 to 65 in 1700 and 66 in 1788.[14] The guild coverage did not grow at the same rate, because the textile industry was not organised in guilds but in *neringen*, vertically organised corporations that included the textile producers from all stages of the production process. Shearers, dry shearers, woolcombers and fullers formed an exception and did have guilds of their own, but the numerous wool spinners and weavers remained outside the guilds. As the textile industry was declining the coverage of guilds was growing. Around 1749 an estimated 65 per cent of the male labour force was organised in guilds.[15]

Citizenship could be obtained, either by birth, marriage, purchase or gift. The price for citizenship in Leiden rose from 3.30 guilders (1625), to five (1651–1673), to eight (1673–1703) and finally to just over 12 guilders in the eighteenth century, but remained affordable compared to, for example, in Amsterdam, where citizenship cost fifty guilders around 1650.[16] Notwithstanding the low costs, the citizenship requirement did function as an instrument of exclusion. It has been estimated that the absolute minimum wage for a person around 1650 to survive was about 25 stuivers (1.05 guilders) per week. The average weekly wage of an unskilled worker in the building sector amounted to about 105 stuivers. 'Full-time working' female spinners in Leiden, however, could only earn weekly wages of between some 25 to 75 stuivers.[17] This demonstrates that the small amount needed to pay

11 Versprille, 'Het Leidsche poorterschap', 90–91; Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 1:272–74. The 1583 By-laws stated that those who were not born or adopted citizens (*poorter*) were not allowed to do a citizens craft or trade (*poorters neeringe of hanteeringe*). ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 9, p. 20, Keurboek van Leiden.

12 De Munck, Davids, and Burm, 'Beyond Exclusivism', 207.

13 Marsilje, 'Het economisch leven', 97–99; Marsilje, 'Bestonden er in het middeleeuwse Leiden'.

14 De Vries et al., 'Het economisch leven', 102.

15 De Vries et al., 102–3.

16 Versprille, 'Het Leidsche poorterschap', 80; Kuijpers, *Migrantenstad*, 132.

17 Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*, 293–94, 301, based upon the estimated subsistence minimum of 200 guilders per year. De Vries and van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 564.

for citizenship still could be too high a threshold and was an extra financial barrier for people of little means. Moreover, in many guilds people who purchased citizenship still had to pay a higher entrance fee than born citizens. The entrance fee for the relatively open *Lijwatiers* guild (sellers of linen and cotton goods) was, for example, six guilders for newly admitted citizens and only two guilders for born citizens.[18] In the surgeons guild the apprenticeship fees for immigrants was twice as high as for natives.[19] There were more differences between born and purchased citizenship. Only after seven years were newcomers who acquired citizenship considered full citizens. In theory, they were then entitled to participate in the urban government and hold administrative positions.[20] In practice, access to such positions in the upper echelons remained often out of reach of newcomers.[21]

The distinctions between partial and full citizenship and the regulations imposed by guilds and *neringen* were a thorn in the side of the famous textile merchant Pieter de la Court. He agitated strongly against the restrictive regulations and institutions and called for an open society and economy.[22] De la Court, a second-generation immigrant himself through birth, with his mother, Jeanne des Planques, being from Lille, and his father, Pieter de la Court sr, from nearby Ypres, argued that Leiden owed its wealth to immigrants and therefore nothing should be put in their way to prevent them from fully participating.[23]

Whereas migrants faced obstacles, Jews were directly discriminated against. In general, guilds in Holland barred Jews, but the regulation was not always observed strictly, and in some guilds, Jews were tolerated.[24] In Leiden, Jewish old-cloth traders were allowed to join the tailors' guild. However, the 1733 ordinance by which the city council prohibited 'foreign Jews' from going along the streets with their merchandise was immediately responded to by a petition of the *Lijwatiers* guild. According to the wardens, Jewish citizens had concluded from this ordinance that they were allowed to go along the streets with their wares, which, according to the guilds, harmed the shopkeepers. Their petition to prohibit all Jews from peddling linen and cotton goods was approved.[25]

18 Full name of the guild, which also included matrass makers: *Lijwatiers, beddemakers en tijkverkopersgilde*. ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 129, f. 151–163, Gerechtsdagboeken (2 October 1767); Van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship*, 103.

19 Schalk, 'Apprenticeships with and without Guilds', 193.

20 Versprille, 'Het Leidsche poorterschap', 81–82.

21 Weststeijn, *Commercial Republicanism*, 159.

22 Weststeijn, 159, 210–12.

23 De la Court, *Het welvaren van Leiden*, 18–19, 28.

24 Lourens and Lucassen, 'De oprichting en ontwikkeling', 55. In Amsterdam Jews did enter the guild of the booksellers and printers, brokers, surgeons and pharmacists; Levie Bernfeld, *Poverty and Welfare*, 192, 426.

25 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no 114, f. 75v-77v, Gerechtsdagboeken (24 June 1733).

Whether the guild's attempts to ban Jews from guild membership were successful remains unclear,[26] but Jews were eventually admitted, as shown from their names appearing on the membership list compiled in 1788.[27]

The citizenship requirement discriminated against rich migrants, poor migrants and migrants of the middling sort, excluding the wealthy from administrative positions and the poor from self-employed work, and burdening the middling sort with extra costs to exercise their occupation. The requirement thus led to social differentiation, and at least contributed to a certain segmentation in the labour market according to origin. But these institutional forces did not hinder the arrival of numerous migrants to Leiden. Access to the labour market varied from occupation to occupation and urban policies regarding admittance changed according to the economic situation.

3 Migrants in the Leiden Labour Market

Leiden owed its so-called 'golden' age to the large influx of migrants from the Southern Netherlands. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, many people fled persecution and war activities, mainly from the south of the county of Flanders, the region with the towns of Hondschoote, Ronse, Ypres and Poperinge which had specialised in the production of the new drapery since the fifteenth century.[28] Wealthy entrepreneurs, skilled craftsmen and unskilled workers moved up north and settled in Leiden where they gave major impetus to the production of cheaper and lighter woollen cloths, laying the foundation for the seventeenth-century Dutch city's economic boom.[29] Leiden expanded to become the European centre of textile production and kept attracting people. The economic importance of immigrants was acknowledged by contemporaries. From 1577 onwards the city council lured Flemish migrants, some of whom had at first fled to Colchester or Norwich, with attractive settlement conditions: they were granted citizenship, supported financially, helped with housing, or exempted from entrance fees and from taking the master's exam.[30]

26 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0509, no. 757, Petition (eighteenth century); Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 1025.

27 Why all names of Jews on the list of the linen, mattress and cover sellers were crossed out later is unclear. Possibly they did not have to swear the oath on the stadtholder; ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 231, Notulen burgemeesterskamer (1788).

28 Lucassen and de Vries, 'Leiden als middelpunt', 142–43.

29 Cf. chapter by Jori Zijlmans.

30 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 2 and 3:10–11; Desreumaux, *Leidens weg op*, 10–11; Noordam, 'Nieuwkomers in Leiden', 64; Van Maanen, *Doorgaande beweging*, 10.

Whether attracted by these privileges or not, textile workers came in large numbers.[31] At the end of the sixteenth century, three quarters of the brides and grooms who married in the town were born outside Leiden (Table 9.1);

TABLE 9.1 Population and migration in Leiden, 1581–1800

	No of inhabitants	**Share of inhabitants born outside Leiden in Leiden population (estimated)[c]**	**Share of grooms (m) and brides (f) born outside Leiden[d]**	**Number Reformed emigrants leaving Leiden with an Act of Indemnity (approximate)[f]**
1581	c. 12,275[a]		m: 62% f: 51%[d]	
1586–1595			m&f: 75%[e]	
1600	24,000[b]	69%		
1622	44,745[a]		m: 62% f: 54%[d]	
1632	46,000[b]			
1641–1650			m&f: 67%[e]	
1650	52,000[b]	52%		
1666	62,000[b]			
1670	56,000[b]			
1675	56,777[c]		m: 53% f: 47%[d]	
1691–1700			m&f: 31%[e]	
1700	54,000[c]	31%		
1727	47,896[c]			
1730–34				100
1735–39				105
1740–44				
1742	39,175[c]		m: 36% f: 23%[d]	200

(*cont.*)

31 Further research is needed to assess the impact of such measures. Kuijpers and Prak concluded for Amsterdam that there was no relation between changes in the labour market and increases or decreases in the cost of citizenship; Kuijpers and Prak, 'Burger, ingezetene, vreemdeling', 121–22. See also De Munck, Davids, and Burm, 'Beyond Exclusivism', 10–11.

TABLE 9.1 Population and migration in Leiden, 1581–1800 (*cont.*)

	No of inhabitants	Share of inhabitants born outside Leiden in Leiden population (estimated)[c]	Share of grooms (m) and brides (f) born outside Leiden[d]	Number Reformed emigrants leaving Leiden with an Act of Indemnity (approximate)[f]
1745–49				190
1750	36,648[c]	29%		
1750–54				220
1755–59				225
1760–64				240
1765–69				290
1770–74				330
1775	33,160[c]			
1775–79				320
1780–84				280
1800	29,961[c]	27%		

SOURCES:

a M. Hooymans, *Ranking the towns: nieuw licht op de bevolkingsdichtheid van middeleeuwse steden: volkstelling Leiden 1581* (*deel 1 & 2*) (The Hague: DANS, 2019), https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-2ag-e6qc;

b Van Maanen, 'Leidse bevolkingsaantallen', 64; H.D. Tjalsma, *Leiden Historical Population Databank 1700–1850, Population Data Leiden 1671–1895* (The Hague: DANS, 2023), https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-xtw-vgtr;

c Lucassen, 'Immigranten in Holland', 27;

d Noordam, 'Nieuwkomers in Leiden', 52, 55, 58, 62;

e De Vries et al., 'Het economisch leven', 95;

f Davids, 'De migratiebeweging', 142 (approximate numbers as read from Graph 8.1).

more than half of all Leiden brides and grooms came from the Southern Netherlands.[32] The 1581 census that recorded the origins of one third of the adult men shows that male migrants were concentrated in the textile industry.[33]

In the mid-seventeenth century, still two-thirds of brides and grooms were migrants. By then, labour migration was showing strong regional specialisation. The textile industry remained by far the most important employer for

32 De Vries et al., 'Het economisch leven', 95.

33 Daelemans, 'Leiden 1581', 184–85.

newcomers,[34] and also influenced patterns of other labour migration. People did not come by chance, but followed beaten paths. With recruitment from other textile areas, shortages in the Leiden labour market were met. Textile workers were followed by fellow villagers working in the provisioning trades, as tailors, shoemakers, bakers or carpenters, as has been shown by Leo Lucassen and Boudien de Vries. That few migrants found work in transportation or commodity trades during this period probably reflects the importance of social networks in getting access to these occupations.[35]

The waves of migration to Leiden were inextricably linked to the boom and bust of the textile industry.[36] When, after a period of boom, the textile industry deteriorated after 1675, attitudes towards immigrants changed. From the end of the seventeenth century, several cities in Holland tried to limit the arrival of poor migrants by demanding letters of surety. Leiden implemented these Acts of Indemnity in 1716 for incoming migrants. Because the influx of 'foreign poor people, beggars, thugs, vagabonds, lazy and other useless persons' would put too much of a burden on public poor relief, the city government decided that foreigners had to put up a deposit in case they fell into poverty.[37] The proportion of immigrants had fallen sharply – in the 1690s less than thirty per cent of the brides and grooms were of migrant origin (Table 9.1).

After 1700, immigration continued to decline, while emigration increased.[38] Poverty drove people out of town. Groups of textile workers left Leiden, for example, for work in Copenhagen and Guadalajara (Spain), where working conditions were more favourable.[39] Employment opportunities declined, though, according to G.P.M Pot, the Leiden labour market was characterised by *under* rather than *un*employment.[40] In the second half of the eighteenth century, some sectors even faced labour shortages. The Acts of Indemnity, implemented in 1716 to limit the immigration of poor migrants, were now used to prevent emigration. From 1779 onwards, Acts were only issued after confirming with the *nering* that there was no work for those who wanted to leave. In 1785, the city authorities decided to abandon the system, not only because Leiden was held responsible for the many emigrants who had fallen into poverty in

34 De Vries et al., 'Het economisch leven', 98.

35 Lucassen and De Vries, 'Leiden als middelpunt', 160–61.

36 De Vries et al., 'Het economisch leven', 95.

37 Own translation: 'vremde arme menschen, beggars, troggelaars, vagabonds, luije and other useless persons', cited in Davids, 'De migratiebeweging', 138.

38 Davids, 142.

39 Pauw, 'De Spaanse lakenfabrieken'; Davids, 'De migratiebeweging', 146. In fact, emigration was so large that it even temporarily caused labour shortages in textiles again; Pot, *Arm Leiden*, 73.

40 Pot, *Arm Leiden*, 356.

their new place of residence, but also to prevent immigrants who could be useful for the urban economy from choosing not to come to Leiden.[41] Whether the 1785 'provisional resolution' to abandon the system was eventually implemented is unknown.[42]

Around 1750, the textile industry was still the city's largest employer, but the sector had lost importance, for migrants even more than for local-born. This pattern continued, and by 1808 only 28 per cent of Leiden's population was employed in textiles. The economic reorientation in the second half of the eighteenth century caused Leiden to attract different types of migrants. Little is known about women, but male immigrants found work in the service sector, and in crafts and trades producing goods for the local and regional markets.[43] New occupations emerged through which wealthy city dwellers, whose purchasing power was hardly affected, sought to affirm their affluent status. These new trades attracted migrants: coachmen, servants and gardeners from Germany were especially in demand.[44] Migrants who purchased citizenship were better represented in the branches of metalwork, clothing and cleaning, trade and transport, and in free professions than those without citizenship.[45] This shows the segmentation of the labour market.

The segmentation in the labour market ran not only along origin but also gender lines. Citizenship was less important as a mechanism for excluding women, as there were other, more weighty factors that prevented access to urban crafts and trades, such as other institutional constraints or lack of capital.[46] Yet, the Leiden labour market did attract female migrants. Domestic service was an important employer, for women and men. In 1581, as much as 87 per cent of the 95 male and 364 female servants with a recorded origin were migrants.[47] Women also found ample employment in other sectors, though, especially in the textile industry. As in many other cities, Leiden was characterised by unequal sex ratios. In 1581, the city counted 79 men for every hundred women. N.W. Posthumus stated as early as 1939 that the 'female surplus' was beneficial to Leiden's development into a major textile city because of the availability of a large pool of cheap labour.[48] Recent research proves he was right, as will be shown below.

41 Pot, 61–62.
42 Davids, 'De migratiebeweging', 138 and endnote 18.
43 Davids, 152–53.
44 Noordam, 'Nieuwkomers in Leiden', 63.
45 Davids, 'De migratiebeweging', 153.
46 Erickson and Schmidt, 'Migration', 197.
47 Daelemans, 'Leiden 1581', 167.
48 Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 3:29.

3 Female Labour Market Participation

The 1581 census listed 2,825 heads of household, of whom 233 were women with a recorded occupation, making up only 25 per cent of all female household heads. For male heads of households this participation rate amounted no less than 86 per cent (Table 9.2). Underreporting almost certainly contributed

TABLE 9.2 Male and female household heads with a registered occupation in Leiden, 1581, 1674, 1742 and 1749

Source	Total household heads	Male household heads	Male household heads with a registered occupation (% of total recorded male household heads)	Male without a registered occupation	Female household heads	Female with a registered occupation (% of total recorded female household heads)	Female without a registered occupation
1581 census (12,275 inhabitants)	2,825	1,907	1,654 (87%)	253	918	233 (25%)	685 (75%)
1674 tax register, household heads annual income ≥ 365 guiders (56,027 inhabitants)	2,709	2,375	2,221 (94%)	154	334	291 (87%)	43 (13%)
1742 tax register residents annual income ≥ 600 guilders (39,174 inhabitants)[a]	2,161	1,733	1,509 (87%)	224	428	327 (76%)	101 (24%)
1749 tax register (36,744 inhabitants)	9,759	7,195	6,847 (95%)	348	2564	2,124 (83%)	440 (17%)

a Professors, lecturers, clergymen, military officers with regards to income from their office, craftsmen working for wages and foreigners residing in the province for less than six months were exempted from the tax. H.J.H. Mooren, 'De personele quotisatie van 1742', ELO, https://www.erfgoedleiden.nl/collecties/uw-verhalen/uw-verhalen/verhaal/id/814 (accesssed 1 July 2022).

SOURCES: Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*, 328; Personeele Quotisatie Leiden (1742), E. Klijn and R. Ouwehand, *Tax register Leiden 1742* (The Hague: DANS, 1998), https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-24r-8uq5; Number of inhabitants, Table 9.1

to this low share of women with an occupation, though unfortunately we cannot assess to what extent. When the population was listed again in 1749, the gender gap had declined significantly. By then, 83 per cent of female and 94 per cent of the male heads of households had recorded occupations. Two tax registers, made up in 1674 and in 1742, provide information about the wealthiest part of the population. The *Klein familiegeld* taxed household heads with annual incomes of 365 guilders and above,[49] the *Personele quotisatie* of 1742 taxed wealth, and included households with incomes over 600 guilders.[50] Both registers reveal remarkably high participation rates for women in the top layers of society. No less than 87 per cent of the women in the *Klein familiegeld* and 76 per cent in the *Personele quotisatie* had an occupational identifier.

Almost half of all women in the *Personeele quotisatie* were described as 'rentier' as an occupational marker. As the modern definition considers rentiers to be economically inactive the large share of female rentiers in the eighteenth century has been understood by historians as a sign of women's withdrawal from the labour market and the emerging cult of domesticity.[51] Danielle van den Heuvel, however, corrected this interpretation by showing that many female rentiers were in fact active in financial trade and investment. These women acted as money lenders, often to other merchants, invested in shares and could even be involved in commodity trading. Moreover, rentiership appeared to be a highly gendered concept. Whereas women were likely to be labelled 'rentiers' or to present themselves as such, men were more often identified, or identified themselves, as merchants. The label of 'rentier' apparently provided these women with the opportunity to be economically active in financial trades and investment without transgressing the appropriate gender norms.[52]

Despite the shortcomings of the sources, which leave the work of women underexposed, census and tax records offer some interesting insights. First, they suggest that the labour force participation of female household heads in Leiden increased between 1581 and 1759. Secondly, the occupational information drawn from tax registers reveals that the activity rates of female household heads among the higher echelons of urban society were not negligible. Neither gender norms nor the availability of at least some wealth prevented

49 The tax of the *Klein familiegeld* had to be paid by persons who derived income from work. Large merchants (*kooplieden*) and rentiers were exempt; Peltjes, *Leidse lasten*, 10–11.

50 De Vries and Van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 107.

51 De Vries and Van der Woude, 576, 604–5; Pott-Buter, *Facts and Fairy Tales*, 282.

52 Van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship*, 243–47. Research on financial markets and public money lending also reveals an increased involvement of women in finance; Van der Burg, 'Tot laste der Stadt Rotterdam', 67.

women from accessing means of gainful employment. Many women worked, and women were active in almost all sectors of the urban economy.

4 Women's Work in Production

The range of occupational groups and occupations in which women worked, was less varied than for men. This became clearly evident in the textile industry. Regulations seldomly explicitly prohibited women from performing certain tasks, but formulations in the ordinances as well as the population census of 1581 reveal a strict gender division of work.[53]

While men could be found across all textile occupations and were active as weavers, fullers, dyers, cloth-shearers and cloth-producers, women were overrepresented in low-status and poorly paid work, being mainly employed as spinsters and wool combers.[54] With their work taking place at the preliminary stages of the production process, where the demand for labour was high, women made an indispensable contribution to the development of Leiden's all-important export industry, as Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk has shown.[55] Women also contributed to the production of textiles by providing assisting labour in the family workshop, but they remained hidden behind their husbands. The few women that were recorded in the census as independent artisans, as drapers, fullers or dyers of wool, were mostly widows continuing their husbands' trades.

The idea that the context of the family economy still offered women plenty of opportunities, which they would later lose,[56] has long been refuted. Institutions like guilds and *neringen* restricted women's work. But there is debate about to what extent, how, when and where the institutions affected women's economic roles. Sheilagh Ogilvie emphasises the limitations guilds imposed on women, thereby inflicting 'harm on the women themselves, on the families they supported, and almost certainly on the economy at large'.[57] There were geographical differences in the exclusion of women, though, and guilds in

53 Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 179.

54 Dataset Volkstelling Leiden 1581, based on ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 1289, Register van de Volkstelling (1581) (own digitization). The new and accurate digitized version M. Hooymans, *Ranking the towns: nieuw licht op de bevolkingsdichtheid van middeleeuwse steden: volkstelling Leiden 1581* (The Hague: DANS, 2019), https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-2ag-e6qc, does not categorize according to gender.

55 Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*, 110.

56 Clark, *Working Life of Women*.

57 Ogilvie, *The European Guilds*, 306.

cities in Holland were known to be more inclusive than guilds in the eastern provinces.[58] Also, in Dutch cities most craft guilds excluded women from training and independent membership; mixed-gender guilds did exist, but more often in trade than in production. Recent research has shown that regulation of mixed-gender guilds could have gendered implications, disadvantaging unmarried women or those working independently of their husbands. Possibly the examples of male members from retail guilds successfully defending their own family's interests at the expense of women working independently, existed in craft guilds as well.[59] But it is important to emphasise that the incorporation of women varied from guild to guild. The guild membership lists compiled in 1788, when all guild members had to take an oath of allegiance to the stadtholder after the defeat of the patriot movement, reveal the sex ratios among guild members at the end of the eighteenth century.[60] There were mixed gender guilds, organising mixed gender occupations (e.g. fish sellers, market gardeners, button makers), most commonly in the retail sector,[61] and mixed gender guilds incorporating typical male and typical female occupations (e.g. male tailors and female seamstresses). There were guilds that completely excluded women (e.g. butchers, peat porters) and finally guilds with only a couple of female members, usually widows (Table 9.3).

Most craft guilds excluded women from membership, but not always or necessarily from work. Marital status was crucial in this respect. Women had, and continued to have, access to various types of artisanal work when work was carried out in the context of the family economy.[62] Daughters assisted fathers, wives assisted husbands, and/or married couples cooperated in family-based workshops in textiles as well as in other industries. Only as widows did women appear in the sources, as they could continue their late husbands' work or the work of the family business – sometimes under the condition that they would employ a 'master journeyman' (*meesterknecht*). For some, this meant taking responsibility for work with which they had had limited or no experience. Others continued work that they had been involved in for a long time, but

58 Lourens and Lucassen, 'De oprichting en ontwikkeling', 53; Schmidt, 'Women and Guilds'; De Munck, Davids, and Burm, 'Beyond Exclusivism', 195, have shown that registration and entrance fees of guilds in the Northern Netherlands were 'consistently lower' than in the Southern Netherlands.

59 Van den Heuvel, 'Guilds, Gender Policies and Economic Opportunities', 125–31.

60 De Vries et al., 'Het economisch leven', 102.

61 Button making was a typical mixed gender occupation; Schmidt, 'Women and Guilds', 174–75.

62 Schmidt, 'The Profits of Unpaid Work'. For an extensive discussion of women's access to guilds see also Schmidt, 'Women and Guilds'.

TABLE 9.3 Male and female guild members in Leiden in 1788*

Economic sector	Guild	Occupation	Total	Men	Women
INDUSTRY					
Printing	Bookprinters and sellers	Printers and sellers	9	9	
		Printers	5	4	1
		Sellers	46	44	2
		Paper sellers	10	9[a]	1
		Playing card sellers	9	9[a]	
Chemistry	Pharmacists		27	27	
Building	Glassmakers		56	56	
	Carpenters and masons		91	90	1[w]
Wood working	Broommakers		15	15	
	Buttonmakers		31	19	12
	Hatmakers		5	5	
	Barrelmakers		25	25	
	Cabinet and Spanish chairmakers		28	28	
	Basketmakers		25	25	
	Chair and wheelmakers		94	65	29
Leather work	Shoemakers and tanners		187	184	3
	Old shoemakers, cobblers, wooden shoemakers and vendors		220	155	65
	Chamois leathermakers		77	77	
Instrument making	Cardmakers		98	85	13
Garment	Tailors and seamstresses		579	169	410
	Wigmaker		56	53	3[w]
Metal work	Tinsmiths and plumbers		19	17	2[w]
	Gold and silversmiths		46	43	3
	Blacksmiths	Taking exam (*proefdoeners*)	58	57	1[w]
		Not taking exam	76	61	15
Food production	Bakers	Bakers	124	120[a]	4[w]
		Male and female bread sellers	17	8	9

(*cont.*)

TABLE 9.3 Male and female guild members in Leiden in 1788* (*cont.*)

Economic sector	Guild	Occupation	Total	Men	Women
	Brewers		19		
	Groat grinders		21	19	2[w]
	Millers		11	9	2[w]
	Butchers		29	29	
Textile	Woolcombers		25	25	
	Shearers		30	30	
	Fullers		10	10	
Art	Painters and sculptors		77	76	1[w]
TRADE	Market gardeners		128	106	22
	Orchadists/fruiterers		91	18	73
	Glass, pot and porcelain sellers		135	54	81
	Beer sellers		12	11	1[w]
	Flax sellers		7	4	3
	Wine merchants		16	12	4[w]
	Sea fish market vendors		17	5	12
	Silk cloth merchants		194	100	94
	Linen, matrass makers and cover sellers		362	114	248
	Linen and silk cloth sellers		18	14	4
	Inn keepers	Inn keepers	109	60	49
		Grossiers	24	16	8
		Brandy sellers	152	65	88
	Grocers		319	204	115
	Sellers of trousers and stockings makers	Sellers of trousers	9	8	1[w]
		stocking makers	69	49	20
	Tobacco sellers		117	98	19
TRANSPORT	Bargemen		19	10	
	Bargemen of tent barges		22	22	
	Coach rental		19	18	1[w]
	Voerliedengilde		12	12	
NON-ECONOMIC SERVICES	Surgeons		24	23	1[w]
	Mourning cloak rental		13	8	5

(*cont.*)

TABLE 9.3 Male and female guild members in Leiden in 1788* (*cont.*)

Economic sector	Guild	Occupation	Total	Men	Women
	Schoolmasters and schoolmistresses		90	46	44
PUBLIC SERVICES	Pullers at the waterlock of the *Naakte Sluis*		7	7	
	Peat porters		98	98	
	Peat ton fillers		38	28	20

* Some lists are not always easy to read, sometimes names have been crossed out. Names that were apparently later crossed out were included.
a Because of the use of initials, the sex of these guild members could not be determined with certainty. The number of female guild members is a minimum.
w All women could be identified as widows.
SOURCE: ELO, NL-LDNRAL-0501A, NO. 231, NOTULEN BURGEMEESTERSKAMER, APPENDIX (1788)

which was performed in their husbands' name. The so-called widows' right, established by guild regulations or granted by custom, explains the instances of women in typical 'male' occupations in the sources, which excluded women from training and independent mastership. They acquired access through their marriage, not individually. Petitions of widows to the city authorities reveal that rules were sometimes applied flexibly or even adapted to ensure widows could continue their work. Favourable decisions could be motivated by consideration for the broken family. But the Leiden city council was certainly sensitive to the argument that continuing the work was important for commercial continuity and the local economy.[63]

In 1749 Leiden's population was registered again. The town had lost its leading position in textile production, but the industry still dominated the urban economy. The organisation of the production process had changed. Proto-industry, which co-existed with a corporative mode of production, did not fundamentally alter the gender division of labour, as Van Nederveen Meerkerk has shown. But the increase in capitalist labour relations and subsequent growth of wage dependency affected gender ratios. The share of producers working independently decreased. Many more men worked as wage-dependent weavers or

63 Schmidt, 'The Profits of Unpaid Work', 317.

FIGURE 9.1 Female spinner, painting by Nicolaes Maes, 1652–1662
SOURCE: RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM, SK-C-176

spinners and, thus, female spinners faced more male competition.[64] In 1749 the proportion of female household heads in the textile industry working as spinners was still substantial (68 per cent), but smaller than in 1581 (77 per cent). In addition, women worked for wages as twiners of yarn, wool pluckers and cloth stoppers.[65] The decline in the number of independent male producers also reduced the opportunities for married women to perform 'assisting labour' in their husbands' workshops or in the family enterprise.[66] These women had to find work outside the family workshop, possibly outside the textile industry.[67]

The distribution of women across occupations had increased in the mid-eighteenth century compared to 1581, and also outside the textile industry. Changing fashion altered the composition of the garment trades. The growing popularity of knitwear created employment opportunities for female knitters.[68] The number of wool seamstresses, the female counterparts of the male master tailors who made outerwear for women, increased dramatically.[69] The extent of growth is evidenced by the dominance of female members in the tailors' guild in 1788 (Table 9.3).

Changes in the organisation of production were less significant in other economic branches. Still, much artisanal work was carried out by independent artisans, in a family context, which explains the presence of women in occupations they could not access independently. The female apothecaries, chair makers, mat makers, brush makers, stonemasons, leather workers and saddlers in mid eighteenth-century Leiden were almost all widows continuing their deceased husbands' work.

5 Serving the City

The service sector typically offered work to women who did not head their own household, and the earnings of most of these women were too low for them to

64 Van Nederveen Meerkerk, *De draad in eigen handen*, 114–16, 166–70, 181, 361.

65 Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 111.

66 Schmidt, 'The Profits of Unpaid Work', 303–6.

67 Van den Heuvel and Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'Huishoudens', 121, examined the background of licensees for the sale of coffee and tea but were unable to determine whether the growing group of women active in this new niche had been employed in the textile industry before.

68 Dataset Volkstelling Leiden 1749, Netherlands Historical Data Archive (NHDA D0104); now deposited at DANS, H.A. Diederiks and H.D. Tjalsma, *Leiden Historical Population Databank 1700–1850, Kohier 1748* (The Hague: DANS, 1972), https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-23u-3exj. (Data further processed by Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk and Ariadne Schmidt and used for diverse publications).

69 Panhuysen, *Maatwerk*.

be assessed for the taxes levied in 1674 and 1742. Yet, employment options were much larger than these registers suggest; and also in this sector, the variety of occupations open to women had grown.

The combination of the growth of services, the professionalisation of public administration and the expansion of public amenities that accompanied the growth of the city increased employment options for women. Domestic service was – and remained – one the most accessible occupations for women in the urban economy. Women worked for wages as servants, cleaners, laundresses in the households of fellow city dwellers. Domestic servants carried out all kinds of household chores, but could also be employed in artisanal work, as is shown by Anna Zeelis who seemingly easily switched between jobs: as a maid at a bleachery, as a domestic servant and a kitchen maid. The women from Kolhorn who registered as servants (*dienstmeijsjes*) in the sources in 1748 were in fact seasonal workers. They came from the north of the province to Leiden to work in a salt refinery (*zoutkeet*) at the Oude Singel carrying out the physically demanding tasks of salt making, which in the Dutch Republic was typically women's work.[70]

Options in the service sector extended beyond domestic service. At the other end of the social scale we find the positions of female regents in one of the city's hospitals or in orphanages, which would have provided women prestige but no income. The supervision of such institutions was seen as one of the public offices that burghers of social standing were expected to assume as a civic duty. They supervised women who provided care for wages as in-house mothers, nurses and servants. The differentiated education system offered work to female teachers of different kinds. Whereas they were excluded from higher education, women benefited from the university's presence by allowing them to earn an income by housing and catering for students.[71] Midwives were the well-known exception of women usually performing low or unskilled work. The process of professionalisation in the medical professions, which has been identified in the literature as a cause of limiting employment opportunities for women, did not lead to the exclusion of midwives working independently in Leiden.[72] Women were, furthermore, appointed by the city council in a range of occupations, varying from church sweeper and grave maker to peat

70 Everard, 'Kolhorner keetmeiden', 77.
71 Dataset Volkstelling Leiden 1581.
72 Van der Heijden and Schmidt, 'Public Services and Women's Work'.

ton filler, appraiser, collector of the weighing house, janitor of the town hall or prison warder.[73]

Some of the aforementioned women owed access to work to the arrangement of the earlier mentioned ‘widows’ right’, typically associated with crafts and trades, but also applied to some public services. Thus, we find widows of caretakers, grave diggers, town pharmacists and coachpersons continuing in their deceased husbands’ office. The position of warder of the Leiden prison Gravensteen was even held by widows for years. When Marij Huijgen requested permission to take the office over from her deceased husband in 1601, she assured the city authorities that she had ‘all her life served well and faithfully and that she had held the office together with her late mother or her husband’.[74] Her daughter-in-law Trijntje Claes had worked as warden for nineteen years when she eventually resigned, partly in cooperation with her husband, Marij Huijgens’ son. Maria van Nispen resigned in 1727 after working as jailer for decades; her colleague, the 72-year-old Sofia Verlaan, had worked for years ‘diligently, arduously and carefully’ next to her husband and another sixteen years as a widow until physical weakness ultimately forced her to resign in 1764.[75] The option to continue work as a widow continued to exist in the eighteenth century.

6 From Market to ‘Multinational’

In the industrial city of Leiden, trade was the second most important sector in size for both men and women. What is significant, though, is that the proportion of female household heads working as traders was even larger than that of males. The sector appeared to be particularly important as an employer of wealthier women, as we saw earlier.[76] The economic service sector provided income-earning opportunities for women of all social strata, though – from market to multinational business. Money was made through trade in many different ways.

73 Dataset Volkstelling Leiden 1581; Dataset Volkstelling Leiden 1749; ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, nos. 970–973, Stadsdienaars aanneemboeken.

74 Own translation: ‘alhaer leven lang ‘t voors. ambt mit [haar] za: moeder, offf man voors. wel ende getrouwelicken bedient ende waergenomen heeft’, cited in Schmidt, *Overleven na de dood*, 167.

75 Schmidt, ‘The Profits of Unpaid Work’, 314.

76 Rentiers are left out of consideration. Klein familiegeld 1674; Personeele quotisatie 1742.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the industrial city of Leiden also benefitted economically from the colonial system. Leiden people traded in colonial goods produced by the enslaved. They traded Leiden products to the colonies, owned shares in colonial plantations, or owned plantations. Unsurprisingly, most links were through the textile industry. Leiden held close connections with the VOC (Dutch East India Company) and WIC (West India Company), and through these companies Leiden textiles were exported all over the world. Women also participated in these colonial activities. As dyers in the textile industry, they used indigo and cochineal produced in the colonies; women merchants supplied cloth to the VOC; women invested in plantations and owned plantations in, for example, Demerara, Curaçao and Suriname. However, more research is urgently needed to better understand women's involvement in colonial and slavery-related activities.[77]

Some women appear in the sources as widows continuing their husbands' trades. Hester della Faille, for example, came from a renowned Antwerp merchant family and held an important position in the international business alongside her husband during her marriage with Daniel van der Meulen, with whom she had fled and settled in Leiden in 1591. From 1600, Hester continued the business in partnership with her brother-in-law, Andries van der Meulen, and his brother-in-law, Nicolaas Malapert, as was stipulated by the will made a year before Daniel died from the plague.[78]

Hester della Faille was very wealthy, but the trade sector also provided opportunities for women of lesser means. The process of differentiation of occupations that we saw in the industrial sector was even more pronounced in the trade sector. At the end of the sixteenth century women in Leiden were active as retail traders earning incomes by selling consumable household goods (apples, cheese, fish, vegetables) and textiles (linen, woollen cloth, flax), or second hand goods.[79] The ongoing commercialisation resulted in a diverse and differentiated trade sector later in the century that provided employment for many women who worked as specialised traders and retailers.

Women traditionally had a strong position at the Leiden food markets, although shares fluctuated over time and according to the type of trade. Within the meat trade, the division of labour by gender was strict. The meat hall in the Breestraat was the domain of male butchers; women, often butchers' wives, occupied most of the stalls in the opposite offal hall, where tripe,

77 Ramackers, Sow, Schmidt, and Schrikker, 'Vooronderzoek koloniale en slavernijgeschiedenis'.

78 Versprille, 'Hester della Faille', 87, 93.

79 Dataset Volkstelling Leiden 1581.

lard and sausages were sold. Violation of the rules on gender division remained a concern. In 1656, the meat-hall board complained that butchers' wives could be found in the meat hall every day, after which the city council imposed a fine for violation of the rule. In 1670, the city council decided that butchers could be replaced by their wives in case of illness. The inspector (*vinder*) of the meat hall, the official charged with detecting violations of urban ordinances, had to verify that butchers were indeed ill and that women were not occupying a stall under false pretences.[80]

The fish market behind the city hall at the Nieuwe Rijn was dominated by women who occupied on average seventy per cent of the booths. At the vegetable market, women occupied on average thirty per cent of the market stalls, but their share fluctuated significantly.[81] Van den Heuvel has shown that variations in the gender division in the food trades were closely related to the trades' organisation. In the more traditional organisation of trade, in which the production or catching of meat, fish and vegetables, as well as the sale of those goods, was family-based, women derived their position from their husbands. When production and sales were separated, and merchandise could be purchased via intermediaries or at auctions, as was the case at the vegetable market and the fish market, work was no longer exclusively accessible via marital ties. Women increasingly gained independent access to the trades, which obviously benefitted unmarried women especially. This is mirrored by the fact that women also could become independent members of the market gardeners and the fish sellers' guilds.[82]

Historians have explained the relatively large proportion of women active in trade by the institutional context. Indeed, guilds in retail trade were generally more open to women than craft guilds, as is evidenced by the guild membership lists from 1788. Formal training or a master's exam was not required. Yet women were not represented evenly in all retail guilds, which indicates that other factors influenced accessibility. Moreover, the incorporation of women within the guilds did not always secure their position. The city government issued stipulations that strengthened the interests of local market women in response to complaints about competition from countryside farmers or from fishermen's wives from the neighbouring villages selling fish in the Leiden streets.[83] Again we see that locals had an advantageous position in the labour market over migrants. Sometimes single women were put under

80 Schmidt, *Overleven na de dood*, 129.

81 Van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship*, 103–4, 112.

82 Van den Heuvel, 133.

83 Schmidt, *Overleven na de dood*, 128, 269–70.

FIGURE 9.2 Green market on the Rhine, painting by Hendrick van der Burgh, 1660
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, LEIDEN, S 1057

pressure, such as in the mixed gender guild of the market gardeners where male members tried to strengthen their own interests and those of their own families. The request to only allow children and widows of members into the guild was rejected, but the number of women in the vegetable market after 1750 was smaller than a century earlier.[84]

Changes in consumer behaviour between 1650 and 1800, whereby people began to consume more, more varied, and newer products, often referred to as the 'consumer revolution', resulted in greater employment opportunities in trade.[85] New commodities were sold, also in Leiden. Changing fashion increased the demand for haberdashery and fabrics, and women in particular opened stores selling yarn and ribbon, needles and buttons as well as fabrics of all kinds.[86] Women managed to gain a solid share in the sale of alcoholic

84 Van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship*, 109–10, 133–34.
85 McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*; De Vries, *The Industrious Revolution*.
86 Van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship*, 206.

beverages, as shown by Van Dekken. Whereas the 1581 register recorded only a handful of female household heads working as publicans (*tapper*), women comprised more than half of all publicans in eighteenth-century Leiden.[87] Women also took advantage of the growing popularity of brandy. Lists of brandy sellers taking the oath for the city government show that the share of women active in this trade increased from six to seven per cent in 1687, to twenty per cent in 1703, fifty per cent of the brandy sellers from the barrel, and sixty per cent among brandy sellers from the bottle later the eighteenth century. The majority of these women were married. Limited institutional constraints and relatively low investment costs explain this wide representation of women.[88]

In addition to the growing popularity of fashion items and new alcoholic beverages, the introduction of colonial goods, such as coffee, tea and chocolate, also increased employment opportunities for women in retailing. Colonial beverages were introduced in the seventeenth century. Consumption increased as prices fell and so did the number of sellers.[89] Both women and men were found among the license holders, but women already constituted the majority of vendors of coffee and tea in the early eighteenth century. In the second half of the century, they dominated the trade, comprising eighty per cent of all vendors of coffee and tea.[90]

Changes in consumer demand generated employment for women, also in the industrial city of Leiden. Does this indicate the beginnings of an Industrious Revolution? According to Jan de Vries, new consumer goals led households, especially married women and children, in the period 1650–1800 to shift their time and labour power from leisure and non-market production to market work to increase their income. If these shifts indicate an Industrious Revolution remains subject of debate. First, it remains difficult to assess whether women entered the labour market out of consumer aspirations or out of financial necessity. Second, the question is also whether those who started working harder were the same as those who started consuming more.[91] However, it is clear that changing consumption patterns led to a diversification in retail trade in which women found their way. Having said that, in comparison with male traders, women were usually less well-off. The emergence of

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87 Van Dekken, *Brouwen, branden en bedienen*, 161.

88 Van Dekken, 159–60, 193. For a detailed analysis of the representation of women in the retail sector based on the 1749 census, see Van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship*, 177–222.

89 Van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship*, 194–95.

90 Van den Heuvel and Van Nederveen Meerkerk, ‘Huishoudens’, 110–12.

91 Van den Heuvel and Van Nederveen Meerkerk, ‘Huishoudens’, 124; Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Schmidt, ‘Le travail des femmes’.

a specialised retail structure widened work opportunities for women but did not necessarily improve the status of female sellers. In the sources, we see women appear relatively more often than men in less capital-intensive, and consequently less profitable, branches of the urban economy.[92] But maybe the sources cloud the picture. After all, unmarried women are much more visible in the sources, as married working women would regularly hide behind their husbands.[93] Perhaps not only unmarried women but also unmarried men were at a disadvantage, and marriage, in which a couple would accumulate joint capital, opened doors to the labour market for both sexes. Until we have more information on the labour market position of unmarried men, we cannot rule out the possibility that marital status instead of gender was a crucial factor in gaining access to these trades.

7 Conclusion

Whether Anna Zeelis came to Leiden in search of work or with bad intentions is not known. Finding a job to 'earn a living and meet her needs', as the Leiden bailiff expected her to do, would not have been too difficult, but she would only have been able to meet her basic needs, earned in possibly poor working conditions. As an unmarried woman from outside the city, with few resources, and barely any family or friends nearby, more profitable jobs would have been out of reach. Origin, social status, gender, marital status, and social or family network were – often interwoven – determinants of access to work, but their relative significance varied over time.

Institutions were important. *Neringen*, guilds and, above all, the city council, which in Leiden often had the final say over the corporations, impacted access to work. Citizenship requirements, admission policies and entrance fees directly or indirectly contributed to the segmentation, disadvantaging migrants and women of little means and/or without family connections and women entering the labour market independently, i.e. not via spouses. Regulations were adapted to economic conditions and tightened during economic deterioration, loosened in times of prosperity, and applied flexibly if considered beneficial to the urban economy. The city government was well aware of the labour potential of women and migrants, who had proven crucial to the development of the urban economy over the centuries. Further research should establish the effect of these measures in detail.

92 Van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship*, 221–22.
93 Van Dekken, *Brouwen, branden en bedienen*, 193–95.

Changes in the labour market also impacted access to paid work. Leiden remained a textile city, but in the two centuries following the Relief of 1574, advancing commercialisation, ongoing specialisation and bureaucratisation increased the occupational differentiation which resulted in a broad spectrum of occupations that were also open to women and migrants.

Changes in the organisation of work impacted women's economic options. Labour relations changed and so did mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. In the traditionally organised crafts and trades women gained access to market work via their husbands, and they cooperated or provided unpaid work to support family businesses. Usually, these women remained hidden behind their husbands, who were recorded in the sources, and only became visible as widows. With the separation of production and sale, and the augmentation of wage labour, however, women increasingly gained access to paid work on an individual basis. This widened their options for entering the labour market independently. Marital status became less important, although it did not lose all significance. Marriage, for example, could provide access to the capital necessary to enter the more profitable trades and, although not always visible, family networks could be important. This hampered single women but must also have repercussions for single men or for migrants.

Anna Zeelis, however, was a typical migrant woman of the sort whom the city government preferred to keep outside the city walls. But Anna was punished for her thefts and put to work after all. She was sentenced to four years prison in Gravensteen, 'to earn a living during that time with her manual labour'.[94]

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94 'Omme gedurende denzelven tijd met haarer handen Arbeijd aldaar de kost te gewinnen', ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 3+54, f. 23, Crimineel vonnisboek (28 April 1775) (own translation).

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CHAPTER 10

Social Control and the Uses of Justice in Leiden, 1500–1800

Manon van der Heijden

In the years between 1620 and 1625, Leiden residents Sara Brambeke and her husband Jeremias de Praem were summoned by the Protestant consistory because of their ongoing domestic quarrels. Sarah refused to live with her violent husband, but the clergymen ruled that the couple should live together and reconcile, and for that reason they were both disciplined by the Reformed Church.[1]

This is just one example of the many ways in which social control was exercised in early modern Leiden. Social control is considered one of the foundations of order within society, but the exact definition is the subject of scholarly debate. Generally, it is described as the implementation of a certain set of rules that keep individuals bound to shared standards as well as the use of formalised mechanisms. Individuals, groups and institutions use social control to establish social norms and rules to maintain order and enforce a standard of behaviour that the majority in a society deems socially acceptable. Social control is closely connected to conflict regulation, because behaviour that is considered deviant or undesirable leads to conflict and the need to enforce control. Social historians often distinguish between formal means of control, enforced by governments, and informal means of control, which are internalised norms and belief systems. In the early modern period, social control was much more complex and layered, because there were many forms of informal, formal and semi-formal social control.[2]

Social control and conflict regulation in early modern cities everywhere across Western Europe were characterised by legal pluralism. The distinction between control from government, church and civil initiatives was not always clear, and the extent to which social control was exercised depended on access to justice and who made use of it. In the medieval and early modern period there were structural socio-economic differences, and the legal status of urban residents varied. The fragmented system of social control underwent

1 Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 109.
2 Spierenburg, 'Social Control and History'.

important changes over time. The criminal and civil justice system that originated in the late medieval period was expanded and professionalised over the course of the early modern period and the power balance between various institutions of social control increasingly shifted towards the urban government. Demographic growth from the sixteenth century and economic decline from the end of the seventeenth century had an impact on the social control of the poor and outsiders.

This chapter gives an overview of the different forms of social control in early modern Leiden and answers the questions: what were the forms and functions of social control; who was responsible; who had access to social control institutions; and how diverse were the populations who made use of it? In addition, this chapter charts changes in the organisation of social control, the power balance between urban government, churches and other civic organisations and the focus of social control throughout the period.

1 The Uses of Justice

Until the 2000s historians mainly looked at the workings of judicial infrastructures through the lens of urban elites and secular and ecclesiastical authorities. Legal historians have generally assumed that over the course of the early modern period a process of 'juridification' occurred: urban populations increasingly came to rely on formal criminal court procedures to exercise social control and to settle disputes. As a result, the role of citizens in social disciplining and informal or semi-formal conflict regulation procedures became less important. In the last decades, socio-legal historical research has shifted its attention from a top-down perspective of social control to a more nuanced bottom-up approach.[3] These new strands instead focus on judicial pluralism and the ways that people used and shaped social control and conflict regulation from below.[4]

The instrumental ways ordinary people took legal recourse has been described by Martin Dinges as *Justiznutzung* or 'the uses of justice'.[5] Dinges argues that judicial institutions can be seen as instruments in the hands of the authorities, but they might as well be viewed as instruments of people using the judicial system for their own interests or to help settle a personal conflict. Most historians recognise the importance of the idea of the uses of justice.

3 Also, see Smail, *The Consumption of Justice*.

4 Van der Heijden and Vermeesch, 'The Uses of Justice'.

5 Dinges, 'Justiznutzungen als soziale Kontrolle'; Dinges, 'The Uses of Justice'.

The types of crime handled and the kinds of people prosecuted by the courts were as much determined by the authorities as by the urban population. The magistrates of Leiden had the power to set up laws and to prosecute those who broke them, but the number of cases they dealt with largely depended on the willingness of ordinary people to bring their conflicts before the court. As Joachim Eibach and Gerd Schwerhoff have argued, early modern justice was an instrument of regulation as well as an agent of social and moral discipline.[6] Criminal justice served not only the aims of the urban government, but also the interests of a person who started a lawsuit or who informed the public prosecutor. Furthermore, the urban criminal court was only one of many options available to the urban population to settle their conflicts. In addition to formal criminal and civil justice, there existed different judicial options and extrajudicial forms of conflict settlement. This was particularly true for the cities of Holland, which were characterised by strong urban autonomy and strong citizen involvement in all kinds of urban matters.[7]

The active involvement of citizens was an essential element in the organisation of conflict regulation. In principle, every urban resident – whether being part of the urban elite, acting as a member of the craft guilds or other corporate body, or belonging to the lower strata – was obliged to contribute to the urban community. The workings of social control and conflict regulation reflected a balance between the general interests of the city, a neighbourhood, a craft guild or a religious denomination, and the personal interests of urban groups and individual urban residents. Members of most institutions of conflict regulation provided their services without receiving regular salaries or adequate compensation.[8]

The work of Aries van Meeteren offers a good overview of the various options for conflict regulation available to the people of Leiden in the seventeenth century (see Table 10.1). Social order and justice were in the hands of various secular, ecclesiastical and civic institutions. Urban authorities were responsible for criminal justice and had the authority to make laws and to prosecute and punish those who committed crime or offenses. In addition to criminal justice, there were several semi-criminal and civil justice procedures for city-dwellers to confine misbehaving family members, to settle conflicts or to conclude agreements on personal matters.[9]

6 Schwerhoff, 'Social Control of Violence', 223; Eibach, 'Der Kampf um die Hosen', 173.

7 Prak, *Citizens without Nations*.

8 Van der Heijden, *Civic Duty*.

9 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*.

Conflicts between two parties could be settled through civil justice, in which case they were brought before a civil court, a peacemakers' court or a neighbours' committee. In 1664, for example, Brewer Gedion Piaet brought a lawsuit before the Leiden peacemakers' court against Herrie Orben because Orben owed him money for delivering beer.[10] The peacemakers' court and neighbours' committee were established in Leiden in 1598 as a response to rapid population growth; they were unique to the Dutch Republic. The Leiden peacemakers offered their services two days a week, during which time they usually handled more than one hundred disputes. Van Meeteren's data shows the immense popularity of the peacemakers' court; in 1664, it dealt with 3,584 cases. The court was particularly important for settling all kinds of everyday administrative matters between city-dwellers; only fourteen per cent of the cases involved personal or marital issues. The large majority of the conflicts concerned debts, payment arrears and rent disputes. Between 1597 and 1605 the neighbours' committee handled at least 294 disputes between neighbours, primarily about property boundaries and water drainage.[11]

The magistrates of the neighbours' committee and the peacemakers' court primarily acted as arbiters who tried to bring about an agreement between conflicting parties. Litigants had to bring their disputes to these courts first, and only parties that did not succeed in settling their case could bring a lawsuit before the civil court. Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the peacemakers' court obtained judicial power in cases involving small sums of money (up to 200 guilders). Unlike the procedure before the civil court, the evidence and arguments were based on verbal statements and not on written testimonials.[12] Most civil justice cases focussed on financial matters, but the interests went beyond finances; initiators tried to prove that socio-economic norms had been broken and people's reputation and good name were at stake.

Before going to the civil court, people could use the services of public notaries, who drafted deeds relating to family and inheritance law, property law and attestations to get justice. Van Meeteren examined the records of four Leiden notaries for the period 1664–1668. They had produced over seven hundred deeds that were drawn up on the request of residents of Leiden in order to get justice. The large majority of the appellants used such deeds and attestations to warn others, with the intention of coming to a resolution and keeping the matter out of court. The recording of a statement of witnesses who testified

10 Van Meeteren, 255.

11 Van Meeteren, 181, 226–73.

12 Van Meeteren, 226–73; Vermeesch, 'The Social Composition'.

TABLE 10.1 Overview of institutions of social control and conflict regulation in early modern Leiden

Institution	Type of cases	Users
Criminal court	Behaviour punishable by law, or for transgressing moral norms.	Magistrates, victims, witnesses, bystanders, and neighbours from all social classes.
Civil court	Voluntary justice on unpaid debts, inheritance disputes, marital matters, sexual morality between two equal parties.	Mainly higher middle classes. Sometimes, lower classes through pro deo procedure.
Peacemakers' court	Voluntary justice on debts, payment arrears, rent disputes, and marital issues between two equal partners.	Mainly higher middle classes, sometimes lower classes.
Neighbours' committee	Voluntary justice between neighbours, primarily on property boundaries and water drainage.	Neighbours, mainly higher middle classes.
Request on confinement	Unruly behaviour of family members.	Mainly higher middle classes.
Notaries	Deeds and attestations on insults, violence, fraud, disputes on agreements.	Higher middle classes.
Protestant consistories	Protestant Church discipline on marital and religious matters.	Clergymen and members of the Protestant Church.
Neighbourhood organisations	Conflict regulation, peace control, control of immigrants by neighbourhood masters.	Neighbourhood masters and residents' neighbourhoods.
Craft guilds	Conflict regulations, labour and controlling misbehaviour.	Heads and members of the craft guilds.
Civic militia	Misbehaviour.	Heads and members of the civic militia.

SOURCES: VAN MEETEREN, *OP HOOP VAN AKKOORD*; VAN DER HEIJDEN, *CIVIC DUTY*; KLOEK, *WIE HIJ ZIJ, MAN OF WIJF*; VERMEESCH, 'THE SOCIAL COMPOSITION'

to a person's good behaviour could warn others to stop gossiping or harming someone's honour. Leiden widow Jannetje Teljeur had a statement drawn up because she had been called a sorceress by a man named Jacob, who also accused her daughter of being a whore.[13] Most attestations involved insults

13 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 191.

FIGURE 10.1 A public notary in Leiden around 1650, painting by Gabriel Metsu
SOURCE: THE LEIDEN COLLECTION, GM-101

that would harm someone's reputation, including accusations of (domestic) violence and fraud and raised problems with contracts and agreements. The Leiden notaries often combined their activities as a notary with administrative jobs in service of the city, such as secretary or clerk.[14]

In addition to formal governmental procedures that aimed at controlling people's social behaviour, there were various other forms of social control. Urban Protestant consistories imposed ecclesiastical penalties for violating religious rules and marriage rules, while church members could ask clergymen and elders to act against undesirable behaviour. Finally, there were citizens' organisations that had their own social control mechanisms, such as craft guilds, civic militia and neighbourhood organisations. Members of the Leiden craft guilds could bring their labour conflicts before the board of the guild, but conflicting parties usually preferred to settle their disputes mutually.[15] The dean and board of the civic militia corrected the misbehaviour of members through a system of fines, mainly for violating the rules, insulting one another and sometimes committing violence. The number of corrections was low, and members of the civic militia solved their disputes and fights mostly out of sight, without the involvement of their own board or any civil justice procedures.[16]

Studies on Leiden and Rotterdam suggest that most people preferred to settle their conflicts outside the criminal court and opted for semi-judicial or non-judicial forms of conflict regulation. Van Meeteren concludes that even though well-to-do Leideners had the option to start a civil lawsuit in case the neighbours' committee failed to reconcile the parties, they were rarely inclined to choose that route.[17] The types of cases handled by the criminal court and through civil procedures were the outcome of interactions between the objectives of judicial institutions and the ways that people made use of those institutions. Urbanites were well aware of the different options available to them, the risks of bringing cases to criminal and civil courts and consistories, and the costs involved in various procedures. People weighed up the consequences attached to each of these options and made choices that served their interests best. Historians now generally agree that such options also gave legal agency to social groups that were assumed to have no or little agency.[18]

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14 Van Meeteren, 174–225; Faber, *Strafrechtspleging en criminaliteit*, 102–3; Roodenburg, 'De notaris en de erehandel'; Helmers, *'Gescheurde bedden'*, 65–76, 341–47.

15 Dekker, 'Arbeidsconflicten'; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 62–104.

16 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 103–21.

17 Van Meeteren, 270.

18 Van der Heijden and Vermeesch, 'The Uses of Justice', 5–6; Van der Heijden, 'Women, Violence and Urban Justice'; Van der Heijden, 'Domestic Violence'.

2 Access to Justice

The uses of justice among urban populations in Europe were largely shaped by the extent to which people had access to it, and this was no different in Leiden. The focus on bottom-up initiatives might lead to false impressions about the scope of legal agency of the majority of the urban population.[19] There is little information about the social position of the people that made use of various forms of conflict regulations, but there were evidently structural differences between groups in terms of their access to justice and their treatment by the courts. Although in practice married women had more freedom, according to the law they were subservient to their husbands. Not only did men have more options to independently make use of justice, they also had more opportunities to defend themselves against accusations. Urbanites with established positions and the privileged group of formal citizens had many more options than people from the lower socio-economic strata. They had the money to pay notaries and start civil court procedures, their good reputation helped them in court, and they were less likely to be prosecuted themselves.[20]

Reporting a crime or undesirable behaviour to the public prosecutor or the Protestant consistories did not bring any costs, but it might involve other risks. Wives reporting adulterous husbands could risk losing their marriage partner for a considerable amount of time because the husband could be sentenced by the court to a banishment of fifty years. Men complaining to the consistory about their irreconcilable problems with their wives might be subjected to ecclesiastical sanctions themselves, such as being kept from the holy supper in church. Whether it concerned personal, marital, neighbourly or commercial disputes, a formal complaint or lawsuit might also turn against the person who took the initiative and might result in unforeseen costs and reputation damage.[21]

Other initiatives to correct undesirable behaviour, to settle conflicts or to prepare a civil procedure did involve costs for those using the judicial service. Notaries earned their income mainly through offering their services to private individuals. Urban governments sometimes complained about the high amounts charged by notaries. There is no underlying data for Leiden, but based on examinations on Amsterdam, notaries in the eighteenth century generally charged around 6.5 guilders for a testimonial. Van Meeteren concludes

19 For an overview of the debate on the accessibility of law courts, see: Vermeesch, 'Reflections on the Relative Accessibility of Law Courts'.

20 Egmond, 'Fragmentatie, rechtsverscheidenheid en rechtsongelijkheid', 14.

21 Van der Heijden, 'Punishment versus Reconciliation'.

that these amounts made notaries mainly a good option for the higher social strata.[22] There were also costs involved in civil procedures. Originally, neighbours could bring cases before the neighbours' committee without any costs involved, but after 1658 the Leiden city council established a cost threshold. Neighbours who jointly brought their disagreement before the aldermen had to pay 32 nickels for the expenses of the aldermen, clerk and messenger. The cost threshold seems to have had a direct impact on the population using the neighbours' committee; they were almost all men, mainly house owners from the higher middle classes. Van Meeteren found that both plaintiffs and appellants could dispose of sizeable assets and lived in expensive houses in the old centre of the city.[23]

The peacemaker court was a more open and accessible form of conflict regulation with a very low cost threshold. Griet Vermeesch examined the accessibility of the Leiden peacemaker court and concluded that it offered to any potential litigant a financially viable option for judicial recourse.[24] Despite its easy access, the peacemakers' court attracted only a slightly more diverse group of users than the neighbours' committee. Women rarely made use of neighbours' committees, but they sometimes did go to the peacemakers to complain about insults committed by other women and violence committed by men. The majority of people sued before the judges of the peacemakers for insulting behaviour were women, often neighbours, and twenty per cent of the plaintiffs were female victims. However, this type of case formed only a small share of the complaints brought before the peacemakers' court. Over eighty per cent of the cases involved male plaintiffs and defendants who disagreed on financial matters.[25] In principle all inhabitants had access to the peacemakers, but in practice it was the urban elites and higher middle groups that used the court. Vermeesch argues that this may be explained by the socio-cultural gap between the large majority of the population of Leiden and the aldermen who staffed the court. She concludes that 'the lower sixty percent of the Leiden population resorted to non-judicial forums for dispute regulation, instead of the formal judicial infrastructure that was staffed by members of the ruling regent families'.[26]

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22 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 174–77.

23 Van Meeteren, 234–35.

24 Vermeesch, 'The Social Composition', 218.

25 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 270–73.

26 Vermeesch, 'The Social Composition', 228; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 270–73. For the social composition of the Leiden elite, see: Prak, *Gezeten burgers*. There is still little known about the uses of justice by immigrants in Leiden, but recent research by Karlijn

The peacemakers' court and neighbours' committee were important conflict regulation procedures, but the disputes involved mainly financial matters and less the breaking of other social codes. The next paragraphs will focus on the most important procedures of social control: criminal justice, civil justice, and Protestant consistories and neighbourhood organisations. I will also pay attention to the neighbourhood organisations, because the role and functioning of the Leiden neighbourhoods have been the subject of scholarly debate.

3 Criminal Justice

Criminal justice was the city's most institutionalised form of social control that created law and prosecuted and penalised behaviour punishable by law. Research on Leiden in the late medieval period has shown that from the second half of the fifteenth century the Leiden government increasingly exercised control over the behaviour of the population. The urban magistrates started prosecuting acts of violence, property offenses, and all sorts of violations of city rules.[27] The numbers and types of cases handled by the criminal court were to a large extent the outcome of the prosecuting policies of the city council. The administration of justice was in the hands of aldermen (*schepenen*), burgomasters and bailiff (*schout* or *baljuw*). The bailiff (in contemporary terms: sheriff) acted as public prosecutor, the aldermen served in magistrates of the courts, and burgomasters were day-to-day administrators. These officials jointly created laws by adopting ordinances and statutes. The magistrates of the criminal court imposed a variety of sentences, mostly banishment, corporal punishments and imprisonment. The prosecutor could make a request to the magistrates to apply torture, which was in certain cases allowed to force a suspect to confess.[28]

The bailiff and aldermen had the exclusive authority to prosecute and try criminal cases, but the involvement of the urban population in the prosecution of crime was much greater than today. First, although the public prosecutor was aided in his work by several assistants, they were not trained as such and there were not nearly enough police officers to keep urban crime under control. Therefore, townspeople who knew or lived near the suspects played

Luk suggests that newcomers seldom used the peacemakers' court and the neighbours' committee between 1600 and 1800.

27 Tamis, 'Criminalisering, vervolging of rechtspraak?', 69–72.

28 The first part of this paragraph is mainly based on: Van der Heijden, *Women and Crime*, 28–47.

a crucial role in the adjudication of deviant acts that were punishable by law. Most people did not have reservations about reporting other inhabitants to the public prosecutor or to police officers, because their own reputation was also at stake. The role of honour and reputation in the criminal process was highly important, because decency was a social good. For example, in 1780, wife beater Frans Janssen from Leiden was not only sentenced for beating his wife, but also because he behaved rudely towards the neighbourhood master who had confronted him with his behaviour.[29] Second, a considerable part of the prosecutions concerned so-called 'soft crimes'. Crime historians generally refer to sexual offences as soft crimes, because the definition and prosecution of such infringements depend on continuously changing moral and social norms. Pre-marital sex and adultery were forbidden by secular law and were therefore a personal and private matter as well as a matter of public concern. Furthermore, sexual conduct was a major factor in decency and seen as a leading determinant of honour. This applied to both men and women, but society applied double standards with regard to female sexual behaviour. Women were more likely to be arrested for sexual crimes and treated with less leniency by the judges.[30]

In a criminal procedure, prosecutor and defendant were opposed to each other, and by definition were unequal parties. There were no sentencing standards for most crimes; the Leiden court had a free hand in sentencing, and sentences could therefore differ between time periods and/or individual magistrates. Florike Egmond has discussed the extent to which the criminal system was fundamentally based on legal diversity and inequality.[31] There is no doubt that there was great inequality in the treatment of suspects. The defendant's social status was an important factor in the magistrates' judgements, and wealthy and established residents were generally treated with more leniency than poor residents, migrants, seasonal workers and travellers. Most people who appeared in court as defendants came from the lower social groups, were employed in poorly paid jobs or were underemployed, or lived on a variety of sources of income and moved from place to place.[32] However, the high degree of judicial discretion did not imply a high degree of legal diversity. Egmond has rightly pointed out that the systematic importance of the socio-economic background of defendants in the criminal process in fact led to structural homogeneity rather than legal diversity. Variation in sentences was ultimately

29 Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 146–47.

30 Van der Heijden, 'Explaining Crime and Gender'.

31 Egmond, 'Fragmentatie, rechtsverscheidenheid en rechtsongelijkheid'.

32 Van der Heijden, *Women and Crime*, 38–40; Schmidt, *Prosecuting Women*, 74–117.

based on a fixed set of variables, and the judges in the towns of Holland arrived at remarkably similar judgements.[33]

In the period 1601–1811, the criminal court of Leiden handled 4,231 criminal cases. Only four per cent of prosecutions involved violence. Property crime was by far the most frequently prosecuted crime: forty per cent of all prosecutions. Moral and public order offences made up a little under thirty per cent. As Els Kloek and Ariadne Schmidt have shown in their studies on female criminality in Leiden in the early modern period that the share of women amongst the prosecuted was remarkably high.[34] Between 1601 and 1811, women's proportion of public order crimes was 28 per cent, of property crimes 37 per cent, and of moral crimes as much as 55 per cent.[35]

Recent studies on women's crime have ascribed the high proportion of female delinquency in Holland in this period to a combination of factors.[36] First, legal and moral norms regarding sexual behaviour along with double standards certainly contributed to the higher prosecution rates of women. As mentioned above, women were more likely to be prosecuted for pre-marital sex and adultery. In Leiden in the period 1678–1794 women accounted for as much as 66 per cent of all sexual crimes. They were particularly prosecuted for adultery, fornication and prostitution.[37] The law in Holland, the Political Ordonnance issued in 1580, prescribed more serious punishment for female adulterers than for their male counterparts. Even more, male adulterers had the opportunity to settle their case financially with the prosecutor. As a result, men were rarely prosecuted for visiting prostitutes, even when they were married. Yet only in exceptional cases were arrested female adulterers released at the intercession of their husband.[38]

Second, women's high share of criminal convictions was related to their agency and leeway to lead public lives. The cities of Holland were characterised by a high female surplus, and large numbers of women who temporarily or permanently lived alone. The pattern of immigration added to the surplus of women in Leiden. By the late sixteenth century, most of the housemaids in Leiden were immigrants, and this was before the great wave of migration during the seventeenth century. Around 1750, about 26 per cent of Leiden households were headed by women. Many of them lived in poverty. Almost half

33 Egmond, 'Fragmentatie, rechtsverscheidenheid en rechtsongelijkheid', 15; Van der Heijden, *Women and Crime*, 38–39; Schmidt, *Prosecuting Women*, 58–59.

34 Schmidt, *Prosecuting Women*, 166–67; Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 131.

35 Schmidt, *Prosecuting Women*, 166.

36 Van der Heijden, 'Explaining Crime and Gender', 26–45.

37 Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 122–58.

38 Van der Heijden, *Huwelijk in Holland*, 114–16.

the Leiden households that were recorded as being poor were led by women without male breadwinners.[39] Many women in Leiden were in vulnerable positions, had a relatively independent status and led remarkably public lives. As a result, they were more likely to become involved in crime.

The pattern of crime and prosecution was related to the important role of textile production in the city of Leiden, as Schmidt concludes: 'the industrial cities were thus first and foremost cities where property crime thrived'.[40] These patterns were not stable, but strongly fluctuated throughout the period. Prosecution rates for property offences were low between 1650 and 1675, when Leiden experienced economic growth due to the successful textile industry. But when economic decline set in after 1675, prosecution rates rose and remained high in the first decades of the eighteenth century. Crime historians have discussed the correlation between economic fluctuations and crime rates, but it is difficult to establish a clearcut relation between the two. The Leiden data suggests that high crime rates were the result of endemic poverty and low standard of living.[41]

Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Leiden government increasingly aimed its prosecution policies at reducing the burden on the city from the need to pay poor relief. Beggars and vagrants were treated more harshly and more often prosecuted. In 1715 the government issued an ordinance that prohibited begging; after 1735 beggars and vagrants were systematically banished from the city; and between 1718 and 1771 additional 'beggars books' were kept to record arrested beggars. At the end of the eighteenth century the Leiden city council established a separate workhouse to correct and employ beggars and vagrants.[42] The establishment of this workhouse reflected the professionalisation and specialisation of the cities' criminal justice system. From 1598 the Gravensteen building in the city centre was partly used as a prison for beggars, and to discipline unruly inhabitants and convicted criminals. In 1655 special rooms for convicted male and female criminals were added (*rasphuis* and *spinhuis*).

Around 1700, the Leiden city council introduced the system of 'confinement on request'. Inhabitants could submit a request to the magistrates to confine

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39 Schmidt, 'Survival Strategies of Widows'; Schmidt and Van der Heijden, 'Women Alone in Early Modern Dutch Towns'.

40 Schmidt, *Prosecuting Women*, 167.

41 Schmidt, 173; Tegelaar, 'Uit bittere armoe'; Diederiks, 'Quality and Quantity'.

42 Pot, 'Het beleid ten aanzien van bedelaars', 87–91; Schmidt, *Prosecuting Women*, 200–205. Dyonne Stolwijk examines the source material on the treatment of beggars in Leiden in her BA thesis, 'Een luy en ledig leven'.

FIGURE 10.2 The Gravensteen building, which was built in the sixteenth century and used to imprison people from the second half of the sixteenth century onwards
SOURCE: PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY ERIC ZACHTE

unruly relatives for a period of time in a confinement institution in and around Leiden. Between 1676 and 1807 the magistrates granted 2,034 requests; most of them were at the initiative of a spouse or parent because of alcohol abuse, insanity or debauchery. The latter category often referred to a combination of loose behaviour, such as sexual activity outside marriage, wasting money and roaming around. The study of Pieter Spierenburg on Leiden shows that this type of confinement became particularly popular in the eighteenth century. He argues that families increasingly felt the need to discipline the social behaviour of their relatives.[43] Not so much the inconvenience of problematic situations, but reputation and shame because of the behaviour of a family member, seem to have been the main motives to confine someone. The magistrates encouraged such forms of self-disciplining, because people paid the costs for confinement themselves and it reduced the workload of the magistrates. The popularity of this measure in the eighteenth century was probably also related to economic decline, unemployment and growing complaints about alcohol abuse.[44]

The socio-economic background of the users of confinement on request has been the subject of debate. Historians have argued that particularly the higher middle and upper classes used the option, because they would have felt the need to protect their reputation more than the lower classes and they had the money to pay for it. Pro bono requests were an option as well, and in some cities in Holland people from different socio-economic backgrounds frequently took this opportunity. In Leiden most requests were made by family members from the higher middle classes who could afford to get rid of an unruly relative without bringing a serious criminal trial or initiating a time-consuming civil procedure.[45]

4 Civil Justice

Trials before the criminal court were the most formal and serious forms of social control, but many more cases were handled by the judges of the civil court. Between 1664 and 1668 the aldermen of the civil court of Leiden adjudicated 1.600 cases. Unlike criminal justice, civil court justice was voluntary justice, which meant that the parties involved were equals and both were assisted by an attorney. Civil court cases were extended procedures which often took three months or even more, and included a statement of a claim, a defence, a reply and a rejoinder. The inhabitants of Leiden could only start a lawsuit when they had failed to come to an agreement before the peacemakers' court and if their claim amounted to at least 200 guilders. Poor people could start a pro bono lawsuit, but the numbers were low. According to the examinations of Van Meeteren for the period 1664–1668, the judges handled only 32 pro bono lawsuits, about two per cent of the total number of disputes that were brought before the civil court. Vermeesch looked at the petitions for

43 Spierenburg, 'Financiën en familie-eer'; Spierenburg, *Zwarte schapen*.
44 Van der Heijden, 'Domestic Violence', 69–85.
45 Spierenburg, 'Financiën en familie-eer', 134.

legal aid between 1710 and 1808 and concluded that on average eight per cent of all cases included at least one party requesting free legal aid. However, not all successful petitioners ended up in court. As Vermeesch puts it: 'acquiring free legal aid – as first step in litigation – could be a forceful instrument in out-of-court negotiations with the other party'.[46]

Why did so few people use the opportunity to start a pro deo lawsuit? Obviously, the amount of 200 guilders as a condition to start a civil court case was the first threshold. There were other reasons for people's reluctance to put a case before the civil court. In the context of the peacemakers' court, Vermeesch has argued that lower social groups remained reticent about filing complaints because of the socio-cultural gap between them and the judges. The peacemakers' court remained a forum for an inner circle of well-to-do households who were firmly established in the local community.[47] Most probably, lower social groups were even more hesitant to bring their case to the much more formal civil court. Van Meeteren has pointed at other obstacles, such as the complexity and considerable length of the procedure, the uncertain outcome, and the risk of a financial loss in the eventuality that the judges rendered an adverse judgement.[48] Clearly, the threshold was too high for a majority of the Leiden population.

What types of conflicts were brought before the civil court of Leiden? Similar to the cases that were handled by the neighbours' committee and the peacemakers, most disputes arose from financial disagreements: 94 per cent of the claims involved unpaid debts. The plaintiffs in these debt matters were mainly merchants and members of the higher middle classes, such as doctors, professors, lawyers and members of the administrative elite.[49] Inheritance disputes regularly ended up in civil court as well, mainly when descendants fought over the distribution of the inheritance. However, the numbers were small compared to debt matters. Most people were reluctant to bring family issues to court, because doing so would make their financial and familial matters public and could damage their honour and reputation. Nearly everyone who dealt with issues relating to family business preferred to use arbiters or mediators that were approved by both parties.

Only six per cent of civil court cases involved personal disputes, marital matters or sexual morality; in 1664–1668 merely sixty-two marital and sexual cases

46 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 274–81; Vermeesch, 'The Legal Agency', 56.

47 Vermeesch, 'The Social Composition', 226–27.

48 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 281.

49 Van Meeteren, 313.

were brought before the civil judges.[50] Yet, for various reasons civil lawsuits on marital issues and sexual morality have received the most attention from historians. The civil procedure was particularly used by men and women to resolve conflicts about illegitimate children, marital vows, alimony and adultery, which sheds light on personal matters that stay out of sight in most other records. In addition, almost half of the matrimonial disputes were started by women as plaintiffs. As evidenced by the data on the uses of justice in Leiden, women were hardly visible in the large majority of cases treated in civil justice procedures. Well-established men dominated the court at both ends. Women were visible in the criminal court records, but mainly as defendants accused in trials on fornication, prostitution and adultery, not as accusers. The pre-marital and adultery claims brought before the civil court are the few sources in which women's voices and choices are audible.[51]

Women were particularly visible in paternity suits, which could be employed to force fathers to cover the costs of supporting illegitimate children raised by the unwed mother. Pre-marital sex was forbidden by law, and giving birth to an illegitimate child was seen as an aggravating circumstance that could be prosecuted by the criminal court and lead to severe punishments.[52] For women particularly, there was also the risk of losing one's reputation and honour. Female domestic servants were immediately fired when their employers found out that they were expecting a child, and a pregnant girl without legitimate marriage vows practically had no chance of marriage with the father of the child. The claim filed with the civil court usually consisted of marriage, but probably most plaintiffs aimed at receiving a sum of money, alimony for their child and, consequently, restoration of their honour.[53] Civil court was the last option women had (unless they wanted to accuse a man of rape, but that rarely happened) to restore their reputation. In the period 1671–1794 the Leiden peacemakers settled approximately one paternity case per year. Others used the services of notaries to draft a deed, while Protestant girls also asked clergymen or elders to support them. Despite the opportunity to receive legal aid to start a lawsuit against the alleged father of their child, only a minor portion of all single mothers seem to have taken legal recourse. Most probably women

50 Van Meeteren, 282, 294.

51 See, Haks, *Huwelijk en gezin in Holland*; Vermeesch, 'The Legal Agency'; Muurling, Kamp, and Schmidt, 'Unwed Mothers'.

52 Van der Heijden, *Huwelijk in Holland*, 106, 111–12; Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 142–45.

53 Van der Heijden, *Huwelijk in Holland*, 121–27; Haks, *Huwelijk en gezin in Holland*, 88–104; Vermeesch, 'The Legal Agency', 68.

initiated a civil lawsuit with the intention of coming to an agreement outside the court.[54]

The low numbers of women starting a paternity lawsuit was unrelated to the discouragement policies of the urban authorities. Vermeesch has pointed to the leniency of urban magistrates in granting free legal aid to women in their paternity conflicts. The authorities' highest concern was not the protection of the honour of the poor girls, but rather the financial burden that unmarried mothers and their children would cause. Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteen centuries, the number of paternity suits increased, while the Leiden population declined. Again, there are no clearcut correlations between economic decline and the growth in the number of certain cases handled by the courts. We do know that everywhere across Western Europe the proportion of illegitimate children increased. Examinations on Rotterdam have shown that from the end of the seventeenth century unwed mothers who did not receive financial compensation from the child's father were treated with less leniency by the criminal court. The evidence from Leiden shows that women who did start a paternity suit were surprisingly successful; the sentence was made to their advantage in 65 per cent of cases.[55] Despite the accessibility of the procedures and the success of the plaintiffs, the Leiden data clearly shows that it was mainly the higher middle classes that used such civil justice procedures to get justice.

5 Protestant Consistories

In addition to the described options to bring matters to the secular courts, there were also ecclesiastical forms of social control and conflict regulation. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Protestant consistories played an important role in the social disciplining of members of the Protestant Church. Clergymen and elders kept an eye on church members, and during their visits to members' homes they obtained information about conflicts and disorderly conduct. Their focus of discipline included marital matters, such as premarital sexuality, parental consent, marital quarrels, adultery and separation. Although Reformers regarded marriage to be a secular matter, it continued to

54 Haks, *Huwelijk en gezin in Holland*, 97–98; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 384; Vermeesch, 'The Legal Agency', 68; Van der Heijden, *Huwelijk in Holland*, 182–86; Muurling, Kamp, and Schmidt, 'Unwed Mothers', 20.

55 Haks, *Huwelijk en gezin in Holland*, 91–98; Van der Heijden, *Huwelijk in Holland*, 124.

be a divine institution, and matrimonial matters remained a concern of the Church.[56]

After 1572, the Protestant Church became the dominant religion in Holland, even though nearly half of the Dutch population remained Catholic. In addition to the Dutch Reformed Church, immigrants established their own Walloon Protestant Churches and Flemish baptised communities in Leiden.[57] The social control exercised by the church consistories of Leiden was limited in various ways. First, their discipline only reached the members of the Protestant Church. Second, they lacked the authority to initiate legislation, and their control only included social behaviour that related to ecclesiastical rules. Finally, they could apply only ecclesiastical sanctions. This usually meant that those who violated church rules were excluded from Holy Communion, until they showed an improvement in their religious or domestic life. Members were rarely excommunicated, because the consistories primarily focused on reconciliation between church and member and reconciliation between fighting parties.[58]

The nature of church discipline has been a subject of debate among historians.[59] Heinz Schilling has argued that historians should make a strict factual and methodological distinction between the 'history of crime' and the 'history of sin'. Whereas Protestant churches primarily aimed at the sinner and his reconciliation with the church, criminal courts merely aimed at punishing the crime. Accordingly, it would be incorrect to label church discipline (*kerkelijke tucht*) 'social discipline', because clergymen and elders aimed at purifying community members, not at discipling socially deviant behaviour. Others, such as Martin Ingram, have argued for comparing church discipline and criminal court cases, because this would give valuable insights into the workings of various forms of social control. Historians generally agree that although the law and punishments enacted by urban governments and the discipline enforced by Protestant churches may have been different in principle, they also overlapped. The interests of both institutions often formed a coalition in ensuring compliance with social norms and marriage regulation.[60]

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56 Van der Heijden, 'Punishment versus Reconciliation'; Van der Heijden, *Huwelijk in Holland*, 30–42; Roodenburg, *Onder censuur*.

57 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 122–71.

58 Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 78–121; Roodenburg, *Onder censuur*; Van der Heijden, *Huwelijk in Holland*, 90–92; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 124–26.

59 See, for this discussion Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 86–87; Van der Heijden, 'Punishment versus Reconciliation', 55–59.

60 Schilling, '"History of Crime" or "History of Sin"?'; Ingram, 'History of Sin or History of Crime?' For the overlap of marriage control from church and government, see: Van der Heijden, 'Punishment versus Reconciliation', 58–59.

The studies of Kloek (1584–1590, 1620–1626) and Van Meeteren (1664–1667) on the consistory notes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as well as the research of Henriette van der Meijden (1700–1904), present a good overview of the activities of the Dutch consistory of Leiden.[61] What types of cases did clergymen and elders handle, and which types of complaints did Protestants bring to the consistory? It must be noted that the information is based on the records of the consistory minutes, which might not include all cases that were handled by the clergymen.[62] Marriage and sexual morality formed the most important category of cases the consistory dealt with: c. 35 to 64 per cent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Second, people were summoned before the consistory because of religious issues (c. sixteen to 28 per cent of all cases). Third, the church regularly took action when its members displayed unruly behaviour, such as quarrelling, drinking, dancing or other acts that were considered ‘non-Christian’. The gender patterns were to some extent similar to those cases brought before the criminal court. Women made up around 35 percent of the total number of people coming before the consistory, while 56 percent of the cases concerning marriage and sexual morality involved women.[63]

Throughout the period 1584–1800, matrimonial matters were the most discussed issues in the consistory minutes of the Protestant Church. Clergymen and elders summoned church members for breaching marriage rules, for unruly behaviour in marriage life and for engaging in pre-marital sexual activities. Church members also brought complaints about marriage contracts, double marriage vows and the breach of marriage promises to the consistory, hoping that the clergymen could help them. The consistory always aimed at reconciliation between the parties and addressing the person who had violated marriage rules. Those who persisted in their bad behaviour or refused to reconcile could be excluded from Holy Communion. When the parties continued to disagree, the consistory referred the case to the magistrates, because marriage regulation was in the hands of the secular authorities.[64]

The church had no authority in matrimonial issues and its room for action was limited, but clergymen could effectively assist young people who were dealing with marital disputes. Examinations on the Rotterdam Protestant consistory have shown that in cases of double marriage vows clergymen demanded

61 Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 78–121; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 122–71; Luiten-van der Meijden, ‘De weg naar verzoening’, 109–31.

62 Pollmann, ‘Off the Record’.

63 Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 100–101; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 132.

64 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 141–44; Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 105–11.

a statement in writing which would preserve a girl's reputation and honour.[65] In her study on paternity lawsuits in Leiden, Vermeesch concludes that mothers who were members of the Dutch Reformed Church, who had received poor relief from the church and who had baptised their children, were the most successful. She argues that the consistory might have encouraged legal action to force the father of a child to take financial responsibility.[66] Urban magistrates readily granted free legal aid to women in a paternity conflict, but the motives of church and government in solving the problem of unmarried mothers were different. Secular authorities were primarily concerned with the financial burden of illegitimate children, while the church's greatest concern was the moral conduct and reputation of its members.[67]

Adultery, conflicts between spouses and the separation of households were of great concern to the clergymen as well, but, like in other cases, they focused on reconciliation between church and member and between spouses. Although officially allowing divorce and separation of bed and board, as the example in the introduction showed, the Reformed Church never permitted its members to live separated from their marriage partner. Battered women were never advised to divorce, nor did the clergymen help church members in getting a separation order from the magistrates. Instead, they attempted to reconcile the couple; and they summoned the abusive husband and relatives in an effort to ameliorate the domestic circumstances. When a husband refused to improve his behaviour, the consistory excluded him from Holy Communion.[68] Adultery was forbidden and could lead to criminal prosecution, but the consistory was rarely inclined to bring members of the church before the public prosecutor.[69]

Whether the discipling work of Protestant consistories remained equally important between 1584 and 1900 is subject to debate. The studies of Kloek and Van Meeteren have shown that in the early years the church had handled all kinds of doctrinal matters, such as apostacy, not attending the holy meal, and conflicts of opinion regarding religious viewpoints. Throughout the seventeenth century the consistory handled fewer of such cases, and at the end of the eighteenth century the minutes hardly ever mention doctrinal matters. Between 1700 and 1750 the number of disciplinary cases regarding marital

65 Van der Heijden, *Huwelijk in Holland*, 177–89.

66 Vermeesch, 'The Legal Agency', 57, 68; Muurling, Kamp, and Schmidt, 'Unwed Mothers'.

67 Van der Heijden, 'Punishment versus Reconciliation', 66–67.

68 Van der Heijden, *Huwelijk in Holland*, 227–29; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 142–44.

69 Van der Heijden, 'Punishment versus Reconciliation', 66–67; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 142.

matters and moral conduct declined as well and disappeared from the minutes from 1842.[70]

The explanation might be found in the growing power of the urban government. The Leiden city council exerted greater influence on the composition of the Reformed consistory and on church discipline. Strong governmental control could have led to a decline in discipline cases and an emphasis on marital matters.[71] Historians have also questioned the quantification of cases in consistory notes. Clergymen might not have recorded all cases, or not in a systematic way. They might have dealt with undesirable behaviour in less visible ways, such as during home visits, and not through formal ecclesiastical discipline. Some historians suggest that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries discipline was increasingly left to neighbourhood pastors of the Reformed Church, who approached people at home and whose visits were not necessarily discussed with the consistory or recorded in the notes of the consistory. Finally, rapid population growth, immigration and an increase of floating populations may have hindered the full supervision and social control of all church members.[72]

6 Neighbourhoods

Neighbourhood organisations (often referred to as *gebuurten* in Leiden, and to be distinguished from the administrative wards or *bonnen*) have only thoroughly been examined by a few historians in general, yet they have received ample attention from Dutch historians who have studied social control. Studies on eighteenth-century Paris, Ghent and Antwerp have shown the strong social cohesion and lively internal social control in early modern urban neighbourhoods. David Garrioch even describes the Parisian neighbourhoods as 'urban villages'.[73] Herman Roodenburg was one of the first Dutch historians who pointed to the important role of neighbourhood masters as conflict regulators and monitors of order and peace in the cities of Leiden and The Hague.

70 Kloek, *Wie hij zij, man of wijf*, 78–121; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 122–69.

71 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 130–36, 147. See also Roodenburg, *Onder censuur*, 137; Van der Heijden, *Civic Duty*, 109–16.

72 Pollmann, 'Off the Record', 423–38; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 133–34, 147; Luiten-van der Meijden, 'De weg naar verzoening'.

73 Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community*; Lis and Soly, *Te gek om los te lopen?*; Roodenburg, 'Naar een etnografie van de vroegmoderne stad'; Dorren, *Eenheid en verscheidenheid*, 67–91.

In 1675, there were more than two hundred neighbourhoods in Leiden, each covering a few streets and headed by a neighbourhood master. Neighbourhood organisations existed also in Haarlem, Utrecht, Delft and Rotterdam, but the records are largely lost. Leiden is one of the few cities for which sources have been preserved, but these records mainly concern accounts, legislation and resolutions for the neighbourhoods, along with some notes and registrations.

The lack of extensive source material raises the question whether historians were right about the important role of neighbourhoods in conflict regulation. In his study on the Leiden neighbourhoods between the fourteenth and nineteenth centuries, Kees Walle emphasises their task as peacekeepers, in addition to poor relief and funeral care. Inhabitants would have put their complaints and conflicts before the neighbourhood master first; and, when they failed to settle the matter, they would have opted for less accessible means such as the notaries, the neighbours' committees, the peacemakers or civil courts, and ultimately the criminal court. Van Meeteren nuances the assertion of Roodenburg and Walle by looking closer at the evidence. The city council, and particularly its famous secretary Jan van Hout, considered the neighbourhood masters as key persons in the preservation of urban peace. The neighbourhood ordonnance of 1593 stipulated that the masters were responsible for keeping order and peace and gave them the authority to impose fines on quarrelling city dwellers in their area. In 1667 the neighbourhood masters' authority was extended; they could act as arbiters between neighbours, make a decision on the quarrelling parties, and impose fines up to twelve nickels. The question is to what extent the objectives of the city council were reached in practice. The accounts show that fines were primarily given for not attending funerals or sorting out financial matters, but rarely for brawls, domestic violence or quarrels between inhabitants. Sometimes Leiden residents asked the neighbourhood master to take action against noisy and unruly neighbours. At the request of the neighbours of Antoon and his wife, the neighbourhood master attempted to ban the couple from the neighbourhood in 1720.[74] Van Meeteren concludes that the neighbourhood masters did fulfil their task as conflict regulators, but they did not play the central role in mediation and social control that the city council had envisioned.[75]

In addition to conflict regulation, neighbourhood masters were supposed to take care of the poor in their district. Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the pressure on the masters grew and the tasks became

74 Walle, *Buurthouden*, 82.

75 Roodenburg, 'Naar een etnografie van de vroegmoderne stad', 242; Walle, *Buurthouden*; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 27–59.

increasingly focused on socio-economic control over immigrants. Rapid population growth and immigration resulted in increasing tensions in neighbourhoods and made the tasks of the neighbourhood masters more difficult. In 1615, one of the masters complained to the magistrates that the many new strangers and the multitude of people from different countries led to growing quarrels and disagreements among neighbours, particularly those who were poor.[76]

The city council put more pressure on the neighbourhood masters as well, since the magistrates increasingly expected them to choose between the deserving poor and freeloaders, to keep records of names, professions and children, and to keep track of incoming immigrants. As a response to economic decline and a growing influx of poor immigrants, the States of Holland had encouraged cities in 1682 to demand surety letters from newcomers. Immigrants had to show a letter in which their place of origin guaranteed either to pay for their costs or allow them to return in case they fell into poverty. Not all cities in Holland followed the suggestions by the States of Holland – such as Amsterdam, which never demanded surety letters because it wanted to maintain an open labour market.[77] The city council of Leiden decided in 1716 to introduce surety letters and ordered the neighbourhood masters and their servants to track down poor and unemployed newcomers residing illegally in the houses in their neighbourhood. The masters objected to the duty to keep records, because the measures led to a huge increase in their workload and also resulted in increasing control of the city council over their own performance. Like the consistories, the neighbourhood organisations, too, were in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries confronted with the growing power of the city government, at the cost of their independence.[78]

7 Conclusions

Legal pluralism was typical for the system of social control and conflict regulation in early modern Leiden, but the access to and use of different forms of conflict regulation varied and changed over the course of the period. The urban government had control over criminal and civil justice through which all kinds of criminal cases were prosecuted and conflicts between inhabitants were handled. Due to population growth and a growing demand for court

76 Walle, *Buurthouden*, 61.

77 Kuijpers, *Migrantenstad*, 272.

78 Walle, *Buurthouden*, 61, 86, 125–32; Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 35, 48. See also Van der Heijden, *Civic Duty*, 109–34.

rulings by the aldermen, other accessible civil procedures were introduced at the end of the sixteenth century. By the end of the eighteenth century, people increasingly made use of the opportunity to request confinement of unruly family members. The thousands of financial disagreements handled through civil procedures show that they were extensively used by the urban population as well. Despite their accessibility, these courts were mainly used by men from the higher middle classes and rarely by the lower social layers. Women hardly made use of the various civil procedures, but they made up a remarkable large proportion of those coming before the criminal court. Women's high share is explained by their vulnerable and relatively independent position and by the double standards regarding sexuality. As the pressure on the peacemakers' court and neighbours' committees continued to grow, thresholds were introduced and they became less accessible to urbanites. The socio-cultural gap between the aldermen and the large majority of the population of Leiden reduced the accessibility of the civil courts as well. As a consequence, a less diverse group of inhabitants made use of these procedures.

Most people probably preferred to settle their conflicts through informal ways, whereby neighbourhood wardens and Protestant consistories could play an important role. With the help of clergymen, women were often successful in paternity suits. The Leiden population was well aware of the various options to settle conflicts, and they made calculated choices. Serious marital issues were more likely to be brought before the consistories, because civil procedures cost money and criminal justice could lead to drastic prosecution. Those who did not succeed in settling their case through informal ways instead made use of a public notary to come to an agreement.

From the sixteenth century, population growth, a large influx of migrants and pressure on poor relief prompted the urban government to professionalise legal procedures. The urban government increasingly became concerned about social control, resulting in an expansion of procedures and a growing number of cases for magistrates to deal with. Criminal cases which had originally been settled through reconciliation between conflicting parties gradually became the exclusive territory of the urban administrative elite.[79]

Economic decline from the end of the seventeenth century also led to the growing social control of specific groups, particularly poor inhabitants and newcomers. As the power and authority of the urban government strengthened, the church and neighbourhood organisations were expected to put their

79 See, Tamis, 'Criminalisering, vervolging of rechtspraak?'

activities in service of the policies of the city council. They instructed neighbourhood masters to select between deserving poor and freeloaders, to keep records of newcomers and to track down unemployed immigrants. Craft guilds and Protestant consistories were increasingly labelled as institutions of social care and poor relief. Future research should answer the question whether such policies also resulted in discriminatory patterns between Leiden-born citizens and newcomers, and the treatment of immigrants by the criminal courts.

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CHAPTER 11

Change and Continuity in Leiden's Medieval Ecclesiastical Landscape

Elizabeth den Hartog

Like most Northern Netherlandish towns, late medieval Leiden boasted a great many ecclesiastical foundations – churches, monastic houses and convents, hospitals and alms-houses – within and just outside of its walls. Only Amsterdam, with its nineteen monasteries/convents and one beguinage, had more.[1] Jacob van Deventer's town plan of c. 1545 justifiably showcases Leiden as a town dominated by churches and chapels and focuses on such buildings to the exclusion of most other building types. Apart from the town walls with their towers and gates, the only secular buildings represented are the town hall, St Catherine's hospital, the Burcht and the Gravensteen. Some twenty spires are shown pointing towards heaven in the town proper, adjoined by a smaller number outside the walls (Figure 11.1).

Today, other than the two main parish churches and a few chapels, little of this religious heritage has survived, and what there is has been much altered, whilst reliable iconographical material is scarce. The existing prints and drawings of the lost convent chapels invariably date from a time when the buildings had long since disappeared and were made by artists who at best fashioned their work after the schematic representations found in town plans, using their imagination to fill in the details. The documentary value of these drawings being negligible, one has to rely on the existing remains and on the oldest town plans to get a sense of what the now-lost cloisters and their churches looked like.[2] The oldest known plan, drawn up by Hans Liefrinck in 1578, has survived in a 1744 copy by Jacob van Werven.[3] Also invaluable are the

1 Schilder, *Amsterdamse kloosters*, 10.

2 One of the few sites to have been partially excavated, in 1984, is that of the St Michael and St Agnes convents, with most attention being focused on the latter institution; De Boer and Pompe, 'Het St. Agnietenklooster in Leiden'; Van Heeringen, 'Archeologisch onderzoek'. Remains of the farm belonging to the Roomburg convent near Leiderdorp were excavated in 2003; Brandenburgh and Hessing, *Matilo, Rodenburg, Roomburg*. More recently, some light has been shed on the layout of the monastery of St Hieronymusdal, which was better known as Lopsen; Van den Ende, 'Klooster Lopsen'.

3 Archief Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken, Leiden (hereafter ELO), Beeldbank K4-8907.

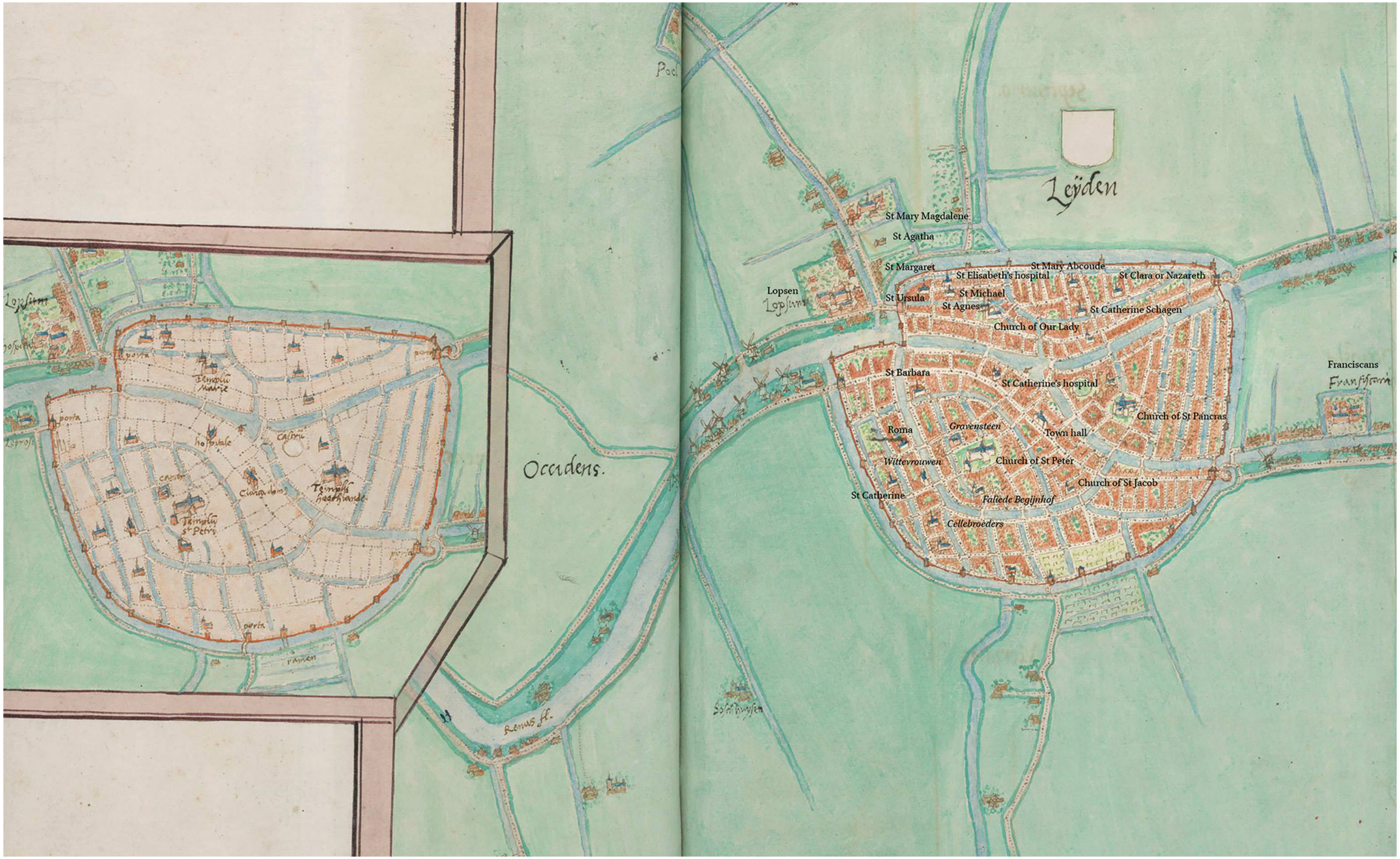

FIGURE 11.1 Jacob van Deventer's town plan of c. 1545, with the locations of the churches, chapels, convents and monasteries mentioned in the text
SOURCE: BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL DE ESPAÑA, MADRID, RES/200

Straetbouc and the *Grachtenboek* drawn up between 1583 and 1589 by Salomon Davidsz van Dulmanhorst.[4]

While the architecture of Leiden's parish churches and the founding and organisation of the Leiden convents and monasteries have been the subject of various studies, little attention has been given to the architecture of the considerable number of convent chapels, which have also been passed over in studies dealing with medieval Low Countries architecture, probably because the buildings were not considered to be architecturally innovative. Also, when discussed at all, attention has centred on the finished buildings, not on the piecemeal fashion of their construction, where the unfinished state of a chapel was often used as a catalyst for increased or renewed funding, a practice that has been termed the 'culture of incompletion'. This phenomenon has only recently received more scholarly attention, notably from Caroline Bruzelius in her seminal study of Italian mendicant architecture.[5]

In this chapter, therefore, after discussing the earliest religious buildings in and around Leiden, attention will be given to where and when Leiden's convents were built and with what objectives in mind. How and why did the chapels come to be erected, and what were the reasons behind the differences in their size and allure, considering that all of Leiden's convents adhered to the ideals of poverty and sobriety? To conclude, I will briefly discuss the decline of the convents and the reasons why some convent chapels survived the upheavals of the sixteenth century, while others did not.

1 Churches and Chapels in the Town Centre

In England, already from an early date, the larger cities numbered dozens of parish churches. By 1300, London had over one hundred churches; Winchester had 57. Canterbury had 22 churches by 1200, and York 35.[6] But in Germany, towns of equivalent size had far fewer churches. Cologne, with its nineteen parishes, is considered exceptional. Lübeck had five parish churches in the medieval period, Nürnberg only two. Dutch towns were generally relatively young and were often planned foundations, and therefore had one or two parish churches at most, which were consequently of considerable size and in constant need of extending throughout the medieval period as the cities

4 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 5153 and no. 5113.

5 Bruzelius, *Preaching, Building, and Burying*, 89–107.

6 Schofield, 'Saxon and Medieval Parish Churches', 41–42.

expanded.[7] This even holds true for the cathedral city of Utrecht, which, in spite of having Roman roots, had only four parish churches. Leiden had three.

Leiden's oldest and main parish church was the church of St Peter (Pieterskerk). Probably dating back to the early decades of the twelfth century, the church was renewed and expanded over time as the town's commercial centre developed.[8] Originally a comital foundation dating from 1268, St Peter's came to be served by the Teutonic Order, whose commandry was situated to its south.[9] The much smaller chapel of St Mary's (Viskapel) near the Visbrug was built in 1383 by the fishmongers, replacing an older chapel they had been using since 1373, with the permission of the *burggraaf* (castellan). The fishmongers received communion in this chapel once a week, while convicted criminals who were to be put to death on the 'blue stone', the spot in the Breestraat where the four original wards that formed the town centre adjoined, received their final communion here.[10] Leiden's oldest hospital, that of St Catherine, was also to be found in this part of the town.

Leiden's first extension saw the incorporation of the Hogeland, a triangular piece of land between the two arms of the River Rhine that forked near what is now Leiderdorp and came together again east of the town centre. In the Hogeland, separated from the eastern part of this island by the Vestgracht, a chapel dedicated to St Pancras was founded in 1314. This chapel, the later St Pancras Church or Hooglandse kerk, was to become Leiden's second parish church.[11] In 1355 the town incorporated the Maredorp (Mare village) on the north side of the Rhine. The chapel in this neighbourhood, a dependency of the parish church in Oegstgeest, was given full parish rights in 1365, and became known as the Vrouwekerk (Church of Our Lady).[12] In 1386, Leiden was expanded in a south-westerly direction, moving outwards from the Rapenburg and Steenschuur.

Leiden's new parishes were given hospitals of their own, each with a chapel. The St Elisabeth's hospital, near the Vrouwekerk, served the parish of Our Lady. The hospital of Our Lady served the St Pancras parish.[13] There was also St Barbara's hospital (in Maredorp, opposite the Burcht). In 1477, the Jacobskerk developed out of a house belonging to the confraternity of St James of

7 Beuckers, *Köln*, 43–44.
8 Dröge and Veerman, 'Inleiding'.
9 Loopstra, 'De Leidse commanderij'.
10 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:86, 92.
11 Leverland, *St. Pancras op het Hogeland*. For the building history, see Veerman, 'De bouwgeschiedenis'.
12 De Boer and Vos, 'Van Vrouwekapel tot Vrouwekerk', 67.-91.
13 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:149.

Compostela along the Steenschuur that, presumably, housed pilgrims on their way to Spain. Of the eight alms-houses (*hofjes*) founded in Leiden up to 1574, the Jeruzalemhof, the Stevenshof and the St Anna Aalmoeshuis had their own chapels. The Jeruzalemhof chapel is known from drawings, while the chapel of the St Anna Aalmoeshuis has survived with its pre-Reformation interior intact.

In the earliest centuries of its existence Leiden had no monasteries, cloisters or convents within its walls, but in its environs were the nunnery of Rijnsburg, founded by Countess Petronilla of Holland in 1133, and the slightly less prestigious Cistercian nunnery of Leeuwenhorst, founded near Noordwijk in 1261. As in other Netherlandish towns, the beguines were the only religious community in the town itself. The Leiden beguinage, mentioned as early as 1293, was located along the Pieterskerkhof (the cemetery west of St Peter's) on comital land and had no chapel of its own.[14]

Beguines either lived together in large gated communities (court beguinages) or in private houses.[15] The women generally worked for their living, either teaching, looking after the poor, the sick and dying, or practising some sort of handicraft in the textile industry. Committed to the ideals of sobriety and chastity, their daily routine also included prayer, contemplation and penitence. Even so, they took no vows. Despite their way of life having been sanctioned by various papal decrees, as they did not belong to a religious order the beguines raised suspicion. In 1298, Pope Boniface VIII, and, in 1311–1312, the decrees of the Council of Vienne condemned the beguine way of life, even accusing them of heresy.[16] Although the beguines within the diocese of Utrecht were exonerated in 1324, the damage was done, as suspicion lingered.

2 Sister Houses, Convents and Monasteries in and around Town

Even though Leiden had enough churches and chapels to serve the religious needs of its parishioners, in the late fourteenth century, like elsewhere in Holland, the town saw a sudden surge in the founding of religious communities in the wake of the Devotio Moderna movement. Most of these convents settled in the newly developed areas of Maredorp and along the Rapenburg, with those in the Rapenburg expansion developing into more prestigious

14 Koorn, *Begijnhoven in Holland en Zeeland*, 9, 138–39.

15 For a general history of the beguines, see Simons, *Cities of Ladies*; Swan, *The Wisdom of the Beguines*.

16 Swan, *The Wisdom of the Beguines*, 155–72.

houses than those ending up in the underdeveloped Maredorp.[17] Generally, the communities tended to move around considerably.

The earliest of Leiden's convents, St Hieronymus, had settled along the Jan Vossensteeg by 1388, but moved to a location along the Rapenburg around 1446, where it became a house of regular Augustinian canonesses known as Roma. With 102 nuns in 1460–1461, Roma was the largest nunnery within Leiden's walls. St Catherine Schagen, which moved into the abandoned buildings along the Jan Vossensteeg, was the smallest nunnery in town, with merely 38 nuns in 1460–1461.[18] A tertiary convent, consisting of six women, was founded in 1398 and dedicated to St Margaret in a house behind the Vrouwekerk, but the community soon moved to a location outside the Haarlemmerpoort, where it became quite successful. By 1460–1461, St Margaret's numbered 170 nuns, and there were as many as 197 by 1464, when the nunnery moved to Roomburg near Zoeterwoude, disliking the damp and unhealthy conditions on the site outside the Haarlemmerpoort. A plan of the nunnery drawn up by Jacob Coenraedts in 1574 shows a sizeable complex that included a chapel, a conventual building, a weaving house, a brewery and an extensive farm. Other sources indicate that the nunnery also possessed extensive lands.[19] The Leiden buildings originally occupied by St Margaret's were taken over by the tertiary convent of St Agnes (Agnietenklooster) in 1404. St Margaret's premises outside the Haarlemmerpoort went to the convent of St Mary Magdalene in 1464. Maredorp further housed the tertiary convents of St Michael and Nazareth or St Clara, while the other houses here, St Ursula, St Agatha, St Mary Abcoude and St Catherine Schagen, followed the Augustinian rule.

In addition to Roma, the Rapenburg area also hosted several other religious houses. The Dominican Wittevrouwenklooster was founded shortly before 1447. The Augustinian nunnery of St Catherine was right behind the Wittevrouwenklooster. The Alexians (*cellebroeders*) originally settled along the Papengracht but moved to what came to be known as the Cellebroedersgracht (now the Kaiserstraat) in 1421. The nunnery of Bethany, also known as St Barbara, was a tertiary house, founded in 1441 along the Rapenburg and Voldersgracht. Finally, just outside Leiden's walls were a Franciscan friary (founded in 1445) and the monasteries of Engelendaal and Lopsen. The latter was a male tertiary convent that later adopted the Augustinian rule.[20]

17 Orlers, *Beschrijvinge der stad Leyden*, 28–29; Verbij-Schillings, 'Kerk en cultuur', 164–70.

18 Van Kan, 'Leiden en de Moderne Devotie'; Van Luijk, 'Bruiden van Christus', 51–52.

19 Brandenburgh and Hessing, *Matilo, Rodenburg, Roomburg*, 78–80.

20 See, for the Franciscan friary en Engelendaal: Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:237. And for Lopsen: Van Oerle, 1:126; Smithuis, 'Lopsen en de Moderne Devotie'; Obbema, *De middeleeuwen in handen*, 41–48, 126–27; Van den Ende, 'Klooster Lopsen'.

Around 1400 new beguine communities also appeared. Pieter Symonsz van Oerde founded a community of beguines in 1389, and Hillegont Gheerlofsdr did likewise in 1402.[21] These probably small communities were short-lived. The already-existing beguinage along the Pieterskerkhof was relocated to a site along the Rapenburg in the 1420–1430s to allow for St Peter's graveyard to be expanded. The beguines' willingness to move earned them the protection of the town council and remission from paying municipal taxes. The move, which took a while to accomplish, enabled the beguinage to develop into a fully-fledged court beguinage (Faliede Begijnhof) (Figure 11.2) with some 41 single, double, triple – and even one quadruple – housing units, arranged around an open courtyard, and a chapel for the building of which the beguines received municipal support in the 1450s and 1460s. This chapel, built on a newly acquired plot of land, is still standing today but is much altered (Figure 11.3). In 1614, Jan Orlers praised its fine architecture and tower.[22]

Outside Leiden's walls, the number of religious houses also gradually increased after 1400. The patrons of these new houses being nobles, albeit of a somewhat lower status than the founders of the earlier houses of Rijnsburg and Leeuwenhorst, their buildings were, as far as can be deduced from the documentary evidence, more prestigious than those of the convents in Leiden itself. Although not situated in the town, Orlers already included these houses in his description of Leiden, suggesting they were important to the town's history.[23] Not only were the nuns of these new houses recruited from amongst the town's elite, these institutions were also emulated inside the town walls by Leiden's patricians for reasons of status and prestige. Moreover, a considerable amount of documentation has survived concerning their founding and construction history that can be used to place the architecture of the religious houses in Leiden proper into perspective.

In Warmond, Jan van den Woude (†1417) founded the convent of St Ursula of the Eleven-Thousand Virgins and the Cistercian monastery of Mariënhaven in 1410 and 1412 respectively. The first was a nunnery for enclosed women, housed in a property Jan possessed to the north of the Warmond parish church. To ensure that the nuns could worship and fulfil their religious obligations unseen by the parishioners, and to restrict contact between the nuns and the officiating priests, he vowed to build a covered passage leading from house to church as well as a gallery in the church itself. Nuns' galleries are a characteristic of enclosed female convent churches, setting these churches apart from those of

21 Koorn, *Begijnhoven in Holland en Zeeland*, 26, 148–53.

22 Orlers, *Beschrijvinge der stad Leyden*, 84.

23 Orlers, 88–91.

FIGURE 11.2 The Faliede Begijnhof (beguinage) as shown on the map of Leiden drawn by Pieter Bast around 1600
SOURCE: ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN, PV329 1A

FIGURE 11.3 Chapel of the Faliede Begijnhof in its present state
SOURCE: AUTHOR

monasteries. Holland counted at least nineteen churches with nuns' galleries dating between 1400 and 1539.[24]

The foundation of Mariënhaven came at a much greater expense. Jan pledged to build a glazed dormitory, one hundred feet long and 26 feet wide, with walls 3.5 stones thick, with six cells and a lavatory, within one year of the arrival of the six founding monks from IJsselstein. To begin with, the monks would have two beds; the rest would follow when all six monks had arrived. Jan also promised to build a stone refectory, forty feet long and twenty feet wide, over a cellar. In the third year, he would donate two hundred (presumably Flemish) nobles[25] to the building of a church, and obtain the permission of the bishop of Utrecht, the parish priest of Warmond, and the Leiden town council to have this church consecrated, at no cost to the brethren. He would also found a chapelry of twenty French crowns a year or donate land equalling

24 Eman, 'Middeleeuwse nonnengalerijen'; Eman, 'Nonnengalerijen'.

25 The value of the Flemish noble varied but was roughly the equivalent of about eight working hours. A Flemish noble was the equivalent of 92 *groten*. A master mason working at the court of Holland in The Hague in 1450 earned 6 *stuivers* per working day in summer (12 *groten*) and 3 *stuivers* (6 *groten*) in winter, see: Noordegraaf, *Daglonen in Holland*, 25, table 1; Zuijderduijn, Stapel, and Lucassen, 'Coin Production in the Low Countries'. With many thanks to Robert Stein and Rombert Stapel.

that in worth. Additionally, he pledged to donate sixty French crowns a year, or land that would yield the equivalent sum in rent.[26] The brethren were to be given four copes and five chasubles – one for church festivals, one for Sundays and three for daily use – as well as two silver chalices and a gilt one, a large and a small missal, and two consecrated altar stones. They would also be provided with vestments for three altars, four copper pots, two kettles, a pan, two bowls and water containers and two lavabos, as well as twelve cushions to sit on, four tablecloths and altar linen. Jan also promised to set a golden altarpiece over the high altar. To sustain the community, they would receive eight cows as well as lands and privileges, such as the use of the lord's mill for free until they had built their own.[27]

In 1428, Boudewijn van Zwieten (1370/73–1454), a prominent member of Leiden's elite – the treasurer of Jacqueline of Bavaria, Countess of Holland, and adviser to her successor Duke Philip of Burgundy (1396–1467) – founded the nunnery of Mariënpoel outside Leiden's town walls, in Oegstgeest. Although Boudewijn stipulated that life in Mariënpoel was to be sober and that its income was not to exceed a hundred pounds a year, save a little money set aside for maintaining the buildings, Mariënpoel developed into a rich institution that housed up to ten lay sisters and forty enclosed nuns who followed the Augustinian rule.[28] The nunnery was endowed with a farm, houses, substantial tracts of land and the sum of three thousand Philippus guilders. Philip of Burgundy approved and supported the foundation, and for this he was awarded four annual memorial services and four annual masses for the benefit of his soul. The town's elite followed suit, sending daughters to Mariënpoel to become nuns, and endowing the foundation with land, money, houses, food and wine, as well as liturgical objects, statuary and paintings, some by Leiden's best artists.[29]

3 The Problem with Stone Chapels

Quite a few of the new religious houses in and around Leiden were given stone chapels. In town, these visible markers of their existence made them stand out

26 The value of the French crown was about half of that of the noble and the equivalent of 46 *groten*, Bos-Rops, *Graven op zoek naar geld*, 340–41. This means the chaplain would have earned 920 *groten* a year, supplemented with 2760 *groten* from the land. With many thanks to Robert Stein and Rombert Stapel.

27 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0503, no. 1469, Cartularium (1375–1569), no. 26, f. 9v and no. 33, f. 11v.

28 Bijleveld, 'Het nonnenklooster Mariënpoel', 151–56.

29 Van der Velde, 'Boudewijn van Zwieten', 5; Vogelaar, 'Lucas en Leiden', 28–33.

among the ordinary houses of citizens, enhancing Leiden's religious landscape. However, stone buildings were costly, and the newly founded convents in and around Leiden were related to the Devotio Moderna movement, led by Geert Grote (1340–1384), a popular preacher from Deventer. Grote advocated a return to the *vita apostolica*, the simple and humble lifestyle of the apostles, based on sobriety and love.[30] Stone chapels stood in contradiction to this ideal, the more so as the brothers and sisters who did not belong to an enclosed order could follow services in the parish church, whilst enclosed nuns could attend mass read from a portable altar by their own confessor, a privilege Pope Boniface IX had afforded to all tertiary convents in 1399.[31] Chapels, then, were clearly not a prerequisite but a luxury. Consequently, the erecting of a stone chapel was seldom a priority of religious houses. Even in the well-endowed houses of the nobility it took years, decades even, before the building of a church was begun, let alone completed.

Rich as Jan van den Woude was, the passage leading from the convent building to the Warmond parish church and the nuns' choir that he had promised to build when he founded the convent of St Ursula in 1410 were not realised until 1428. The chapel of Boudewijn van Zwieten's foundation Mariënpoel was completed only after his death by his sons, some 26 years after the founding of the convent.[32] The same held true for the monastery of Lopsen. Although permission to build a chapel and cemetery was granted by the bishop of Utrecht in 1429, due to lack of funds building progress was slow. In 1439 Claes Pietersz and his wife donated an altar in honour of St Mary, St James and St Anthony that was placed in the existing chapel for the time being, suggesting that building had not even begun. By 1446 the building had still not progressed beyond the foundations, and in 1453, at the time of the consecration, the church was unfinished. In 1460 the town council gave Lopsen a subsidy towards the building costs.[33] Even so, excavations have shown that the building was no grand affair but measured approximately 20 by 5 metres.[34] This raises questions. If stone chapels were so expensive to build and unnecessary for the religious life of the convent, why then did so many of the religious houses decide to erect one?

30 Van Luijk, '"Want ledicheit een vyant der zielen is"', 115.
31 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0503, no. 1487.
32 Bijleveld, 'Het nonnenklooster Mariënpoel', 151–56.
33 Obbema, 'Lopsen onder Leiden', 172–74.
34 Van den Ende, 'Klooster Lopsen', 52.

4 Patronage and the Differences in Size and Allure of the Chapels

In 2014, Bruzelius remarked that in thirteenth-century Europe 'the friars reversed the tradition of reserving church and cloister burial as an honour for the upper clergy, royalty, and nobles, making sacred space available for the middle-class merchants and bankers. Burial was "democratized", though not perhaps for the poor.'[35] This is how burial became big business. What started with the Franciscans and Dominicans soon took a hold on other institutions. Parish churches also started offering burial spaces inside their walls for those willing to pay, and offered memorial masses for the benefit of souls in purgatory in return for legacies and donations.

In Leiden, too, the number of burials inside the parish churches steadily increased from the fourteenth century onwards. Whereas ordinary citizens were still buried in the churchyard, the well-to-do could afford a simple tombstone inside the church, while patricians and nobles erected private altars, founded chantries (i.e. they provided funds to pay one or more priests to read/sing memorial masses) and even built private chapels.[36] In the Leiden Pieterskerk, these foundations were administrated by the masters of the Holy Spirit, and their surviving registers provide useful information about the founding and locations of altars (of which there were at least thirty by the sixteenth century), the foundation of chantries, the donation of, for example, stained glass windows, and, of course, the location of graves and the memorial masses due. The earliest register dates from 1386.[37] Leiden's two other parish churches also saw an enormous increase in altars, memorial foundations and altar pieces to remind the clergy of what they owed their benefactors in terms of prayers and memorial services.[38]

The best burial sites were soon taken, and sometimes even fought over.[39] It therefore did not take long before there was nothing exclusive about a memorial mass, chantry or tombstone in the parish church. To ensure that their prayers were heard, those who had the necessary means to do so started to diversify their patronage, founding masses for their souls in various locations. Lady Adriana van den Woude's will, for example, benefitted five of Leiden's

35 Bruzelius, *Preaching, Building, and Burying*, 182; Van den Ende, 'Klooster Lopsen', 52.

36 Bueren, *Leven na de dood*; Bueren, *Care for the Here and the Hereafter*.

37 Van Baarsel, 'De memoriemeesters'; Den Hartog, 'Inleiding'.

38 Den Hartog, 'Inleiding', 164–65. For the patronage of art works in Leiden's parish churches, see: Vogelaar, 'Lucas en Leiden', 25–28.

39 Den Hartog, 'Inleiding', 173.

female religious houses under the condition that yearly masses were said for her in all of them.[40]

Others even founded their own convents to ensure exclusivity.[41] This certainly holds true for Jan van den Woude's prestigious foundations in Warmond, where Jan was buried in front of the high altar of the Cistercian abbey, while his wife Agnes van Kruiningen found her last resting place in front of the high altar of the parish church, which also doubled as the convent chapel.[42] The already-mentioned Boudewijn van Zwieten is another example. Not only did he sponsor a chapel in the Leiden Pieterskerk and patronise the leper chapel of St Anthony and the Warmond St Ursula convent, above all he founded Mariënpoel in the hope of 'obtaining grace and forgiveness in the present' and 'glory in eternity'.[43] In return for his generosity, Boudewijn and his family were granted burial in the choir of Mariënpoel, and it was stipulated that the nuns, each time they entered the choir, should first visit his grave and recite prayers there, and do the same on their departure. In addition, a weekly requiem mass was to be read over his grave and an annual memorial service held on the day of his demise, for himself and his family, including a vigil the day before, as well as a requiem mass followed by a visit to the grave on the day itself. When Boudewijn died in 1454, the nuns explicitly mentioned their 'indebtedness' to him and their need to pray for him over all other people in eternity.[44] To showcase his family's status and help the nuns remember the founding family, a painted memorial, showing Boudewijn, his first wife Lutgard and their children, was placed near their tombs. Johanna Adriaansdr (†1554), Boudewijn's great-granddaughter, renewed the deteriorated painting in 1522 and had the figures of herself, her brother Jan (†1510) and their mother Otte van Egmond added.[45]

Maybe in emulation of the above-mentioned foundations in Warmond and Oegstgeest, Leiden patricians who could afford it, founded or started to sponsor convents in Leiden, thus establishing their own exclusive burial sites within or just outside the confines of the town walls. The size of the chapel and the success of the convent depended very much on the endowments they were granted and on continued sponsorship. Quite often a convent was only provided with enough funds to start building and had to rely on the 'culture of

40 Van Luijk, 'Bruiden van Christus', 67.
41 For an extensive discussion of 'memoria' in Leiden, see Brand, 'Mémoire individualisée'.
42 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0503, no. 1469, Cartularium (1375–17569), no. 26, f. 9v and no. 33, f. 11v.
43 Bijleveld, 'Het nonnenklooster Mariënpoel', 129, 139.
44 Bijleveld, 167.
45 Van der Velde, 'Boudewijn van Zwieten', 6.

incompletion' for continued patronage. Not surprisingly the convents located in the better neighbourhoods achieved better results in this respect than other houses.

Leiden's Dominican nunnery was founded by Margaretha Boudewijnsdr (†1481) and Machteld Jansdr (†1490) in 1441 as a community of religious-minded women. By 1450, it possessed a chapel with altars dedicated to St Mary Magdalene and St Elisabeth of Thuringia, of which the Dominican Arnoldus of Doetinchem is said to have been the founder.[46] This chapel was presumably built on an east-west axis and would have been large enough to accommodate the nuns and a restricted number of visitors: shortly after 1450, indulgences were issued: for those who went to confession in the convent church on special feast days and truly repented; to those who attended the services in the church; and to those who remembered the church in their testament or bestowed gifts like gold, silver, clothing, books, chalices, lights, church ornaments and so on. In 1454, the convent was officially welcomed into the Dominican order. At the time, the nuns were living 'in der Jan van den Wouden huysinge' and Machteld Jansdr was the convent's first prioress.[47] It may thus be presumed that Jan van den Woude was an important donor.

The original chapel's thatched roof burned down in 1458. To help the nuns rebuild it, Philip the Good granted the nunnery the right to accept inheritances bestowed to their convent and exempted them from paying various taxes.[48] A bequest of a house along the Rapenburg in 1477, adjacent to the chapel, enabled the latter to be enlarged. The orientation of the building is likely to have been altered, as the existing church is, rather unusually, located on a north-south axis along the Rapenburg. The permission which allowed the nuns to collect funds in various Dutch cities in 1510 may well have been connected to this rebuilding. The altar of St Mary Magdalen was rededicated in 1516.[49]

The enlarged chapel consisted of a large hall, eight bays long, lit by high windows separated from one another by exterior buttresses of alternate courses of brick and white Gobertange stone from Walloon Brabant, with a narrower aisle along its west flank (Figure 11.4). Aisle and nave were separately roofed, and on the inside they were divided from one another by an arcade supported by freestone columns. The sculptural decoration was restrained, befitting the

46 Wolfs, *Middeleeuwse dominicanessenkloosters*, 42, 47–48.

47 Machteld was probably a daughter of Jan van den Woude (†1444), the son of Jan Florisz [Alkemade] van den Woude and Aleid van den Boekhorst, and not of Jan van den Woude (†1417) of Warmond.

48 Ottenheym, 'Van Witte Nonnen klooster tot Academiegebouw', 781–83.

49 Wolfs, *Middeleeuwse dominicanessenkloosters*, 42; Ottenheym, 'Van Witte Nonnen klooster tot Academiegebouw', 786–87.

poverty ideals of the order. The aisle was probably the location for private altars erected by the well-to-do and is a feature of several other mendicant churches. At the north end of the church there was a built-in gallery that would undoubtedly have been easily reached from the nuns' sleeping quarters. The gallery sat over the two northernmost bays of the nave, with a central tripartite protrusion into the third bay. Because of the gallery, the two northernmost bays had upper and lower windows. The over 30-metres-long building has seen many changes since 1581, when it became the university's Academy building, but the only significant alterations to its external silhouette were the addition of the tower on the west side and the splitting of the windows of the southern bays of the nave into upper and lower windows, when, to suit the needs of the university, a floor was inserted in the nave between 1616 and 1618 (Figure 11.5).[50]

Certain anomalies in the building suggest the church was built in distinct phases. Counting from the south, the fifth and sixth bays are wider than the others. Also, the lower parts of the fourth and sixth column, again counting from the south, are angled. It therefore seems likely that the church was enlarged every time additional funding came along with the demands of the benefactor(s) for a high-status burial space: a clear-cut illustration of the already-mentioned 'culture of incompletion'.

The strict rules of the enclosed Dominican convents enforced silence and forbade visitors from entering the cloister walls. However, since the chapel was used by the secular confraternity of St Catherine of Siena, and as visitors were encouraged to go to confession and attend masses in the convent church, some parts of the church were clearly exempt from this 'clausura'.[51] The surviving tomb slabs, dating between 1465 and 1556, indicate that it was not only the nuns' confessors who received burial here but also outsiders. These included eminent personages like Philips Codde (a doctor, but also burgomaster and alderman of Leiden), Richaert Barradot (†1518, secretary to the king), members of the Van den Boechorst and Van Adrichem families, and Jacob van Montfoort Florisz (†1554) and his wife, the owners of Rapenburg 59–61. Lucas van Leyden's *Healing of the Blind Man at Jericho Triptych* (now the State Hermitage museum, St Petersburg), showing the heraldry of Van Montfoort and his wife Dirckgen Dirck Boelensdr, probably adorned their altar in the church.[52] Other paintings, by Lucas van Leyden and others, three altars, and

50 Van Oerle, 'Het academiegebouw'; Ter Kuile, *Leiden en westelijk Rijnland*, 116–21; Ottenheym, 'Van Witte Nonnen klooster tot Academiegebouw', 785–88.

51 Ottenheym, 'Van Witte Nonnen klooster tot Academiegebouw', 784–85, 790.

52 Van Oerle, 'Het academiegebouw', 77; Beets, 'De bestellers', 155–60.

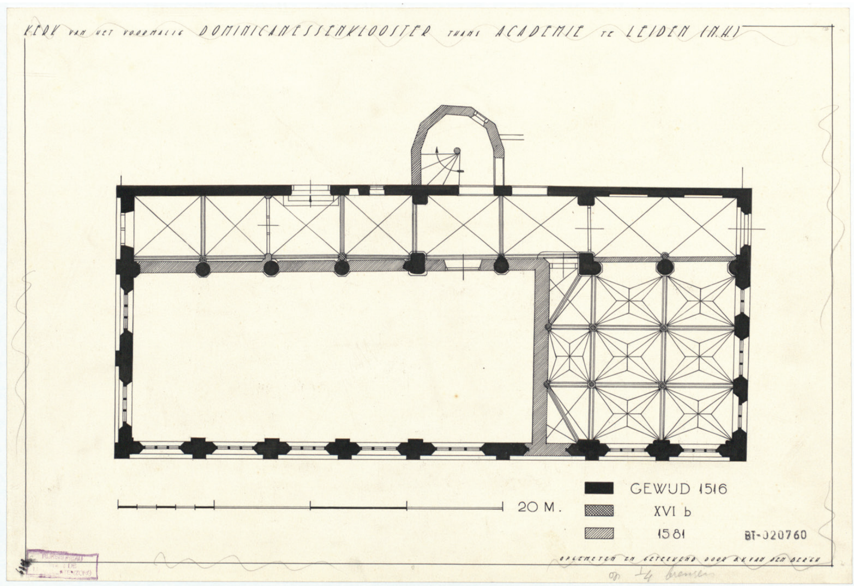

FIGURE 11.4 Plan of the chapel of the Wittevrouwenklooster along the Rapenburg, now the Academy building of Leiden University
SOURCE: PLAN BY B.V. VAN DEN BERGH, RIJKSDIENST VOOR HET CULTUREEL ERFGOED, AMERSFOORT, BT-020760

FIGURE 11.5 Leiden University's Academy building, formerly the chapel of the Wittevrouwenklooster
SOURCE: PHOTO AUTHOR

a statue of Our Lady were lost during the iconoclasm of 1566.[53] The chapel at that time was clearly graced with high-status art works. The lay patrons' desire for an exclusive burial church was apparently the 'raison d'être' of the church, not the religious needs of the Dominican nuns. In this case, then, the success of the church and the status of its first patrons seem to have attracted others to desire a burial space here and to dress it up with the necessary pomp.

The convent of St Barbara, founded in 1441 by Jan van den Woude's brother Simon Jansz van Alkemade, named Van Woude (c. 1395–1476), and his wife Sophia IJsbrandsdr van Spaarnwoude, presents a different story. They donated their own house for the purpose, and provided the community with lands, the yield of which was to sustain the community and fund the building of a chapel.[54] The couple's tombstone, in place by 1468, and drawn by the antiquarian Buchelius (1565–1641),[55] used to lie in front of the high altar, where yearly masses were to be sung for their and their daughter's benefit. Similar masses were read for other benefactors.[56] Van Dulmanhorst's drawing of the convent, seen from the Voldersgracht, shows a rather meagre-looking church, not quite 30 metres long: a box of no great height, pierced by seven windows terminating in a three-sided apse (Figure 11.6). The oldest plan, dated 1667, indicates the presence of buttresses between the choir windows and on the convent side of the church. There were none on the Voldersgracht side.[57] It would seem that the nuns, after the initial phase when Simon van den Woude provided for them, received no substantial patronage, which is why the chapel remained as it was, low and uninspiring.

In 1464, the Leiden Alexians were given the rights to choose their own confessor and to have an altar in their oratory, where mass could be read, with closed doors (meaning that outsiders were not allowed in), without the ringing of bells and without singing. The Alexian order, officially recognised in 1472 but obviously much older, was a mendicant order that from 1463 onwards had taken on the rule of the Third Order of the Augustinians. Its friars, not being priests, looked after the sick and buried the dead. In gratitude for their capital work during the plague, the pope gave the Alexians the right to erect a small bell tower over their churches and to maintain a monastery where the brothers and sisters of the order could be buried. The Leiden Alexians were permitted a chapel in 1474, where masses could be said with open doors (meaning that

53 Wolfs, *Middeleeuwse dominicanessenkloosters*, 53.

54 Lunsingh Scheurleer, Fock, and Van Dissel, *Het Rapenburg*, 2:165–73.

55 Buchelius, *Monumenta*, fol. 72r.

56 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:95–96; Lunsingh Scheurleer, Fock, and Van Dissel, *Het Rapenburg,* 2:170.

57 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:185.

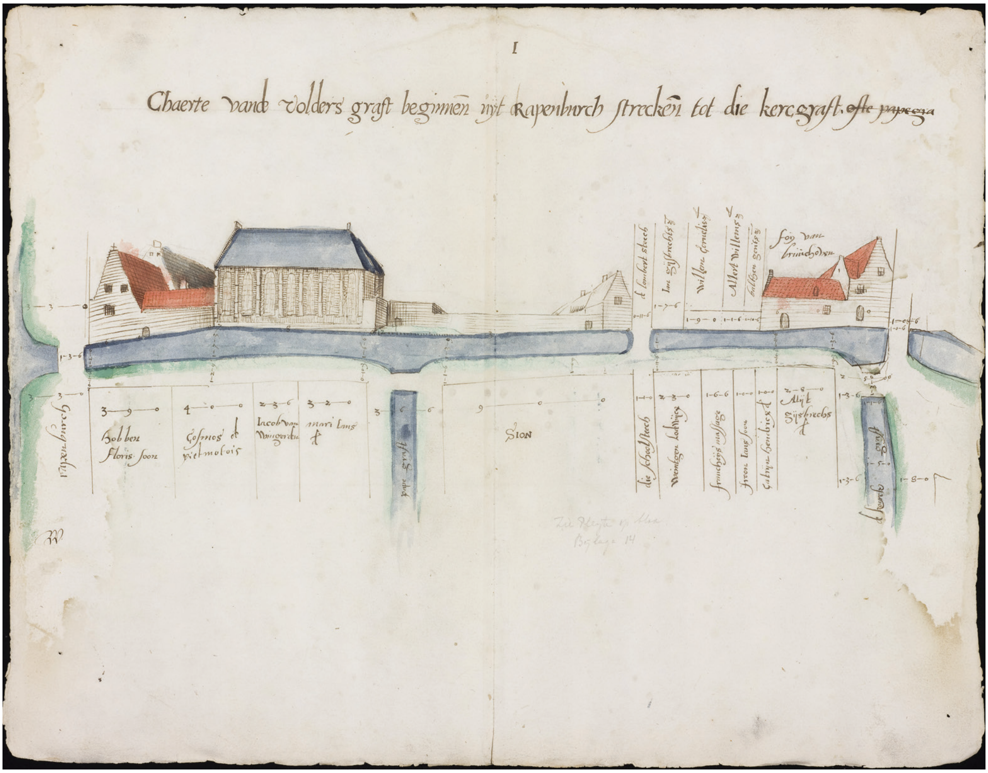

FIGURE 11.6 The convent of St Barbara, as shown in Van Dulmanhorst's *Grachtenboek*
SOURCE: ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN, NL-LDNRAL-0501A, F. 40

outsiders were welcome).[58] Clearly, this did not suffice to attract a great deal of patronage. The Alexian complex, as is apparent from a plan of the complex drawn up in 1589, fifteen years after the friary had been dissolved (Figure 11.7), had the sort of haphazard appearance that goes with adding to an existing nucleus over time. On the side of the Cellebroedersgracht a narrow passage, the Cellebroederspoort, led into a more or less rectangular open space with the church opposite the entrance. The chapel is hardly recognisable as such. The 1578 Liefrinck plan also shows it to have been a small, very basic building (Figure 11.8).

The convent of St Catherine Schagen was allowed its own confessor as well as the right to bury outsiders in its cemetery, but memorial services were to be held only for those belonging to the community. The convent, although small, was well off and in no need of external funding to make ends meet. It was also

58 Van Oerle, 1:202; Leupen, 'Het Leidse cellebroedersklooster'.

FIGURE 11.7 Plan showing the buildings constituting the Alexian monastery, drawn up in 1589
SOURCE: ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN, PV_PV1151.1

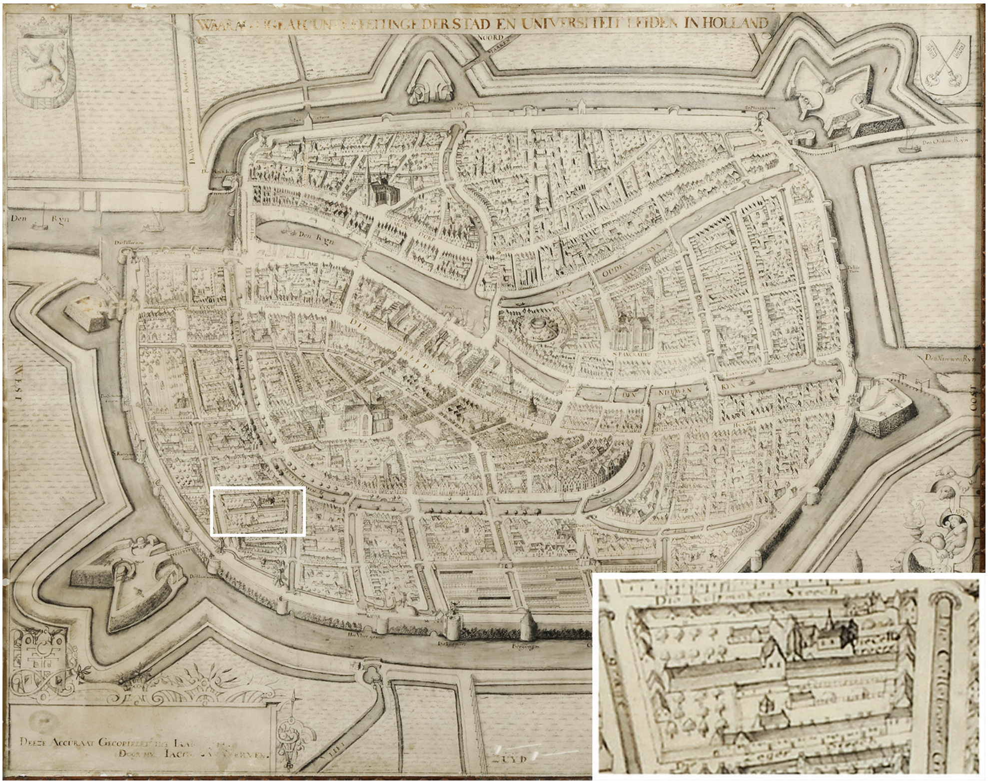

FIGURE 11.8 The Alexian complex as shown on the 1744 copy by Jacob van Werven of Hans Liefrinck's map of Leiden from 1578
SOURCE: MUSEUM DE LAKENHAL, NO. 11351

too far removed from the city centre to attract patronage. Without external patrons, there was no need for a grand chapel. Not surprisingly, therefore, the chapel of St Catherine's is hard to pinpoint on the Liefrinck plan.[59]

The chapel of St Clara or Nazareth was also undistinguished, but for other reasons. This convent being extremely poor, the nuns had to go out begging to provide for themselves. No wonder they explored ways of drawing sponsors in. Permission to build a chapel was granted by the chapter of Leiden's St Pancras Church in 1497. To finance construction, the nuns organised a fundraiser in the villages around Leiden. Building the chapel took time and in 1550 the abbey of Rijnsburg granted the nuns additional funding towards the project, as well as for a new tabernacle. In the end it was all for nothing, as the convent was not granted permission to conduct memorial masses for outsiders from

59 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:177–78; Van Luijk, 'Bruiden van Christus', 68.

the community, thus missing out on the funding that could have contributed to a better financial situation, and it did not take long until the convent was bankrupt. By 1567 the convent was taking in lepers from the leper hospital. In 1590 these were transferred to the St Elisabeth's hospital and the chapel was transformed into a 'Sayhalle', a hall where *saai*, a woollen fabric, was tested.[60]

To return to Van Deventer's 1545 plan showing the town dominated by chapels and churches, it must be concluded that, although Leiden had a fair number of turrets and spires, the plan is clearly an exaggeration. Where the plan shows all churches and chapels with a spire, this was not the case in reality. Neither were all convent churches neatly finished and similar in size, shape and allure. In fact, the differences between Leiden's convent churches were substantial, their prominence, size and furnishings being very much indicative of their success with the high and mighty, and the funds available to them. The chapels of Leiden's lesser convents were not landmarks at all. Moreover, at the time of the Reformation, many of the chapels were still under construction, their construction often being consciously conducted in a deliberately piecemeal fashion, with the unfinished state acting as a stimulus to attract patrons. Even the still existing church of the Dominican nunnery, one of the finer specimens, shows evidence of this procedure through the irregularities of its ground plan and superstructure.

5 Leiden's Religious Houses in Decline

After 1480 no new religious houses were founded in Leiden and many of the existing ones gradually declined, as also happened elsewhere in Holland. The reasons for this are not entirely clear. In this paragraph several of the possible factors for this decline will be discussed, such as the enlargement of Leiden's parish churches, increased taxation by the Habsburg emperors, and the growing unpopularity of convents, which gave rise to an increasing number of regulations intended to restrict cloisters' capacity to manufacture and produce goods for the market that also negatively influenced the balance sheet.

First, the second half of the fifteenth century saw Leiden's parish churches being enlarged, creating more burial and chapel space and thus ways to display status in order to satisfy their remaining patrons and maybe even to lure back families that in the preceding decennia had preferred the convents as a focus for their 'memoria'. The Pieterskerk, which had been rebuilt from the late

60 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:178; Van Luijk, 'Bruiden van Christus', 76–77.

fourteenth century onwards and completed circa 1430, was enlarged from 1465 onwards. The nave was widened to accommodate four more chapels, a transept was added, and there were plans to build a series of chapels around the choir.[61] This bid to earn the favour of the Leiden elite appears to have had success. The new transept housed the chapels of the Van Boschhuijsen family and the Lokhorst family; on the north side of the nave was the Van Zwieten chapel. Altarpieces and stained-glass windows showcased the generosity of Leiden's most important and richest citizens.[62] The return of the wealthy parishioners to the parish churches, away from the convents, would have greatly impacted the latter's finances, which relied on continuing patronage to maintain their buildings.

The parish churches' success did not last. Following the 1512 collapse of the tower of St Peter's on the west end of the church into the nave, the tower was not rebuilt. In fact, the nave roof was subsequently extended up to the west wall. Building stopped around 1540; the planned chapels along the choir were never built.[63] The same holds true for Leiden's Hooglandse kerk that was rebuilt from 1470 onwards. Work proceeded in a slow and piecemeal fashion, and when construction came to a halt in 1543–1544 the building was nowhere near completed. The beautiful Renaissance capitals of the unfinished triforium are still hidden under the roofs of the side aisles.[64] It is clear that the cash flow gradually ceased and came to a halt in the 1540s. Undoubtedly, this draining of the available resources was related to increased taxation by the new Burgundian and Habsburg rulers who needed money for their costly wars.

Already in 1474, whilst the rebuilding of Leiden's main parish churches was still in full swing, the Lopsen monks heavily contested the *bede* – the request of the ruler to grant him a large sum of money to cover exceptional costs that could hardly be denied – that was imposed on religious houses by the Burgundian ruler Charles the Bold. The Lopsen protest had a negative effect, only leading to a tax increase, with Lopsen having to pay more than other houses.[65] The struggling monastery closed its doors in 1526.[66] Its land and buildings were given to Leiden's St Catherine's hospital. A reason for Lopsen's decline, mentioned by the papal legate who decided on Lopsen's dissolution in 1526, was that the monks who 'had over the years sustained themselves with the writing,

61 Dröge and Veerman, 'Inleiding', 33–43, 53–56.
62 Den Hartog, 'Inleiding', 173–82; Grasman, 'Het Laatste Oordeel'.
63 Dröge and Veerman, 'Inleiding', 43, 55–56.
64 Veerman, 'De bouwgeschiedenis'.
65 Smithuis, 'Lopsen en de Moderne Devotie', 216.
66 Smithuis, 21.

illuminating and binding of books' had also suffered from the invention of the printing press, which ended their means of sustenance.[67]

Taxation increased under the Habsburg ruler Charles V, who not only targeted the religious houses but also the towns and cities. As ecclesiastical property was held in mortmain – meaning that it belonged to the endowment of the institution and could neither be alienated nor taxed – this implied that, when a town or city was taxed, the burghers' tax portions increased as ecclesiastical property was augmented, which led to the decreasing popularity of the convents. There were even attempts to put a halt to the foundation of new convents. In addition, being exempt from municipal taxes, convents supporting themselves with handicrafts and trade were considered to offer unfair competition for the town or city's merchants and workmen, which worked against them. Restrictions as to what and how much they could produce were therefore imposed. In concordance with this, in 1446, the Leiden town council decided that tertiary institutions were not true cloisters, as their inhabitants made money by crafts and trade and were thus not exempt from municipal taxes, leading to a long-standing conflict between the town and the sisters that lasted well into the sixteenth century.[68] At the same time, due to taxation, patrons clearly had less to spend, and with the decline in donations, the rebuilding of the Leiden parish churches halted and many convents found it increasingly difficult to make ends meet and maintain their stone buildings, let alone complete them. By the sixteenth century, it was not only Lopsen that was struggling to survive.

The convent of St Mary Magdalene, which had settled in the premises outside the Haarlemmerpoort, formerly occupied by the nuns who had moved to Roomburg, closed down.[69] The convent buildings of St Agatha were given to the nearby leper hospital in 1553, while the remaining nuns could stay on condition that they did not take on new recruits. The hospital of St James did not fare well either, after receiving permission to build its own chapel in 1477. The church that was built (nowadays Steenschuur 19) may well have exceeded its available means, causing the hospital to struggle for survival until the curtain fell in 1547. The chapel was then put to various uses and eventually transformed into another *saaihal*. In 1807 it was turned into the Catholic church of St Louis.[70] In the end, only the well-endowed houses and those that forged

67 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0503, no. 212; Obbema, *De middeleeuwen in handen*, 127.

68 Van Luijk, 'De tweede religieuze vrouwenbeweging', 60.

69 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:216.

70 Van Oerle, 1:197.

good relations with the town's elite and the Habsburg regime managed to keep themselves afloat, as they had sufficient assets to sustain themselves.

6 Change and Continuity

The Reformation was the harbinger of the greatest changes to Leiden's ecclesiastical landscape. During the iconoclasm of 1566 most churches in Leiden suffered losses and the Franciscans were driven from their friary just outside Leiden's walls. The populace held it against them that they had played an active part in the Inquisition's measures against the so-called Protestant heresy.[71] The events unfolding during the Siege of Leiden in 1573–1574 had an even greater impact on the ecclesiastical heritage, especially that outside the town walls. In July 1572, the Franciscan monastery was levelled, and this was followed by the sacking of Mariënpoel and Roomburg. In 1573, in view of the oncoming siege by the Spaniards, all buildings within a certain range of the town needed to be demolished so as not to afford the enemy cover.[72] It was at this time that the last remains of the Lopsen monastery, the orchard included, disappeared. These measures led to an influx of refugees from the nunneries and cloisters outside the walls.

The situation worsened in 1573 when the States of Holland prohibited Catholicism in their territories. Church buildings and estates were confiscated by a decree issued in 1577. From this time onwards, Leiden's two main parish churches were used for protestant worship and, in time, the third parish church, the Vrouwekerk, was given over to the Walloon community. Most convents became redundant. Their inhabitants were pensioned off and the buildings were either reconverted or pulled down to allow for housing projects. In some cases, the plunder from the churches was used to decorate private houses. The elephant from the 1586 facade of Aalmarkt 27, for example, was made from a fine piece of Gothic sculpture that probably came from one of Leiden's churches or chapels.[73] Although losses were inevitable, the religious houses along Leiden's prestigious Rapenburg were reused to facilitate Leiden's university, founded in 1575.

The nuns of the convent of St Barbara were told to vacate their premises in 1575, which were to house the newly founded university. Two years later the

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71 Knappert, 'Een liedje'.

72 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:215–16.

73 Jan Dröge, *Gevelsteen De Zwarte Olifant, Aalmarkt 27 Leiden*, Digital 3D Model (Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken, 2019), https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/gevelsteen-de-zwarte-olifant-aalmarkt-27-leiden-046dfacebe934c5698dd73f37e6bd56e.

university was moved to the Faliede Begijnhof chapel, where it remained until 1581, when the university found its definitive location in the chapel of the Wittevrouwenklooster, today's Academy building. The vacated St Barbaraklooster was turned into the Prinsenhof, a residence where the Prince of Orange and his successors could stay when visiting Leiden. It was in use until the 1650s, and largely demolished in 1667 to make way for housing. Only the chapel remained, until that too was demolished in 1845.[74] When the university moved out in 1581, the Begijnhof chapel became the university library and a fencing school. Today it houses part of the university's administrative centre. The houses of the beguinage were initially used to house university professors, but gradually disappeared due to modernisation. The same holds true of the Alexian complex, the assets of which were sold in 1576, while the buildings were given to the university. In 1592 the *Staten College* was founded there, a college for theology students. This institution survived until 1795.[75]

The Reformation thus had a huge impact on Leiden's ecclesiastical heritage. The religious houses founded by the nobility outside Leiden's walls were the first to go. As they had endangered the town during the Siege, they were razed. The smaller convents on the outskirts of town gradually disappeared after becoming redundant, together with their chapels. Not only are these likely to have been in a bad state of repair, in view of the financial difficulties of the communities that had maintained them, the space they took up was also needed for housing. The larger and more prestigious the church, the more likely it was to survive. More towards the centre, several of the convents were granted a second life as part of the university. The three parish churches, even though their reconstruction was halted, were turned into protestant prayer halls.

Although the idea of a pre-Reformation Leiden dominated by churches as an expression of the solid faith in God of its citizens, as shown on Van Deventer's plan, was clearly exaggerated, and in spite of the fact that most churches and chapels in Leiden's town centre had survived the Reformation with their architecture more or less intact, in 1614 Jan Orlers, in his description of Leiden, experienced a sense of awe for the medieval achievement, as well as a sense of loss. He writes:

> I cannot hide that I can never behold, without great amazement, our soaring churches which our good ancestors built or enlarged with blind zeal and at great cost and lust, and which they endowed with many goods, something that we, their offspring, would never do today. In the cities

74 Lunsingh Scheurleer, Fock, and Van Dissel, *Het Rapenburg*, 2:172–226.

75 Van Oerle, *Leiden*, 1:202.

> that abolished the papacy, and after the Troubles, what half-destroyed or ruined churches [...] have been rebuilt again to such height, beauty and size as in the old days: nowhere: and I am certain that the like will never be erected again in our times.[76]

Orlers was right. Around 1540, church building in Leiden had come to a standstill. This stagnation was exacerbated by the Reformation and the so-called Eighty-Years War that followed. It was not until 1639, with the building of the protestant Marekerk, that Leiden was graced, once again, with a new highlight of religious architecture.

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76 Translation author. Orlers, *Beschrijvinge der stad Leyden*, 66–67: "Doch ick en can niet verbergen/ dat ick onse hoochgheboude kercken nimmermeer sonder groot verwonderen can aenschouwen / de welcke onse goede voorsaten in haren blinden yver met meerder costen ende lusten hebben gebout / vermeerdert / ende met velen goederen begiftet / als (ducht ick) wy hare goede nacomelinghen huyden ten daghe soude doen. want / in wat steden uyt het pausdom getreden zijnde / heeft men sedert dat de Troublen gheweest / eenighe half afgheworpen ofte verdistrueerde kercken [...] van sulcke hoochten / schoonheden / ende grootte / wederomme ghebout ende opghetimmert / als die van ouden tijden gheweest hebben: voorwaer nergens: ende ick houde voor seecker dat sulcx in deze onse tijden nimmermeer ghedaen sal werden".

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CHAPTER 12

Religious Diversity in Leiden, 1550–1800

Christine Kooi

In the fall of 1774, during the celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the relief of Leiden from its Spanish siege, the noted naturalist, artist and poet Johannes le Francq van Berkhey gave a public recitation of his long dramatic poem *Het verheerlijkt Leyden* ('Leiden Exalted'), in which he sang, with considerable bombast, the praises of the city's past and present.[1] In one particularly melodramatic section, he offered a passionate retelling of the siege and relief of 1574. One of its passages extolled Leiden's saviours and excoriated its besiegers:

> Their names, so beloved, are inscribed in our hearts,
> While the others, the Netherlands' scourge, are hated and cursed.
> Don't think that my mouth will encourage church fight,
> And throw Roman or non-Roman in a hateful light.
> The Leiden stamp suffers no coercion by churches,
> It demands freedom for the conscience, the law and the fatherland.[2]

The siege and relief of Leiden, he assured his spellbound audience, had nothing to do with religion; heroic Leideners of all confessions had valorously defended their city from Spanish troops in the dark days of 1574. The Netherlands' enemies were 'hated and cursed' because of their tyranny, not their Catholicism. The 'Leiden stamp', the poet insisted, tolerated no religious coercion but instead demanded freedom. Leiden stood for liberty; for two centuries its siege and relief had been lionised and mythologised as *haec libertatis ergo*.

Le Francq van Berkhey, an outspoken Orangist and a member of the Reformed Church, naturally associated his winning side with freedom. He insisted in his overwrought verse that the city of Leiden was a paradise of religious freedom,

1 Groffie, 'Het tweede eeuwfeest van Leidens ontzet'; Honings, *Geleerdheids zetel*, 39–40.

2 Le Francq van Berkhey, *Het verheerlijkt Leyden*, 21 (own translation): 'Hun naamen, zoo geliefd, staan in ons hart geboekt, / Daar de andre, Neêrlands schrik, gehaat zijn, en gevloekt. / Denkt ook niet, dat mijn mond den Kerk-twist aan wil roeren, / En Roomsch, of Onroomsch in een haatlijk daglicht voeren: / De Leydsche Stempel duldt geen' kerk-dwang in den rand, / Eischt Vrijheid voor 't Gemoed, de Wet, en 't Vaderland.'

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concord and toleration, and it had proven this during its heroic siege and relief. Le Francq van Berkhey's rosy poetic depiction of the town's spiritual unity, however, hardly matched contemporary reality, for all Leideners who were not Reformed Protestants were at best second-class citizens.[3] In Le Francq van Berkhey's day Catholics, Mennonites, Lutherans and Jews in the city could not worship openly, nor could they hold public office; for them Leiden was hardly 'free ground' at all. They were tolerated rather than free. From his triumphalist perch among the privileged confessional majority, Le Francq van Berkhey apparently did not see the distinction. Leiden's religious landscape was not nearly as harmonious as the poet depicted.

This chapter examines the principal consequence of the Reformation for early modern Leiden: the emergence of a religiously diverse population in uneasy relationship with the privileged Reformed Church, superintended by a magistracy willing to maintain this diversity but also intent on preserving civic harmony. That religious diversity would in turn complicate human interactions in the city in ways not anticipated in the Middle Ages. The Reformation confronted Leiden, along with the rest of Protestant Europe, with a novel phenomenon: a multiconfessional population. Now polities had to manage populations that were divided along confessional lines; the spiritual unity of medieval Christendom was replaced by multiple confessional Christianities that were more often than not hostile to each other. Recent scholarship has emphasised how widespread this state of affairs was, as well as its manifold political, social and cultural repercussions. Historians such as Benjamin Kaplan and Nicholas Terpstra have examined how nearly all early modern European governments, which had their own official confessional identities, had to contend with religious minorities. The official responses to this diversity could range from suppression to toleration. Socially, multiconfessionalism forced the dispersion and migration of large numbers of European Christians. For the Dutch Republic more specifically, scholars such as Judith Pollmann and Charles Parker have painted a compelling portrait of the accommodation of religious diversity, especially with regard to Catholics, as a protean and tangled mix of public antagonism with private accommodation. Toleration there was a process, not a condition. What Le Francq van Berkhey celebrated as a triumph of harmony among Leideners of different religious stripes was in fact the complicated result of two centuries of both official and informal political and social interaction.[4]

3 Arpots, *Vrank en vry*, 102–3; Buisman, 'Kerk en samenleving', 146.

4 Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*; Terpstra, *Religious Refugees*; Pollmann, *Religious Choice in the Dutch Republic*; Parker, *Faith on the Margins*.

1 Reformation and Revolt

The religious diversity of Leiden's population had been a fact of life since 1572. The very wars that had brought Spanish armies to besiege the city in 1573–1574 were also directly responsible for the variegated and complicated religious landscape in which Le Francq van Berkhey and his fellow eighteenth-century Leideners of all confessions lived. When, in the summer of 1572, the rebels against the Habsburgs took over the city and its royalist magistrates fled, the new regime joined the cause of revolt against the Habsburg central government, and also by extension joined the cause of reformation.[5] In exchange for its support of the rebellion the Reformed Church had within a year secured from the city government the sole right to worship openly as the public church (a French-speaking Walloon Reformed congregation was given a church building about a decade later). All other non-Reformed Christian confessions (at that time principally Catholics, Mennonites and Lutherans) were not forced to join the public church, but they were also not allowed to worship God in public, only in spaces designed to look like private dwellings. The law guaranteed them freedom of conscience, so they could believe as they wished, but they could not express those beliefs in any sort of public space. This would remain the case in Leiden until French revolutionary armies brought complete religious emancipation to all the inhabitants of the Dutch Republic in 1795. Therefore, during the entire lifespan of the Dutch Republic, from the Revolt to the Revolution, Leiden had one official church and a host of tolerated congregations.

This wide degree of religious diversity in Leiden was a direct result of the Reformation, which was by far the most important event in the religious history of early modern Leiden.[6] Before 1520, Leiden, like the rest of Latin Christendom, had been spiritually united by baptism in the Catholic Church; there was, in effect, no religious diversity in medieval Leiden, at least institutionally. Paganism was a dim memory of the early Middle Ages, and heresy was uncommon. For at least five hundred years all Leideners belonged to the same universal spiritual community, the *corpus christianorum* of the medieval Catholic Church. All Leideners were baptised Catholics; in the fifteenth century the city's ecclesiastical infrastructure grew rapidly to three parishes, St Peter, St Pancras and Our Dear Lady, as well as at least fifteen cloisters. The sixteenth century shattered this unity. It is difficult to overstate how transformative the Protestant Reformation was for early modern European society and culture; the spiritual uniformity that had once defined medieval Latin Christendom

5 Jones, 'De Nederduitse gemeente', 126.
6 Knappert, *De opkomst van het protestantisme*.

was, in the space of a few decades, gone forever. This was as true for the Low Countries as it was elsewhere in Europe.[7] And it was in growing, crowded Dutch cities such as Leiden where the breakdown of that uniformity was felt most keenly. As one scholar succinctly puts it: 'The Reformation destroyed the religious unity of the town.'[8] Various kinds of Protestant heresy made their appearance in Leiden between 1520 and 1572 – evangelical, Lutheran, Anabaptist, Mennonite, Reformed – mostly in the form of secretive, small conventicles. They were all subject to heavy prosecution by the city authorities at the behest of the Habsburg government, particularly the Anabaptists.[9] By the 1560s the most successful of these dissident movements would prove to be Reformed Protestantism, which allied itself with the aristocratic political opposition to the Habsburg government of Philip II of Spain.[10]

In 1572 the fortunes of war made reformation permanent in Leiden when the political rebels, the Beggars (*Geuzen*), took over the city in June of that year. The Reformed Protestant militants (disparaged by their opponents as 'Calvinists') who had joined the insurgency demanded the right to worship freely as the price of their support; within a few months they secured control of all three parish churches, the Pieterskerk, Hooglandse kerk and Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekerk, with the help of anti-Catholic violence perpetrated by Beggar troops.[11] The leader of the rebel coalition, Prince William of Orange, laboured hard to broker a religious peace (*religievrede*) in the insurgent towns so that some sort of confessional coexistence could be worked out, but this hope withered in the face of Reformed militancy, which insisted on the suppression of Catholic 'idolatry'. By the spring of 1573 the public celebration of Catholic sacraments had been outlawed in Holland. Leiden, like nearly every other town in the province of Holland, became officially and publicly a Reformed city.

From 1572 to 1795, therefore, Leiden, like all other Dutch towns, was publicly Reformed, but this officially unified façade masked a much more diverse private reality. As one early seventeenth-century traveller to the city observed with some wonder, 'every Sunday here there is open preaching in three Dutch, one French, one English, one Lutheran and about three Mennonite churches.'[12] Reformed Leideners were always the largest confessional group during the republican era, likely achieving majority status sometime in the

7 Kooi, *Reformation*, 189.
8 Duke, 'Building Heaven', 75.
9 Kolff, 'Libertatis Ergo'.
10 Knappert, *De opkomst van het protestantisme*, 217.
11 Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 31–34.
12 Quoted in Van Wijhe, 'Leiden', 20.

later seventeenth century, but substantial minorities among the rest of the city's inhabitants included Catholics, Mennonites, Lutherans, Remonstrants and (by the 1700s) Jews. The sources do not allow us to calculate exact numbers of these populations, but a rough estimate for the year 1620 places forty per cent of Leideners in the Reformed camp (including the French-speaking Walloon congregation), followed by Catholics at roughly eleven per cent.[13] Two centuries later these remained the city's two largest confessional groups; a national religious census conducted in 1809 under the Napoleonic regime revealed the following numbers: Reformed: 73 per cent, Catholic: 23 per cent, Lutherans: three per cent, Jews: one per cent, Mennonite or *doopsgezinden*: 0.5 per cent.[14] Reformed Protestants, as a share of the municipal population, grew substantially over the course of two centuries, while the city's confessional diversity dwindled somewhat but remained intact.

This demographic reality presented the civic government of early modern Leiden with a novel and thorny problem: how to manage religious diversity. In this matter they received some guidance from the 1579 Union of Utrecht, a treaty of military alliance between the Netherlandish territories rebelling against the Habsburgs, lands that eventually formed the independent Dutch Republic. This treaty provided a provisional confessional arrangement that became over time the Republic's functioning ecclesiastical settlement. Article 13 of the Union stipulated that consciences were free but the ability to worship was not, and it gave local authorities the power to superintend religious affairs.[15] Thus, in Leiden, as in other rebel-held cities, the Reformed Church enjoyed the status of the privileged, public church, but no one was compelled to join it. All other burghers – those who were not Reformed – were free to believe as they wished or even to adhere to no church at all. Freedom of conscience prevailed; freedom of worship did not. The current consensus among historians is that religious toleration, as the Dutch Republic practiced it, was a protean, complicated and tenuous process.[16]

What Le Francq van Berkhey celebrated as a triumph of liberty, then, non-Reformed Leideners experienced as a regime of toleration.[17] This regime was intended to manage confessional coexistence, and so it created a peculiar

13 Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 194.

14 Van Eijnatten and Van Lieburg, *Nederlandse religiegeschiedenis*, 253.

15 'Treaty of the Union', in Kossman and Mellink, *Texts Concerning the Revolt*, 169–70.

16 Spaans, 'Violent Dreams'; Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*; Pollmann, *Religious Choice in the Dutch Republic*.

17 Kooi, 'Religious Tolerance', 213–15. On the notion of a regime of toleration, see Walzer, *On Toleration*, 14–36; Spohnholz, 'Confessional Coexistence'.

ecclesiastical landscape across the Dutch Republic's densely populated towns: the Reformed Church controlled the major churches in any given community, but in close proximity to the private house churches, serving an array of tolerated confessions, an arrangement that dotted nearly all urban topographies. Everyone lived cheek-by-jowl with neighbours who were often of a different religious persuasion. Early modern Leiden was no exception in this regard. By the middle of the seventeenth century, Leiden's Lutherans were worshipping in a house church just a stone's throw north of the Hooglandse kerk. Likewise, one of the *Doopsgezinde* congregations, the Waterlanders, met in a house around the corner from the Pieterskerk (Figure 12.1). Catholics gathered in multiple locales across town, especially on its east and south sides. All of these locations were private, but they were not secret. It was common knowledge where non-Reformed Leideners worshipped; in the seventeenth century a zealous or sectarian sheriff (*schout*) might on occasion raid a known Catholic house church in order to collect recognition money (a combination of fine and bribe), but by the following century this practice had largely disappeared. Harassment came to an end, but the legal disadvantage remained. This was the regime that Leiden's Catholics, Mennonites, Lutherans, Arminians and Jews lived under for the entirety of the Dutch Republic.

FIGURE 12.1 Lokhorstkerk, where the Waterlander Mennonites worshipped
SOURCE: ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN, HVOL_HS0263

2 The Regime of Toleration

The regime of toleration had its origins in the Netherlands' tumultuous experience of religious change in the sixteenth century. One of the defining characteristics of the Netherlandish Reformation was the very harsh Habsburg reaction to it; nowhere else in Europe were so many people tried and put to death for heresy.[18] So the impetus to tolerate confessional minorities on the part of the Dutch Republic's urban regents was partly ideological: because of the Habsburg government's harsh anti-heretical judicial regime religious coercion did not sit well in regions long used to their own legal privileges, hence the clause protecting freedom of conscience in the Union of Utrecht. Another part of the impetus was theological: whatever theocratic pretentions it may have had, the Reformed Church refused to play the role of national church, instead insisting on high standards for membership in conformity with its teachings about moral discipline. The Reformed were the privileged, public church because of its truth rather than its universality. Only a minority of the population joined the church initially. Though privileged, the public church was still a minority among minorities, at least until the second half of the seventeenth century. A third factor was practical: if there was to be no forced religious conformity, and if the public church admitted only a select few as members, then local authorities were faced with the task of policing relationships among the various confessions, public and private, to ensure civic harmony and order. A regime of toleration, in which both privileged church and religious minorities were to be carefully superintended, became the only workable ecclesiastical settlement for the cities across the Dutch Republic. Religious diversity was managed rather than suppressed.

It was the town government's obligation, therefore, to manage the religious diversity of Leiden during the republican era in the interest of municipal peace and order.[19] Insofar as the magistracy could be said to have had a religious policy, this was it: to make sure that all of the city's religious groups got along, or at least co-existed, with each other relatively peacefully so that civic harmony would not be disrupted. And in one particular respect this regime was a success: there were only a handful of instances of interconfessional violence in Leiden during the republican era. The period 1572–1574 first brought sectarian violence to the city in the form of war, when soldiers in the Beggar

18 Kooi, *Reformation*, 195.
19 Spaans, 'Violent Dreams'.

army physically assaulted Catholic clergy, most of whom fled, and attacked Catholic church buildings before handing them over to the Reformed.[20]

A second period that saw sporadic confessional violence came in the 1610s, when the Arminian controversy divided the Reformed Church between Gomarists and Arminians. Gomarist passions against the minority Arminians, especially their ministers, ran so high that in 1610 the *gerecht*, the college of burgomasters and aldermen that ran the city's daily affairs, imprisoned four Leideners for assaulting them and then issued a stern order admonishing burghers to live peaceably with each other despite 'different persuasions in religion' (*verscheyden gesintheyt in religie*).[21] Seven years later, when the religious discord caused by the Arminian controversy grew even worse, a mob that gathered in front of city hall for the annual 3 October celebration hurled insults and stones at the companies of hired troops (*waardgelders*) contracted to guard the pro-Arminian magistracy. The troops fired over the heads of the mob but killed one person; the *gerecht* called in the civic militia to restore order.[22] A third instance of sectarian violence took place in 1655, when a fist-fight between Reformed and Catholic Leideners broke out on the city docks over news about the Catholic persecution of Protestants in the duchy of Savoy.[23] These kinds of incidents were more the exception than the rule. Violence between people of different confessions in Leiden was largely confined to a smattering of incidental episodes; in terms of this goal, the prevention of interconfessional violence, the regime of toleration may be deemed a success.

3 The Public Church

The regime of toleration required that all confessions came under the city fathers' watchful eye, and that included the privileged Reformed Church. If anything, it was the public church that took up most of the Leiden magistracy's energy and attention in the arena of religious policy during the republican era. This was, to be sure, mostly due to the Reformed Church's novelty; it had only achieved legitimacy in 1572. Thanks to the Revolt's confiscation of church property, it had replaced the old medieval Catholic Church with an unfamiliar ecclesiastical organisation featuring a wholly new theology, liturgy

20 Jones, 'De Nederduitse gemeente', 127–29.

21 Erfgoed Leiden en Omgeving (hereafter ELO), NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 17, f. 178v, Aflezingboek G (15 August 1610).

22 Knevel, *Burgers in het geweer*, 247–48.

23 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 3+15, f. 186v-187r, Crimineel vonnisboek (28 September 1655).

and polity – it was a literally re-formed church that the magistrates now had on their hands. And the Reformed themselves, having endured decades as a church under the cross or in exile, were deeply suspicious of any political encroachments on their rights as a community. The city fathers' relationship with this new body was initially wary and fraught; it took half a century after the Leiden Reformed congregation's founding before the public church and the city government reached an accommodation with each other.

The immediate issue was church governance. In the pre-Reformation era, the city fathers had exerted some influence on the appointment of parish priests, and so they expected this medieval tradition of collaboration with the church to continue. Already from its beginning in the 1570s, Leiden's Reformed leadership and its municipal leadership had had sharply different understandings of what the new public church's place should be in the larger civic community. The burgomasters expected that the new public church would assume the traditional universal role of the former, now disestablished church: that it would serve as the spiritual home for all Leideners, and would submit itself to the authority of the municipal government. The most zealous 'Calvinists' (as their opponents called them) on the Reformed consistory (its ruling council of ministers and elders), however, required a profession of faith and submission to moral discipline as conditions of membership; they also insisted on the church's autonomy from any worldly control or supervision. The issue came to a head in 1579 over the selection of that year's new elders to the consistory; the consistory did not provide the names of its nominees to the magistracy before announcing them publicly, and the magistrates retaliated by refusing to endorse them. This initial dispute plunged Leiden's Reformed congregation into nearly two years of bitter controversy and, for a time, even schism, and forced the intervention of Prince William of Orange and the States of Holland.[24] Ultimately both sides agreed to an 'Arbitral Accord' that allowed the magistracy the right of final approval of consistorial candidates, but the bitterness and distrust lingered.

A generation later, in the 1610s, the public church again became embroiled in controversy, this time over the teachings of the Leiden professor Jacob Arminius. The supporters of the Arminian understanding of salvation, who were in the minority, sought protection from the magistracy, and so once again the autonomy of the public church came into contention.[25] For a second time

24 Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 55–89; De Jongste, *Om de religie of om de vrijheid*, 17–24.

25 Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 125–61. The Francophone Walloon Reformed congregation also abided by the Arbitral Accord and largely escaped the upheavals of the Arminian controversy; Fockema Andreae, 'Uit de geschiedenis van de Waals-Hervormde kerk'.

bitter controversy resulted in schism within the public church. The Arminian controversy would of course be resolved nationally rather than locally with the National Synod of Dordrecht in 1618–1619; in Leiden, too, Arminians would be ejected from the public church and Calvinist orthodoxy would henceforth serve as official doctrine. The Reformed Church would not be plagued by schism again until the nineteenth century.

These troubled interactions with the Reformed leadership made the Leiden magistracy all the more determined to ensure that the public church was managed and superintended at least as much as the tolerated confessions; the religious role of the city government thus grew more multifaceted. Indeed, the burgomasters of Leiden understood themselves to be first and foremost Christian magistrates, charged with the protection of the faith and the maintenance of communal harmony. In the midst of the troubles of 1579, for example, the town secretary Jan van Hout commissioned his friend, the Haarlem humanist Dirck Volckertz Coornhert, to author a ringing defence of the ecclesiastical powers of the magistracy:

> No one may deny that the magistrate is appointed by God for the defense of the pious and the chastisement of evil. So also may no one deny that sometimes wolves in the guise of shepherds may slink into the churches (…). [The magistrate] must always make lawful acquaintance of the persons that men will place as shepherds in the church or sheepfold of Christ, in order to prevent the lambs of Christ from being ruled by wolves.[26]

The magistracy, according to its own understanding, was tasked with defending the public church in the interests of all its members. In particular, this included guarding the church against dangers from within, from the wolves who threatened the flock. And in these militant Calvinists, Van Hout and his colleagues in the *gerecht* perceived a potential threat to civic harmony. The Calvinists were men, they feared, who were intent on setting up a new kind of religious tyranny, replete with 'inquisition' and the coercion of consciences. Having just recently rejected the authority of the Catholic Church in the previous decade, Leiden's magistrates reacted warily to the Calvinists' claims to being an autonomous church that accepted magisterial support but rejected magisterial supervision. For their part, the militant Reformed, especially the minister Pieter Cornelisz, having endured decades of harassment and persecution from civil authorities before their legitimation in 1572, were in turn equally

26 Coornhert, *Justificatie des magistraets*, fol. Bvi.

suspicious of the city government. Pieter Cornelisz and his radical brethren believed that because theirs was the 'true' church, the church re-formed, they were due their public and privileged status. But since the purity of that church had to be guarded lest God's honour be besmirched, they also insisted that it could not simply accept all burghers as members.

In the long term, Leiden during the republican era would come to an ecclesiastical settlement that worked largely to the magistracy's advantage. By 1620, after the National Synod of Dordrecht had ejected the Arminian minority and imposed Calvinist orthodoxy in the Reformed Church, Leiden's church and town hall had worked out an arrangement: although full membership in the public church, which included partaking in the sacrament of communion, remained subject to consistorial examination and discipline, all Leideners were welcome to attend services and preaching. Likewise, the public church was willing to baptise and marry non-members, if somewhat grudgingly, though Leideners could also marry in the town hall.[27] Church governance would be subject to magisterial oversight, especially the calling of ministers and elders. In this way the Reformed church fulfilled its status as a civic church while keeping its disciplinary function over its membership, and the magistracy continued to supervise while granting the Reformed congregation a degree of autonomy. Consistory and magistracy would have no more serious conflicts with each other for the rest of the history of the Dutch Republic; the Reformed Church had in effect been tamed of its earlier bristly defiance. The price it paid to be the city's privileged church was acceptance of magisterial supervision, an arrangement that, over the long term, served it well; as noted earlier, close to three-quarters of Leideners had professed Reformed Protestantism by the early nineteenth century.

Adding to the complexity of the place and role of the Reformed community within Leiden's ecclesiastical and political landscape was the presence of the University in the city, starting in 1575. By the seventeenth century the University of Leiden was emerging as one of the most important academies in Protestant Europe. In particular it became a centre of Reformed theology, training future preachers for the Dutch Republic and beyond. And theological disputes could be a source of headaches for the Leiden city government. Several of its earliest, most staunchly Calvinist theologians on the faculty, such as Lambertus Danaeus and Adrianus Saravia, got embroiled in church controversies about discipline in the 1580s and left the faculty under a cloud.[28]

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27 Pettegree, 'Confessionalization', 113.

28 Fatio, *Nihil pulchrius ordine*; Nijenhuis, *Adrianus Saravia*, 46–109; Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 138–40.

In 1609 the theological faculty became a source of intra-Reformed friction, as the theologians Jacobus Arminius and Franciscus Gomarus argued over the nature of predestination, a disagreement that spilled out beyond the academic community into a controversy that embroiled the Reformed Church not just in Leiden but the rest of Holland for most of the 1610s.[29]

The attendant political controversy led the stadtholder Maurits of Nassau, who favoured the strict Calvinists, to purge the Leiden magistracy of its Arminian supporters in a coup in 1618.[30] In the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Dutch academic establishment was plagued by disputes between supporters of the liberal theologian Johannes Cocceius in Leiden and his stricter counterpart Gisbertus Voetius in Utrecht. The Leiden magistracy supported the Cocceians in church and university, a stance with got them in trouble with the court of the Prince of Orange, which supported the Voetians, in the 1750s.[31] The University added greatly to the city's renown, but squabbles among its theological scholars would prove to be a thorn in the side of the magistracy throughout the republican period.

4 Managing Confessional Minorities

If the public church, with all its attendant privileges and protections, was subject to magisterial oversight, then confessional minorities were monitored equally carefully. Although the Leiden magistracy declared itself committed to freedom of conscience, it did not hesitate to constrain the city's private, subaltern religious communities when it believed they were troubling civic tranquillity or disobeying ecclesiastical edicts. For these communities the regime of toleration was truly a regime, a system of (often unarticulated) rules and constrictions intended to confine their religious activities to private spaces. They were tolerated – in the barebones, early modern sense of that word – by a government that could take away their liberties if it so chose. Toleration was a relationship of power, not of liberty, and as such could be protean and unpredictable. The Leiden magistracy could and did exercise its legal authority over religious minorities when it saw fit to do so.

This could be a rather bumpy process, because the magistracy effectively made up its own rules for enforcing ecclesiastical policy as it went along, and

29 Van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen*, 243–55.

30 Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 421–49.

31 Van Poelgeest, 'Cocceianen en Voetianen in Leiden'; Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 365–88.

non-Reformed religious minorities sometimes suffered as a consequence. The magistrates' management of religious diversity was largely pragmatic in nature, and they seldom explained their thinking behind it. There was one occasion, however, when the town government felt the need to articulate and explain its religious policy. In 1595 the *gerecht* summoned to its chambers the Lutheran preacher Bernard Muykens, to question him about a growing conflict within his small congregation that had become public.[32] A serious controversy over the doctrine of original sin had erupted within the large Lutheran congregation of Amsterdam, and echoes of the split were felt by their co-religionists in Leiden. Members of the two camps jeered each other in confrontations on Leiden's streets, and Muykens was accosted and heckled during worship. Families within the Lutheran community grew divided on the issue, and the threat of violence was in the air. The Reformed consistory complained sharply to the magistracy about their confessional rivals and their disorderly conduct.[33]

Things got so out of hand that the Leiden magistrates took the unusual step of temporarily banning the Lutherans' gatherings, or 'inappropriate conventicles', as they called them. This was a power they seldom exercised, and it formed part of a larger anti-Lutheran campaign enacted in the Republic's cities during the 1590s.[34] So strongly did they feel about this issue that they had an official statement about religious freedom written into their official journal of record:

> [anyone who does not want to join the public church] may live his belief freely, enjoying the freedom of the fatherland in the stillness of his home without anyone's aggravation, without any interrogation to endure, but at the same time it is not permitted that three or four persons set up a religion as they see fit, with services and the use of public preaching, the celebration of the sacraments, the collection and distribution of alms and such practices, with no other goal but uproar and disturbance of the peace (…)[35]

For Leiden's city fathers, the crux of the problem was not belief but praxis. Leideners were free to believe as they wished in private, a metaphorical space

32 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 47, f. 181v-183r, Gerechtsdagboek C (26 May 1595). The entire entry is printed in Overvoorde, 'Uit de eerste jaren van de Luthersche gemeente', 51–56; Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 172–73.

33 Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 173–74.

34 Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 374–75.

35 Overvoorde, 'Uit de eerste jaren van de Luthersche gemeente', 52–53.

linked to the home, but acting together on those beliefs 'as they see fit' (as the above statement put it) was not to be allowed, especially if such actions led to tumult and disorder. It was actions that the burgomasters insisted they were forbidding, not belief. In this way they argued they were conforming to the stipulations of the Union of Utrecht, which permitted freedom of conscience but also allowed local authorities to regulate religion. Undergirding this justification was an interesting distinction between private and public, the boundary which seemed, at least to the magistracy's thinking, to lie on the threshold between home and street, between domicile and city. It was a domestic boundary but also a visual one.[36]

Freedom did not extend beyond the confines of one's dwelling; as soon as collectivities and communal spaces became involved, and as soon as outsiders could noticed religious activity, then the magistracy could impose its mandate for order. It was the magistracy's obligation to oversee and protect these common civic spaces, for these spaces lay, in effect, under the jurisdiction of the regime of toleration.[37] Thus, according to their own thinking, the magistrates were correct in imposing a ban on Lutheran worship in the city, for as long as that worship caused upheaval it endangered public space. The temperamental Lutheran preacher Bernard Muykens resisted the ban, however, and continued to preach privately, prompting the *gerecht* to take further drastic action by expelling him from the city in early 1596. As the town sheriff escorted Muykens through the city gate, the Lutheran preacher loudly and repeatedly denounced 'the tyranny of the Calvinists'.[38] As far as he was concerned, the blame for his plight lay with his confessional rivals.

The competition for souls among the various confessions was another dynamic of the religious diversity of early modern Leiden. As long as the regime of toleration allowed non-Reformed Christians to worship privately within the city walls, and as long as the public Reformed Church set high standards for membership, some rivalry among the city's different confessions was perhaps inevitable. Nevertheless, the city's Reformed leadership frequently complained to the city fathers about the activities of non-Reformed Leideners and the challenge those groups posed to the authority of the 'true' church, especially when other confessions tried to lure away church members. Sometimes the magistracy heeded those complaints, as was the case for the Lutherans in the 1590s, but their compliance was not automatic. The magistracy enforced the regime of toleration as it saw fit.

36 Kaplan, 'Fictions of Privacy', 1042–44.
37 Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics*, 11–12.
38 Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 172.

5 Catholic Recalcitrance

The confessional sub-culture that suffered the greatest amount of Reformed venom was the city's Catholics. This was, to Reformed Protestants, precisely the church which had needed to be re-formed, and the fact that Catholic 'idolatry' and 'superstition' were allowed to continue in the city after the regime change of 1572 grieved and enraged them considerably. Though Catholicism was disestablished, by the first quarter of the seventeenth century it had flourished in private spaces, thanks to the diligent efforts of both devoted lay Catholics and the priests of the Holland Mission, set up by Rome in 1592 to minister to the Catholic faithful in lands ruled by heretics (*in partibus infidelium.*)[39] Throughout the early modern period, but especially during the seventeenth century, the Reformed Church in Leiden frequently hectored, petitioned and lobbied for the Leiden *gerecht* to do something about the persistence of Catholic worship inside the city. Technically the Republic's placards outlawed any such worship, but Leiden's regents, like many of their confreres across the country, usually looked the other way as long as that worship confined itself to the private sphere. By the mid-1600s, Leiden's Catholics were meeting in some thirty or so different meeting places.[40] This situation infuriated the city's Reformed consistory, which complained vociferously and recurrently about what it called 'popish impudence' (*paapse stoutigheid*). In addition to their objection to Catholic doctrine, the Reformed also feared that the priests of the Holland Mission were working actively to lure vulnerable believers away from the 'true' church; in short, they worried about Catholic competition.

The Leiden *gerecht* only heeded Reformed complaints about Catholic activity sporadically and irregularly at best. On a limited number of occasions throughout the republican period, the city sheriff, either on his own initiative or at magisterial direction, raided Catholic conventicles and arrested priests. Sometimes, as was the case with sheriff Lot Huigensz Gaal in 1612, the Catholics paid the law off either with substantial fines or recognition money.[41] For a twenty-year period between the 1620s and 1640s, when the Dutch war with Spain resumed after the Twelve Years' Truce and Catholics were tainted by their religious affiliation with the enemy, legal measures taken against them were stepped up. The then-sheriff, Willem de Bondt, who served between 1619

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39 Parker, *Faith on the Margins*, 112–89.

40 Sloots, *De minderbroeders*, 196.

41 Dusseldorpius, *Uittreksel*, 428.

and 1646 and was an ardent Calvinist, prosecuted Catholic gatherings with frequency and enthusiasm.[42]

A good example of the sheriff's sectarian zeal can be found in the case he brought against three Catholic spiritual maidens, or *klopjes,* in 1644. *Klopjes* or *kloppen* were Dutch Catholic laywomen who lived celibate lives in devout communities, as if they were members of a religious order. They often aided the priests of the Holland Mission in their sacramental and pastoral labours.[43] The sisters Hendrine, Hester and Machtelt, all scions of the aristocratic Van Santhorst family, stood accused of maintaining in their home on the Breestraat an altar space before which 'papistical masses and other popish superstitions' were celebrated. In addition to that violation of the placards, the sheriff also charged them with breaking the municipal statute that forbade more than two *klopjes* to live together, as well as with physically preventing the entry of law officers into the house while they secreted away their sacramental objects.[44] The sisters coolly responded to the charges by claiming that the only religious objects the sheriff could find in their home were candles and some paintings 'hanging here and there, which we have never understood to be forbidden'.[45] As for being *kloppen*, they blandly insisted they were just sisters living together, no different than 'any other unmarried persons'.[46] To the charge that they refused the sheriff immediate entry into their home, they responded that they had been preoccupied with their ailing sister Machtelt, who 'would have been ashamed to have the gentlemen gather around her bed'. Surely the sheriff could not fault them that as 'honourable daughters' they would do everything physically possible to keep any men, however honest, from coming into their bedrooms.[47] By playing the card of female honour, adding a heavy dose of disingenuousness, the sisters Van Santhorst thus defended themselves against religious persecution. Nevertheless, they were banned from the city for six years for the crime of housing a hidden church (*schuilkerk*) on their premises.[48] This was an unusually harsh penalty, and may have reflected the heightened political atmosphere in the closing years of the war with Catholic Spain, but it may also have reflected the magistracy's insistence that its authority in all matters religious be obeyed.

42 Blok, *Geschiedenis eener Hollandsche stad*, 3:304–5.
43 Monteiro, *Geestelijke maagden*, 49–121; Spaans, *De Levens der Maechden*, 35–52.
44 Hoogland, 'Drie klopjes voor het Gerecht'.
45 Hoogland, 73.
46 Hoogland, 74.
47 Hoogland, 75–76.
48 Hoogland, 73. On hidden churches, see Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, 177–83.

During his career sheriff Willem de Bondt enforced the placard against private Catholic worship relatively stringently, but over the entire republican period the city's upholding of this rule was far from consistent. De Bondt himself died in 1646, and after his tenure some of the confessional urgency seemed to lessen. Persecution of Leiden Catholics persisted into the 1650s, with the head of the Holland Mission lamenting their situation as 'monstrous'.[49] In the latter part of the seventeenth century, however, magisterial attempts to suppress Catholic worship largely quietened after the prosecutions of the previous decades. This may have been partly due to the end of the war with Spain in 1648, when the external confessional threat to the Republic largely receded. But it may also reflect the Leiden magistracy's success in enforcing its regime of toleration against the most recalcitrant of the minority confessions. After 1660, this enforcement no longer seemed necessary as Leiden's Catholics acquiesced to their status under magisterial ecclesiastical policy. The way for the regime of toleration to preserve its authority was through both persecution and toleration.[50]

Thus, when Leiden's Lutherans in the 1590s and its Catholics in the 1620s-1650s disrupted public order or defied magisterial authority, the *gerecht* had few scruples about applying the religious placards to forbid worship in order to keep the peace. The *gerecht* would constrain religious practice whenever it was perceived to cause a problem, but otherwise was inclined to manage the city's confessional coexistence rather than squelch it. In this sense, the religious minority the Leiden magistracy found most congenial and cooperative were the Mennonites or *Doopsgezinden*. To judge from their relative absence from early modern Leiden's judicial or magisterial archives, they may well have proven to be the city's 'model minority', at least from the civic point of view. The Mennonites of the Dutch Republic, who were divided across at least four different congregations, mostly segregated themselves from the larger municipal society, worshipped quietly and privately, and did their best to draw as little attention to themselves as possible.[51]

Leiden's Mennonites were no different in this regard, and they were fairly few in number, so the magistracy gave their beliefs as much legal and political leeway as it could. Thus any Mennonite who wished to become a citizen (*poorter*) of the city but could not swear an oath to do so because of his beliefs was allowed by the *gerecht* to make a solemn promise of loyalty instead.[52]

49 Van Lommel, 'Relatio seu descriptio status religionis catholicae', 87.
50 Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics*, 117.
51 Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente*, 98.
52 Versprille, 'Het Leidsche poorterschap', 99.

Likewise, Mennonite couples could marry each other with promises 'to live in all unity, love and devotion according to God's institution' rather than vows before those aldermen tasked with solemnising marriages.[53] When one of the Mennonite congregations purchased a house on the Pieterskerkstraat in 1613 with an eye to turning it into a church, the *gerecht* consented, as long as no worship services were visible from the street and thus could not offend public sensibilities.[54] The Mennonites were in effect the perfect citizens of the regime of toleration, obeying the rules, not making trouble, and industriously contributing to the prosperity of the city.

And so the regime of toleration, the Dutch Republic's ecclesiastical settlement, took hold and matured in Leiden in the early modern period. Leideners of diverse faiths learned to live with each other, though the Reformed consistory continued to complain to the magistracy about the sufferance of other Christian congregations. And the consistory's disciplinary mechanisms would intervene vigorously when one of its own strayed into other confessions. When church member Maritgen Jansz reportedly began attending Catholic mass in 1639, for example, the preachers and elders summoned her to explain herself. She said she preferred the Catholic Church in part because in the Reformed Church the sacrament of communion did not have 'the body and blood of Christ', a reference to the Catholic doctrine of the real presence in the eucharist. The consistory sternly warned her to mend her ways and offered to instruct her in doctrine, even in the presence of the priest who had tried to convert her. A few months later she returned to the Reformed fold after marrying another church member.[55] Mixed marriages, which were not frequent but did occasionally happen, could help the Reformed cause, but they could also be problematic for the consistory if one spouse tried to lure the other away from the public church or when children were involved. In 1586 the consistory successfully called in the magistracy to intervene when Maeyken Robaes, the Mennonite wife of Reformed Church member Dionys van de Walle, fled to Delft and Haarlem with her child in order to prevent the infant's baptism, apparently with the connivance of Leiden's Flemish Mennonite community. The Leiden municipal court ordered the congregation to pay court costs as well as direct compensation to Van de Walle.[56] This was a rare instance of the magistracy heeding consistorial complaints and taking direct legal action, mostly both to protect the father's rights and to prevent further conflict between confessions.

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53 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0501A, no. 46, f. 328v-329r, Gerechtsdagboek B (15 July 1593).

54 Le Poole, *Bijdragen tot de kennis van het kerkelijk leven*, 39–40.

55 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0511B, no. 3, Kerkenraadsacta (24 June 1639 and 16 September 1639).

56 ELO, NL-LdnRAL-0508, no. 3+3, f. 56r-58v, Crimineel vonnisboek (27 September 1586).

6 Conclusion

For Leiden during the republican era, religious diversity meant the policing of religious difference. After its initial troubles with the Reformed Church, the city government of Leiden settled into a regime of toleration that superintended all religious communities, public and private, that would last until revolutionary armies invaded the country at the end of the eighteenth century and introduced far more radical confessional arrangements. Leiden was not exceptional in this regard; its trajectory of religious diversification was similar to that of cities across the Dutch Republic. Other major towns in the Republic had similarly variegated confessional populations, and all magistracies had to grapple with the challenges that diversity posed for municipal peace and concord. They all created their own versions of the regime of toleration, with varying degrees of enforcement of the religious placards. One distinctive aspect of Leiden's experience, however, was the conflict over church polity that erupted after the Reformed Church was established in the 1570s; only the cities of Utrecht and Gouda had similarly intense battles over ecclesiastical autonomy with recalcitrant Reformed consistories. These towns became the exceptions that proved the rule of generally mutual collaboration between town magistracies and Reformed congregations.

The religious images of Leiden during the republican era were manifold, complicated and even contradictory. A superficial glance would suggest a solidly Reformed city, where the old medieval Pieterskerk and Hooglandse kerk and the resplendently new classicist (where the pulpit now stood central, as befitted Protestant worship) Marekerk (Figure 12.2) were bastions of Reformed worship, stripped and devoid of 'idolatrous' altars and images, where God's word was preached decently and in order. Another look would reveal a city publicly and ostentatiously committed to the principle of liberty, which had heroically withstood a tyrannical siege and welcomed religious refugees of many kinds, including English Separatists and French Huguenots. This was the Leiden celebrated by Johannes le Francq van Berkhey. A third examination shows the city as a centre of learned theology, home to one of the oldest universities in Protestant Europe.[57] All of these images are, to a certain extent, true, but they are incomplete without also recognising the complicated religious diversity of the city's population in this era. An even closer look exposes a superficially Reformed city that was also home to significant confessional minorities, especially Catholics and Lutherans, all of which were carefully

57 Kooi, 'Religionis Ergo', 35.

FIGURE 12.2 Marekerk in the eighteenth century
SOURCE: ERFGOED LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN, PV_PV23482

superintended by the city government. This religious diversity, and its management, would be a hallmark of Leiden's population well into the modern era.

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CHAPTER 13

Migration and Cultural Transfer in Early Modern Leiden

Alisa van de Haar and Johannes Müller

Histories of migration are often told as narratives of hardship, expulsion and marginalisation, in many cases for good reasons.[1,2] One often neglected aspect is the cultural impact of migration and mobility and the ways in which they shape, and often connect, host societies and places of origin. The early modern Netherlandish diaspora is a good example of how early modern displacement could lead to new opportunities for both the migrants themselves and for their host society, and also to fruitful exchanges of culture, knowledge and technology between European cities, regions and territories.[3]

Over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Leiden, and other cities in the province of Holland, welcomed thousands of migrants from the Southern Low Countries and northern France. They had left their homes for economic, political or confessional reasons, most of which were related to the Dutch Revolt, the uprising of Netherlandish subjects against their sovereign Philip II.[4] Among the migrants were many Protestants from the provinces of Flanders and Brabant, who sought refuge from religious persecution in Leiden, which had officially adopted Protestantism in 1572.

Because of the influx of large numbers of migrants, Leiden's demography changed considerably over a matter of decades: it is estimated that the city went from c. 12,000 inhabitants in 1581 to c. 45,000 in 1622.[5] Its high immigration rate placed Leiden among the fastest growing cities in Holland. This

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1 Part of the research for this chapter was conducted within the project 'Languages as Lifelines: The Multilingual Coping Strategies of Refugees from the Early Modern Low Countries' (2022–2026), funded by the Dutch Research Council, grant number VI.Veni.211F.017.

2 See, e.g. Bade, *Migration*; Terpstra, *Religious Refugees*; Lucassen and Lucassen, *Winnaars en verliezers*.

3 On cultural transfer and the exchange of culture, knowledge and technology in early modern Europe, see Höfele and Von Koppenfels, *Renaissance Go-Betweens*; Burke and Po-Chia Hsia, *Cultural Translation*.

4 On the – often interconnected – reasons for migration, see Vermeylen, 'Greener Pastures?'

5 Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 42–53; Noordam, 'Leiden als ideale stad', 17; Van Maanen, 'De Leidse bevolkingsaantallen', 63.

demographic expansion had strong repercussions for the physical urban space: in 1611, an entire district was constructed on the north side of the city to harbour its new inhabitants.[6] Extensive archival and prosopographical research has been undertaken since the 1970s and 1980s and provides important insights into the places of origin and the occupations of the immigrants.[7] These findings reveal the principal 'pull factors' of Leiden and show, at the same time, the diversity among the migrants themselves: on the one hand, many textile workers came to the city, which was known for its cloth industry, while on the other, the foundation of the university in 1575 attracted intellectuals, poets, printers, scholars and teachers.[8] They brought their experience with them, both enriching the city and learning from local practices and knowledge through mutually beneficial processes of exchange. The diversity of the immigrant population is also reflected in their places of origin: while most migrants came from Flanders – notably Hondschoote, Ypres, and Belle – a smaller but still significant group had its origins in Brabant – especially Antwerp – and Hainaut.[9] In recent decades, scholarly attention has shifted from quantitative to qualitative approaches to studying this migratory movement: research has been done on the cultures of memory surrounding the displacement of the diasporic community and on their (self)representation.[10]

This chapter explores the ways in which immigrants of different occupations managed to become an integral part of the various professional, religious, political, cultural and social communities of Leiden and how they shaped the city's cultural, economic and intellectual life. It examines how they fashioned new identities for themselves and negotiated their Southern Netherlandish migrant heritage in local and communal settings in their new hometown. Three key groups that define the demographics of the migratory movement into sixteenth-century Leiden are discussed, each belonging to a specific cultural occupational domain and reflecting the aforementioned pull factors: manual labour (textile workers); cultural life (writers and artists); and intellectual labour (publishers, scholars and schoolmasters). For each of these groups, the chapter will look at the ways in which they engaged with local civic identities and consider how their presence fostered cultural transfer and interregional exchange. Finally, this chapter will address the frictions

6 Van Oerle, *Leiden*; Taverne, *In 't land van belofte*.
7 Briels, *Zuid-Nederlanders in de Republiek*, 125–34; Lesger, 'Migrantenstromen'.
8 Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, 83–88; Briels, 'Zuidnederlandse immigratie'; Lucassen and De Vries, 'Leiden als middelpunt'.
9 Briels, *Zuid-Nederlanders in de Republiek*, 133.
10 Pollmann, 'Brabanters'; Müller, *Exile Memories and the Dutch Revolt*.

that arose in the midst of Leiden's dramatic demographic expansion: in some cases, it proved difficult to negotiate shared civic identities or to create a sense of belonging and community that connected migrants and non-migrants. As we argue, newcomers used various rhetorical and narrative strategies to bridge this divide, and we will explore some key examples of these.

It is relevant to note that Leiden's early modern civic society was not only divided between a community of locals and new networks of immigrants that were trying to create a shared identity: the entire urban society was made up from partially overlapping, and in some cases concentric, smaller communities with permeable borders. An individual could belong, simultaneously, to multiple communities on a social, confessional and professional level, such as the trans-local and local community of immigrants, a confessional community of believers, and an artisanal community, e.g. a guild.[11] Each community would be responsible for its own members but also remain accountable to the municipal authorities. Each subgroup was thus marked by a constant (re)negotiation between the in-group and the civic administration, and thus by continuous exchange.

1 Migrants and the Textile Industry

While elite migrants such as merchants, scholars or clerics left the most archival traces, sources and written documents, the largest group of Leiden's early modern immigrants consisted of textile workers and labourers in related crafts. The influx of Flemish and Walloon migrants was a notable stimulus to the establishment of Leiden as an international textile hub.[12] While there had been a textile industry in Leiden since the late Middle Ages, the first half of the sixteenth century marked a period of decline. The expertise of skilled immigrant labourers was therefore highly valued, and some entrepreneurs actively tried to attract migrants.[13] The potential for recruiting Flemish textile workers was soon discovered, and from the late 1570s onwards the Leiden magistrate issued contracts to exiles from Colchester and allowed them to settle in the city.[14] Other textile workers came from the Netherlandish communities of

11 Halvorson and Spierling, *Defining Community*.
12 Lucassen and De Vries, 'Leiden als middelpunt', 153–56.
13 Noordam, 'Leiden als ideale stad'; Lesger, 'Migrantenstromen'; Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 1:70–72.
14 Koppenol, *Leids heelal*, 29; Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 42–43; Noordam, *Geringde buffels*, 9.

Gloucester and Norwich, as well as from West-Flanders, for example Hondschoote, a centre of the wool industry in the Low Countries.[15] It is likely due to Leiden's reputation in the field of textile production that the city attracted more migrants from Flanders than Brabant. Brabant migrants, in particular those involved in commercial activities, moved instead to the trading hub of Amsterdam.[16]

These numerous Southern migrants played an important role in Leiden's spectacular population growth in the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries. Between 1574 and 1675, Leiden grew into the second city of the Dutch Republic, and during the main period of immigration from the Southern Netherlands its population almost quadrupled.[17] It became Holland's most important production centre of cloth thanks to the involvement of immigrants, but the textile industry in other cities, such as most notably Gouda, also benefitted from the influx of migrants.[18]

As in most cities and territories in early modern Europe, Leiden's textile production was organised into local corporations. Next to a couple of guilds there were the typical Leiden *neringen*, which were vertically organised corporations that defined and implemented regulations for product quality but also established labour conditions within their respective trades.[19] The influx of newcomers could challenge the position of the traditional guilds and *neringen*. These organisations were often focused on their own communities, and local citizenship was usually a prerequisite for guild membership.[20] Migrants were often able to buy citizenship and thereby get access to the local labour market, but they could be accused of trying to undermine local guilds or *neringen* by producing goods outside these organisations.[21]

The relationship between migrants and the guilds and *neringen* could become a topic of debate – and not only in the short term. As textile merchant Pieter de la Court argued later in the seventeenth century in several treatises, as well as in his historical account *Het welvaren van Leiden* (*The Wealth of Leiden*) from 1659, migrants had laid most of the foundations of Leiden's prosperity.[22] The local guilds and corporations were a thorn in the side of De la Court, who lamented their old and outdated rules and restrictions on trade and labour. He

15 Briels, *Zuid-Nederlanders in de Republiek*, 128, 133.
16 Briels, 118–9; Noordam, 'Nieuwkomers in Leiden'.
17 Noordam, 'Leiden als ideale stad', 17; Noordam, 'Demografische ontwikkelingen', 43–45.
18 Mijderwijk, 'Over de "wolle-laecken-volmolen"'.
19 Van Meeteren, *Op hoop van akkoord*, 95–97.
20 Ogilvie, *The European Guilds*, 100–105, 164–65.
21 Briels, *Zuid-Nederlanders in de Republiek*, 127; Asaert, *1585*, 266–68.
22 De la Court, *Het welvaren van Leiden*.

also decried them as dominated by locals who had done their best to exclude newcomers and undermine their new and innovative economic activities. In De la Court's historical panorama, Leiden had been an small, insignificant town in the later Middle Ages that only grew due to earlier immigration waves from the Southern Netherlands: from the medieval immigration of Flemings to Holland, to the migration waves during the Dutch Revolt, and the influx of refugees from war-torn Germany after 1618 and from France, Flanders and Brabant in the 1630s, Leiden owed its economic success to strangers who were initially excluded from local guilds. In order to strengthen its position, De la Court argued, the town should strip these organisations of their influence and liberalise trade and the production of local merchandise.[23]

De la Court was himself an offspring of a Flemish migrant family from Ypres, from where his father had moved to Holland. In his account, Leiden's history is largely a history of migration, and the city owed its modern shape and construction to innovative newcomers.[24] The city's wealth was thus dependent on the economic freedom it offered outsiders who brought capital and expertise. While this message served De la Court's economic outlook as a textile merchant in search of new markets and production modes, he was often reminded of his status as a second-generation migrant and insulted as 'a degenerate, stinking and rotten Walloon' by those who disagreed with his economic and political vision on civic life in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic.[25]

2 Migrants and Urban Art and Literature

On an artistic level, too, immigrants in Leiden negotiated between their southern origins and local civic identities. Among the migrants were many individuals who, back in their hometown, had participated in local chambers of rhetoric. These chambers were literary societies whose members, named *rederijkers*, discussed and practised the art of rhetoric in the vernacular, producing poetry and theatre and often participating in civic festivities. The chambers united individuals – mostly men – from the middle and higher classes. Among their ranks were schoolmasters and painters but also brewers and drapers, who thus practiced literary activities in a community setting alongside their professional lives and engagements. Such chambers were also

23 Weststeijn, *Het welvaren van Leiden*, 159.
24 De la Court, *Het welvaren van Leiden*, 43.
25 Voetius, *Den ver-resenen Barnevelt*, fol. B3. For more pamphlets that used xenophobic rhetoric against De la Court, see Weststeijn, *Het welvaren van Leiden*, 31–33.

present in Holland, and their archives show that they welcomed rhetoricians with a migrant background. Arjan van Dixhoorn, who studied the northern chambers extensively, suggests that the chambers offered valuable network opportunities to the immigrants exactly because they united men from diverse professional and social backgrounds.[26] After the Siege of Leiden, the city had one chamber, named *The White Columbine* and founded in the late fifteenth century. It welcomed various migrants and became an important hub for literary exchange between poets from the Southern and Northern Low Countries.[27]

While it was thus possible for migrants to join a local rhetoricians' chamber, in 1590 a group of migrants asked the city council of Leiden for permission to found their own chamber. The municipal archives explicitly state that the request was made by the 'Flemish rhetoricians', and it is emphasised that they belonged to the 'Flemish nation'.[28] It is therefore likely that the decision to found a separate migrant chamber was at least in part based on the wish to create a separate society uniting people who shared a geographical origin and diasporic experience. In agreement with the magistrate, they created the chamber *The White Lily* (later renamed *The Orange Lily*), tailored specifically to Flemish immigrants.[29] The foundation of this chamber allowed migrant rhetoricians to meet in an atmosphere of shared experiences of displacement, but *The Orange Lily* was far from closed off to local civic identity: they shared their stories of war, loss and flight with Leiden's inhabitants, and also negotiated the integration of the migrant community in Leiden through their literary output. Leiden was not the only city where immigrants founded their own chamber of rhetoric: in 1598, a group of primarily Brabant migrants in Amsterdam created *The White Lavender*.[30]

The Flemish chamber of Leiden played an important and tripartite role when it came to promoting Leiden's communal identity: first, the literary productions of the chamber – distributed orally, in manuscript or in print – provided a means for this particular group of immigrants to present themselves to their new city of residence. Its artistic leader Jacob Duym (himself a Brabanter), for instance, published a collection of plays in 1606, in which he elaborated on the bravery with which he had defended the fatherland and the hardships he had endured, thus presenting himself (and, implicitly, his fellow refugees) as a patriot who had suffered so the Northern Low Countries could

26 Van Dixhoorn, *Lustige geesten*, 119–20.
27 Koppenol, *Leids heelal*, 104; Koppenol, 'Jacob Duym'.
28 Van Boheemen and Van der Heijden, *Retoricaal memoriaal*, 402.
29 Mak, 'Jacob Celosse'; Briels, 'Reyn genuecht'; Koppenol, 'Een wereld apart?'
30 Smits-Veldt, 'Het Brabantse gezicht'.

be free.[31] The collection, titled *Een ghedenck-boeck, het welck ons leert aen al het quaet en den grooten moetwil van de Spaingnaerden* (*A Memorial Book that Teaches Us About the Great Evils of the Spaniards*), contained six plays on the Dutch Revolt.[32] One of these plays depicted the Siege of Leiden and reserved a crucial role for the Flemish refugees who appeared in it: as Duym makes clear, these people were among the most loyal members of the Northern Netherlandish resistance against the Habsburg 'Spanish' authorities, whose tyranny they had experienced themselves in the South.[33]

Combining migrant and local identities was not uncommon among southern authors in the Leiden Flemish chamber. In particular, the annual commemorations of the Leiden Siege became occasions to inscribe migrant identity into local memories and identities.[34] For these commemorative festivities, *The Orange Lily* annually contributed poems and songs about Leiden's Relief (*Leidens Ontzet*). The chamber was paid by the city, for example, for its contribution to the commemoration of the end of the Siege of Leiden in 1592. In another play about the Siege, migrant writer Jacob van Zevecote expressed the gratitude of the refugees to their new home towns, to which they felt strong commitment and loyalty, in similar terms.[35] Nostalgia for Flanders is combined with praise of Holland, which has now become the true home of the refugees. This dual loyalty to both the region of origin and the host community is reflected in the fact that *The Orange Lily* was also known as the 'Flemish Chamber of Leiden' (Figure 13.1).

The chamber represented and reinforced the local identity of the city of Leiden, not only internally, by participating in local festivities in the city itself, but also externally. The Flemish chamber took part in competitions that were organised by chambers of rhetoric in other cities in Holland, such as the festival that took place in Haarlem in 1606.[36] Each chamber represented its city of origin, and both *The Orange Lily* and *The White Columbine* attended to defend Leiden's honour.

The lively festival culture of the chambers of rhetoric resulted in strong interurban networks, making them important sites of interregional exchange

31 On Duym and his self-presentation, see Koppenol, 'Jacob Duym'.

32 Duym, *Een ghedenck-boeck*.

33 Once Duym had lost hope of a Habsburg defeat, he moved to Muisbroek near the fort of Lillo, an external bastion of the Dutch Republic in Brabant. See Koppenol, 'Jacob Duym'.

34 On these annual commemorations, see Pollmann, *Herdenken, herinneren, vergeten*.

35 Parente, 'Latin and the Transmission of the Vernacular'.

36 On this festival, see Ramakers, 'De "const" getoond'; Müller, 'Orthodoxie jenseits der Konfessionen?'

FIGURE 13.1 The entry of the Flemish chamber The Orange Lily from Leiden into Haarlem
SOURCE: Optocht door de Vlaamse rederijkerskamer De Orange Lelie / De Witte Lelie uit Leiden, 1607, anonymous. Copper engraving, 200 mm × 430 mm
RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM, RP-P-OB-80.859C

and cultural transfer.[37] In the second half of the sixteenth century, rhetoricians from the Southern Low Countries started experimenting with new poetic forms in Dutch, such as the sonnet and iambic verse, inspired by poetic trends in France. Both through the networks of the chambers and the activities of southern individuals moving north, these literary experiments also reached Holland, and especially the closely linked intellectual circles of Leiden and Haarlem.[38] Leiden's city secretary, Jan van Hout, was among the first to write Dutch sonnets in the North.[39] It has been suggested that his poetic innovations had been inspired by southern refugees with whom he had maintained close contacts.[40] Even after Antwerp had fallen back into Habsburg hands in 1585 and many rhetoricians had left the South, rhetoricians' networks were maintained across the whole of the Low Countries: in 1620, a festival was organised in Mechelen, and chambers from Flanders, Brabant, Holland and Zeeland participated, including *The Orange Lily*.[41]

37 Van Dixhoorn, Mareel, and Ramakers, 'The Relevance of the Netherlandish Rhetoricians'.
38 Smith, 'Paix et poésie'.
39 Bostoen, *Hart voor Leiden*, 101–3.
40 Koppenol, *Leids heelal*, 180–81.
41 Thieullier, *De schadt-kiste der philosophen ende poeten*.

In Leiden's learned circles, further experiments with new literary forms in the vernacular were conducted. Among the most influential were the writings of Daniel Heinsius, the son of Protestant refugees from Ghent. During his studies at Leiden's university, he had developed an interest in classical languages, and he was later appointed professor at his *alma mater*. He wrote a large poetic oeuvre in Latin and Greek, sometimes using the pseudonym 'Theocritus a Ganda' (Theocritus from Ghent). Although he had left Ghent at a very young age and was firmly embedded in the Leiden network of humanists, Heinsius consciously referred to his southern roots through his pseudonym. He applied his extensive knowledge of classical literature in his Dutch poetry, producing vernacular poems in classical forms such as odes and elegies in iambic verse.

Heinsius' experiments would have an impact not only on the Dutch literary culture of the Dutch Republic, but also on German literature. His works were highly appreciated by Martin Opitz, who modelled his *Buch der teutschen Poeterey* (*Book of German Poetry*), the most influential prescriptive-poetical work in German-speaking Europe until the eighteenth century, on Heinsius' poetical ideas.[42] Heinsius, having lived through migration himself, and impacting German literature through his Dutch poetry and the interregional Republic of Letters through his Latin and Greek works, is an exemplary case of how complex the web of early modern cultural transfer often was.

While Flemish and Brabant artists had less impact on Leiden's cultural life than those of other Holland cities,[43] Leiden's *Guild of Saint Luke* also counted migrants and second-generation migrants among its members, for example Gabriël Metsu and David Bailly, whose parents were migrants from Hainault and Flanders, or Matthijs Naiveu, Pieter du Bourdieu and Edward Collier, whose family backgrounds are less clear. The town was also an important place for tapestry weavers. This craft had undergone a process of transfer similar to the textile industry, and Holland had become a destination for Flemish tapestry weavers from Oudenaarde, Bruges and other places over the course of the seventeenth century – even before the Dutch Revolt.[44] Tapestries made by Flemish migrants decorated Leiden's town hall and it is likely that the maker of the iconic tapestry *The Siege of Leiden*, which is now kept at Museum de Lakenhal, also had migrant roots.[45]

42 Rothmund, *Martin Opitz*; Deneire, 'Daniel Heinsius'; Yüksel, 'Daniel Heinsius als Leitfigur'.
43 Van der Linden, 'Coping with Crisis'.
44 Hartkamp-Jonxis, 'Flemish Tapestry Weavers', 16–18.
45 Asaert, *1585*, 285; Hartkamp-Jonxis, 'Flemish Tapestry Weavers', 18.

3 Making a career out of displacement: Schoolmasters, Publishers, Scholars

Leiden was a city of letters, especially after the founding of the university in 1575, and many migrants made a living by using their education and language skills. Among the migrants from the Southern Low Countries who moved to Leiden in the second half of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth were, strikingly, many schoolmasters. Johan Briels was able to find archival traces of 418 teachers from the South who moved north, and no fewer than 112 of them settled in Leiden, versus sixty in Amsterdam.[46] With its university and many schools that provided students opportunities for higher learning, Leiden truly was a centre for education.

It seems that it was, at least in part, the presence of the university from 1575 onward that attracted migrant teachers to the city.[47] In a school book she published after moving to Leiden, schoolmistress Magdalena Valery claims that she opened her own school there because 'the female youth had just as much need for good, learned, and virtuous instructors and teachers as the male youth, for whom the university had been founded there'.[48] Valery thus explicitly comments on what she has to offer the city of Leiden. At the same time, however, like many other teachers who left the Southern Low Countries, Valery does not hide her background as a migrant:[49] the title page presents her as 'head of a French school for girls at Leiden', but in the main text she explains that she received her own schooling in Antwerp.[50] She negotiates a place for herself in Leiden, without ignoring her roots.

Like Magdalena Valery, many migrant teachers opened their own French schools in Leiden, where they taught reading and writing in both Dutch and French. Knowledge of French was much more common in the South than in the northern parts of the Low Countries, but it was a valuable skill.[51] French was an important *lingua franca* of interregional trade, and therefore the many schoolmasters with expertise in this language were welcomed in Leiden. Teachers required permission from the local magistrates before they could

46 Briels, 'Zuidnederlandse immigratie', 651.

47 Briels, 'Zuidnederlandse onderwijskrachten', 104.

48 Original: 'la jeunesse feminine avoit autant besoing de bonnes, doctes, & vertueuses instructrices & maitresses, qu'auroit la jeunesse masculine : Pour laquelle l'Université y estoit establie'; Valery, *La montaigne des pucelles*, pt. A2r.

49 Van de Haar, 'Beyond Nostalgia'.

50 Original: 'Maistresse d'Escole Françoise de jeunes filles en la Ville de Leyden'; Valery, *La montaigne des pucelles*, pt. A2r.

51 Van de Haar, *The Golden Mean*, chap. 2.

open a school, and the city archives show that a high number of migrants obtained it.[52]

As the most important prerequisite for becoming a French schoolmaster was a solid knowledge of the language, the educational sector offered valuable opportunities to migrants from the South, many of whom had a good command of French. Cases are known of a monk and a goldsmith from the South who, moving north, decided to establish themselves as French schoolmasters there.[53] Moreover, it was an occupation that, as Valery's case demonstrates, was available to women. As a daughter of Huguenot refugees, Valery used her native language proficiency to open her own French school for girls.[54]

The many schools opened by migrants in Leiden were important sites of both linguistic and cultural exchange. They were attended by local students as well as migrant children, who, just like their teachers, spoke one of the southern dialects of Dutch. Furthermore, the southern culture of the schoolmasters would have become apparent in the classes, as well as in certain school books: Antwerp had been an important centre for educational printing, and many migrant editors and authors brought their writings with them in order to republish them in the North. A school play in French for girls written by the migrant Peeter Heyns was thus reissued in Haarlem after the schoolmaster moved there. The play portrays two sisters living in a city that shows a clear resemblance to Antwerp, which would thus have been re-performed in a northern context.[55] Publications like these show that these displaced schoolmasters did not hide their southern roots while they were building a new reputation and publication list in the Northern Low Countries. Furthermore, they maintained a diasporic network, and frequently contributed laudatory poems to publications by other migrants. It is telling that Heyns had his play published by a fellow migrant, Gillis Rooman.

As education flourished in Leiden, so did printing: printing presses were needed to provide school books to the students who attended all levels of education in the city. The highest level of technological know-how in terms of printing was available in the South, and therefore migrants played a large role in the swift expansion of the printing press in Leiden, which has been termed 'the miracle of Leiden'.[56] In the 1570s, migrant printers largely took over the

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52 Briels, 'Zuidnederlandse onderwijskrachten', 104.
53 Briels, 123–24.
54 Van de Haar, 'Van "nimf" tot "schoolvrouw"'; Dietz, *Lettering Young Readers*, 203–37.
55 Van de Haar, 'Beyond Nostalgia'; Van de Haar, 'Both One and the Other'.
56 Hoftijzer, 'Het Leidse wonder'.

local market.[57] Only Amsterdam attracted more book printers and sellers from the Southern Low Countries.[58] The flourishing of printing in Leiden also gave impetus to the local practice of a closely related and relatively new artform in which southerners excelled: copper engraving. As printing activities were on the rise, so was the demand for skilled engravers who could provide images for the many books that were produced. The most famous and successful engraver active in Leiden in the later sixteenth century was the Antwerp-born Jacques de Gheyn, who created engraved portraits of, among others, the abovementioned Jacob Duym.[59]

The university was, of course, an important driving force behind the printing 'miracle': professors wished to publish their books; students needed them for their studies. Willem Silvius, from 's-Hertogenbosch in Brabant, was the first appointed printer of the university, although he did not print many works before his death in 1580. His successor, Christophe Plantin, however, would have an important impact on Leiden's typographical environment. Plantin, originally from France, had established himself in Antwerp in the 1550s, as he was attracted by the metropolitan status of the city. His confessional preferences remain unclear – probably intentionally, so he would not lose precious clientele on either side of the political and religious divide. In 1582, while Antwerp turned into a bulwark of the Revolt, he came to Leiden to print for the university, leaving the Antwerp workshop in the hands of his sons-in-law.[60] He would stay until 1585, when Antwerp came back under royal dominion. He was quite prolific in his Leiden years, printing high-quality works for the university as well as, for instance, chambers of rhetoric. Plantin's trajectory shows that not all migrants were religious refugees: in his case, it seems to have been a conscious commercial decision to move to Leiden.

Upon moving back south, Plantin appointed his son-in-law Frans van Raphelingen (Raphelengius) in charge of the Leiden workshop.[61] Raphelengius was a native of Lannoy (near Lille) who entertained Calvinist ideas, making Leiden a safer place for him to work than Antwerp after 1585. He arrived in January 1586 and started printing for the university. He used Plantin's famous printer's mark, the golden compass. He thus maintained a visual connection with his father-in-law's renowned workshop in Antwerp that would have stood out to the early modern reader. Raphelengius was not only a valuable asset for

57 Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers*, 83–111.
58 Briels, 17.
59 Ekkart, 'Leidse schilders', 178–79; Van Regteren Altena, *Jacques de Gheyn*.
60 Breugelmans, *Christoffel Plantijn in Leiden*.
61 Voet, 'Het Plantijnse huis te Leiden'.

the city of Leiden because of his qualities as a printer, but also because of his knowledge of multiple languages. Besides Latin and Greek, he was well-versed in Hebrew, Chaldean, Syrian and Arabic. His skills did not go unnoticed, and in the year of his arrival he was appointed Professor of Hebrew at the university, alongside his position as academic printer.

Evidently, books were not only produced in Leiden but were also sold there by booksellers operating as intermediaries between printers and their public. Louis Elsevir, who was born in Leuven and had worked for Plantin for some time, moved north for religious reasons. In 1580, he opened a book bindery and bookshop at the Rapenburg, marking the start of a family business that would last for over a century.[62] Several of his sons became important printers, and one of them was later appointed official printer of the university. It was an Elsevir who was responsible for the printing of the first edition of Galileo Galilei's *Discorsi e dimonstrazioni* in Leiden in 1638. In part because of this migrant family, Leiden's printing scene gained great international importance.

Elsevir opened his bookstore at the Rapenburg in order to be as close as possible to his clientele: university students needing study materials. Thus, as a firm Protestant, he set up shop on this street that had until shortly beforehand been dominated by a Dominican monastery. After the Siege of Leiden, this former site of Catholic worship had been confiscated by the municipal authorities and then reassigned to the university, founded in 1575.[63] This change in societal function altered the urban functioning of the Rapenburg, turning it into the city's educational heart. Instead of Dominican nuns, it was now frequented by mostly Protestant students and professors.

Indeed, in the first decades after its foundation, Leiden university employed many professors who, like Raphelengius, had left the troubled South. Before 1575, the only university in the Dutch-speaking area had been that of Leuven, in Brabant. This changed with the arrival of academic education in Leiden, but the city did rely heavily on southern immigrants to fill its various chairs.[64] For a long time, the direction of the university was even in the hands of a southerner: Justus Lipsius, who had previously worked as a corrector for Plantin's printshop and had been appointed professor of history and a rector.[65] Like his former employer, however, he would later return to the South, taking up a chair at the university of Leuven. The student population, too, was characterised by the strong presence of foreigners. Martine Zoeteman-van Pelt has

62 Dongelmans, Hoftijzer, and Lankhorst, *Boekenverkopers van Europa*, 8.

63 Van Dalen, *Rap 73*.

64 Heesakkers, *Een netwerk aan de basis*.

65 Enenkel and Heesakkers, *Lipsius in Leiden*.

calculated that until the middle of the eighteenth century, around half of the students enrolled at Leiden were not originally from the Republic. It is unclear how many of them came from the Southern Low Countries. Zoeteman-van Pelt rightfully describes Leiden university, in the first century and a half after its foundation, as an 'international university'.[66]

4 Migrants and Civic Conflict

It is hardly surprising that the accommodation of thousands of migrants within a short time period challenged local ideas about belonging and civic identity. Due to the early modern culture of communal belonging, the position and the status of migrants often needed to be negotiated. As a result, debates about belonging and identity in urban and communal settings could intersect with conflicts that were not necessarily related to matters of migration. The most prominent examples of such conflicts were the religious and political quarrels that occurred between Calvinists and non-Calvinists, first in the 1580s and then during the final years of the Twelve Years' Truce (1609–1621).[67] While the conflicts of the 1580s and the 1610s greatly impacted Leiden, they were fought all over the Northern Netherlands, and especially in Holland. In both cases, immigrants from the Southern Netherlands were often associated with Calvinist radicalism and were attacked in pamphlets, songs and other popular writings.

While both conflicts touched on a number of more fundamental doctrinal issues, they ultimately revolved around the position of religion and the public church in the new society that emerged after the revolt against the Habsburgs. During the 1580s, Reformed theologians and believers insisted on a church model in which secular authorities had little influence on clerical matters, and in which synods, classes and local consistories had the final say in the installation of ministers or in the maintenance of church discipline.[68] Their opponents favoured a more Erastian model (named after the Swiss clergyman Thomas Erastus), in which local and provincial authorities should be more closely involved in church matters, so as to implement checks on radical tendencies in the congregation. What was at stake here was not only the problem of authority but also the question of whether the public church should be either an open and inclusive body of believers or one based on an exclusive

66 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 117–19.
67 Kaplan, *Calvinists and Libertines*; Van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen*, 227.
68 Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 86–90.

model in which members had to conform to congregational discipline in order to receive the Holy Supper, one of only two sacraments that the Reformed Church still maintained.[69]

A second, and politically more consequential, conflict emerged in Leiden during the second decade of the seventeenth century. In 1604, two Leiden theology professors, Jacob Arminius and Franciscus Gomarus, a migrant from the Southern Netherlands himself, had engaged in a debate on the nature of Divine grace and justification. Gomarus argued that the Protestant principle of *sola gratia* excluded any form of human contribution to salvation. If sinners could not be redeemed because of their good deeds, a wilful decision to accept God's grace would also represent an act that at least partially contributed to the sovereign divine decision to save sinners from damnation. This decision was independent from human action and will, and salvation was thereby absolutely predestined. Arminius, representing a less strict faction in the Reformed Church, did not explicitly deny predestination but acknowledged at least some form of human agency in the process of salvation. In his view, predestination was closer to a form of foreknowledge, and so God's decision to save individuals was more based on the prescience that these people would accept the offer of salvation.[70]

That a doctrinal issue at this level of theological abstraction had such a wide resonance was not only the consequence of the central position of religious questions in the society of the Dutch Republic. The debate fully escalated around 1609, the year of Arminius' death. His followers, who were then labelled 'Arminians', and later 'Remonstrants' (after the 'Five Articles of Remonstrance' of 1610, a series of theological propositions formulated by Arminius' followers), tended to be in favour of the decision to sign a truce agreement with the southern provinces and the Habsburg government. A truce with the Catholic authorities was a setback for many migrants who still hoped for the victory of the Northern Provinces and, eventually, a return to their former homelands, as the example of Jacob Duym illustrates. The final play of his *Ghedenck-boeck* of 1606 is a stark warning against a 'false peace' with the Habsburg enemy.[71] Even though the Twelve Years' Truce was only announced in 1609, rumours about an agreement had already begun circulating in late 1605, and, as Duym made clear, a truce would lead to the loss of the Southern Provinces and thus make it impossible for him to return.

69 Kaplan, *Calvinists and Libertines*, 40.

70 Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 133–35.

71 'Een bewys dat beter is eenen goeden crijgh dan eenen gheveynsden peys', in: Duym, *Een ghedenck-boeck*, 6.

In both conflicts, the Calvinist-Erastian controversy of the 1580s and the debate around predestination during the Twelve Years' Truce, southern migrants were typically associated with the more orthodox, if not radical, wing of Reformed Protestantism.[72] Even though the assumed Calvinist radicalism of Flemish and Brabant immigrants was often exaggerated in media such as pamphlets, songs and plays, they were indeed often over-represented in the new Reformed Church. This requires an explanation. As we have already seen, communal institutions and identities in the early modern Netherlandish cities were typically based on local descent, and admission to guilds or public offices was reserved for local citizens. Church organisations offered an attractive alternative and allowed migrants to fully participate in the local community. Local connections and networks were of crucial importance in the early modern city, as they provided access to charity and support in times of need.[73] Being an official church member could thus be of vital importance for newcomers to Leiden and other Holland towns.

Locals without a migrant background, by contrast, were often more reluctant to join the Reformed Church.[74] In some cases, magistrates and church consistories agreed to set limits on the number of southerners who could be elected as elders and deacons. In Haarlem, a town with percentages of southern migrants similar to Leiden, Flemish and Brabant church members could only fill fifty per cent of the consistories while the other half of the positions were reserved for Hollanders.[75] That such measures were taken certainly illustrates the prominent position of southerners in the Reformed Church. Yet, the large numbers of migrants in the Reformed Church should not be taken as clear indication of the Calvinist radicalism of which this group was often accused. Such accusations became commonplace following the conflicts of the 1580s. To the annoyance of many established patrician families, Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, who acted as Governor-General of the Northern Netherlands after the assassination of William of Orange and had many orthodox Calvinists among his local allies, had installed a number of southerners to offices that were traditionally held by locals.[76]

When Leicester left the Netherlands in 1587, the appointments of the 'foreigners' he had installed were reversed, and again southerners were more

72 Asaert, *1585*, 289–99; Van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen*, 314–15.
73 Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*, 255.
74 Van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen*, 90; Duke, *Reformation and Revolt*, 291.
75 Müller, *Exile Memories and the Dutch Revolt*, 91.
76 Oosterhoff, *Leicester and the Netherlands*, 118; Kaplan, *Calvinists and Libertines*, 175.

structurally denied access to public offices in Holland and Utrecht. The association of radical Calvinism with 'strangers' from Brabant and Flanders was reinforced by an attempted coup in Leiden, where a number of Calvinists, including the Flemish theologian Adrianus Saravia, tried to bring the town under Leicester's control in 1587.[77] Three Flemings were executed, and a number of other conspirators were condemned to death in absentia and fled with Saravia to England where the latter had been living since his flight from Antwerp in 1585. These events remained present in the collective memory and were often used to identify southerners as radicals who needed to be excluded from political office. Even the pro-migrant advocate Pieter de la Court had to admit 'that in the year 1587 some Flemings have very imprudently collaborated with the Earl of Leicester to reform the government', but, as he added, this occasion was unjustly held against the many migrants who wished to live peacefully within Leiden's city walls.[78] The idea that support for Leicester was mainly concentrated within migrant circles also ignores the fact that his political allies were the magistrates of many cities without any significant migrant populations, for example all Frisian towns (with the exception of Franeker) as well as Alkmaar, Hoorn and Enkhuizen.[79]

While both contemporary public opinion and modern historiography tend to depict southern migrants as loyal allies, if not radical propagandists, of orthodox Calvinism in its Gomarist version, it is important to realise that this image was in itself an effect of contemporary media discourses.[80] The French-speaking Walloon stranger congregation that was part of the public Reformed Church, played hardly any role in the quarrels that took place during the Twelve Years' Truce (Figure 13.2).[81] However, two factors made an alliance with the Counter-Remonstrant cause indeed attractive to migrants. First, church membership offered strangers a social safety net and a place in society when they were excluded from other local organisations.[82] And second, the political promises of the faction behind the Gomarists appealed to people who had not given up hope of returning to their former homelands in the South.

77 Nijenhuis, *Adrianus Saravia*, 102.

78 De la Court, *Historie der gravelike regering*, 209: 'Het is nochtans waaragtig, dat eenige Vlamingen in den jaare 1587 seer onvoorsigtlik met den Grave van Leycester aanspannende om de regeering te hervormen, occasie hebben gegeven tot een scheuring […].'

79 Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 228–29.

80 Müller, *Exile Memories and the Dutch Revolt*, 90–110.

81 Kooi, *Liberty and Religion*, 155.

82 Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*, 244; Asaert, *1585*, 268–69.

FIGURE 13.2 The so-called 'Truce quarrels' in Leiden in 1617. This print shows the Breestraat, where the Arminian faction had entrenched itself

SOURCE: *D'Arminianze schans tot Leyden*. Leiden: Johannes Tangena, 1618. Copper engraving, 305 mm × 368 mm

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5 Conclusion

Urban and civic life in early modern Europe, and especially the Dutch Republic, was deeply shaped by discourses of belonging and a sense of strong local identity. This communal culture could pose a challenge to newcomers but also offer opportunities. Migrants were often excluded from local organisations and guilds, and public office was typically reserved for locals.[83] However, urban life in a changing society also critically depended on the influx of newcomers.

83 Prak, *Citizens without Nations*, 36–50, 83–99.

During the turmoil of the Dutch Revolt, Leiden strongly benefited from the skills and expertise as well as the networks of Southern Netherlandish migrants. This was especially true of the textile industry, which largely drew on Flemish and Brabant newcomers and played a crucial role in Leiden's economic bloom between the late-sixteenth and the mid-seventeenth centuries. In the cultural sphere and the world of learning, poets, rhetoricians, publishers and scholars transplanted Southern Netherlandish cultural ideals and conventions to Leiden. Southern writers were formative in the renewal of Dutch literary poetics – and their ideas eventually also shaped new literary cultures of the German-speaking world, where Heinsius became a role model for a new generation.[84]

Leiden's new academy presented itself as an alternative to the university of Louvain, to where Holland's elite had previously sent its students. The new centre of learning in the North heavily depended on southerners who could now be recruited and whose academic prestige attracted students from all over Europe. The new university was also quickly surrounded by a publishing industry that served the academic book market. Migrant publishers like Plantin, Elsevir and Raphelengius became widely known as entrepreneurs who were able and willing to engage in prestigious and ground-breaking publication projects. Their international networks provided them with the contacts that were necessary to achieve this.

The challenges that migrants faced, such as exclusion from local networks, could not always be overcome easily. However, Flemish and Brabant newcomers actively engaged in the promotion of civic identities and local pride. The southern chambers of rhetoric eagerly participated in commemorative festivities, and wrote poems, plays and songs about Leiden's heroic struggle against the Habsburg oppressors: Jacob Duym's play on the Siege of Leiden was staged for decades and continued to appeal to local audiences. Duym, as well as other writers, actively tried to combine Leiden's local identity with the ideal of a common Netherlandish 'fatherland'. This idea was attractive to migrants for two reasons. First, it allowed them to present themselves as part of a national community that connected Hollanders and southerners and legitimised their position in the new society. Like the Leideners during the Siege, the migrants had suffered 'Spanish' oppression, and a shared sense of suffering and identity helped build a connection between the two groups. Second, the idea of a wider 'fatherland' held out a vague promise, especially for first-generation migrants,

84 Van Ingen, *Holländisch-deutsche Wechselbeziehungen*.

that perhaps it would once again be possible to return to the South, after the final defeat of the Habsburg oppressors.

Civic and local identities had several layers and dimensions, and migrants needed to position themselves carefully in each of them. Being a member of the public Reformed Church or a southern rhetoricians chamber (which could be mutually exclusive, since church authorities often had mixed feelings about the public culture of rhetoric), an inhabitant of a 'Flemish' neighbourhood or an almshouse, or someone newly accepted to a local guild – all these identities required different positionings in relation to questions of community; but migrants were often successful in finding a language to bridge differences and to become part of Leiden's society.

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CHAPTER 14

The University as Urban Pride: Town-Gown Relations in Leiden, 1575–1850

Ronald Sluijter

In the nineteenth century Leiden university adopted the motto *Libertatis Praesidium*, Bastion of Liberty. This motto refers in a specific sense to the foundation of the university in 1575, during the Dutch Revolt against King Philip II of Spain, and in a general sense to academic liberty. However, in the context of the early modern city, it can also literally be understood as denoting an institution with an independent position within the urban community. In an inspiring article on town-gown relations in Europe between 1200 and 2000, Laurence Brockliss discerns a clear boundary between them around 1800: he characterises the university's position before that date as *in* the city, but not *of* the city, and that only from the nineteenth century onwards was there much more integration.[1] Before 1800, the university already needed the city, because of the facilities it provided, but many city governments had little to say about the institution established within their walls, according to Brockliss. Universities traditionally enjoyed the privileges that set the academic community apart from the rest of the urban population, such as their own jurisdiction, tax exemptions and freedom from military service. During the early modern era, cities and states increasingly sought to abolish these privileges, but this did not necessarily lead to increased city influence everywhere. In many places, the state gained control over universities. In addition to the exceptional position that academics enjoyed, their notoriously recalcitrant behaviour created extra tensions with the rest of the urban population.

Although none of the members of the 1575 Leiden city council had an academic background, others involved in the founding of the university did, such as city pensionary Gerrit van Hoogeveen and former pensionary Paulus Buys.[2] Therefore, the city council was undoubtedly aware of the kinds of problems that housing a university could cause. Why was it so eager to situate the university within its walls in 1575 anyway? After briefly describing the university's rise to become an institution of international stature, this chapter seeks to answer

1 Brockliss, 'Gown and Town', 164.
2 Lamet, 'Men in Government', 464.

this question by examining the three motives the city seems to have had for hosting the university: prestige, education and economy. Furthermore, I argue that Brockliss' distinction between the early modern and the modern era is too clearcut, at least for Leiden. I will show, on the one hand, that many town-gown ties already existed in the early modern era and, on the other, that the further integration of city and university was gradual rather than sudden until the second half of the nineteenth century.

1 Leiden University from an International Perspective

Leiden university was founded according to a pattern that placed it firmly within an already long tradition: education was divided into four faculties (theology, law, medicine and *artes*); the academic community was granted privileges that gave it a separate status within the urban community; the university had the power to award degrees; and the language of instruction was Latin. At the same time, however, it emerged in circumstances radically different from those in which its predecessors had appeared on the scene from the twelfth century onwards. The Reformation had broken Christian unity in Europe: governments, both as rulers of the nascent states and as urban administrators, were gaining increasing control over the institutions of higher education, while Humanism was making its mark on the content of education.

The creation of Leiden university was by no means a unique event from an international perspective. It was a drop in the ocean of university foundations in the second half of the sixteenth century, which stemmed largely from the rulers' desire for qualified personnel to administer church and state, educated according to the orthodoxy prevailing in their territories.[3] The new institution in Leiden fit seamlessly into this development. William of Orange, stadtholder of the province of Holland and leader of the rebellion against the Spanish king, was the initiator, and his motive was to educate the youth 'in the right knowledge of God and all good honest and free arts and sciences serving the legal government of the country'.[4] The fact that, according to the patent of 6 January 1575, the university was established in the name, but without the knowledge

3 Frijhoff, 'Patterns', 71; Hammerstein, 'Relations with Authority', 116.

4 '(…) inde rechte kennisse Godts ende allerley goede, eerlycke ende vrye kunsten ende wetenschappen dienende tot die wettelicke regeringe der landen (…)'; Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, apps. 1, 1* (28 December 1574).

and approval of Philip II, who was still formally the sovereign of the rebellious regions and therefore authorised to take this action, did not alter this.[5]

After a difficult beginning, Leiden university acquired international prestige and appeal fairly quickly. The English traveller Fynes Moryson deemed the university 'famous' as early as 1592. Whether that remark was in his original notes or only added later in his travelogue, published in 1617, is not clear.[6] The assembly of professors, or Senate, had declared by 1593 that the university was 'not of less fame and reputation than many ancient and famous universities', but it was obviously biased.[7] In any case, we can assume that the university's international reputation had been established in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, given the admiring remarks of other travellers visiting Leiden at the time, and as evidenced by the large influx of foreign students that was by now underway.

The success was the result of a combination of internal and external factors. The Dutch Republic developed into the political and economic miracle of Europe from the late sixteenth century onwards and was relatively tolerant on religious matters, which in itself made the country attractive. Church interference in the affairs of the university had been successfully averted in the early stages. In addition, the university's specific appeal lay in its embrace of Humanism, and then its strategy of attracting a number of famous scholars, whose fame then brought attention to the young institution – notably Justus Lipsius and Josephus Scaliger – as did its rapidly established infrastructure, in a combination of institutions that was unique in Europe in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (hortus, anatomy, library), and several renowned printing/publishing houses that worked for the university.[8] There were also external developments that were favourable for Leiden, such as the declining appeal of the leading Protestant universities in the German Empire and Switzerland and the increasing influence of the Counter-Reformation on the renowned Catholic universities of Bologna and Padua, which made it less attractive for foreign Protestant students to study there.[9]

After an initially difficult start, the number of new enrolments in Leiden rose rapidly, from 2,725 in the period 1575–1600, to 5,565 between 1601 and

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5 Molhuysen, apps. 7, 7*. The patent was drafted after the opening of the university on 8 February 1575 and antedated.

6 Moryson, *An Itinerary*, 1:97; Holeton, 'Fynes Moryson's Itinerary', 382–83.

7 '[…] van geen minder renomme ende reputatie […], als veele van de oude vermaerde universiteyten'; Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, apps. 227, 254* (between 3 and 10 March 1593).

8 Prögler, *English Students at Leiden University, 1575–1650*, 81; Clotz, *Hochschule für Holland*, 139; Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 437; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 569–72.

9 Grell, 'The Attraction of Leiden University', 84–85.

1625, and then to 8,998 between 1626 and 1650. Around this time, about fifty per cent of students came from abroad. Enrolment numbers began to decline somewhat in the second half of the seventeenth century, only to plunge in the eighteenth century. In the years 1776–1794, only 1,774 students enrolled. At the same time, the proportion of foreign students in the total student population gradually decreased, reaching thirteen per cent at the end of the eighteenth century. Of the students from the Republic the majority came from the province of Holland. As the proportion of foreign students decreased, the share of Hollanders in the total student population increased: by the end of the eighteenth century, it had reached fifty per cent.[10]

Although the university increasingly had regional appeal, its international reputation was maintained well into the eighteenth century. Especially in the fields of medicine and philology, the university stayed at the forefront for a long time. In the *Encyclopédie* of 1765, it was still considered 'la première de l'Europe', although that description will have been based mainly on its former glory.[11]

2 Prestige: Urban Pride, Identity and Competition

That the Leiden city council was very keen on hosting the university was evident immediately after William of Orange's proposal to the States of Holland on 28 December 1574. Gouda and Middelburg were also considered as possible locations, but the Leiden city council quickly sent a delegation to Orange and thus managed to settle the case in its favour.[12] Soon after the foundation, the story surfaced that William of Orange had given Leiden the university as a reward and compensation for withstanding the Spanish siege of 1574. Whether true or not, the combination of two important elements in the city's identity, the university and the siege, has been a fixed element in cultural memory and historiography ever since.[13]

The four Leiden burgomasters were also very active in the founding phase that followed the decision to choose the city as the seat of the university. They provided a building, designed for the first *pro forma* professors, and announced the opening ceremony (8 February 1575). The active attitude of the burgomasters,

10 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 102–17.
11 Diderot and Le Rond d'Alembert, *Encyclopédie*, 9:451.
12 Frijhoff, 'Hoger onderwijs', 105.
13 Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, apps. 113, 133* (3 June 1586); Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 62.

besides the wish to acquire the university, came from the desire to have as much control over it as possible, in order to minimise its negative effects on the city. This was not easy, as the city was only one of the parties seeking influence alongside the States of Holland, the stadtholder, the Senate and the Reformed Church council.[14] Influence from the church council was soon successfully averted, particularly by the burgomasters. The first statutes, dated 2 June 1575, were a compromise between the remaining four parties as far as the division of control was concerned, with no indication of how the university board would work in practice. Only in the years that followed did it become clear that three curators – representatives of the States of Holland – together with the four Leiden burgomasters, would form the central executive council. Until 1795, this seven-member board of Curators and Burgomasters would appoint new lecturers and other staff, conduct financial policy, and manage university institutions. Apart from choosing the rector from the three nominated by the Senate, the stadtholder was given no role in the administration. He still intervened at various times over the next few centuries or exercised informal influence. The Senate mainly regulated educational matters.

The city council's efforts to have a say in the governance of the university were in line with an international trend. Although some cities did not want a university, or preferred to have one outside their walls, universities were generally welcomed. City administrators obviously saw more advantages than disadvantages in the presence of a university but wanted to limit the negative effects by negotiating to have as much say as possible. Such influence was sometimes enforced later at older universities, as in Italy, at others, such as Leiden, as early as the initial phase. It was also increasingly common for city councils to establish universities themselves, and then, of course, take almost full control.[15] Within the Republic, Leiden would occupy a middle position in terms of urban influence compared to the universities founded later. In Utrecht (founded in 1636), the board consisted exclusively of city administrators, while the boards of the University of Franeker (1585) and Harderwijk (1648) only comprised provincial administrators.[16]

Prestige was not explicitly cited in Leiden as an argument for acquiring the university. That it played a major role can be inferred from the extent to which Leiden's urban identity was derived from the presence of the university and the

14 The information on university governance is based on Sluijter, *Tot ciraet*, 17–64.

15 Frijhoff, 'Hoger onderwijs', 97–103. Often this was done in two phases: first an 'illustre school' was founded, which was later endowed with the right to confer degrees.

16 Kernkamp, *De Utrechtsche academie*, 93–94; Van Berkel, *Universiteit van het Noorden*, 98; Jensma, 'Inleiding', 15; Frijhoff, 'De betekenis van de Harderwijkse universiteit', 19.

prestige associated with it, as well as from the importance the city government attached to the university in competition with other cities. Leonore Stapel remarks that Leiden's urban self-image seems to have been rather dominated by the wool industry, while outsiders did associate the city primarily with the university.[17] She concludes so on the basis of the absence of any reference to the university in the prestigious paintings commissioned by the city council from Isaac van Swanenburgh between 1594 and 1612 and from Abraham van den Tempel around 1650. A more logical explanation, however, is that these works only represented the cloth industry because they were intended for the tanning hall and cloth hall. In contrast, paintings commissioned by the city council in the seventeenth century which hang in the city hall contain prominent references to the university, such as a chimney piece by Ferdinand Bol with Pallas Athene as the personification of the university.[18]

That the leading circles saw the university as an important part of the city's identity and were proud of it, is also evident in the first chorography of Leiden from 1614 by Jan Jansz Orlers, and the so-called 'Hagen'-map of Leiden which was commissioned by the city. Although Orlers was not a member of the city council when he wrote his book – a few years later he would be –, he was a cousin and foster child of Jan van Hout, the ubiquitous secretary of the city council and university board who had been heavily involved in the founding of the university. In Orlers' book, the university is one of the three thematic focuses with which he formulates Leiden's urban self-image, alongside the cloth industry and the Siege of 1573–1574.[19] The depictions of the Academy building, the hortus and the chapel of the Faliede Begijnhof on the widely distributed map of 1674 by Christiaan Hagen also emphasise Leiden's identity as a university city as promoted by the city council.[20]

From the perspective of cultural representation, the ways in which the university was presented in art and the written word can be understood as communicating the idea that Leiden was a city of learning, and, implicitly, that this was a factor distinguishing it from other cities. The latter message was conveyed more explicitly through the defence of the so-called *privilegium exclusivum*, a prohibition on the establishment in Holland and Zeeland of a 'similar school' included in the patent of 6 January 1575. This first happened in 1586, when supporters of Governor Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, including the Leiden professor of theology Saravia, attempted to move the university

17 Stapel, 'Tuyn van heel Holland', 166, 168–69.
18 Hoogduin-Berkhout, 'Op de geluckige regeeringe van Leiden', 87–96.
19 Orlers, *Beschrijvinge der stad Leyden*, 128–55.
20 De Jongh, 'The Promotion of Civic Identity', 76.

to Utrecht. In a remonstrance to Leicester, the Leiden magistrate refuted allegations that it would rather see the university disappear from the city, calling the institution 'her only and best pearl'.[21] The university board, invoking the *privilegium*, vehemently opposed the establishment of the Amsterdam Athenaeum Illustre in 1632 and an Illustre school in The Hague in 1710, and plans to establish a full-fledged university in Zierikzee in 1756. Because the privilege was limited to Holland and Zeeland, it was not possible to stop the foundation of universities in other provinces, but the university board did try several times in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, unsuccessfully, to obtain a monopoly on the promotion of Dutch students. The defence of the *Privilegium* shows that the university, as an 'emblem of modern urbanity', was seen by the city council as a very important asset in competition for status with other cities.[22]

3 Education: Benefits for the City's Youth

The argument William of Orange and the States of Holland made for establishing the university – educating youth for church and state – resonated well with the Leiden city council. For a long time, the city had had a Latin school that was regarded as fundamental to the city: it educated youth in the principles needed to eventually become good urban administrators, which would benefit commerce and bring prosperity.[23] It is more than likely that the city council thought that the presence of a university could give Leiden an even greater advantage in this respect. Willem Frijhoff has shown that the idea that there was a link between the education level of administrators and merchants on the one hand, and prosperity on the other, gained ground in Europe from the sixteenth century onwards.[24] Educational and economic arguments – which I will discuss below – were thus partly intertwined.

The Latin school functioned as preliminary training for university. For a university education, Leiden boys – academic education was virtually closed to women everywhere until the nineteenth century – could now stay in their own city, which lowered the threshold considerably. As in other university cities,

21 Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, apps. 113, 133* (3 June 1586).

22 Frijhoff, 'Hoger onderwijs', 112–113 (quotation on p. 112). The founding of the Athenaeum Illustre in Amsterdam could not be prevented. An 'Illustre school' could offer the same curriculum as a university, but did not have the right to grant degrees.

23 Van Steensel, 'Het personeel', 226.

24 Frijhoff, 'Hoger onderwijs', 93–102.

a relatively large proportion of enrolments in Leiden were of the town's own youth: up to 1625, the percentage of Leiden boys of the total number of students was five to ten; between 1625 and 1795 it was two to six; and during the Batavian-French Period (1795–1813) around ten. In absolute numbers, it was around ten to twenty enrolments per year in the first, and five to ten enrolments in the second and third periods. In the nineteenth century, the percentage was at five to six.[25]

Research by Martine Zoeteman-van Pelt on the social origins of students from Leiden, Dordrecht and The Hague shows that of the Leiden students, a higher percentage came from the middling classes than from the circles of the nobility, the urban patriciate, high-ranking civil servants and wealthy entrepreneurs. This is in contrast to the students from Dordrecht and The Hague, cities without a university, the majority of whom came from the highest strata.[26] The wider accessibility of university studies for Leiden boys was possible because, by staying at home, they did not incur costs for moving, rent and board. Probably a large part of this group would not have gone to college if there had been no university in the city. Nevertheless, even for Leiden citizens, university studies were mainly a matter for the higher and middle social strata, although poorer students were certainly not a rarity.[27] At the so-called *Staten College*, closely connected to the university, poor theology students were trained to become ministers for the Reformed Church at the expense of the States of Holland, or were on private scholarships.[28]

For Leiden regents, especially from 1650 onwards, when this group began to separate from the upper middle class, university (law) studies became a must. Initially, the proportion of Leiden's academically educated regents was lower than that of other cities. It was fourteen per cent in the period 1625–1649, but then rose rapidly from forty per cent in the years 1650–1675, to 76 per cent around 1700, and to ninety per cent in the eighteenth century, considerably higher than in cities without a university such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Gouda, Zierikzee and Zutphen.[29] This shows that, in the long run at least, the educational level of the Leiden urban administrators indeed benefited from the presence of a university.

25 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 194–95; Otterspeer, *De wiekslag van hun geest*, 410.
26 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 136–41.
27 Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 268–69.
28 Sluijter, *Tot ciraet*, 61–92, 107–9.
29 Prak, *Gezeten burgers*, 210–11; Frijhoff, *La société néerlandaise*, 189.

4 Economy: Direct and Indirect Benefits

Although less prominent than its educational aspects, administrators and academics pointed to the economic benefits of the presence of a university to a city as well.[30] In Leiden, we also see this argument echoed. In his letter of 28 December 1574, William of Orange wrote that having its own university would ensure that money spent by students elsewhere would now stay in the country. And in proclaiming the opening of the university, the Leiden *gerecht* (sheriff, aldermen and burgomasters) expressed the expectation that its foundation would lead to trade and prosperity in the city.[31] This shows that in addition to increasing prosperity through good governance by highly educated administrators, the city government also expected more concrete, direct economic benefits. They were probably sincere in their expectations, but also used the argument to make the foundation attractive to the urban population.

To start with the possible economic *dis*advantages: the main cost of the university to the city was the loss of several excises from which students were exempted: wine and beer (1577), salt (1602), soap and *redemptiegeld* (a wealth tax, 1681), *heerengeld* (a tax on servants, 1693), and coffee, tea and chocolate (1693). Other than that, the university did not cost the city much. Its funding came from former monastic estates whose management had been taken over by the States of Holland after the Reformation (mainly land holdings, tithes and redeemable bonds), and increasingly from direct subsidies from the States of Holland.[32] The city provided two buildings, but these were also former church property.

The direct economic benefits of housing the university were by no means comparable to those of the main urban economic branch, the cloth industry. The university of the early modern period was not a major employer. Except for the professors, the majority of whom came from outside the city, the number of staff did not exceed 32 before 1812.[33] Student expenses had a greater impact on the city's economy, yet also in enrolment numbers the university was not comparable to our own times. Zoeteman-van Pelt calculates that the proportion of students in the total population of Leiden before 1812 never exceeded three per cent. In the university's heyday in the mid-seventeenth century, there were at most about one thousand students in the city at any one time, in a

30 Frijhoff, 'Hoger onderwijs', 83–86.
31 Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, apps. 14, 12* (3 February 1575).
32 Sluijter, *Tot ciraet*, 211–20.
33 Sluijter, 315–18.

population of around 50,000.[34] Only in small towns like Franeker and Harderwijk in the Republic, Rinteln in Germany and Cervera in Catalonia did the university have real economic significance.[35] While students were comparatively wealthy and spent more money than average, in Leiden this expenditure was partially offset by the tax benefits they enjoyed. On top of this, many non-students managed to enrol in the university's immatriculation register to benefit from these exemptions.[36]

However, the presence of the university led to indirect benefits for the urban economy which are hard to measure, though they might have been more significant. First of all, the academic climate in general attracted learned people, for instance school and private teachers.[37] The largest indirect stimulus from the university was on the economic branch of book printing, publishing and selling. It was the presence of the university that led to the development of Leiden as the second-most important centre in this respect, behind Amsterdam. The approximately 250 printer-publishers active in Leiden in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most of them specialised in academic publications, provided employment, not only directly, but also via suppliers of, for instance, leather and parchment.[38]

We can also wonder whether the scientific knowledge that stemmed from university circles contributed to economic development in the city, for instance through technological innovations. In other words, can we speak of a 'knowledge economy' emerging this early? Although the early modern university was primarily an educational facility, scientific research would gradually become more important, and Leiden was one of the forerunners in this respect.[39] Karel Davids discerns two phases in which universities or individual professors actively spread technological knowledge to society. A prominent example of the first phase, which lasted from 1575 to 1650, is the *Duytsche Mathematicque*, established in Leiden in 1600 on the initiative of Stadtholder Maurits of Nassau and designed to train military engineers. The school was closely connected to the university: the teachers were university professors. The students were mainly artisans such as carpenters and (stone)masons. In practice, they were not only trained as military engineers, but as civil engineers and surveyors as

34 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 290–92.
35 Frijhoff, 'Hoger onderwijs', 87–92. Also, see Duinkerken, 'De plaats van de Gelderse universiteit', 44–45.
36 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 34–37, 97–101.
37 Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 89.
38 Rasterhoff, *Painting and Publishing*, pt. 1; Koppenol and Hoftijzer, 'Het sociaal-culturele leven', 188.
39 Meijer, 'De historische achtergronden'.

well. During the second phase, lasting from 1720 to 1800, Leiden professors Willem Jacob 's Gravesande, Petrus van Musschenbroek, Johan Lulofs and Jean Allamand actively tested and made innovations to steam engines and windmills for industrial applications.[40] The question of whether this knowledge was actually applied, and if it contributed specifically to Leiden's economy, remains open for now.

5 Governance and Jurisdiction

The motives discussed above that played a role in the city government's desire to welcome the university – prestige, education and economy – simultaneously represent three aspects in the interactions between town and gown. However, there were other areas where interactions took place. One was the university's administration, the composition of which has already been discussed briefly. On paper, the fact that the four Leiden burgomasters had a majority over the three curators meant that they could call the shots on the board. However, based on the small amount of concrete data on the course of events – the resolution books usually only mention the decisions and not the preceding discussions – a picture emerges that the curators dominated proceedings. They were elected from circles of leading nobles and regents in the province of Holland and served on the board for longer periods than the burgomasters, who, except for one, changed every year. The burgomasters did not usually act as a closed block of power but could prevail if there was no agreement among the curators.[41]

Nevertheless, the urban influence in governing the university should not be downplayed. Unlike the curators, the burgomasters were almost always present in Leiden and would therefore often have resolved smaller urgent matters. On top of this, the secretary of the board of Curators and Burgomasters was always chosen from among Leiden's ruling circles. Although he had no decision-making power, the secretary occupied a central position and, depending on his personality and qualities, could exercise considerable influence. Another important office, that of steward, was also always held by a member of the Leiden regent patriciate after 1609.[42]

40 Davids, 'Universiteiten, illustre scholen', 4–5, 11–14; Davids, *The Rise and Decline of Dutch Technological Leadership*, 2:490–93.

41 Sluijter, *Tot ciraet*, 20–61.

42 Sluijter, 168–70, 198–99.

In the early years, the Leiden city council tried to limit as much as possible the privileges usually granted to universities, namely their own courts of justice and tax benefits. After all, those privileges were elsewhere often the cause of friction with citizens. But at the same time, their absence could prevent students from choosing Leiden. The outcome of the negotiations in the founding phase between the States of Holland, the professors and the city council in Leiden was the instituting of a separate court for students and staff of the university, in which the six Leiden aldermen represented the city alongside the rector and four assessors of the university. The bailiff of the city acted as prosecutor. Rector, professors, doctors and magisters, when charged, had to appear before the Court of Holland. Both the delimitation of the jurisdiction of the university court and, relatedly, who could be enrolled as a member of the university, and the other privileges, regularly caused disagreements between the city and the Senate.[43]

In contrast to the city's influence in the governing board of the university, hardly any professors were represented in the *vroedschap* of Leiden before the nineteenth century, although some of them did marry a regent's daughter. Somewhat more often, sons of professors succeeded in obtaining a seat on this council.[44] The boundary between professors and patrician circles was characteristic of the Republic, unlike the situation in the German Empire, for example. There, the social status of professors was higher, making it easier for them to enter the highest urban circles.[45]

6 Spatial Concentration and Social Interactions

In an urban society that attracted a huge influx of migrants, which was a very diverse group in itself, the academic population, as well as those attracted by the intellectual climate, provided an additional tint that must have given Leiden a specific *couleur locale*. Although the academic population seemed rather inward-looking, it did not live in splendid isolation. Inevitably, within the space of the city, human exchange took place between academics and the rest of the urban population. Moreover, while tensions between these

43 Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 120–24; Otterspeer, *De vesting van de macht*, 168–72; Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 98.

44 Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 305; Otterspeer, *De vesting van de macht*, 243, 245–46.

45 Frijhoff, 'De betekenis van de Harderwijkse universiteit', 19.

two groups frequently ran high until 1650, large-scale conflicts were virtually absent afterwards, as we will see.

In spatial terms, university life took place in the part of the city where the elite lived, in and around two former churches on the Rapenburg: the current 'academy building' (the former chapel of the convent of the Dominican nuns), which from 1581 functioned as the main building where the public lectures took place, and the chapel of the Faliede Begijnhof, which stood diagonally across the street and was the main building from 1577 to 1581. The various institutions and collections established during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were housed in and around these buildings. The astronomical observatory (1632) was located on the roof of the academy; the *hortus botanicus* (1593) – enlarged several times in the following centuries – behind it; the chemical (1669) and physical laboratory (1675) in buildings next to the hortus; and in the chapel of the Faliede Begijnhof the library (1587), the anatomical theatre (1594), the fencing school (1594) and the *Duytsche Mathematique* (1600). The *Staten College* (1592) was housed in the former monastery of the *cellebroeders* a stone's throw from the academy. Since professors and students also mostly lived in this part of town, and most academic publishers had their businesses there, we can cautiously speak of a *Quartier Latin* of Leiden.[46]

The student population formed a small but fairly constant part of Leiden's population, as the development of enrolment figures followed the rise and fall of the total urban population. Nevertheless, their impact was larger than their share suggests, at least until well into the seventeenth century. As in other university towns, student misconduct was endemic, manifesting itself in offenses ranging from smashing windows to duelling, from rape, manslaughter and murder to large-scale riots. Larger conflicts often started with disagreements between groups of students, only to escalate into fights with the city guard trying to keep order. The hatred between guards and students was high, thus reflecting tensions between citizens and the privileged student population.[47] The academic court applied lower sentences than the urban court, further contributing to this strained relationship.

The number of large-scale conflicts decreased after 1650. From the founding of the university, students of the same geographical origin had organised into so-called nations, as elsewhere, despite the objections of and measures introduced by the Senate. These group formations had led to rivalries between

46 Otterspeer, *De vesting van de macht*, 251; Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 293–95.

47 Otterspeer, *De vesting van de macht*, 169.

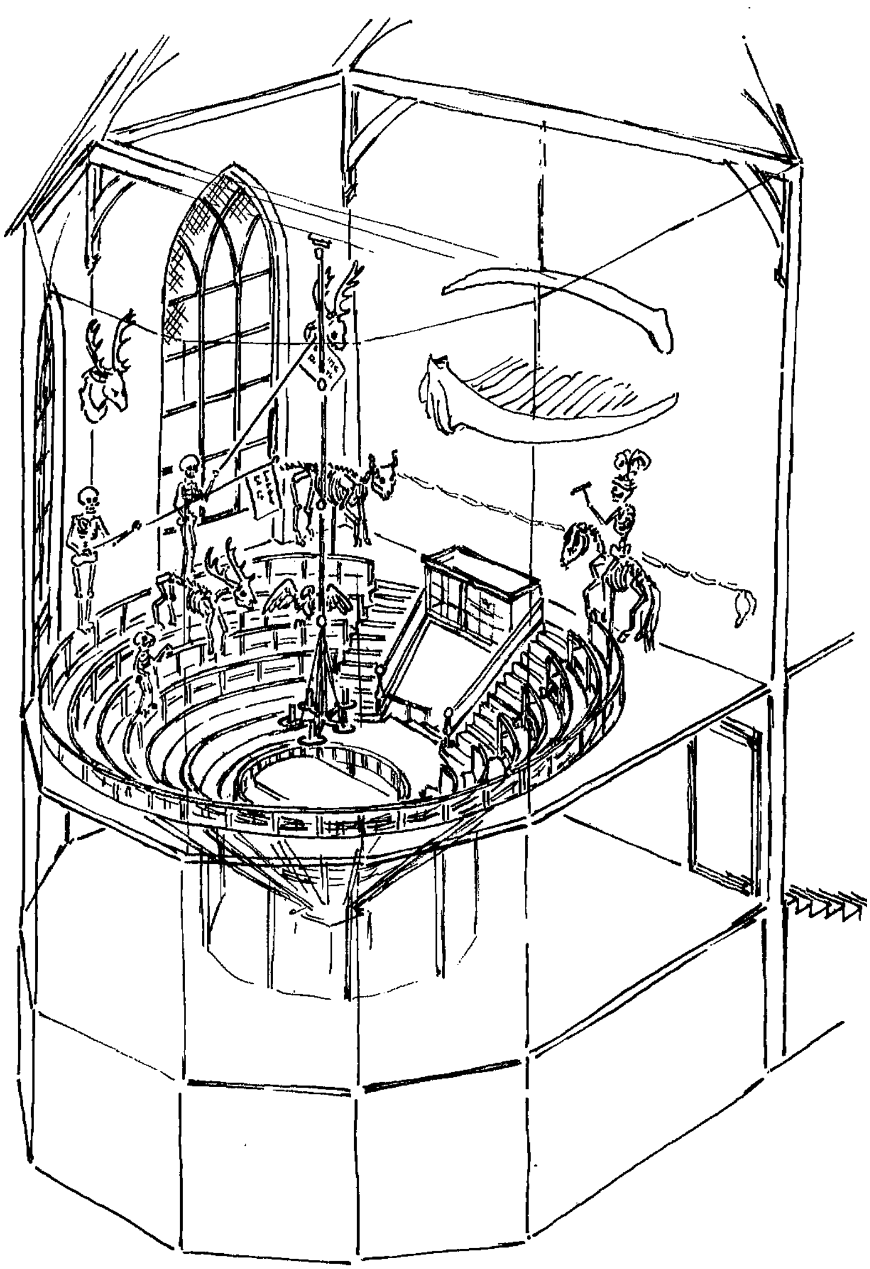

FIGURE 14.1 Reconstruction of the Leiden Anatomical Theatre by A.J.F. Gogelein, second half of the twentieth century
SOURCE: RIJKSMUSEUM BOERHAAVE, LEIDEN

nations and sometimes with the Leiden population.[48] The importance of nations declined from the second half of the seventeenth century, due to the introduction of more effective measures and possibly also to the decline in the number of (foreign) students. Simultaneously, there was a decline in the number of large student houses. Whereas initially sometimes as many as twenty students, often of the same origin, lived together in inns, professors' houses or private houses, the average number of roommates from the end of the seventeenth century onwards was two to five.[49] The decline in rioting was also a result of a refinement of morals among the students.[50] In other university towns, the number of large-scale conflicts also decreased in the eighteenth century.[51]

Moreover, while conflicts indicate tensions and a lack of cohesion between citizens and students, disputes are over-represented in the sources. We are less well informed about the day-to-day interactions between these two groups. Leiden students, as was common in German, Italian and Eastern European university towns, lived not in colleges but with private individuals, with the exception of the relatively small number of grant students in the *Staten College* and the *Walloon College*.[52] This means that they would generally have had more contact with ordinary citizens than many students in areas where the college system was the norm, such as England, France and Spain, although even there a large proportion of students lived outside colleges.[53]

Geographic origin and rank largely determined who Leiden students interacted with, but this pattern did not differ from the rest of the urban population. Relations with Leiden citizens from lower social classes were mainly businesslike, such as with suppliers of all kinds of services and goods. With landlords there was inevitably more intensive contact. The information on this, derived from trials conducted before the academic court, obviously mainly contains examples of bad relations (payment arrears, theft, misconduct). Cases where relations were better will have been in the majority. Nevertheless, the class difference that existed in many cases and the financial dependence the landlords

48 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 355; Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 218, 276–77; Lucä, *Der Chronist Friedrich Lucä*, 77. The following nations are mentioned: Holland, Friesland, Gelderland-Overijssel and Germany.

49 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 316–23.

50 Van Arkel, 'Leids studentenleven', 28–29.

51 Brockliss, 'Gown and Town', 157.

52 Müller, 'Student Education', 346–48.

53 Brockliss, 'Gown and Town', 157.

had on the students meant that they were more often in a subordinate position. The students' spectators – a new literary genre that emerged in the second half of the eighteenth century – recommended maintaining a good relationship with the landlord, without getting too close.[54]

When love or lust were involved, the difference in class could fall away, at least temporarily. Relationships or sexual relations between students and women in the city were common, whether they involved landladies, their daughters or maids, or other women with whom students came into contact elsewhere, such as in church, in shops or at stage performances. As elsewhere, visiting prostitutes was the order of the day. Both the parents of women of equal status and those of other classes, as well as the parents of the students themselves, were generally unhappy about such interactions.[55]

The distance between the students and the general population that existed was reflected in other areas. Regarding the neighbourhood organisations of Leiden, students remained largely aloof. These organisations mainly had a role in settling disputes and arranging funerals of neighbours. Disputes involving students, however, came before the university court, and when students from elsewhere died, the court notified the family so that they could organise the funeral in their place of origin. University members were exempt from helping with the funerals of neighbours, at least from 1748 onwards.[56] Students also seem to have preferred to practise sport among themselves. A number of German students asked the university board in 1598 for a sports field where they could be active without being interrupted by citizens.[57] Even before that, the university rented several grounds for the practice of tennis and *kolf*, and in 1636 it had a *paillemaille* court set up for the students, where a kind of croquet was practised. There was a fencing school in the chapel of the Faliede Begijnhof, which also offered lessons in shooting, flag waving and horse riding. To give horse riding lessons to students, the university hired a horse coach in 1704.[58]

The separation from the civilian population did not initially manifest itself in clothing. With the exception of theology students, who wore black cloaks, students generally dressed like their class peers, which usually amounted to a doublet, a cloak and a hat.[59] From the end of the seventeenth century, among Leiden students, the Japanese cloak came into vogue,

54 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 358.
55 Zoeteman-van Pelt, 370–82.
56 Zoeteman-van Pelt, 363–64.
57 Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, apps. 323, 378*.
58 Sluijter, *Tot ciraet*, 70, 75, 181.
59 Müller, 'Student Education', 348–49.

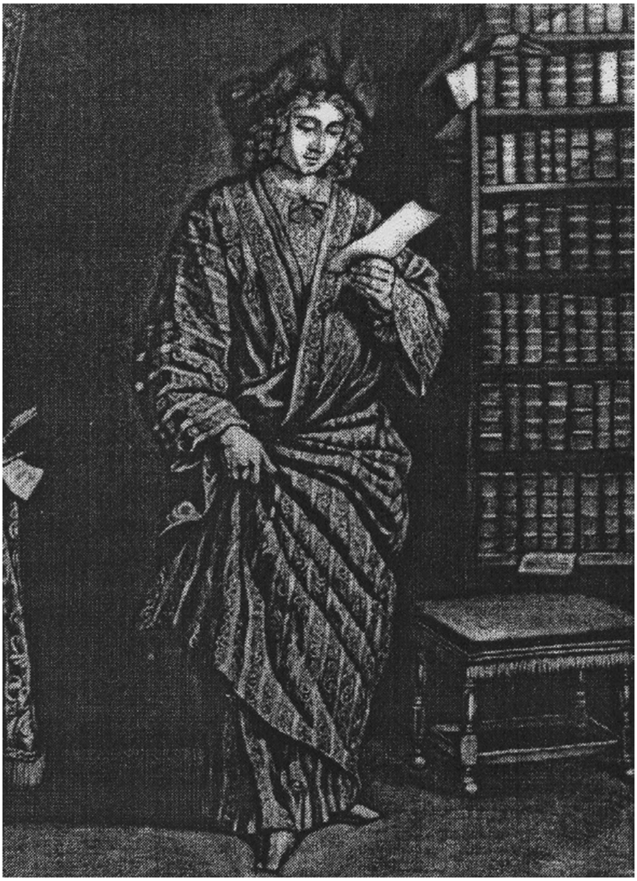

FIGURE 14.2 Student in Japanese robe, mezzotint by Petrus Schenk, early eighteenth century
SOURCE: ACADEMISCH HISTORISCH MUSEUM, LEIDEN

a dressing gown that was eventually also worn on the street, combined with a wig, slippers, a hat and a sword. With this came the custom of wearing clothing in faculty colours: black for theologians, red for lawyers, green for medics and white for philosophers. Foreign travellers marvelled at the typical student attire. The Japanese cloak was also popular among students at other universities in the Republic. It will have marked them out from the majority of the population in the city, although members of the Leiden elite adopted this fashion.[60]

60 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 349–54; De Vrankrijker, *Vier eeuwen Nederlandsch studentenleven*, 94–95.

7 Professional Ties between Town and Gown

While the average student tried to keep some distance from the urban population, many professors were active in social functions. The city could benefit from their knowledge, while the professors could increase their income. Such individual ties to the city were also common elsewhere.[61] For theologians, preaching was a logical side job. Several were active as pastors in the Reformed Church, often in a shared position with other professors from the theological faculty, or in the Walloon Church in the case of professors from France. In addition, several served on the church council, which also applied to professors from other faculties. Incidentally, some theologians, lawyers and doctors were already active as pastors, lawyers or doctors in Leiden at the time of their appointment. They continued their own practice afterwards.[62]

Medical professors' ties to the city went beyond keeping their own practice. In 1636, the university started to offer clinical education, the *collegium medico-practicum*. The university administration entered into an agreement with the regents of the St Cecilia's hospital to reserve twelve of the 24 beds there for patients of the *collegium*. At the end of the eighteenth century, this was replaced by the *collegium casuale chirurgicum* in the St Elisabeth's hospital, and in 1799 the university purchased its own premises on the Pieterskerkhof. The *nosocomium clinicum* located therein thus became the first academic hospital. In addition, several medical professors had a role as supervisors in the Leiden guild of surgeons and were involved in the composition and supervision of examinations. This connection with the university was also reflected in the place where the exams were held, namely, first in the anatomical theatre, and later in the St Cecilia's hospital where the *collegium medico-practicum* was located.[63]

University professors also had a role in supervising preparatory education for the university, in the Latin school. Of the four 'scholarchen' who supervised the school on behalf of the city, two came from the *vroedschap* and two from the Senate. Of these two professors, one was always from the theological faculty.[64]

61 Brockliss, 'Gown and Town', 159.
62 Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 309; Otterspeer, *De vesting van de macht*, 250, 255–59.
63 Huisman, 'The Finger of God', 148–51.
64 Otterspeer, *De vesting van de macht*, 255.

8 Cultural and Intellectual Exchanges

The influence of the university's presence on the city's intellectual and cultural climate is difficult to measure and many of its manifestations probably have not been preserved in written form. Nevertheless, enough examples can be given to show that this influence was considerable. In general, the university, its professors and institutions – of which the hortus, anatomical theatre and library were also accessible to the general public[65] – attracted many visitors. The ones who stayed longer were former students who gave private lessons in hopes of becoming permanent teachers;[66] scholars who sought refuge in the Republic from persecution in their own country, such as Descartes and Lamettrie;[67] or travellers for whom Leiden was a stage in their educational journey. All this added to the intellectual climate of the city.

Culturally, the presence of a university made its mark on music, theatre and literature. The appointment of a music master in 1686 marked the beginning of Leiden's development into one of the most famous centres for music in the Republic. In the eighteenth century, musicians, music and dance masters and instrument builders settled in Leiden for shorter or longer periods to serve students.[68] Students were avid spectators of theatre performances, partly because they were a way to meet women.[69] In the seventeenth century, performances were mainly staged by itinerant companies. In 1704, the Leiden theatre was established on the initiative of Jacob van Rijndorp.[70] It is possible that both Van Rijndorp's choice of Leiden as the location for a permanent theatre and the benevolent attitude of the city council were partly motivated by the interest students had in drama. In the renewal of literature at the end of the sixteenth century, Jan van Hout in particular played a key role. He persuaded his academic, humanist friends to write in Dutch, and, within the *rederijkers* milieu from which he himself came, placed higher demands on the poems produced there.[71] Many Leiden professors and students were also active in the Leiden art and science societies that emerged in the second half of the eighteenth century. This was especially true of the *Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde*, founded in 1766, and to a lesser extent the *Kunst wordt door Arbeid*

65 Otterspeer, 20; De Ridder-Symoens, 'Management and Resources', 192.
66 Sluijter, *Tot ciraet*, 119–20.
67 Van Vliet, 'De poliep en de luis', 150.
68 Metzelaar, 'De grote reis van Jan Alensoon', 181–83; Rasch, *Muziek in de Republiek*, 100.
69 Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De studentenpopulatie*, 373.
70 Roding, Veldheer, and Bordewijk, *Wat geeft die Comedie*, 20, 76, 103; Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 272; Otterspeer, *De vesting van de macht*, 202–202.
71 Koppenol and Hoftijzer, 'Het sociaal-culturele leven', 174–76.

Verkreegen, founded in the same year.[72] Although the professors probably played first fiddle in these societies, there will certainly have been an interaction with the ordinary members, who mainly came from the scientifically and culturally interested class of lawyers, ministers and doctors.

Thus, in the relationship between university and city, influence could go both ways. This is also shown by Grafton, who points out that the scientific interests of Josephus Scaliger, the famous French philologist who was recruited in 1593 to ease the loss of Justus Lipsius, were partly determined by the circumstances in Leiden. For instance, he derived much of the structure and content of his index to Janus Gruter's *Inscriptiones Antiquae totius orbis Romani* from an older work held in the Leiden university library. His attention to mythical ancient works stemmed from the participation of members of the Leiden elite in a discussion on the mythical King Friso.[73] Another example is the contact between the famous Leiden professor Herman Boerhaave and his cousin Daniël van Eijs, a Leiden cloth manufacturer and merchant. Boerhaave obtained seeds and fruit from Van Eijs' plantations in Berbice in what is now French Guiana, a Dutch colony, with the intention of planting them on his Oud-Poelgeest estate.[74] In general, direct and indirect relations between Leiden academic circles and trading posts of the Dutch East and West India Companies have been little studied, but deserve more detailed attention.[75]

The intellectual and cultural interactions between university and city mainly involved the upper strata of Leiden's population. As mentioned earlier, the establishment of the *Duytsche Mathematicque* also tapped into an interested group of craftsmen from the city and beyond. While this school was strongly linked to the university, more generally the academic atmosphere in Leiden had a positive influence on craftsmen, if we are to believe the French scholar Samuel de Sorbière (1615–1670). Tainturier sees this atmosphere of scholarship

72 Koppenol and Hoftijzer, 176–77; Thobokholt, *Het taal- en dichtlievend genootschap*, 33, 44, 68. Members of this society in the eighteenth century were at least Adrianus van Royen (1704–1779), professor of medicine and botany, and Johannes le Francq van Berkhey (1729–1812), lecturer in natural history. Thobokholt further mentions the membership of more professors and students, without names or dates.

73 Grafton, 'Civic Humanism and Scientific Scholarship', 72–74.

74 Museum De Lakenhal, 'The Plantations of Cloth Merchant Daniël van Eijs', https://www.lakenhal.nl/en/story/de-plantages-van-lakenhandelaar-daniel-van-eijs, based on research by Sjoerd Ramackers (accessed 8 June 2023).

75 See, e.g. Van Berkel, *Citaten uit het boek der natuur*, 136–37; van Groesen, 'The Anglo-Dutch Lake?'

and the identification of Leiden as a university town as a possible part of the explanation for the erudite flair shown by several Leiden painters.[76]

9 Conclusion: Gradual Transition after 1800

Returning to Brockliss' statement, do we see a sharp divide around 1800 concerning town-gown relations in Leiden also? The answer is no, first of all because there were many interactions already in the early modern period. Certainly, members of the university community enjoyed privileges that gave them a position distinct from the rest of the urban population, and socially they also considered themselves as a separate group. Yet, we must also conclude that the ties between city and university were strong, given the city government's pride in the institution itself and in defending its privileges from outside attacks. While the direct economic benefits for the city were relatively small, the impressive size of the famous Leiden book industry was a consequence of the presence of the university. Administratively, the city had an important voice in the university's affairs, and was also represented in the university court. Furthermore, Leiden citizens benefited to an above average degree from the university's presence in the city in terms of education. Professors had professional and cultural ties with the city and, as a whole, the cultural and intellectual exchange between university and city was significant, even though we know that deeper research could reveal more interactions on individual level.

Secondly, because ties were already strong, the increasing integration in the first half of the nineteenth century was gradual rather than sudden and not straightforward in all fields. As the main areas where university-city integration in general increased during this period, Brockliss points to politics and medicine. Professors could from then on pursue national or local political careers like other citizens, and many of them did. Medical education and research increasingly concentrated around urban hospitals, making the urban population the object of study and treatment. Moreover, the greater attention to the connections between social and medical problems led the city to increasingly seek the advice of medical and other professors.[77] Although these developments were also visible in Leiden, they came with their own nuances. The earlier barrier between professors and the city administration disappeared in the nineteenth century and more and more professors joined the Leiden city council. In 1849, there were no fewer than five professors out of a

76 Kleinert and Tainturier, 'Schilders uit de verf', 126.

77 Brockliss, 'Gown and Town', 160.

total of 28 seats.[78] On the other hand, the city's representation in the administration of the university actually decreased from 1795 onwards. The Provincial Council of Holland appointed three curators from that year onwards, as the States of Holland had previously done. However, now the city council was allowed to appoint only two members instead of four. From the foundation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1815, a board of five was once again established, one seat of which was reserved for the (now only one) burgomaster of Leiden. Also, after 1795, the power of the board as a whole diminished. In the new state system after 1815, the university board increasingly became a conduit for the policies of the Ministry of Education.[79] As for the field of medicine, we saw that interactions with the city had already started in the seventeenth century, and that the establishment of the university hospital in 1799 was merely an increase in scale. Meanwhile, the city administration allowed only sparse university interference in urban medical affairs. A committee of members of the medical faculty and city doctors, formed to curb the spread of the 1832 cholera epidemic, was allowed to advise, but was denied a more guiding role.[80]

In other fields, such as the law and social life, there was a clearer increase of integration. In 1811, the university court was abolished, so members of the academic community were henceforth treated equally with the general city population in legal terms.[81] The involvement of Leiden professors in society life increased further, mainly due to the expanding number of societies. Their membership of school supervisory committees, the city poor factory, the painters' academy and the prison also indicate an increasing social engagement.[82]

To underline the gradual nature of the increasing integration of town and gown, we can also point at the continuities. The university of the first half of the nineteenth century was still much the same as it was before 1800. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the language of instruction remained Latin, and student numbers were similar to those at the end of the eighteenth century.[83] Contrary to the professors, the social distance between students and the rest of the urban population did not diminish in the first half of the nineteenth century.[84] In spatial terms, there was some expansion – the academic hospital, a new building near the library (1822), an enlargement of the *hortus*, a museum

78 Duyverman, 'Hoogleraar en gemeenteraad', 55.
79 Sluijter, *Tot ciraet*, 60–61; Otterspeer, *De wiekslag van hun geest*, 21–25.
80 Pruys van der Hoeven, Van Kaathoven, and Salomon, *Geschiedverhaal van de cholera-epidemie*, 21–36.
81 Hardenberg, *De archieven van senaat en faculteiten*, 7.
82 Otterspeer, *De werken van de wetenschap*, 241–44.
83 Otterspeer, *De wiekslag van hun geest*, 411.
84 Otterspeer, *De werken van de wetenschap*, 201–3.

of Natural History and Antiquities (1818–1825) –, but the impact was limited for the time being, and the institutions remained mainly concentrated in the same part of the city.[85] Only from the second half of the nineteenth century would the university change significantly; and certainly from the 1960s, when its size and function changed dramatically, there was much more integration between city and university.

The case of Leiden shows that the general picture Brockliss paints of a sudden shift in city-university relations around 1800 can be nuanced by studying a wide range of possible intertwinings between the two in the early modern period. Unfortunately, Brockliss' observation that the study of this phenomenon has not yet taken off is still valid today. It is quite possible that research on other university cities will show a more gradual transition in town-gown relations into the nineteenth century, as in Leiden.

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85 Otterspeer, *De wiekslag van hun geest*, 75–110, 316, 397.

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As a place of production, knowledge, and creativity, Leiden attracted people from near and far in the premodern era (c. 1200-1800). The result was a diverse population in a rapidly growing city. The contributions to this volume, written by specialists, trace key moments and developments in Leiden's history. The authors show how different groups of city dwellers experienced and shaped socio-economic and cultural events and processes. Through its thematic focus and engagement with current debates in urban history, this volume reveals how the inhabitants of a premodern European city produced and negotiated political, socio-economic, and spatial inequalities.

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