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The power of the purse: student funding and the labour market for Dutch Reformed and Catholic theology students, 1800–1880

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Several European countries were unable to match student numbers with labour market demand during the nineteenth century. The causes of this mismatch may be found in the organisation of higher education and the funding of students. Drawing on a variety of sources, this paper compares financial support available to Reformed and Catholic theology students in The Netherlands, to examine how differences in student funding affected enrolment and labour-market patterns. While low tuition fees increased access to the public universities, generous student financing provided by numerous parties caused a structural oversupply of Protestant theology students. The private Catholic colleges instead selected students and applied grants specifically to encourage graduation, consequently balancing students more closely with labour-market demand. This relative success of regional colleges over national universities mirrors the primary education history literature on the benefits of local coordination and resource allocation.

Keywords: higher education; student financing; labour market; theology; history

Introduction

While acknowledging the importance of an educated populace, Adam Smith already struggled with how societies should fund education. Because of the perceived public benefits such as lower inequality and economic growth, education could be paid for with public money, but it could also be paid for by those individuals who most directly benefit from it.[1] Following Smith, historians have demonstrated that the funding of education indeed mattered for attendance levels. For primary education, local distribution of funds explains rising enrolment levels in nineteenth-century Europe and the United States.[2] By organising education on a regional or city level, demand could be translated into increased funding, consequently lowering tuition

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[1]A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (State College, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 2005), 620–42.

[2]P.H. Lindert, *Growing Public: Social Spending and Economic Growth since the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. 1: *The Story* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2004); C. Goldin, 'The Human-Capital Century and American Leadership: Virtues of the Past', *Journal of Economic History* 61 (2001): 263–92; J. Westberg, 'Stimulus or Impediment? The Impact of Matching Grants on the Funding of Elementary Schools in Sweden during the Nineteenth Century', *History of Education* 42 (2013): 1–22; N. Beadie, 'Education, Social Capital and State Formation in Comparative Historical Perspective: Preliminary Investigations', *Paedagogica Historica* 46 (2010): 15–32.

fees and increasing enrolment.[3] Also in the Netherlands funds assigned by cities allowed rising primary school enrolments during the nineteenth century, as local authorities could identify how many schools were needed, and adapted tuition fee policies to increase attendance.[4]

It is not clear if this 'local funding argument' also applied to post-primary education. Contrary to primary education, enrolment here to a larger degree needed to be balanced with labour-market demand.[5] Increased access could cause an oversupply of skilled workers, rising unemployment levels, and even social unrest.[6] Lowering access through increasing tuition fees might cause labour-market shortages and reduce chances for social mobility. Matching access to post-primary education with labour-market demand during the nineteenth century and before proved challenging.[7] England may have lost economic prowess because the absence of a 'local state apparatus' delayed the supply of technical schooling.[8] Both in France and in Germany cycles of graduates flooded the labour market.[9] In the Netherlands it proved difficult to control the supply of medicine and theology graduates, leading to an oversupply on the labour market.[10]

This imbalance between access to higher education and labour-market demand may have related to the financing of study costs.[11] The undersupply of English nineteenth-century engineers may have been caused by the high costs of attending

[3]C. Goldin and L.F. Katz, 'The "Virtues" of the Past: Education in the First Hundred Years of the New Republic', *NBER Working Paper Series* 9958 (2003).

[4]H. Knippenberg, *Deelname aan het Lager Onderwijs in Nederland gedurende de Negentiende Eeuw: Een Analyse van de Landelijke Ontwikkeling en van de Regionale Verschillen* (Amsterdam: 1986).

[5]R. Anderson, 'The Idea of the Secondary School in Nineteenth-Century Europe', *Paedagogica Historica* 40 (2004): 106.

[6]L. O'Boyle, 'The Problem of an Excess of Educated Men in Western Europe, 1800–1850', *Journal of Modern History* 42 (1970): 471–95; F. Ringer, *Education and Society in Modern Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 2, 50–1; C. Goldin and L.F. Katz, *The Race between Education and Technology* (Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 304.

[7]W.T.M. Frijhoff, 'De Arbeidsmarkt voor Academici tijdens de Republiek', *Spiegel Historiael* 17 (1982): 503.

[8]A. Green, 'Technical Education and State Formation in Nineteenth-Century England and France', *History of Education* 24 (1995): 138; M. Sanderson, *Education and Economic Decline in Britain, 1870 to the 1990s* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[9]F. Ringer, 'Admission', in *A History of the University in Europe*, vol. III: *Universities in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, ed. W. Rüegg (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 234–5; H. Kaelbe, *Social Mobility in the 19th and 20th Centuries: Europe and America in Comparative Perspective* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1983), 59, 61; K.H. Jarausch, 'The Social Transformation of the University: The Case of Prussia 1865–1914', *Journal of Social History* 12 (1979): 615.

[10]P. van Rooden, *Religieuze Regimes. Over Godsdienst en Maatschappij in Nederland, 1570–1990* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1996), ch. 2; H. van der Velden, 'Overvloed en Schaarste. De Verspreiding van Geneeskundige Hulp in Nederland in de Negentiende Eeuw', *Gewina* 19 (1996): 210–30.

[11]Jarausch, 'The Social Transformation of the University', 613–14. Ringer, 'Admission', 234; F. Ringer, 'Higher Education and Social Change: Some Comparative Perspectives', in *The Transformation of Higher Learning, 1860–1930: Expansion, Diversification, Social Opening and Professionalization in England, Germany, Russia and the United States*, ed. K.H. Jarausch (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1983), 17–18, 35–6; G. Edirisooriya, 'A Market Analysis of the Latter Half of the Nineteenth-Century American Higher Education Sector', *History of Education* 38 (2009): 115–32.

higher education.[12] In France, the government proved unable to use grants in order to reduce the excess of medicine graduates.[13] Access to Dutch universities has incidentally been linked to grants and tuition fees as well.[14] Many contemporaries also related the supply of European graduates to the costs of attending university.[15] Even though Smith has already argued that an excess supply of grants 'draw many more people into those trades than could otherwise pretend to follow them', there is an absence of studies examining the link between student financing and attendance levels.[16] Consequently, it remains unknown how the funding of students affected the balance between access to higher education and labour-market demand.[17]

By taking a case-study approach this paper explores how differences in student funding affected access to higher education and labour-market patterns. From about 1800 Dutch Reformed (Protestant) and Catholic theology students were educated in centralised public and regional private institutions respectively. Albeit particular, this presents a rare opportunity to compare a similar education under a dissimilar institutional setting. Both institutions educated for a comparable occupation, and both labour markets converged in size during the century. As each Church employed around 1,500 ecclesiastics around the 1860s their labour markets were sizeable, even exceeding that of physicians.[18] This is not surprising since together both Churches had to minister to almost the entire population. In 1849, 55% of the Dutch population was Reformed and 38% Catholic.[19]

After introducing both education institutions, the paper will demonstrate that the differences in funding between Reformed and Catholic students affected enrolment and labour-market patterns significantly. A multitude of actors involved caused the emergence of a 'free market' for grants, preventing the formulation of a student financing policy tailored to job market needs, but the numerous grants awarded did increase access. Keeping grants and tuition fee policies in the same hands on a regional level, together with close ties between colleges and the labour market, ensured a closer match between supply and demand for Catholic theology graduates.

[12]A. Guagnini, 'Worlds Apart: Academic Instruction and Professional Qualifications in the Training of Mechanical Engineers in England, 1850–1914', in *Education, Technology and Industrial Performance in Europe, 1850–1939*, ed. R. Fox and A. Guagnini (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 16.

[13]G. Weisz, 'The Politics of Medical Professionalization in France, 1845–1848: The Organization of Medicine', *Journal of Social History* 12 (1978): 3–29.

[14]J. Roelevink, *Gedicteerd Verleden: Het Onderwijs in de Algemene Geschiedenis aan de Universiteit te Utrecht, 1735–1839* (Amsterdam: APA-Holland Universiteits Pers, 1986); P.A.J. Caljé, *Student, Universiteit en Samenleving: de Groningse Universiteit in de Negentiende Eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2009), 334–6.

[15]O'Boyle, 'Excess of Educated Men', 478, 485–6, 491.

[16]Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 112–13.

[17]See also the special section on education markets in *Social Science History* 32, no. 1 (2008).

[18]Van der Velden, 'Overvloed en Schaarste', 29.

[19]Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 'Kerkelijke gezindte en kerkbezoek vanaf 1849', http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?VW=T&DM=SLNL&PA=37944&LA=NL (accessed November 19, 2014).

Educating Reformed vicars and Catholic priests

In 1815 the newly installed Dutch government introduced a decree to regulate the Dutch universities, which hitherto had been urban institutions.[20] Several universities were closed and only the universities of Utrecht, Leiden and Groningen remained, together with some athenaeums.[21] Although it had been common practice before, becoming a vicar in the Dutch Reformed Church now required a university degree in theology.[22] Passing an entry exam or certification from a Latin school or gymnasium was required to be admitted to university. Everyone passing this entrance exam or having certification had to be accepted to university. The decree further stipulated an official course of study for theology students, beginning with four years at the arts faculty and being completed with two years at the faculty of theology. This study trajectory remained largely the same for the remainder of the century.[23] After obtaining a university degree of *candidaat* in theology graduates could take a vicar's exam at the Reformed Church to qualify as a vicar. Most graduates seem to have taken their vicar's exam between the ages of 23 and 25.[24]

Vicar's exams had to be taken at a regional *classis*. The *classis* was a collection of about 20 local church boards that also settled and regulated regional church affairs.[25] This regional focus typified the Dutch Reformed Church. Representatives of the *classis* together made up provincial church boards, whose representatives in turn constituted the general synod (*Algemeene Synode*), where general administration and finances were discussed and issues settled that could not be resolved locally. None of these bodies, however, was involved in managing theology faculties.

Before 1815 theology students had been exempt from paying tuition fees because of the relatively low social standing of these students and because training Reformed vicars was considered a necessity for the Reformed Dutch Republic.[26] The Revolt against Catholic Spain had made the Reformed Church de facto the only public religion, although freedom of religion was tolerated in private. With the official separation of Church and state after the Napoleonic period this privileged position had become untenable in theory. Now also theology students had to pay tuition fees.

Because Calvinism was the privileged confession during the early modern period, Dutch universities offered no training in Catholic theology. Catholic students wanting to study theology did so at foreign universities where Dutch colleges were

[20]Organiek Besluit, August 2, 1815. Printed in *Bijvoegsel tot de Nederlandsche Staats-Courant* 242 and 243 (1815).

[21]Athenaeums were comparable to universities but could not grant degrees.

[22]The decree made this mandatory for aspiring vicars of the Reformed Church only; for other Protestant denominations like Lutheranism and the Walloon Church no qualifications were yet put in place; Organiek Besluit, articles 117, 118.

[23]A. de Lange, '"Staatsrechtelijk Geknutsel": De Regeling van de Predikantsopleiding in Nederland door de Overheid in de Negentiende Eeuw', *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse kerkgeschiedenis na 1800* 24, no. 54 (2001): 28–58.

[24]Based on a sample of 50 theology graduates between 1813 and 1850; J. Vree; 'Lijst van (voornamelijk Hervormde en Lutherse) Predikanten, Hulppredikers, Kandidaten, Proponenten en Theologanten', http://wwwold.vu.nl/hdc/Hulppredikers.pdf (accessed September 2, 2013).

[25]Van Rooden, *Religieuze Regimes*, 175.

[26]M. Wingens, 'The Motives for Creating Institutions of Higher Education in the Dutch Republic during its Formative Years (1574–1648)', *Paedagogica Historica* 34 (1998): 443–56.

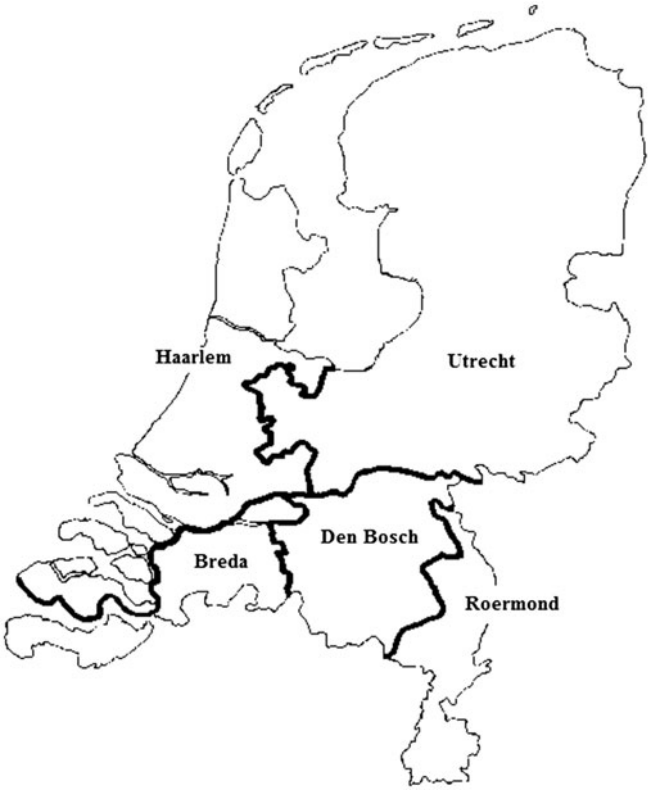

Figure 1. Dutch Catholic Church districts from 1853.
Note: Haarlem and Utrecht together formed the *Hollandsche Missie* until 1853.
Source: Original image from Katholiek Documentatie Centrum, Nijmegen.

set up for the purpose, for instance at Leuven or Cologne.[27] The proclamation of freedom of religion that caused the introduction of tuition fees for Reformed theology students after 1795 also allowed the establishment of Catholic training institutions within the Netherlands.[28] The full training course consisted of six years at a *kleinseminarie* or minor college that concentrated on philosophy, followed by four

[27]J.F. Vregt, 'De Vroegere Collegiën of Seminariën tot Opleiding van Geestelijken voor de Hollandse Missie', *Bijdragen voor de Geschiedenis van het Bisdom van Haarlem*, 8 (1880): 1–379; L.J. Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en de 17e Eeuw*, vol. I (Amsterdam: Urbi et Orbi, 1947), 238, 383.
[28]T. Clemens, 'Een Onbedoeld Kind van de Revolutie: Veranderingen in de Opleiding van Priesters voor de Rooms-Katholieke Kerk van de Noordelijke Nederlanden na 1795', *Trajecta* 3 (1994): 307–27; J.Y.H.A. Jacobs, '"De Opgang tot het Altaar van God": De Structuur van de Priesteropleiding in Nederland vóór en ná 1853', *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis na 1800* 24, no. 54 (2001): 15; F.G.M. Broeyer, 'De Predikantsopleiding in de Negentiende Eeuw', in *Predikant in Nederland (1800 tot heden)*: *Jaarboek voor de Geschiedenis van het Nederlands Protestantisme na 1800*, vol. 5, ed. D.T. Kuiper (Kampen: Kok, 1997), 78.

to six years at a *grootseminarie*, or major college, concentrating on theology.[29] Although legally not institutions of higher education, all major colleges provided post-secondary teaching. Most Catholic theology students received their ordination between the ages of 23 and 26.[30] On leaving major college students were ordained as priests and then became chaplains (assistant priest) in the college's church district.[31] Once a chaplain was deemed capable enough he could be promoted to parish priest. Although the government forced some small colleges to close between 1825 and 1830 because it wanted Catholics to attend Leuven university, it did not interfere much with teaching at the Catholic colleges during the rest of the nineteenth century.[32]

Major colleges were first founded in Breda and Den Bosch in 1798, followed a year later by major colleges at Warmond and Heerenberg, set up in the missionary area of the *Hollandsche Missie* (Figure 1).[33] The minor colleges of Hageveld and Culemborg prepared for the major colleges here. Heerenberg closed in 1841, leaving Warmond as the only major college in the north until 1856.[34] With the re-establishment of the Dutch bishopric in 1853, the major college of Rijsenburg opened in 1856 to train the clergy for the newly established district of Utrecht, and Warmond now trained for Haarlem only. The major college of Den Bosch provided the training of Den Bosch clergy throughout the nineteenth century.[35] Minor colleges in Beekvliet, Oudenbosch and Rolduc prepared for major colleges in the south.[36] The major college in the city of Roermond served the district of Roermond.

The organisation of the colleges, including finances, enrolment, and day-to-day operations, were in the hands of the college directors. Also the individual Dutch Catholic Church districts (vicariates or dioceses) operated relatively independently from each other, without much interference from the Vatican and the archdiocese, and consequently also founded their colleges individually.[37] Jacobs has typified this absence of coordination between Dutch Catholic districts as 'diocesan particularism'.[38] As a

[29]The major colleges of Haarlem and Den Bosch typically required six years of studying, and Utrecht only four. Time spent at each grand seminary seems to have depended on the distribution of philosophy classes over the small and grand seminary; Jacobs, '"De Opgang"', 5.

[30]Diocesan archive of Den Bosch (DADB), inv. 492. These archives are no longer accessible because of cost reductions.

[31]Priests trained by Catholic orders were rarely employed by the Dutch dioceses and are therefore left out of consideration.

[32]Jacobs, '"De Opgang"', 13. Only a couple of students eventually visited the philosophical college at Leuven; *Handboekje voor de Zaken der Roomsch-katholijke Eeredienst* (1848), 5.

[33]Clemens, 'Een Onbedoeld Kind van de Revolutie', 320–3.

[34]L.J. Rogier and N. de Rooy, *In Vrijheid Herboren. Katholiek Nederland 1853–1953* (Den Haag: Pax, 1953), 185.

[35]Jacobs, '"De Opgang"', 10–11.

[36]Jacobs, '"De Opgang"', 14–17.

[37]Clemens, 'Een Onbedoeld Kind van de Revolutie'.

[38]J. Jacobs, 'Van Losse Hulptroepen naar een Welgeordend Leger: Over de Samenwerking tussen de Priester–religieuzen bij de Wederopbouw van Katholiek Nederland na 1853', in *Staf en storm: het Herstel van de Bisschoppelijke Hiërarchie in Nederland in 1853: Actie en Reactie*, ed. G.N.M. Vis and W. Janse (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), 219; Rogier and De Rooy, *In Vrijheid Herboren*, 203–4.

result of this particularism the Catholic church districts individually founded training institutions and bore the costs.[39]

Financing Reformed theology students

The 1815 decree had raised study costs for Reformed theology students by requiring them to attend university for around six years with tuition fees of between 100 and 180 guilders a year.[40] However, studying theology was generally regarded as socially less prestigious than studying law or medicine, meaning that the elite traditionally refrained from studying theology.[41] Reformed theology was therefore by necessity one of the first types of higher education accessible for relatively lower social groups in order to ensure sufficient vicars.[42] As a result theology students had always come from relatively lower social classes than other students. Between 1801 and 1811 most public grants were already given to Reformed theology students, and many had resorted to grants during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as well.[43] The increase in tuition fees after 1815 consequently presented many of them with a financing problem.[44]

Although the Reformed Church was no longer the privileged church, its ties to the government remained close.[45] Thus, when the Reformed Church feared that the new tuition fees would present a problem for the future supply of vicars, it seemed natural to call upon the government to relieve the financial difficulties of theology students.[46] After examining student numbers the Reformed Church concluded in 1819 that high costs prevented students from enrolling in the arts and theology faculties at the three Dutch universities.[47] The Church therefore requested the government to allow more freedom in study choice and in particular asked to lower tuition fees and raise public study grants. The 1815 decree had already installed about 20 public grants for theology students set at 200 or 300 guilders a year, to help talented

[39]Few Dutch students attended the theology faculty of Leuven during the nineteenth century; L. Kenis, 'De Theologische Faculteit te Leuven in de Negentiende Eeuw. Een Overzicht van haar Ontwikkeling en haar Relatie met de Priesteropleiding in Nederland', *Trajecta* 9 (2000): 206–8, 221–4.

[40]W. Otterspeer, *De Wiekslag van hun Geest: de Leidse Universiteit in de Negentiende Eeuw* (Den Haag: Stichting Hollandse Historische Reeks, 1992), 430–1; Roelevink, *Gedicteerd Verleden*, 136–7.

[41]Jarausch, 'Higher Education and Social Change', 25, 28, 30; D.J. Bos, *Servants of the Kingdom: Professionalization among Ministers of the Nineteenth-Century Netherlands Reformed Church* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 180–3; M. Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De Studentenpopulatie van de Leidse universiteit, 1575–1812: 'een volk op zyn Siams gekleet eenige mylen van Den Haag woonende'* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 307–8; Caljé, *Student, Universiteit en Samenleving*, 221, 336.

[42]Ringer, 'Admission', 250–1.

[43]F.C. Dufour-Briet, *De Kerkelijke en Maatschappelijke Achtergronden van de 87 Studenten die in de Periode 1801–1811 uit 's Lands Fonds een Studiebeurs Ontvingen voor de Leidse Universiteit* (Leiden: 1973); *Handelingen van de Algemeene Synode der Christelijke Hervormde Kerk in het Koningrijk der Nederlanden* (1819): 17 (hereafter *Handelingen*); Zoeteman-van Pelt, *De Studentenpopulatie*, 166–73.

[44]*Letterkundig Magazijn van Wetenschap, Kunst en Smaak (uittreksels en beoordelingen)*, no. 2 (1819): 78.

[45]Bos, *Servants of the Kingdom*, 141–2.

[46]P. van Rooden, 'Van Geestelijke Stand naar Beroepsgroep. De Professionalisering van de Nederlandse Predikant, 1625–1874', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis* 17 (1991), 370–1.

[47]*Handelingen* (1819), 16–44, 88–90.

but indigent students afford study costs.[48] According to the Church this was not sufficient. Since the seventeenth century, sons of vicars could also obtain an additional special allowance of 100 guilders a year, called academy money, and the Church asked for this allowance, which had fallen into disuse, to be reinstated and raised.

The multiple appeals by the Reformed Church were eventually successful and illustrative of the still close ties between the Reformed Church and the government. Almost all requests were granted in 1820.[49] Several theology courses were made optional instead of compulsory. Tuition fees for theology students were abolished completely. Although public grants were not raised, the university boards were given permission to let public grant students receive private grants of over 100 guilders as well, which had previously been prohibited. Last, the academy money was raised from 100 to 200 guilders per year and was awarded to all sons of vicars studying theology. As a result, study costs for theology students after 1820 dropped dramatically, notably for sons of vicars.

In 1836 the government reintroduced tuition fees and cut public grants because of budget cuts but also because there was no longer a shortage of vicars, followed by the abolition of all grants in 1842 due to further budget cuts.[50] A few were reinstalled in 1853. Despite these policy changes financial support did not disappear altogether. Various other sources of financial support remained open to Reformed students throughout the century, structurally easing access to the theology faculties.

First, sons of vicars opting to study theology continued to receive the special 200 guilders grant. Second, the government managed so-called vicariate funds, Catholic property confiscated during the Dutch Revolt, the yields of which were traditionally awarded as student grants to Reformed theology students.[51] In the nineteenth century they were supervised by the government. A sample of the records suggests that around 30% of these funds were still awarded to Reformed theology students during the nineteenth century, totalling about 4,000 guilders a year.[52] Third, in addition to the public funds many private grant foundations existed. Nearly all of these private foundations targeted Reformed theology students. Information drawn from various sources provides an estimate of the level and number of different grants. The results are given in Table 1, together with the number of Reformed theology students and the number of vicars' sons receiving academy money.

From 1820 to 1870 the number of available private and public grants rose from 72 to 123, with the result that, at certain times, almost every student could get one. For instance, if in 1840 sons of vicars did not receive grants other than the academy money, nearly all the remaining 102 students could have obtained a grant. Even when the grant/student ratio was at its lowest, for example around 1830, study grants averaging 191 guilders were still available for more than half of the student population. On top of that, around 40% of Reformed theology students during the

[48]Organiek Besluit, article 214.
[49]Koninklijk Besluit [Royal Decree], November 15, no. 29 (1820); Nationaal Archief (NA), The Hague, Hervormde Eredienst, inv. 1900.
[50]Otterspeer, *De Wiekslag van hun Geest*, 429–30; *Kamerstuk Tweede Kamer 1837–1838*, kamerstuknummer XXIII, ondernummer 2 (http://www.statengeneraaldigitaal.nl) (accessed August 7, 2014).
[51]Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme*, vol. I, 531, 542, 569, 581.
[52]Records of 1847–1848 and 1871–1872; NA, BiZa/Hoger Onderwijs, inv. 897, inv. 898; *Kamerstuk Tweede Kamer 1850–1851*, kamerstuknummer II, ondernummer 100.

Table 1. Estimate of financial support for Reformed theology students.

Year	Private grants (fl.)	Public grants (fl.)	Vicariate funds (fl.)	Total (fl.)	Average grant (fl.)	Number of grants	Academy money grants	Total theology students	All grants/ students
1820	6,030	5,000	4,000	15,030	209	72	83	163	0.95
1830	9,300	5,000	4,000	18,300	191	96	208	561	0.54
1840	10,380	3,700	4,000	18,080	199	91	140	242	0.95
1850	10,760	0	4,000	14,760	152	97	114	323	0.65
1860	13,660	3,000	4,000	20,660	178	116	170	434	0.66
1870	13,290	3,000	4,000	20,290	165	123	116	283	0.84

Notes: Student numbers between 1815 and 1844 are estimated by multiplying the average length of study for theology students at Utrecht (1815–1849) and Leiden (1817–1832) by the number of annually passed vicar exams. Since dropping out was uncommon and job opportunities outside the Church were limited, there is a strong correlation between the number of theology students at Utrecht and Leiden between 1817 and 1832 and passed vicar exams ($n = 16$, $r = 0.80$, sig. = < 0.01). This measure includes theology students at athenaeums because they had to register at a university. Academy money for 1838–1839, 1841–1844, 1846, 1854–1859, 1861–1869 is interpolated, and for 1870–1877 is based on the share of total academy money received by the *classis* of Utrecht for the years 1847–1852 and 1859.

Source: Public grants and vicariate funds: see text. Private grants: NA, BiZa, 1813–1848, inv. 4836 (no. 52); NA, BiZa / OKW, inv. nos. 260 (no. 59), 548 (no. 55), 731 (no. 103), 732 (no. 163); Het Utrechts Archief (HUA), Universiteit Utrecht: faculteit Godgeleerdheid, inv. nos. 3, 707, 714, 715, 758, 767 to 779. Academy money: NA, Hervormde Eredienstien, 1815–1870, inv. 1681, inv. 1736; *Kamerstuk Tweede Kamer 1850–1851*, kamerstuknummer XCVIII, ondernummer 4; *Kamerstuk Tweede Kamer 1853*, kamerstuknummer XV, ondernummer 2; *Kamerstuk Tweede Kamer 1853–1854*, kamerstuknummer LVII, ondernummer 3; HUA, Nederlandse hervormde classis Utrecht, inv. 138–141. Student numbers: for 1815–1819: *Handelingen* (1819). For 1820–1844: HUA, Archief Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht, senaat en rector, inv. 506, inv. 507; HUA, Universiteit Utrecht: faculteit Godgeleerdheid, inv. 304; Universiteit Leiden, Archief Senaat en Faculteiten, inv. 192 to 207; Universiteit Leiden, Archieven van de Faculteiten, inv. 20; *Nederlandse 'alba studiosorum' en 'promotorum': in Druk verschenen Naamlijsten van Nederlandse Studenten en Gepromoveerden* (Den Haag: Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, 2007). For 1845–1870: G.T. Jensma and H. de Vries, *Veranderingen in het Hoger Onderwijs in Nederland tussen 1815 en 1940* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1997), 132–33. Vicar exams from *Handelingen* 1819–1857.

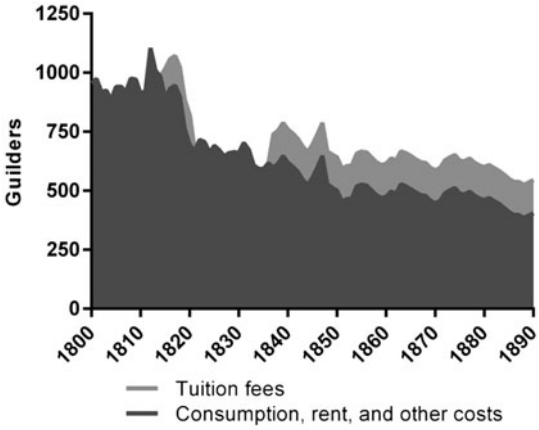

Figure 2. Real annual study costs for theology students at the university of Utrecht (estimate).
Notes: Average annual study costs minus tuition fees of Nicolaas Christiaan Kist (enrolled in 1811–1815), and 11 theology students at the university of Utrecht (enrolled in 1874–1877) are deflated with a consumer price index. Tuition fees are estimated at fl. 125 between 1815 and 1820 and fl. 140 between 1837 and 1890.
Source: NA, Archief Familie Teding van Berkhout, inv. 2160; NA, Kist, inv. 149; HUA, Hervormd opleidingscentrum Ruimzicht te Doetinchem 584-1, inv. 268. Consumer Price Index: 'stylized derived elite index'; http://www.iisg.nl/hpw/brannex.php (accessed July 28, 2014). Tuition fees: Otterspeer, *De Wiekslag van hun Geest*, 431–32; Caljé, *Student, Universiteit en Samenleving*, 332–33; Roelevink, *Gedicteerd Verleden*, 136–37.

nineteenth century were sons of vicars and thus received an annual allowance of 200 guilders. These figures are probably an underestimate. During a debate on 11 December 1835, the member of parliament Willem Schimmelpenninck van der Oije put financial support for theology students at 400 guilders per student annually.[53] Although he may have been exaggerating because he argued for a restoration of tuition fees, anecdotal evidence in newspapers suggests that the number of private grants in particular could well have been higher.[54]

The number of grants matters less, in fact, than their impact on total study costs. Information from a number of account books allows study costs for theology students to be estimated. As it turns out study grants indeed covered a considerable share of the costs. Since consumption formed a large part of a student's expenses, a cost of living index is used to make a time-series of Reformed theology study costs. The index gives a relatively large weight to rent, another major expenditure of students. Figure 2 shows that study costs fell in line with overall prices after 1815. This decline lowered study costs by 25%, begging the question as to whether the 1820 abolition of tuition fees was really necessary to raise enrolment. Study costs between 1820 and 1836 totalled around 750 guilders per year. Although the reintroduction of tuition fees in 1836 temporarily raised study costs, this was offset by a further price fall around 1848. It appears that studying theology in Utrecht after 1820 rarely cost more than 800 guilders a year, which resembles study costs at the university of Groningen.[55]

[53]*Handelingen der Staten Generaal*, December 11, 1832, 86.
[54]For example in the *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant* of July 28, 1857.
[55]Caljé, *Student, Universiteit en Samenleving*, 332–3.

Receiving one grant already lowered expenditure on private study costs by approximately 25%. Costs of living declined more than average grant amounts, so even while average grants became lower after 1840 their purchasing power increased. As Table 1 has demonstrated, more than half to nearly all theology students could have received a grant. In total, the grant market financed at least one-fifth of total study costs for theology students during the nineteenth century. Such levels of financial support were unknown to any other field of study. No evidence was found for grants for non-theology students in this period. Law or medicine students or their parents had to pay all study costs themselves, presumably making access to these studies much more difficult for middle- to lower income groups.

Looking at the social origin of university students highlights the degree to which the widely available support broadened access and stimulated enrolment at the faculties of theology in particular. Otterspeer has suggested that that the large presence of middle-class students at theology faculties can only be explained by 'a shadowy network of study grants and family support'.[56] Thus, in the absence of study grants and measures to reduce tuition fees, access to the other faculties at all three Dutch universities should have been predominantly reserved to students from higher social groups. Indeed, students at the law and medicine faculties at all three Dutch universities structurally originated from higher classes than theology students.[57] At the Leiden faculty of law almost 60% of students originated from the highest classes between 1815 and 1875, compared with only 10% at the faculty of theology.[58]

This dominance of middle groups at theology in particular was not exclusive to the university of Leiden. Attendance lists at the faculty of theology of the university of Utrecht mention the occupations of parents of theology students in 1825 and 1835. Table 2 groups these parents by socio-economic class using Hisclass.[59] Of the 370 listed theology students, 39 were of foreign origin. These are excluded because they usually could not apply for private and public grants and because these students were not educated for the Dutch Reformed Church. Vicars' sons are grouped to illustrate their large presence at the faculty.

The results mirror the origin of Leiden theology students and also point out the significance of the academy monies for vicars' sons. Given the fact that all these students received 200 guilders their strong presence at the faculty does not surprise. Some 19% of theology students had fathers belonging to the two highest Hisclass groups. Even after excluding vicars, the middle class made up 24% of all theology students. These parents, with a lower income, thus sent relatively more sons to study theology than the elite. Moreover, because the occupational status of Utrecht fathers was not listed on birth and marriage certificates the share of the middle and lower class was probably even higher, as they could keep their sons at home while studying instead of having to rent a room. Parents living off capital were explicitly listed, so the 21 fathers stated to be without a profession were

[56]Otterspeer, *De Wiekslag van hun Geest*, 432.
[57]K. Wingelaar, *Studeren in de Negentiende Eeuw: Een Onderzoek naar het Hoger Onderwijs en met name naar de Studenten aan de Utrechtse Universiteit in de Periode 1815–1877* (Utrecht: Instituut voor Geschiedenis, 1989), 69.
[58]Otterspeer, *De Wiekslag van hun Geest*, 420.
[59]M.H.D. van Leeuwen and I. Maas, *Hisclass: A Historical International Social Class Scheme* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2011).

Table 2. Occupation of fathers of all Utrecht theology students in 1825 and 1835.

Class	Description	*n*	%
High	Hisclass 1 to 3	62	19
Middle	Hisclass 4 to 7	81	24
Low	Hisclass 8 to 12	8	2
Vicars	Vicars of the Dutch Reformed Church	93	28
Other	Unknown, widows, without employment, deceased	87	26
Total		331	100

Source: HUA, Universiteit Utrecht: faculteit Godgeleerdheid, inv. 294.

perhaps even currently unemployed. It appears, then, that the combination of low tuition fees between 1820 and 1836 and the structural availability of many grants made theology the only field of higher education accessible for sons from less affluent middle-class families, thereby compensating for the low attendance of the elite at theology faculties.[60]

Easy access to financial support broadened university access but also boosted enrolment levels. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when only some provinces granted academy money, around one-third of vicars had followed in their fathers' footsteps.[61] But as can be seen in Table 1 the share of theology students receiving academy money was continuously higher than one-third during the nineteenth century, and at some points even as high as 50% (1820 and 1840). The academy money thus had a stimulating effect on the number of vicars' sons at theology faculties, thereby raising levels of intergenerational status transfer.

The Dutch government realised around 1860 that this large share of vicars' sons was indeed a direct effect of extending the academy money in 1820, and as a result installed a committee to examine academy money policy.[62] They advised halving the allowance because it was no longer necessary. The minister of finance did not follow this advice, possibly because the Reformed Church successfully lobbied against it by invoking historical entitlements.[63] In the 1870s the academy money was still 200 guilders annually.[64]

Vicars' sons could also receive academy money when studying something else, but that amounted to only 50 guilders a year. If job prospects were more important than financial assistance in determining study choice, we would expect more vicars' sons to have applied for this grant when demand for vicars was low, as was for instance the case around 1842. But even then only about 30 vicars' sons applied for the 50-guilder grant whereas more than 120 still opted to study theology.[65] We may thus conclude that the 200 guilders academy money boosted the number of

[60]Cf. W.D. Rubinstein, 'Education and the Social Origins of British Élites 1880–1970', *Past & Present* 112 (1986): 176–8. Cf. Ringer, 'Admission', 250.
[61]F.A. van Lieburg, *Profeten en hun Vaderland: De Geografische Herkomst van de Gereformeerde Predikanten in Nederland van 1572 tot 1816* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1996), 102.
[62]NA, Hervormde Eredienstenen 1815–1870, inv. 1990.
[63]*Handelingen* (1864), Bijlage B, 136–45.
[64]NA, Financiën/Eredienstenen, inv. 389.
[65]*Kamerstuk Tweede Kamer 1850–1851*, kamerstuknummer XCVIII, ondernummer 5.

Reformed theology students. This is all the more surprising since Vree has demonstrated that sons of vicars did not find a church position quicker than other theology students.[66] Studying cheaply was, then, more important than being able to find a job immediately after graduation.

Grant distribution policies of private foundations further boosted enrolment. Several grant foundations maximised the number of grants. Instead of awarding large amounts to the few, they gave smaller amounts to the many. Since the average grant was 182 guilders, the indigent student had to collect a number of such grants to cover his study costs, forcing him into a juggling act if he needed to finance theology study entirely with grants. Middle-class groups, on the other hand, may have benefited from this grant distribution policy since the average grant provided just that extra bit needed to pay for a theology education. This seems to be confirmed by Table 2, where low social classes (for instance farmers and unskilled workers) are underrepresented, while middle-class groups and vicars dominated the faculty of theology.

Private foundations had no ties to the Reformed Church or the government, hence grant distribution was not tuned to demand for vicars. Several royal decrees demonstrate that the Dutch government did oversee the management of the private foundations, but did not interfere with the assignment of grants. Following the Napoleonic period private foundations were reinstated in 1818 and additional regulation was installed in 1823, 1840 and 1873. Although these decrees stated that the foundations had to send annual reports to the Minister of Education and notify available grants in newspapers, they also stated that 'the bestowing of grants should follow the rules laid down in the deed of incorporation of the foundation'.[67] This seems to suggest that the government indeed favoured a 'free market' policy where grant provision was not centrally coordinated but instead in the hands of the private foundations. It is, however, also possible that it was legally not feasible to overrule these deeds of incorporation.

Whatever the case, the result was that foundations lowered grants when demand for grants rose. The result was that more students received a grant precisely when enrolment was already peaking due to good job prospects. When a renewed demand for vicars pushed up the number of theology students in 1866, the Mijsberg foundation lowered most grants to around 100 guilders. Every third first-year Reformed theology student at the Leiden university now received a grant from this foundation. Several other foundations also tied amounts to the number of applications. Between 1846 and 1866 the estimated amount of financial assistance available to theology students in the province of Zuid-Holland increased from 4,400 to 7,480 guilders. Yet the average amount dropped from 220 to 170 guilders, so that more than twice as many students received a grant. The Utrecht theology professors, who managed some private foundations, also split several large grants into grants of 100 guilders when applications increased during 1850. When applications again rose in 1870, the curators further reduced the average amount to raise the number of students receiving financial assistance: one for every 17 theology students at the university of Utrecht. The combination

[66]J. Vree, 'Overschot op de Nederlandse Kandidatenmarkt: Een Bron van Overzeese Predikanten, Hulppredikers, enz. (1829–1872)', *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse kerkgeschiedenis na 1800* 30 (2007): 46.
[67]Koninklijk Besluit, May 17, 1873, article 23.

of these funding mechanisms, and the absence of coordination between them, the Reformed Church, and the government, resulted in a structural oversupply of theology graduates.

Financing Catholic theology students

Financial support for Catholic theology students was organised completely differently. To compare the financing of these students with that of Reformed theology students, data have been collected for the major colleges of Haarlem, Utrecht and Den Bosch. These colleges provide a fairly representative overview for the training of the Catholic Dutch clergy. The respective dioceses for which they trained accounted for at least 70% of all Dutch secular clergy between 1838 and 1890.[68]

Study costs at the three colleges were well below those paid by Reformed theology students. The major college of Haarlem charged 324 guilders a year from 1819, and only 315 guilders a year as late as 1900. Utrecht tuition fees were 250 guilders throughout the century. The major college of Den Bosch charged 180 guilders per year until 1873 and increased this to only 200 guilders during the last quarter of the century. These amounts included board and lodging. Assuming remaining expenses such as books and clothes represented a quarter of expenditure, Catholic college students paid around fl. 400 at most annually, about half of the costs of Reformed students.

These relatively low tuition fees widened access to candidates from lower social groups.[69] Table 3 demonstrates that more than half of all students enrolled at the Utrecht major college between 1857 and 1863 originated from middle- to lower class families. Indeed 8% of lower-class fathers were day-workers or unskilled labourers, while another large share were farmers. Only 13% of students' fathers were either higher managers or professionals. This relatively low origin of college students also seems to apply to minor college students in the province of Brabant during the 1880s.[70]

Low tuition fees probably removed the necessity to use grants for attracting students. Utrecht tuition amounted to about half an annual skilled wage, but still several carpenters, shoemakers, and farmers could afford tuition without receiving grants. Instead, the colleges could afford to operate a strict selection procedure tied to financial incentives. College boards only admitted students likely to finish a theology education with success, and used grants and subsidies to ensure that a sufficient number of enrolled students graduated to fill the vacancies in their church district.[71] To achieve this they carefully monitored the performance of students.[72] For example, student Joseph Olivier Josset received a grant from the Haarlem directors in 1811 because he had talent and piety.[73] The boards could select on the basis of

[68]*Handboekje voor de Zaken der Roomsch Katholijke Eeredienst* (1869): 59, 85, 115, 131, 156; *Roomsch-katholijk Jaarboek* (1838): 15–82.
[69]This continued during the first half of the twentieth century; J.J. Dellepoort, *De Priesterroepingen in Nederland: Proeve van een Statistisch-sociografische Analyse* (Den Haag: Pax, 1955), 208–11.
[70]K. Mandemakers, *HBS en Gymnasium: Ontwikkeling, Structuur, Sociale Achtergrond en Schoolprestaties, Nederland ca. 1800–1968* (Amsterdam: Stichting Beheer IISG, 1996), 294.
[71]Het Utrechts Archief (HUA), Aartspriesters Hollandse Zending, inv. 1096.
[72]Cf. Mandemakers, *HBS en Gymnasium*, 287.
[73]Rogier and De Rooy, *In Vrijheid Herboren*, 190.

Table 3. Occupation of fathers of Utrecht Catholic major college students during 1857–1863, compared with Reformed theology students (see Table 2).

Class	Description	N	%	Utrecht Reformed theology students %
High	Hisclass 1 to 3	16	13	19
Middle	Hisclass 4 to 7	46	37	24
Low	Hisclass 8 to 12	36	29	2
Vicars	Vicars of the Dutch Reformed Church	0	0	28
Other	Unknown, widows, without employment, deceased	28	22	26
Total		126	100	100

Notes: The profession of the student's father is obtained by linking the full name of the student, his place of birth and the full names of both parents to digitised birth or marriage certificates.
Source: HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht: instituten voor de priesteropleiding, inv. 810. Birth and marriage certificates: http://www.wiewaswie.nl (accessed August 1, 2014).

talent and determination because, unlike the Reformed grant foundations, they managed nearly all grant foundations themselves. Instead of financial assistance boosting student enrolment, as was the case for Reformed theology students, the college boards could balance supply through grants.

In Utrecht this policy can be observed at the Culemborg minor college, from which students graduated to attend the major college for another four years. No student was eligible for a grant during his first year at Culemborg, so the board could observe the newly arrived and select those deserving a grant.[74] Any application required a reference from the local parish priest so that the board could assess a student's potential. Receiving a grant at the small seminary may have served as a basis for a further grant at the major college. At least 41 cohort students who did not receive a grant at Culemborg did not receive one at the major college either. Although the sources do not allow us to trace all students with subsidies between the minor and major college, subsidies of at least seven minor college students were continued at major college.[75]

A similar grant policy operated at the Den Bosch major college, whose curriculum took six years rather than four because it included two extra years of philosophy classes. Annual study financing has been collected for students enrolled at the Den Bosch major college between 1831 and 1891 at five-year intervals. The board predominantly awarded assistance to students who had stayed at the seminary for at least one year. Only 24 of the total 107 grant students had received a grant during their first year at the grand seminary.[76] All other grant students received a grant only after spending one year or more at the major college. Some of the first-year grants may have already been assigned by the minor college and for that reason were prolonged at the major college, as probably happened in Utrecht as well.[77]

[74]HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht, inv. 320.
[75]HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht, inv. 705.
[76]DADB, inv. 175, inv. 176, inv. 1058. The cohort of 1851 was missing.
[77]NA, BiZa/Hoger Onderwijs, inv. 863.

Major colleges wanted to limit the wasting of grants by ensuring that students receiving them were capable and fully motivated to finish their studies. All colleges kept books listing the talent and progress of their students.[78] It seems likely that the boards did this to link grants and tuition fees paid to individual progress, so that grants were not given to less talented students. At the Utrecht major college subsidies were therefore only extended in the second half of the year, after tuition had already been paid. Colleges also did not hesitate to dismiss underperforming students. During the 1860s, for instance, the Utrecht board sent a few poor performers to a local Catholic order.[79] Another grant student at the Utrecht minor college was removed in 1888 when his talents proved too slight.[80] Also the diocese wanted to make sure that money was well spent. In 1831 the archpriest of Holland wrote to Haarlem major college stating that several students in the future had to collect their donations personally at his office, allowing him to better evaluate these students.[81]

A leaflet from 1819 demonstrates that this selection procedure did not fare well with all students. The writer, Adrianus van der Kuyl, had been removed from the Heerenberg major college because of misbehaviour. When he applied to the Utrecht archpriest for a grant to continue his studies elsewhere in the Netherlands he was told that he 'was no great loss to the Church' and as a result further grants from the colleges were denied.[82] In another leaflet Adrianus criticised the grant policy of the colleges because Catholic churchgoers entrusted the colleges with the distribution of their donations instead of supporting students directly, consequently blocking Adrianus's access to financial support altogether.[83]

Nevertheless, this policy of supporting relatively talented students did foster a high success rate. Grants awarded to the right students enabled them to follow the entire curriculum from minor through to major college and the priesthood. For some, grants awarded at the minor college smoothed the move to the major college. Moreover, data on the financial support awarded by the major colleges confirms that grants significantly reduced the number of students dropping out.

At the Den Bosch seminary receiving a grant smoothed the way from the philosophy to the theology department (the last four years). Continuing a grant from year two to year three boosted the chances of a student staying at the college. Only four out of 105 students receiving a grant in their second year at the grand seminary did not continue their studies at the major college. By comparison, of the 156 cohort students without a grant, as many as 47 did not make it to the grand seminary, i.e. they failed to stay at the seminary for more than two years. At Haarlem major college during the years 1867–1876, 37 of 46 cohort students

[78]Noord-Hollands Archief (NHA), Haarlem, Seminarie Hageveld te Heemstede, inv. 626, inv. 627; DADB, inv. 959; HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht, instituten voor de priesteropleiding, inv. 815, inv. 816.
[79]HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht, inv. 705
[80]HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht, inv. 697.
[81]NHA, Seminarie Warmond, inv. 93, letter of the director of Haarlem major college, March 1, 1831.
[82]A. van der Kuyl, *Geschiedkundige verdediging, of Letterlijk verslag van A. van der Kuyl* (Amsterdam: H. Moolenijzer, 1819).
[83]A. van der Kuyl, *Een woordje aan alle gelovige roomsch katholijken, betrekkelijk de inzameling van liefdegiften voor de seminaria, zijnde Warmond en 's Heerenberg, en de kleine seminaria Velsen en Kuilenburg: het onnuttige, onbelangrijke en de nadeelige gevolgen daaruit bewezen en wederlegd* (Amsterdam: M. van Kolm Jr., 1820).

with financial support had at least received their grant on starting their theology courses. As indicated, notes suggest that some of them had been given a grant during the previous year as well.[84]

Grants seem to have reduced dropping out not only because they were predominantly awarded to students capable of finishing their first two years, but also because once given the college boards rarely discontinued them. All grant students in Utrecht received the grant, usually 100 guilders, for their entire course of study. At Haarlem major college, 44 of the 46 grant students continued to receive a grant until they graduated or left the seminary. Even Wilhelmus Kortekaas's grant was continued when he returned to the seminary after being absent for more than a year, possibly due to illness.[85] Clearly grants helped students to continue studying.

The Den Bosch board reduced the chances of dropping out even further by progressively increasing grants. Table 4 gives the average grant amounts paid to students during their stay at the college. The longer they stayed, the more financial assistance they received per year. During his sixth year, the average grant student received more than twice the amount bestowed in his first year. Since grant students generally stayed no longer than about six months during their seventh year, grants even financed almost all tuition fees for grant students during this year, greatly helping them to graduate. By gradually extending the number and amount of grants, colleges motivated students to stay and finish their studies.

At the major college of Haarlem too many students benefited from financial support. Data on tuition fees between 1819 and 1834 show that financial assistance lowered study costs for all Haarlem students by almost 30%. Because of grants and subsidies, students only had to pay fl. 230 annually out of their own pockets. During the years 1867–1876 more than 60% of the sample students could finance more than half of tuition fees with financial assistance. Grants not fully employed by some students because of graduation were sometimes transferred to make sure other students could finance their studies up to the point of graduation.[86] This increased level of funding was no coincidence. As will be shown, the number of church positions increased in this period, raising demand for Haarlem graduates. By extending funds, and also by making rich students assist poorer students, the Haarlem seminary was able to match this increased demand for clergy.

The selective grant policy of the colleges was successful in encouraging persistence and graduation. At the Den Bosch college, for which we have the largest sample, grant students dropped out far less frequently than other students, and they also completed their studies more often. In all, 93% of students who at some point received a grant completed their studies, compared with 65% of students without financial support. Almost one in three non-grant students dropped out before their third year, whereas only one of the 58 grant students present in year two did not stay for a third year. Of the remaining 57 grant students, 50 almost certainly finished their studies. The Den Bosch seminary thus effectively curtailed dropping out by giving progressively increasing grants to second-year students who had proved their capability.

[84]DADB, inv. 812, inv. 1058.
[85]NHA, Seminarie Warmond, inv. 168, fol. 156.
[86]NHA, Seminarie Warmond, inv. 168 (no page numbering from cohort 1876). Notes at students Bensdorp, Ten Brink, Haastrecht, Galen, and Borsboom.

Table 4. Tuition fee financing for cohort students at Den Bosch major college, 1838–1891.

Study year	Total Students	Grant students	%	Average grant (fl.)
1	263	24	9	71
2	240	58	24	92
3	213	74	35	110
4	201	81	40	108
5	172	76	44	122
6	155	76	49	157
7	86	44	51	131

Source: DADB, inv. nos. 175, 176, 1058.

Contrary to the Reformed Church, the Catholic districts acted in accordance with the colleges to ensure a stable supply of priests. As future employer, the diocese of Utrecht regularly informed the boards of Utrecht major and minor colleges on their demand for chaplains, and advised the board on how many students to enrol.[87] Mirroring the regional particularism this coordination was regional instead of on a national or central level. For instance, grants and subsidies were not centralised but disbursed at district level.[88] The subsidies given to Haarlem and Utrecht students were in large part funded by their church district through donations.[89] Between 1841 and 1856 the Utrecht district subsidised the tuition of its students attending the Haarlem major college, so they paid only 200 guilders instead of 324.[90] This ensured that the distance to a major seminary would not deter Utrecht students from enrolling, thus safeguarding clergy for the Utrecht district. Moreover, students needed approval from their diocese if they wanted to become missionaries rather than priests.[91] Abandoning the route towards priesthood could also have financial consequences. The father of Johannes van Aarnhem, a tailor in Jutphaas near Utrecht, had to declare in 1919 that he would repay all his son's grants should he become a missionary instead of serving the diocese of Utrecht.[92] Reformed theology students never had to reimburse grants.

The Catholic training system was characterised by monitoring demand for priests, followed by carefully selecting students, and providing grants to ensure that supply met demand. The combination of close ties with their local church district and relative financial independence gave the minor and major training colleges more control over student selection and financing compared with the heterogeneous funding mechanisms for Reformed theology students. Consequently, the colleges could combine low tuition fees with graduation numbers closely balanced to job-market needs. This emphasis on selection, persistence and graduation proved favourable for the job market for chaplains and priests. Of all students enrolled at Utrecht major college during 1854–1863 approximately 85% became clergy in the Utrecht diocese.

[87]HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht, inv. 705; HUA, Aartspriesters Hollandse Zending, inv. 1096.
[88]NHA, Seminarie Warmond, inv. 166, 'Staat van betaling kostgelden 1841–42'.
[89]HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht, inv. 320, inv. 340.
[90]NHA, Seminarie Warmond, inv. 166.
[91]HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht, inv. 705, letters from August 14, 1866 and December 8, 1867.
[92]HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht, inv. 320; NHA, Aartspriester van Holland en Zeeland, inv. 868.

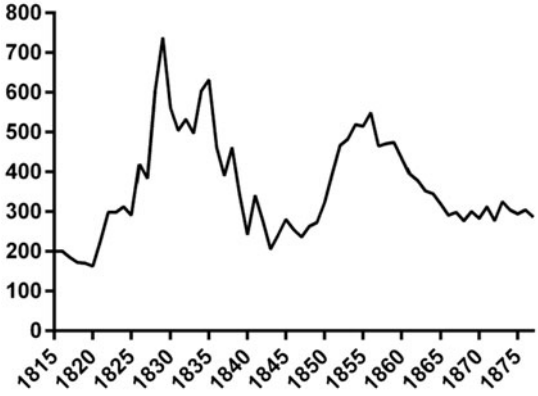

Figure 3. Enrolled Reformed theology students, 1815–1877 (estimate).
Notes and source: see Table 1.

Student financing and the labour market

The literature has generally characterised nineteenth-century graduate labour markets as a 'pork cycle', meaning that they showed cyclical fluctuations in the supply and demand for students.[93] If the labour market outlook was good enrolment would increase. Because studying takes time demand seemed to persist even after the initial increase in enrolment, causing more students to enrol than were needed for the labour market.[94] This resulted in an oversupply of candidates, deterring aspiring students, and leading to an undersupply. Demand would again rapidly increase when the previous generation retired, and the cycle would repeat itself.[95] Such cycles are usually found when 'a given course of study invariably prepares for a specific profession', like studying theology.[96] As demonstrated by Van Rooden and Figure 3, this cycle unmistakably applied to the enrolment of Reformed theology students during the nineteenth century, with enrolments peaking during 1820–1830 and 1850–1860, and dropping before and after every peak.

Nevertheless, the data presented above make a strong case for arguing that not only labour-market demand but also uncontrolled enrolment combined with low tuition, and the absence of grant coordination, affected these cycles significantly. The enrolment of Reformed theology students was boosted by three factors: tuition fee policy, the academy money for vicars' sons, and a 'free market' for private grants. As to the first factor, it is no surprise that student numbers soared from 1820 to 1836 after the abolition of tuition fees. The second factor, granting 200 guilders to all sons of vicars studying theology, caused a very large share of them to do so, even when demand for vicars was low. Table 5 demonstrates that around 40% of all Reformed theology students were sons of vicars. Even though the Reformed Church

[93]H. Titze, 'Die zyklische Überproduktion von Akademikern im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 10 (1984): 92–121; H. Titze, *Der Akademikerzyklus: historische Untersuchungen über die Wiederkehr von Überfüllung und Mangel in akademischen Karrieren* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990).
[94]Van Rooden, 'Van Geestelijke Stand naar Beroepsgroep', 367–8.
[95]Jensma and De Vries, *Veranderingen in het Hoger Onderwijs*, 167.
[96]Ringer, 'Admission', 236.

Table 5. Estimate of vicars' sons studying theology annually.

Period	Theology students (mean)	Vicars' sons studying theology (mean)	%
1815–1820	182	72	39
1821–1830	389	180	47
1831–1840	440	184	42
1841–1850	246	112	46
1851–1860	477	177	37
1861–1870	324	140	43
1871–1877	300	98	33
1815–1877	343	140	41

Notes and sources: see Table 1.

around 1830 thanked the government for increasing access to the Theology faculties, they also conceded that academy money together with the absence of tuition fees had caused an oversupply of graduates.[97]

While the academy money ensured that even in periods of low demand many sons of vicars still attended university, private grants boosted student numbers when labour-market demand by itself already attracted a sufficient number of students. By spreading grants wide this policy worked procyclically, enabling more middle-class students to finance their studies, and reinforced the oversupply of students. That is why in 1835 politician William Schimmelpenninck van der Oije argued that these generous levels of financial support had to be reduced.[98] During the same year the Reformed Church identified that too many students frequented the faculties of Theology.[99]

Nor did it help that everyone with the right qualifications had access to a faculty of theology, so that, unlike the seminaries, enrolment could hardly be controlled. This is reflected in a comment in the newspaper the *Algemeen Handelsblad* of 1838, stating that 'it used to be old wine that shines, now it is only foamy barley beer: because as soon as they have sufficient money scraped together by painting, chopping or carpentering, the son has to go to university, capable or not, it does not matter'.[100]

Consequently, Dutch universities continuously trained more theology students than the Dutch Reformed Church needed. In 1819 the general synod had calculated that 40 graduates a year would suffice in order to have sufficient vicars, which required a total of 259 theology students.[101] However, from 1820 to 1836 the average number of theology students was 440 per year, way more than the Church needed to fill vacancies. Already in 1822 the number of students, approximately 300, was sufficient to staff the Church, yet enrolment continued to increase to a staggering 700 in 1829. Student numbers only really began to decline after 1836, not surprisingly the year in which tuition fees were reinstated. But even during this trough in the cycle of theology students, which lasted until 1850, still too many

[97]*Handelingen* (1830): 9.
[98]*Handelingen der Staten Generaal*, December 11, 1835, 86.
[99]*Handelingen* (1830): 9.
[100]Otterspeer, *De Wiekslag van hun Geest*, 432 (author's translation).
[101]*Handelingen* (1819): 22–3.

theology students were educated. Even at the bottom of the cycle more than 200 theology students attended the universities.

Moreover, the pool of graduates waiting for a position reduced the need for new theology students further and further. This can be seen in Figure 4, which gives the annual number of available theology graduates. Even during periods of low demand in the 1850s around 100 candidates were still waiting for a position as vicar, demonstrating that the surplus of theology students was not only a problem of the 1830s and 1840s.[102] The oversupply seems to have decreased only when the schism in the Dutch Reformed Church around 1880 probably put off potential students, and led to the creation of a new university.[103]

A sample of around 24% of all students taking the vicar's exam between 1820 and 1872 demonstrates that opportunities for the excess number of graduates were limited outside the Church.[104] It was not uncommon to wait as long as four years for a position as vicar. The Reformed Church did feel for these jobless candidates and many became 'assistant vicars', a function that was expanded especially to take up the excess number of graduates. Most of these assistants were poorly paid, either by the local church board or the government. There are many examples of assistant vicars never being able to rise to the position of vicar. Only from the 1860s did a new type of Dutch secondary school offer a limited outlet for these graduates.[105]

By consulting Protestant magazines like *De Boekzaal* or *De Gids*, Reformed students could relatively easily have noticed that there were too many theology graduates and that their prospects were poor. Contemporaries were well aware of these lists.[106] These magazines not only published the number of available candidates, but also advertisements of jobless graduates offering their services as assistant-vicars. For instance, *De Boekzaal* recorded an average of 181 available candidates during the 1840s.[107] The fact that neither these numbers nor the advertisements put off potential theology students underlines the importance of the wide availability of grants in maintaining a surplus of theology students even in periods of low demand.

Contemporaries noticed the link between financial support and the oversupply of theology graduates. Because sufficient theology students would also have been attracted without 'enticements' such as grants, an anonymous leaflet in 1834 called for the abolishment of study grants. The author also proposed a tax on theology students to support the large number of unemployed graduates. Abolishing grants would also have the 'beneficial' effect of deterring many lower class students who now studied theology.[108] In 1868 some Reformed *classis* discarded a clause to increase study grants for sons of vicars, arguing that the number of grants for

[102]Vree, 'Overschot', 23.
[103]Jensma and De Vries, *Veranderingen in het Hoger Onderwijs*, 179–80.
[104]Sample of over 820 protestant theology candidates between 1820 and 1872 from Vree; 'Lijst van (voornamelijk Hervormde en Lutherse) Predikanten, Hulppredikers'; Jensma and De Vries, *Veranderingen in het Hoger Onderwijs*, 173–4.
[105]Bos, *Servants of the Kingdom*, 294–5.
[106]Ibid., 176.
[107]Vree, 'Overschot', 20–1.
[108]Philocandidatus, *Middelen ter plaatsing van een aanzienlijk getal proponenten* (Amsterdam: J.H. van Heteren, 1834).

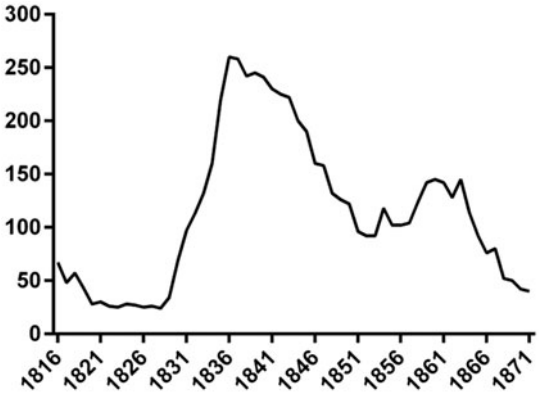

Figure 4. Available candidates for the Reformed Church.
Source: Vree, 'Overschot', 20–21.

theology students was already more than sufficient to meet demand.[109] Regrettably, we can only guess as to why financial incentives were not further reduced, or reduced earlier.

The oversupply of Protestant theology students emanating from an absence of coordination in student funding contrasts sharply with the Catholic colleges. These colleges succeeded in tailoring the number of graduates closely to demand by a policy of selection and monitoring, backed up by judicious grant awards. As Figure 5 shows, attendance levels of Catholic theology students show no cycles at all. Student numbers for both Catholic districts remained more or less constant throughout the nineteenth century, the only disruption around 1825 being a temporary one following an interruption in the flow of students from minor to major colleges.[110] The gradual increase in student numbers simply reflected a rising number of clergy positions. Student numbers in Den Bosch increased until about 1848, in line with the number of chaplain positions. At the colleges of Haarlem and Utrecht the growth in students from 1857 mirrored the expansion of the clergy. As explained, the Haarlem college matched this rise by extending more grants and subsidies and allowing more leeway in tuition fee payments.

The job market for Catholic clergy has not been documented. Following the approach of Van Rooden, fluctuating average terms of clergy office indicate job market cycles.[111] When the number of vacant positions for chaplains and priests was low, the average length of office should have increased, since chaplains or priests would be less able or willing to switch parishes. Conversely, a shortage of clergy should have translated into declining average terms of office, since parishes would compete for priests from other parishes. A shortage of priests would also have quickened the promotion from chaplain to priest, further decreasing average terms of office of chaplains.

Based on more than 7,500 observations in Catholic almanacs, Table 6 lists average office terms for priests and chaplains in the two church districts between 1838

[109]*Handelingen* (1868), 36.
[110]Rogier and De Rooy, *In Vrijheid Herboren*, 35–6.
[111]Van Rooden, *Religieuze Regimes*, 51–5.

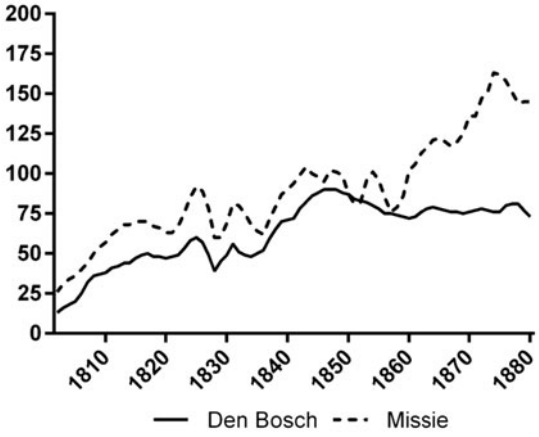

Figure 5. Attendance at the major colleges of Den Bosch and the Missie (three-year moving average).
Notes: The ratio of Heerenberg to Den Bosch students between 1837and 1842 is used to estimate the number of students at Heerenberg during 1800–1837. Estimates are based on average enrolments, graduation rates and study length.
Source: DADB, inv. nos. 175, 176, 1058; HUA, Aartspriesters Hollandse Zending, inv. 1981; HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht: instituten voor de priesteropleiding, inv. 810; NHA, Seminarie Warmond, inv. nos. 85, 92, 93, 121, 166, 167.

and 1888. Only Den Bosch chaplains around 1873 were in office for longer than usual, probably because the number of chaplain positions increased faster than the number of priests. By 1888 this was resolved since the terms of office of Den Bosch priests dropped again, as chaplains who had to stay in office longer around 1873 had now been promoted. Otherwise the average terms of office showed remarkable stability. This consistency suggests a very constant labour market. In contrast to the labour market for vicars, this demonstrates that the two Catholic areas were able to match the influx of graduates to the number of clergy needed in their district.

To prevent unemployment, an oversupply of graduates could still have been masked by installing more offices when there was no actual need for them. This can be identified by the ratio of clergy to Catholic inhabitants in both districts.[112] The stable ratio of 1.1 clergy per 1.000 Catholics throughout the century in both districts nevertheless demonstrates that there never was an oversupply of clergy. In the Missie, this resulted in almost a thousand clergy for approximately 795,000 Catholic inhabitants by 1879 – keeping a ratio comparable to 1830 when there had been only 531,000 Catholic inhabitants. Not surprisingly, the number of clergy in both districts strongly and significantly correlates to the number of Catholic inhabitants throughout the nineteenth century, and also to the number of college students.[113] The Haarlem, Utrecht, and Den Bosch districts thus judiciously balanced student numbers with the growing need for clergy in their parishes, without this resulting in student cycles.

[112]Catholic inhabitants from the censuses of 1830, 1840, 1859, 1869, 1879, 1889 from http://www.volkstellingen.nl (accessed November 12, 2013). Catholic clergy from Table 6.
[113]$n = 6$, $r = 0.92$, sig. = < 0.05; $n = 42$, $r = 0.72$, sig. = < 0.01.

Table 6. Average number of years in current office.

	Chaplains		Priests	
Year	Den Bosch	Missie	Den Bosch	Missie
1838	5.5	6.4	13.8	11.7
1843	6.0	5.8	14.3	10.9
1847	5.4	6.8	13.8	10.5
1853	5.7	5.8	14.5	10.5
1863	5.7	4.3	14.6	11.6
1873	6.9	4.7	15.0	11.7
1888	6.1	5.0	11.6	11.8

Notes: 1857 was omitted because the source did not allow for the reconstruction of terms of office.
Source: *Roomsch-katholijk Jaarboek* (1838, 1843); *Handboekje voor de Zaken der Roomsch Katholijke Eeredienst* (1847, 1853, 1863, 1873); *Pius Almanak* (1888).

Conclusion

Both Reformed universities and Catholic colleges offered financial support to ease access to higher education for students. Both thereby attracted a relatively large number of students from low social groups, the limited data available suggesting that in this respect the Reformed theology departments differed markedly from other faculties. Low tuition fees plus similar amounts of financial support for Catholic college students also resulted in a high share of students from lower social classes. The easy access to financial support offered to these students in particular indicates that low costs historically promoted access to higher education.[114]

The way in which this assistance was provided mattered a great deal for enrolment, graduation, and job opportunities. Contrary to the Reformed Church each Catholic college had close connections with its diocese, so the boards could tailor enrolment and graduation to vacancies in their region. The colleges could do this because they were free to select at the gate, and because they controlled grant funds themselves. This enabled them to use grants not only to ease enrolment and broaden access, but also to encourage students to persist and graduate. This coordination on a regional level balanced relatively open access with labour-market demand in all church districts.

An absence of coordination between the universities, the Church and grant foundations prevented the formulation of a coherent grant policy tuned to job opportunities for Reformed theology students. Neither the Reformed Church nor the universities could select or monitor theology students, and they had no say over tuition fees. Private grants were distributed based on student demand, which had a procyclical effect on attendance. Academy money further reinforced attendance, and the government was, for reasons unknown, reluctant to abolish this grant when it was no longer necessary. This Dutch example suggests that cycles of graduate oversupply, which can be observed throughout eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, might have been resolved by closer coordination between financiers, institutions of higher education, and employers. More research is needed to see if this holds for other types of higher education as well.

The success of both types of student funding ultimately depends on the parties considered. In contrast to elementary education, the oversupply of Reformed

[114]Edirisooriya, 'A Market Analysis', 123–5.

graduates was not really beneficial to society, since employment opportunities for these graduates were limited in this period. Meanwhile, government costs rose following the abolition of tuition fees. The Reformed Church did benefit because it could select the most talented candidates. Graduated Reformed students indeed feared to be rejected on the basis of wearing glasses alone, because so many applicants were available.[115] The efficient use of study grants reduced training costs for the colleges. However, their emphasis on balancing enrolment with vacancies did imply that a large share of admitted students needed to graduate, even if some eventually proved less talented. Some correspondence does suggest that colleges deliberately sent less talented students to small parishes.[116]

Perhaps it is no surprise that coordinated funding at the regional level enabled a closer match between supply and demand. The historical provision of elementary and secondary education in Europe and the United States succeeded in particular when it was organised by towns or provinces.[117] Moreover, the success of higher education in the United States is also ascribed to decentralised funding and local control.[118] The similarity between these cases suggests that the level and distribution of student funding may be important for understanding the development of higher education as well.

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Notes on contributor

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[115]Bos, *Servants of the Kingdom*, 178–9.
[116]HUA, Aartsbisdom Utrecht, inv. 705.
[117]P. Savoie, 'The Role of Cities in the History of Schooling: A French Paradox (Nineteenth–Twentieth Centuries)', *Paedagogica Historica* 39 (2003): 37–51; Goldin, 'The Human-Capital Century and American Leadership'; Lindert, *Growing Public*, vol. 1, ch. 5; N. Beadie, 'Tuition Funding for Common Schools: Education Markets and Market Regulation in Rural New York, 1815–1850', *Social Science History* 32 (2008): 107–33; Westberg, 'Stimulus or Impediment?', 17.
[118]Goldin and Katz, *The Race between Education and Technology*, 138, 260.