

Book Trade Catalogues in Early Modern Europe

# Library of the Written Word

VOLUME 93

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# Book Trade Catalogues in Early Modern Europe

*Edited by*

Arthur der Weduwen

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Cover illustration: Follower of Rembrandt, *Portrait of a Man* ("The Auctioneer"), c. 1658–62. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Title-page of *Catalogus variorum atq; insignium librorum excellentissimi viri Christiani Ostenfeld* (Hafniae: Matthiae Godicchenii, 1672). Det Kongelige Biblioteket, Copenhagen (see also illustration 1.4).

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## Preface

Since 2016, the project group behind the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC) in St Andrews has been engaged on a systematic study of early modern book trade catalogues. Our interest in these catalogues is threefold. Firstly, they are an ephemeral genre, one that is often neglected or underrepresented in national bibliographies. Documenting surviving editions in libraries across the world has been essential to develop an understanding of their variety and influence. This work has also included the identification of book catalogues that, although documented in contemporary references, are now lost. Combing through newspaper advertisements and archival records, we have identified several thousand such catalogues, not previously known to scholarship. The surviving catalogues have played a second crucial role in our investigation, since we have been able to use them as bibliographical sources to augment our knowledge of the contemporary book world as revealed by modern library catalogues and national bibliographies. After having extracted, by hand, hundreds of thousands of pieces of data from seventeenth and eighteenth-century catalogues, we are in a position to match this considerable tranche of data to the existing records of the USTC. This process, which is currently ongoing, has already revealed thousands of references to books that can no longer be identified in surviving copies. The same matching process also allows us to attach references of contemporary ownership to editions that do survive. Some works in the USTC now have twenty, thirty or even sixty contemporary catalogue references attached to them. We have also studied these catalogues intensively as part of broader research on the history of the book trade in the Low Countries, the British Isles and Scandinavia. That this is a useful avenue of research was confirmed to us when we held a workshop at St Andrews in June 2018, where we heard and discussed a variety of insightful contributions on the history of the book trade and book collecting, as told through the study of book catalogues.

The volume before you is the result of that workshop, augmented by two substantial articles from contributors who did not present at the event itself. We wish to express our gratitude to all our contributors, whose efforts and patience have made this volume a pleasure to edit. Many thanks are also due to Arjan van Dijk and his colleagues at Brill, whose digital resource *Book Sales Catalogues Online* underpins the research in many of the essays presented here. This invaluable resource deserves to be known more widely, and it will undoubtedly continue to play an important role in any future research on

the history of early modern book distribution and book collecting. Finally, we would like to thank those scholars who have pioneered the study of book catalogues, as well as those students and volunteers who have worked with our project group in the gathering and analysis of book catalogue data.

St Andrews, November 2020

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## Notes on Contributors

### *Helwi Blom*

is a literary historian whose research focuses on early modern France. Her scholarly interests include popular print (the 'Bibliothèque bleue'), the Huguenot diaspora and reception studies. In 2012, she earned her PhD in French studies from Utrecht University with a dissertation on the reception of medieval romances of chivalry in seventeenth-century France. She is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Université Lumière Lyon 2 and lecturer at Radboud University (Nijmegen, The Netherlands). From 2017 to 2021 she held a Postdoctoral Fellowship in the *MEDIATE* (Measuring Enlightenment: Disseminating Ideas, Authors and Texts in Europe, 1665–1830) project at Radboud University. In this project, she focused on French private library catalogues and provincial book culture in seventeenth and eighteenth-century France. Recent publications comprise articles on the library of Huguenot minister Isaac Claude and on categorisation systems in French catalogues. She is now working on a bibliography of private library catalogues published in France between 1600 and 1830.

### *Pierre Delsaerdt*

is a professor at the History Department of the University of Antwerp and a part-time professor at KU Leuven. Among other things, he lectures on book and library history, the history of the Low Countries, and the management of heritage collections in libraries. He has been chairman of Flanders Heritage Library from 2008 to 2016. He is currently the director of the Ruusbroec Institute at the University of Antwerp. His research focuses on the design of early printed books and on the history of libraries and bibliophily, especially in the Southern Low Countries in the early modern period and the nineteenth century. Together with Elly Cockx-Indestege, he is preparing a monograph on the rare books collection of the Dukes of Arenberg (1850–1950). In addition, he is doing research on the confiscation of books by the French revolutionary government in the Southern Low Countries in 1794–95.

### *Marieke van Egeraat*

is a PhD candidate in the research project 'Dealing with Disasters: The Shaping of Local and National Identities, 1421–1890' led by prof. dr. Lotte Jensen at Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands. Her project focuses on providence and religious conflict in the Low Countries in the period 1517–1609. It deals with all kinds of disasters, including blood rains, hail storms, floods,

earthquakes, comets, epidemics and famine. In her dissertation, she will ask the question how these disasters were interpreted and how these different explanations clashed with or went along with each other. Handwritten chronicles and news pamphlets will be analysed to answer this question.

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*Graeme Kemp*

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*Jasna Tingle*

has been working in the Croatian Academic and Research Network (CARNET) for over twenty years. In her position of the Head of E-learning Research and Development Division Jasna is mostly involved in projects related to the implementation of information and communication technology in education. Jasna's interest in old books stems from her studying history, ethnology and librarianship in her student's days and from her recent PhD studies in Information Science. While taking a course on written heritage her attention was drawn to book sellers' catalogues from the hand-press era, a type of resources that has not been adequately evaluated in Croatia until present. Jasna completed statistical analysis of books indexed in selected catalogues and has published two papers on this topic in an attempt to shed more light on the history of the book trade in her country.

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