CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Memory and Identity in Learned Communities

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Scholars, scientists, learned men and learned women have considered themselves part of communities for centuries. Think of ancient academies, clerical circles, monasteries, universities, or the emergence of learned societies at the end of the seventeenth century. Such communities served different purposes: they established a shared sense of identity in a wider society, provided a set of norms for the production of knowledge or created an environment for discussion. What they largely had in common, however, was the ability to decide what knowledge is and who can possess it, making them central to knowledge creation and dissemination.[1] The purpose of this book is to explore the various ways in which learned men and learned women considered themselves part of a community, and more importantly, how these communities have formed, reformed, and enabled processes of in- and exclusion, as well as how they relate to collective, institutional, and scholarly identity.

The category of 'community' operates on a fruitful level of analysis, because it allows historians to focus on the cultural aspects of knowledge-making. To clarify the approach and focus in this volume, let us consider the example of Desiderius Erasmus (1469–1536) to see how an archetypical image of the scholar and his community can change over time. The case of Erasmus allows us to consider how he identified and presented himself, but also how he was remembered, hailed, and criticized after his death. During his life, Erasmus placed himself in a tradition of biblical scholarship and as a worthy successor of Saint Jerome (ca. 342–420).[2] To strengthen his scholarly persona, Erasmus wrote a life story of his mentor, Rudolphus Agricola (1443–1485), embedding himself and his work in a history of scholarship.[3] At the same time, Erasmus fostered friendships with fellow scholars, most famously with Thomas More

1 James Secord has famously argued that 'To make knowledge move is the most difficult form of power to achieve.' Secord J.A., "Knowledge in Transit", *Isis* 95.4 (2004) 654–672, 670.

2 Jardine L., *Erasmus, Man of Letters. The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, NJ: 1993).

3 Ibidem; Akkerman F. (ed.), *Rudolph Agricola. Six Lives and Erasmus's Testimonies*, trans. R. Bremer – C. Ooms Beck, Bibliotheca Latinitatis Novae (Assen: 2012).

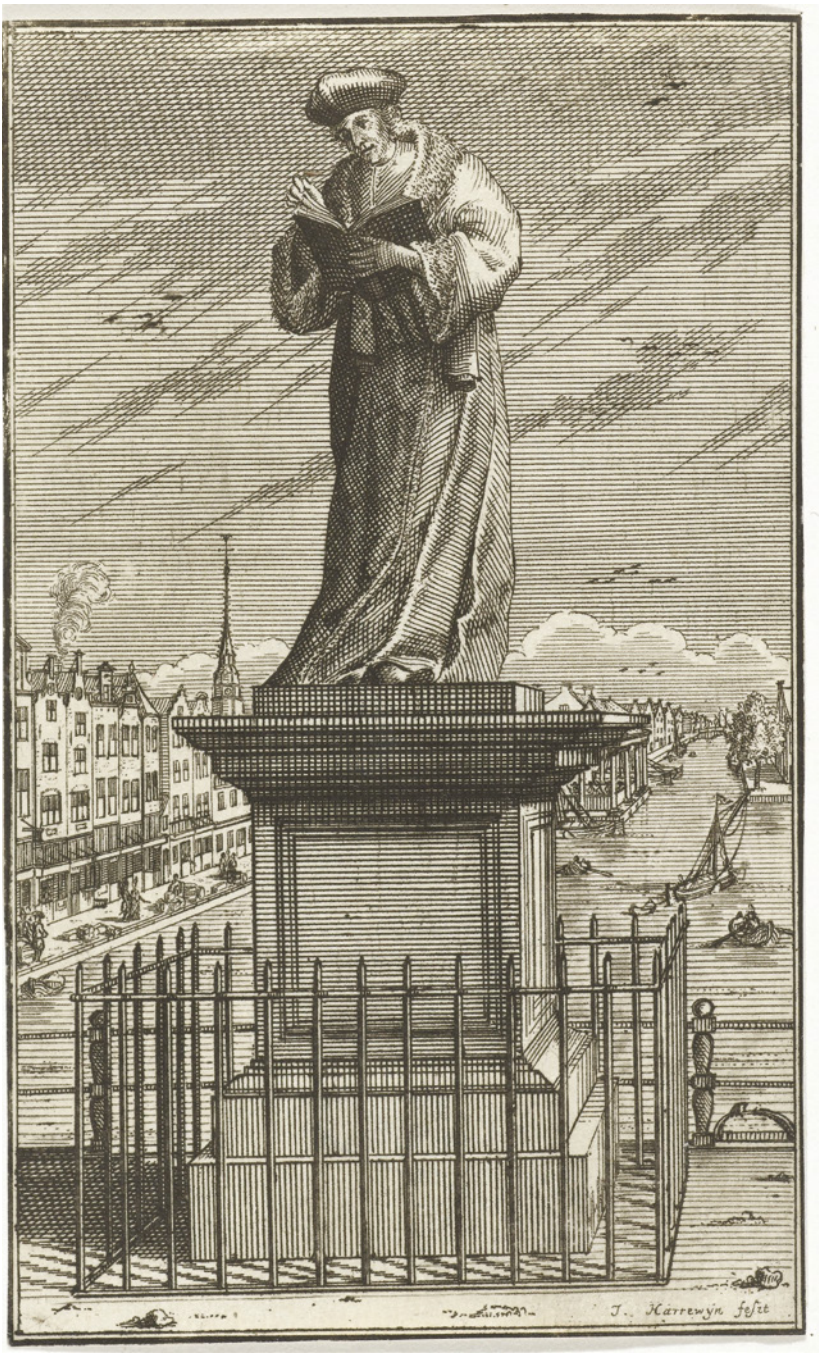

FIGURE 1.1 Jacobus Harrewijn, *Statue of Erasmus in Rotterdam*, ca. 1682–1730. Etching, 132 × 80 mm
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FIGURE 1.2 Jacobus Baptist, Hillebrand van der Aa and Willem van Mieris, Desiderius Erasmus receives The Book of Truth, 1703–1706. Etching and engraving, 345 × 274 mm, made as a frontispiece of Jean LeClerc's edition of Desiderius Erasmus, *Opera Omnia* [...], 10 vols. (Pieter van der Aa, Leiden: 1703–1706)
AMSTERDAM, RIJKSMUSEUM, RP-P-1909–508

(1478–1535). Constance Furey characterized Erasmus's network as 'a new kind of religious community bound together by affective relationships and shared interests in spiritualized scholarship.'[4] In short, Erasmus considered himself part of a scholarly community, with a history, a collective identity, and a common goal.[5]

After his death, Erasmus became part of many lively memory cultures, both as a hero and an arch-enemy.[6] Many humanists viewed him as a champion of learning, while his criticism of the clergy and the papacy made him a heretic in the eyes of many Catholics.[7] He, thus, became a malleable example of both excellent scholarly and deviously heretic behaviour. In Rotterdam, where he was allegedly born, and in Basel, where he worked with the well-respected Froben publishing house for many years, he was already part of a memory culture of regional pride.[8]

On the occasion of Philip II's visit to Rotterdam in 1549, the citizens of Rotterdam placed a wooden statue of Erasmus in the city square. Eight years later, the city council decided to erect a more lasting statue of stone on the bridge next to the city square and close to the house of Erasmus's birth.[9] At this point, Erasmus was clearly a figure of pride for the city of Rotterdam. Erasmus became a symbol of both erudition and civic pride. Spaniard soldiers soiled and smeared the statue during the siege of Rotterdam in April 1572 to eventually push the statue from the bridge into the water. Arnoldus Buchelius (1565–1641) recounted in his *Diarium* that the Catholic Spaniards considered Erasmus to be a Lutheran and therefore removed the symbol of defiance from the square of Rotterdam.[10] Between 1593 and 1596, a new statue was built on the square. Roughly twenty years later during the armistice of 1609–1621, Hugo Grotius

4 Furey C.M., *Erasmus, Contarini, and the Religious Republic of Letters* (Cambridge: 2005) 5.

5 Yoran H., *Between Utopia and Dystopia. Erasmus, Thomas More, and the Humanist Republic of Letters* (Lanham: 2010).

6 Karl Enenkel observed that 'for some of his contemporaries, Erasmus's name meant advanced, hitherto unsurpassed and perfect humanist scholarship; for others, however, it meant unbridled and arrogant hypercriticism, even heresy, that would lead to religious upheaval and to the destruction of millennium-old sacrosanct traditions.' Enenkel K.A.E., "Introduction – Manifold Reader Responses: The Reception of Erasmus in Early Modern Europe", in Idem (ed.), *The Reception of Erasmus in the Early Modern Period*, Intersections 30 (Leiden – Boston: 2013) 2.

7 Mansfield B., *Phoenix of His Age. Interpretations of Erasmus, c. 1550–1750*, Erasmus Studies 4 (Toronto – Buffalo: 1979).

8 Stoffers M., "Erasmus en de dood", in Zeijden A. van der (ed.), *De cultuurgeschiedenis van de dood* (Amsterdam – Atlanta, GA: 1990) 63–83.

9 Schlüter L., *Standbeelden van Erasmus in Rotterdam: 1549–2008* (Rotterdam: 2008) 4–5.

10 Buchelius Arnoldus, *Commentarius rerum quotidianarum, in quo, praeter itinera diversarum regionum, urbium, oppidorumque situs, antiquitates, principes, instituta, mores,*

(1583–1645), then an official of the city of Rotterdam, advised the city leaders to make yet another statue. This time the statue would be cast in bronze and designed by the famous artist Hendrick de Keyser (1565–1621).[11] Grotius saw in Erasmus his own ideal of the universal Christian. The bronze statue was placed in 1622 and was a true icon throughout the seventeenth century and beyond [Fig. 1.1]. The many statues reflect the variety of purposes and sentiments the image and memory of Erasmus could serve and represent.[12] Throughout the ages, Erasmus became an image of Rotterdam, the Dutch Republic at large, and an icon in protestant learned communities.

Like many men of letters, Hugo Grotius visited Rotterdam to show his respects, as he described in a letter to a colleague:

> De eerste uytganck, dye ick tot Rotterdam dede, was om mijne affective te toonen aen de memorie van Erasmus gaende zyen het beeldt van dyen man, dye soo wel de wech heeft aengewesen van een rechtmaetige reformatie [...]. Wij Hollanders connen desen man niet genoech bedancken ende ick houde mij geluckich, dat ick zijne deuchden soo enichsins van verre can begrijpen.[13]
>
> The first visit I made to Rotterdam was to show my affection to the memory of Erasmus, by going to the statue of this man, who showed us the path to a rightful Reformation [...]. We, Dutchmen, cannot thank this man enough, and it makes me happy that I can somewhat understand his virtues from afar.

Additionally, Grotius wished that other visitors of Rotterdam would do the same, as Dirk van Miert shows in Chapter 9. Almost a century after his death, Erasmus became a figure of regional and scholarly pride, as well as a central part of the collective identity and history of the scholarly community throughout Europe. Jean Le Clerc (1657–1736) decided to publish a second edition of Erasmus's *Opera Omnia* between 1703 and 1706, prefaced with lofty praise by Popes, rulers, and scholars.[14] LeClerc presented Erasmus as the bringer of

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multa eorum quae tam inter publicos quam privatos contingere solent, occurrent exempla, University Library Utrecht University, ms. 798, 6 E 15, fol. 138r–v.

11 Becker J., *Hendrick de Keyser. Standbeeld van Desiderius Erasmus in Rotterdam* (Bloemendaal: 1993).

12 Blom N. van der, "The Erasmus statues in Rotterdam", *Erasmus in English* 6 (1973) 5–9.

13 Hugo Grotius to Johannes Uytenbogaert, January 26, 1632, in Grotius Hugo, *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, vol. 5, ed. B.L. Meulenbroek (The Hague: 1966) 15. My translation.

14 Erasmus Desiderius, *Opera Omnia* [...], 10 vols. (Leiden, Pieter van der Aa: 1703–1706).

truth, a man of great erudition and enabler of the Reformation [Fig. 1.2]. Yet, the preface of the first volume also extended his fame to the city magistrates of Rotterdam:

> Amplissimus praesertim Magistratus *Roterodamensis*, qui civi suo statuam aeneam, in celeberrimo Urbis suae foro, posuit, numquam satis laudari potest, quod meritis tanti viri quidquid in eo minus probabat condonarit.[15]
>
> In particular the very esteemed magistrate of Rotterdam, who placed the bronze statue for their citizens in the busiest square of their city, cannot be praised fully enough, because through the merits of such a great man they condoned whatever they disapproved of him.

The edition, thus, acknowledged the fame a scholar can bestow on his native city and state, despite the religious differences the protestant city of Rotterdam had with the catholic Erasmus.[16] Moreover, Erasmus's portrait and life story were included in numerous collections of illustrious men of letters as an example of a pious and dedicated scholar and a testament to his heroic status within learned circles.

Thus, Erasmus became a central figure in the memory culture of many communities, both during his life, but especially after his death in 1536.[17] In the year of his death, close friends and admirers in Basel published a collection of epitaphs. The Froben publishing house added these poems as an appendix to an edition of the *Catalogi duo*.[18] The epitaphs consequently started to appear in different printed editions in Louvain and Paris in 1537.[19] The purpose of the epitaphs was to offer consolation to fellow members of the learned circle surrounding Erasmus. Such publications indicate the scholarly identity of Erasmus as a patron, protector and archetypical member of a community of humanist

15 Ibidem, vol. 1, "Praefatio" 6.

16 Mansfield, *Phoenix of His Age* 251–254.

17 Enenkel K.A.E., "Seventeenth-Annual Bainton Lecture: Epitaphs on Erasmus and the Self-definition of the Republic of Letters", *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 21.1 (2001) 14–29.

18 Erasmus Desiderius, *Catalogi duo operum Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami ab ipso conscripti et digesti: Cum praefatione Domini Bonifacii Amerbachii Iureconsulti ut omni deinceps imposturae via intercludatur, ne pro Erasmico quisquam aedat, quod vir ille non scripsit dum viveret. Accessit in fine Epitaphiorum ac tumulorum libellus quibus Erasmi mors defletur, cum elegantissima Germani Brixii epistola ad Clarissimum virum Dominum Bellaium Langaeum* (Basel, Froben, 1537); cited in Enenkel, "Epitaphs on Erasmus" 15.

19 Enenkel, "Epitaphs on Erasmus" 15–17.

scholars. These first memorial publications of epitaphs were soon followed by the publication of the biography of Erasmus as well as the Basel *Omnia Opera*.[20] Taken together, soon after his death Erasmus became an archetypical figure of a community of humanist scholars throughout Europe.[21] While Erasmus may have died, the ideals he represented lived on in this community.

It is illustrative of how these various communities – the pan-European scholarly community during and after his life, various Protestant scholarly communities, the city of Rotterdam, and the humanist scholarly community – all praised Erasmus as an ideal member of *their* community on account of very different virtues and characteristics, to the point of acknowledging that Erasmus did not perfectly embody their religious convictions, as we have seen above in the case of Rotterdam. This case allows us to see scholarly identity formation on the individual level by Erasmus himself, as well as on the collective level in the adoption of the persona of Erasmus as an exemplary figure in the memory cultures of different communities. Even this brief analysis of a few learned communities shows that Erasmus became part of a myriad of memory cultures to represent an aspect of the identity of these communities.

This volume wants to precisely address these intricate relationships between learned communities, collective memory, and scholarly identity. In particular, it wants to take a closer look at historical knowledge communities, but not from a perspective of the history of science or knowledge, but rather through a cultural historical lens. Cultural historians have studied communities for decades, especially how they establish collective identities, create a sense of belonging, and allow for collective actions. By bringing in concepts from cultural history and memory studies, we open up new avenues to study the formation of scholarly and learned identities and communities. The scope of this collection of articles is necessarily multi-disciplinary, and offers social, sociological, and cultural perspectives on the formation of learned communities, memory, and identities from historians of science, cultural historians, literary scholars as well as art historians. Taken together, this volume proposes to study knowledge communities by stressing the centrality of collective memory for the formation and reformation of groups of learned men and learned women.

Due to its synthetical nature, this book builds on diverse historiographies, theoretical traditions, and conceptual constructs. Four historiographic and theoretical shifts are foundational for understanding the approach we want to take. The first one is the social turn in the history of science, developed by

20 Erasmus Desiderius, *Omnia Opera* [...], 9 vols. (Basel, Froben: 1538–1540).

21 For an overview of the reception of Erasmus in the early modern period, see Enenkel, "Introduction – Manifold Reader Responses".

scholars such as Thomas Kuhn and later Steven Shapin, since it opened the door to social and cultural approaches to scientific and scholarly communities. Secondly, the vast field of memory studies, and in particular the study of collective memory as a shared sense of the past and an essential part of a collective identity. Thirdly, the concept of self-fashioning introduced by literary historian Stephen Greenblatt and subsequently adopted for the study of early modern scholars and scientists such as Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) by Mario Biagioli and Desiderius Erasmus by Lisa Jardine. Fourthly, on a more specific level, the study of collective codes of conduct within the so-called Republic of Letters in the early modern period. In this introduction, I would first like to outline these interrelated historiographies to establish the theoretical background in the first four sections to finally present the content of this book and the case studies in Section 5.

1 Communities and Epistemology

The term "community" has had many divergent meanings. It may refer to a collective of peers. If applied to learned communities, it can take the fully institutionalised form of a learned society such as the Royal Society in London, where members shared and discussed their scientific and scholarly work, or the more informal character of the learned circle, such as a salon. Other kinds of early modern learned communities were based on comradeship and friendship, such as the bond between European humanists. This was exemplified by the already mentioned bond between Desiderius Erasmus and Thomas More who were actively celebrating their friendship (*amicitia*), which allowed them to share knowledge in confidence, effectively building a knowledge community with a common cause.[22]

The role of knowledge communities was taken as a category of analysis in the historiography of science and in particular the development of social histories of scientific knowledge from the 1970s onwards. "Scientific" and "learned" communities became a central framework of analysis after the so-called social turn in the historiography of science. From the 1960s onwards, positivist histories of science chronicling the triumph of modern science since the scientific

22 Charlier Y., *Érasme et l'amitié. D'après sa correspondance*, Bibliothèque de la Faculté de philosophie et lettres de l'Université de Liège 219 (Paris: 1977); Eden K., *Friends Hold All Things in Common* (New Haven, CT: 2001); Lochman D.T. – López M. – Hutson L. (eds.), *Discourses and Representation of Friendship in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1700* (Farnham – Burlington, VT: 2011); Furey, *Erasmus, Contarini, and the Religious Republic of Letters*; Bray A., *The Friend* (Chicago – London: 2003).

revolution, such as Herbert Butterfield's *The Origins of Modern Science* (1949), were replaced with more social explanations of the rise of science, which led historians to analyse the role of communities. In his influential *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), Thomas Kuhn argued that scientific facts and theories were negotiated in communities. He attempted to understand how these communities and their members reached consensus, moving from one paradigm to another.[23] For there to be universally accepted knowledge, Kuhn argued, there needs to be a self-conscious community that applies norms and values:

> The group's members, as individuals and by virtue of their shared training and experience, must be seen as the sole possessors of the rules of the game or of some equivalent basis for unequivocal judgments. To doubt that they shared some such basis for evaluations would be to admit the existence of incompatible standards of scientific achievement.[24]

Kuhn pointed out that a more profound understanding of the history of knowledge production requires a closer look at the communities that prescribe the terms of what constitutes as knowledge and its production. Following Kuhn, scientific theories and knowledge in general were increasingly seen as social constructs, where a community sets the standards of what constitutes knowledge as well as who can possess and advance it.

Even if Kuhn was not universally satisfied that a later generation of sociologists of science developed the more deconstructive implications of his theories, Steven Shapin elaborated on Kuhn's idea and stressed that while knowledge is a collective good, it is also dependent on trust between knowers, and without that trust, there can be no knowledge. Shapin argued that 'in order for that knowledge to be effectively accessible to an individual – for an individual to *have* it – there needs to be some kind of moral bond between the individual and other members of the community.'[25] Communities provide these bonds. Early modern communities, such as academies, schools, churches, learned circles, gardens, courts, and even journals, all helped to establish a sense of community and identity for its participants. In order to produce knowledge, knowledge-making communities were essential. What knowledge is, and more importantly, what a reliable producer is, changes from one community to the next. Learned men and learned women did not only need a consensual system

23 Kuhn T.S., *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd ed. (Chicago – London: 1996).
24 Ibidem 168.
25 Shapin S., *A Social History of Truth* (Chicago – London: 1994) 7.

of knowledge, but also a community in which knowledge could be unproblematically shared and trusted.

The community as a framework of analysis, thus, became central in sociological and anthropological studies of science and the history of knowledge production. Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar's *Laboratory Life* studied scientists in their natural habitat anthropologically, strongly criticising the contemporary idea of science as a rational practice with a strong adherence to the so-called "scientific method". They showed that science, and knowledge production in general, was a social product and stressed the importance of social norms and values.[26] These developments in the historiography of science in the second half of the twentieth century were founded on a changing epistemology: knowledge is not inherent, given, and rationally obtained, but produced by scholars and scientists in social settings.[27] Many historical studies began to focus on how, in learned communities, social factors shaped the knowledge that was produced in these communities.[28] Truth is something that needs to be made, and the conditions of its production, negotiation and communication can be understood by turning towards the practitioners, their communities and their social and cultural contexts.

2 Scholarly Identity

The second historiographical and theoretical inspiration for this current work are studies of scholarly identity. The 1990s saw a surge in these studies, inspired by Stephen Greenblatt's study of Renaissance self-fashioning.[29] These works saw identity increasingly as constructed rather than inherent and given. For example, Lisa Jardine has argued 'that Erasmus's European prominence was something in which Erasmus himself made a considerable investment, in terms of effort and imagination'.[30] Jardine emphasized that Erasmus self-fashioned himself as a man of letters and a scholar saint, placing himself in

26 Latour B. – Woolgar S., *Laboratory Life. The Social Construction of the Scientific Facts* (Beverly Hills, CA: 1979); also see Latour B., *Science in Action. How to Follow Scientists and Engineers Through Society* (Cambridge, MA: 1987).

27 See e.g. Shapin S., "History of Science and its Sociological Reconstructions", *History of Science* 20.3 (1982) 157–211.

28 See e.g. Knorr-Cetina K., *Epistemic Cultures. How the Sciences Make Knowledge* (Cambridge, MA: 1999).

29 Greenblatt S., *Renaissance Self-Fashioning. From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago – London: 1980).

30 Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters* 5.

the middle of the northern humanist world of learning and posing as a successor to Saint Jerome. Mario Biagioli's argument about Galileo Galilei's self-fashioning and patronage at the Florentine court is in line with Jardine's way of thinking. Biagioli suggested 'that patronage is the key to understanding processes of identity and status formation that are the keys to understanding *both* the scientists' cognitive attitudes *and* career strategies.'[31] Galileo adapted to the cultural icon of the courtier; Erasmus appropriated the cultural icon of the scholar saint. Jardine and Biagioli are representative of a group of historians who emphasized *individual* constructions of identity, and offered this as a way of explaining the scholarly and scientific successes of, in these cases, Erasmus and Galileo. In the wake of these seminal publications, there has been wide-ranging work on the self-fashioning and self-presentation of scholars in epistolary exchanges,[32] university settings,[33] and pictorial representations.[34] In these studies, the author or scholar is often at the centre of the construction of identity.

More recently, historians have also turned their attention to the role exemplary scholarly personae play in embodying and establishing virtues for a wider learned community.[35] Herman Paul defined scholarly personae as "ideal-typical models of scholarly selfhood", which in turn shaped the behaviour of individual scholars and learned communities.[36] These ideal-typical models

31 Biagioli M., *Galileo, Courtier. The Practice of Science in the Culture of Absolutism* (Chicago – London: 1993) 14. This book was at the center of an open epistolary exchange on the role of self-fashioning in science, see Biagioli M., ""Playing with Evidence"", and Shank, M.H., "How Shall We Practice History? The Case of Mario Biagioli's *Galileo, Courtier*", both in *Early Science and Medicine* 1.1 (1996) 70–105 and 106–150, resp.

32 Houdt T. van et al. (eds.), *Self-Presentation and Social Identification. The Rhetoric and Pragmatics of Letter-Writing in Early Modern Times*, Supplementa Humanistica Lovaniensa 18 (Louvain: 2002); Smet I.A.R., *Thuanus. The Making of Jacques-Auguste de Thou (1553–1617)*, Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 418 (Geneva: 2006); Glomski J., *Patronage and Humanist Literature in the Age of the Jagiellons. Court and Career in the Writings of Rudolf Agricola Junior, Valentin Eck and Leonard Cox* (Toronto – Buffalo – London: 2007).

33 Kirwan R. (ed.), *Scholarly Self-Fashioning and Community in the Early Modern University* (Farnham – Burlington, VT: 2013).

34 Rößler H., "Character Masks of Scholarship: Self-Representation and Self-Experiment as Practices of Knowledge Around 1770", in Holenstein A. – Steinke H. – Stuber M. (eds.), *Scholars in Action. The Practice of Knowledge and the Figure of the Savant in the 18th Century*, vol. 1, pp. 459–480 (Leiden – Boston: 2013).

35 Daston L. – Sibum H.O., "Introduction; Scientific Personae and Their Histories", *Science in Context* 16.1–2 (2003) 1–8; Algazi G., "Exemplum and Wundertier: Three Concepts of the Scholarly Persona", *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 131.4 (2016) 8–32.

36 Paul H., "What is a Scholarly Persona? Ten Theses on Virtues, Skills, and Desires", *History and Theory* 53.3 (2014) 348–371.

served as examples and guidelines for good practices in learned communities. As such, scholarly identities were always inextricably linked to collective identities and epistemic virtues. An individual drew on social scripts and cultural icons to guide his/her behaviour, practice, and career. Scholars who were considered "successful" were in turn hailed and remembered as exemplary for the learned community, as we have seen in the example of Erasmus.

These models, either implicitly or explicitly, inform epistemic virtues that help form knowledge practices within the learned community.[37] This approach to scholarly identity constitutes the direction we want to take in this volume. When we move from the perspective of an individual scholar to a learned community and its epistemic virtues, we are less concerned with the individual construction of identity, but rather with the structure of collective identities that were embedded in the representations of learned communities and its members. For example, in Chapter 2 of this volume, Karl Enenkel explores role models and the meaning of identity in the context of early modern humanism.

3 Collective Memory

A community does not always need to be a collection of peers who personally know each other and meet physically, as Benedict Anderson's concept of an *imagined community* underscores.[38] Anderson introduced the imagined community to rethink the emergence of the nation state. The nation state was an imagined community, Anderson contended, because 'the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship'.[39] The national community consists of peers who share a country, history, customs, as well as a language.[40] The nation state is *imagined* in the sense that members of the community will never meet all of their fellow peers; yet, they share an image of their unity

37 Dongen J. van – Paul H. (eds.), *Epistemic Virtues in the Sciences and the Humanities*, Boston Studies in the Philosophy and History of Science 321 (Cham: 2017); also see Paul H., "Performing History: How Historical Scholarship is Shaped by Epistemic Virtues", *History and Theory* 50.1 (2011) 1–19.

38 Anderson B., *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed. (London: 2016).

39 Ibidem 7.

40 For a recent collection of studies that focus on the formation of communities and communal bonding, see Blok G. – Kuitenbrouwer V. – Weeda C. (eds.), *Imagining Communities. Historical Reflections on the Process of Community Formation*, Heritage and Memory Studies 5 (Amsterdam: 2018). On the link process of imagining the nation, see Cubitt G., *Imagining Nations*, York Studies in Cultural History (Manchester – New York: 1998).

and community. We can think of learned communities in the early modern period in a similar way. In this book we explore the ways in which learned men and women *imagined* a community, whether it was a small community of learned friends or a transnational community of scholars. Moreover, like all communities, an imagined community was also tied together by a shared sense of identity and a shared past.

The study of how communities remember and thereby construct collective identities is often dubbed collective memory by historians.[41] The term was originally developed in 1925 by Maurice Halbwachs, who used it to explain how an individual sense of the past was strongly linked to the collective memory of a group, such as a past shared by a society.[42] As such, collective memory is not the collection of individual memories, but rather a historical consciousness of a social or cultural group that informs individual memory and identity. Collective memory can be studied by looking at the acts of remembrance by a community.

Geoffrey Cubitt comprehensively defined the study of memory as 'the study of the means by which a conscious sense of the past, as something meaningfully connected to the present, is sustained and developed within human individuals and human cultures.'[43] To avoid any confusion about terminology which often surrounds the concept of memory, collective memory in this volume refers to how a community – consciously or unconsciously – remembers its own past and will be studied by as a way to analyse a community's self-perception, values, and identity.[44]

Collective memory is easily confused with terms such as cultural memory. It is important to note that these terms often overlap in meaning, but approach memory from different perspectives. Halbwachs introduced collective memory to contrast it with personal, individual memory. The Egyptologist Jan Assmann emphasised, in his study of ancient civilizations, that cultural memory is the type of memory that informs individual memory through symbols, rituals, and representations such as tombs and temples.[45] Cultural memory, thus, focuses

41 For an overview of the field of memory studies, see Radstone S. – Schwarz B. (eds.), *Memory. Histories, Theories, Debates* (New York: 2010).

42 Halbwachs M., *On Collective Memory*, trans. and ed. L.A. Coser, The Heritage of Sociology (Chicago – London: 1992); originally published as *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: 1925).

43 Cubitt G., *History and Memory*, Historical Approaches (Manchester – New York: 2007) 9.

44 On the conceptual haze in memory studies and cultural history, see Confino A., "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method", *The American Historical Review* 102.5 (1997) 1386–1403.

45 Assmann J. and Czaplicka J., "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity", *New German Critique* 65 (1995) 125–133. Assmann's foundational work on memory is *Das kulturelle*

on the larger culture from an anthropological standpoint, rather than from the experience of the individual or the community.

Cultural memory has primarily been studied in a modern, national context, since a shared past was essential for the development of the nation state as an imagined community. Most notably, Pierre Nora directed the study of the monuments, rituals, and symbols that all helped establish a myriad of French national identities. Nora called this heritage and places of memory *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory.[46] Places and spaces such as churches, graveyards, memorials, statues, and public architecture can all convey an imagination of a past and a cultural identity. In the same way, the commemoration of literary writers in a national context shows how they were remembered as national heroes in the nineteenth century.[47] These examples remind us that collective memory is inherently multi-medial and is strongly embedded in culture. This is also the case for learned communities. For example, Alan Moss and Paul Hulsenboom argue in Chapter 8 of this volume that scholars cherished tomb monuments as places of memory, and thereby preserved and passed on a shared sense of the past.

Despite the strong focus on the nineteenth-century nation state in memory studies, not all collective memory is national and modern. First, transnational learned and scientific communities operated and remembered beyond national borders.[48] Second, the early modern period had rich and disparate cultures of remembrance: the Italian Renaissance had a rich memory culture which enabled a glorification of the past,[49] in the early modern Dutch Republic, disparate senses of the past dominated confessional disputes and war negotiations,[50] and the houses of Petrarch (1304–1374) and William Shakespeare (1564–1616) were sites of memory early on.[51] Throughout early modern European cultures, we can observe memory cultures strongly tied to communities, large and small.

Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen (München: 1992); translated as *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization. Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination* (Cambridge – New York: 2011).

46 Nora P. (ed.), *Les lieux de mémoire*, 7 vols. (Paris: 1984–1992); also see Nora P., "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire", *Representations* 36 (1989) 7–24.

47 Leerssen J. – Rigney A. (eds.), *Commemorating Writers in Nineteenth-Century Europe. Nation-Building and Centenary Fever* (Basingstoke – New York: 2014).

48 De Cesari C. – Rigney A. (eds.), *Transnational Memory. Circulation, Articulation, Scales*, Media and Cultural Memory 19 (Berlin: 2014).

49 Emison P.A. (ed.), *The Italian Renaissance and Cultural Memory* (Cambridge: 2012).

50 Pollmann J., *Memory in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800* (Oxford: 2017).

51 Hendrix H., *Writers' Houses and the Making of Memory*, Routledge Research in Cultural and Media Studies (New York – Milton Park, Abingdon: 2008).

Moreover, the early modern period has proven to be a fertile ground for the study of collective memory in relation to local states and small communities. Many scholars have pointed out that the Reformation gave rise to a demand for a cohesive identity, both confessionally and locally or regionally. In such cases the learned community was often employed to serve as an example of the success of doctrinal education and of the state.[52] Universities, for example, were customarily founded as "seminaria reipublicae et ecclesiae": nurseries for state and church.[53] History was rewritten in a new confessional framework in the Northern parts of Europe praising the successes of the Lutheran and Calvinist theologians.[54] These memory cultures reflect the change of the cultural presence of the scholar in society as well as the need for a new collective identity and memory after severe shifts in religion and politics.

Remembrance and memory cultures in the world of learning and science have often focused on large-scale events with a national appeal in the twentieth century. Studies of commemorations of scholars and scientists, such as the twentieth-century centennial celebrations of Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543) and Charles Darwin (1809–1882), pointed out that these learned men were often remembered and framed in a national and political context.[55] This volume aims to extend the field of research by moving away from modern, national celebrations of scholars and scientists, and rather focus on how scholars and scientists employed collective memory to construct identities, and became part of national, learned and regional memory cultures.

4 The Learned World and the Republic of Letters

The fourth related strand of historiography this volume engages with is the historical study of the so-called Republic of Letters. Early modern historians often refer to the Republic of Letters as a metaphor for the entire learned world, although it must be acknowledged that historians have varying ideas of what

52 Sherlock P., "The Reformation of Memory in Early Modern Europe", in Radstone – Schwarz (eds.), *Memory*, 30–40.

53 Miert D. van, *Humanism in an Age of Science. The Amsterdam Athenaeum in the Golden Age, 1632–1704* (Leiden – Boston: 2009) 21.

54 Hardy N. – Levitin D. (eds.), *Confessionalisation and Erudition in Early Modern Europe. An Episode in the History of the Humanities*, Proceedings of the British Academy 225 (Oxford: 2019); Backus, I., *Historical Method and Confessional Identity in the Era of the Reformation (1378–1615)*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 94 (Leiden – Boston: 2003).

55 Abir-am P.G. – Clark A.E. (eds.), *Commemorative Practices in Science. Historical Perspective on the Politics of Collective Memory*, Osiris 14 (Chicago: 1999).

the Republic of Letters was and how it developed.[56] To complicate matters, historical actors throughout the early modern period themselves also harboured different conceptions of the Republic of Letters. Modern historians who study the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries often consider the Republic of Letters to be a humanist affair contingent with the revival of the Latin and Greek language, starting in Italy. This *respublica litteraria*, as denoted by humanists in Latin, relied on the earlier-mentioned practice of establishing literary friendship (*amicitia*). Humanist scholars maintained intimate relations through letters to be able to discuss and share scholarly work.[57] This Republic of Letters is literally a commonwealth of learning, a transnational community through which religious ideas spread, carefully maintained by its members.

A somewhat different conception of a different Republic of the Letters gained traction at the end of the seventeenth century with the rise of literary journals, most notably Pierre Bayle's *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* (1684–1687), Jean LeClerc's *Bibliothèque universelle et historique* (1686–1693), and Samuel Masson's *l'Histoire critique de la République des Lettres* (1712–1718). This period saw the rise of the idea of the Republic of Letters as an independent learned world filled with enlightened citizens.[58] It was an ideal learned world devoid of political and confessional obstacles where learned men and learned women could share knowledge. Contemporaries burst this bubble with satire and critique; modern historians similarly pointed out that this rosy ideal knew many obstacles.[59] These two humanist and enlightened visions of the Republic of Letters reveal the complexity of the term, but also its appeal

56 See for example Bots H. – Waquet F., *La République des Lettres*, Europe & Histoire (Paris: 1997); Goldgar A., *Impolite Learning. Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680–1750* (New Haven, CT: 1995); Neumeister S. – Wiedemann C. (eds.), *Res Publica Litteraria. Die Institutionen der Gelehrsamkeit in der frühen Neuzeit*, Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung 14, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden: 1987).

57 Schalk F., "Von Erasmus' Res publica literaria zur Gelehrtenrepublik der Aufklärung", in Idem, *Studien zur französischen Aufklärung*, Das Abendland: Neue Folge 8 (Frankfurt a.M.: 1977) 143–163; Yoran, *Between Utopia and Dystopia*; Fumaroli M., *The Republic of Letters*, trans. L. Vergnaud (New Haven, CT: 2018); Furey, *Erasmus, Contarini, and the Religious Republic of Letters*.

58 The link between the rise of the Republic of Letters, the public sphere, and the Enlightenment is emphasized especially in Goodman D., *The Republic of Letters. A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca – London: 1994).

59 For satire and critique of scholars, see Kivistö S., *The Vices of Learning. Morality and Knowledge and Early Modern Universities*, Education and Society in the Middle Ages and Renaissance 48 (Leiden – Boston: 2014); Smet I.A.R. De, *Menippean Satire and the Republic of Letters, 1581–1655*, Travaux du Grand Siècle 2 (Geneva: 1996). For a study of hierarchy and conduct in the Republic of Letters, see Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*.

for historians.[60] In this volume, the Republic of Letters will not be taken as a singular, pan-European learned community, but rather as a web of local communities with their own idiosyncratic conceptions. Recent historians of the Republic of Letters have increasingly seen it as an amalgamation of entangled networks. Taken together, the contributions in this volume give an impression of this tension between a pan-European ideal of knowledge and the way in which regional learned communities inscribed themselves in this ideal.

As such, the concept of an imagined community offers a fruitful way to conceptualize the Republic of Letters. Historians have applied Anderson's concept of the imagined community to show that scholars throughout the early modern period held disparate views of the European learned world, or the Republic of Letters.[61] In order to study learned community formation, we need to abandon the idea of a coherent and singular concept of the early modern learned world as *the* Republic of Letters.[62] If we want to study how learned communities became aware of their own group identity and perpetuated that sense of forming a distinct collective identity, we have to pay attention to how images or imaginations of the learned world were constructed and disseminated. We need to focus on the media, the collective communication, through which such imaginations spread. The advent of print in the sixteenth century made the learned world increasingly visible for instance in the form of icons, images, and collections of lives of scholars. This cultural visibility helped to create a sense of scholarly community on local as well as transnational levels, but also sparked different and even conflicting discourses on, for example, university professors or learned women. There was no one monolithic learned world or Republic of Letters, but rather a myriad of early modern representations that

60 For the revival of the Republic of Letters as a concept in the beginning of the twentieth century, see Rensen M., "Restoring the Republic of Letters: Romain Rolland, Stefan Zweig and Transnational Community Building in Europe, 1914–34", in Couperus S. – Kaal H. (eds.), *(Re)Constructing Communities in Europe, 1918–1968. Senses of Belonging Below, Beyond and Within the Nation-State*, Routledge Studies in Modern European History 37 (New York: 2016) 153–174.

61 See e.g. Grafton A., "A Sketch Map of a Lost Continent: The Republic of Letters", *Republic of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts* 1.1 (2009) 1–18. Robert Mayhew concluded based on citation analysis that scholars had disparate views of the Republic of Letters, see Mayhew R., "British Geography's Republic of Letters: Mapping an Imagined Community, 1600–1800", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 65.2 (2004) 251–276; Idem, "Mapping Science's Imagined Community: Geography as a Republic of Letters, 1600–1800", *The British Journal for the History of Science* 38.1 (2005) 73–92.

62 This point was also raised in Jaumann H., "*Respublica Litteraria* / *Republic of Letters*: Concept and Perspectives of Research", in Idem (ed.), *Die europäische Gelehrtenrepublik im Zeitalter des Konfessionalismus / The European Republic of Letters in the Age of Confessionalism*, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 96 (Wiesbaden: 2001) 11–19.

overlap or contradict, but often emerged from different memory cultures with a different sense of history and collective identity.

5 Organisation of This Book

The chapters in this book can be read as case studies of the interaction between learned communities, collective memory, and scholarly identity. The book is divided into three parts that each explores different aspects of early modern scholarly identity and memory: the first part addresses collective identity, the second institutional memory as a shared past, and part three focuses on memory cultures and modes of remembrance. Within each of the parts, the chapters have been organised according to chronology.

The first part examines the formation and negotiation of collective identities in different communities of the learned world. Karl Enenkel opens this part with a consideration of the meaning of collective identity for early modern humanists throughout Europe. He identifies many distinct traits of a scholarly identity in scholarly autobiographies, such as the identification with classical authors; the performance of collegiality with fellow humanists in, for example, correspondence and dialogue; the identification with ancient Roman cultural and intellectual concepts such as *otium*; and the identification with a supra-national Latin language, among others. Together, these writings show a conscious sense of community and collective identity, where the autobiography served to gain acceptance and visibility in a transnational learned world, the humanist Republic of Letters. Here, the Republic of Letters is a community of humanist scholars in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries based on the virtues of hard work, the Ciceronian ideal of friendship, and the identification with classical Roman culture. Floris Solleveld shows in Chapter 5 that representations of learned communities were considerably varied throughout the early modern period. Solleveld considers three different printed portrait collections from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as part of a lively memory culture of the scholarly world, where individual galleries positioned themselves in a longer and broader tradition and history of scholarship, recognizable as a community that distinguished itself from other groups in society. Taken together, these chapters show that each portrait collection presents an idiosyncratic and local representation of the learned world, thus underscoring the distinct and disparate nature of the Republic of Letters and its many portrayals.

Historians have long ignored the contested position of learned women in a male-oriented and male-dominated cultural and intellectual sphere of the

early modern period. The position of learned women was precarious and in flux. This does not mean, however, that learned women were not active members of learned communities. In Chapter 4, Esther M. Villegas de la Torre takes the examples of celebrated scholars Luisa Sigea de Velasco (1522–1560) and Margaret Cavendish (1623–1673) to look at the position of women in the learned world in the context of the commercialisation of literature. Villegas de la Torre shows that Sigea and Cavendish based their scholarly identities on conventional strategies by drawing on classical and vernacular publishing practices, both male and female. Where male scholars would often position themselves in a lineage of male models such as Virgil and Horace, female scholars were often presented in a distinct, female tradition starting from Sappho (ca. 630 BC–ca. 575 BC). As such, the memory and identity of female scholars were a central part of the European learned world.

At the same time, female scholars were often actively excluded from a masculine imagination of the learned world.[63] In the context of collective memory, it is necessary to be aware of who has the power to write and decide who will be remembered, since this ultimately determined the canon. Processes of exclusion explicitly and implicitly targeted female scholars, who were often hailed as exceptions in the learned world and as exceptions of their gender.[64] Lieke van Deinsen meticulously shows that Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678), Margaret Cavendish, and Maria Sybilla Merian (1647–1717) are all examples of how female learned identity was formed and negotiated in a learned world dominated by male scholars and masculine ideals of scholars and scholarship. In Chapter 3, Van Deinsen takes a critical look at the reception of their portraits in learned circles and argues that learned men saw and "othered" learned women as curiosities. The icon of female learned authority helped to increase the cultural visibility of female scholars and throughout the seventeenth century normalised the image of female scholars and their scholarly authority. From the perspective of memory and identity, it becomes clear that learned women inscribed themselves in a female history and memory culture, while simultaneously being perceived as a curiosity in the periphery of male learned communities.

The second part of this book focuses on the role of institutions in shaping collective identities and fostering a shared sense of the past. In this

63 See e.g. Labalme P.H. (ed.), *Beyond Their Sex. Learned Women of the European Past* (New York – London: 1980); Schiebinger L., "Feminine Icons: The Face of Early Modern Science", *Critical Inquiry* 14.4 (1988) 661–691; Pal C., *Republic of Women. Rethinking the Republic of Letters in the Seventeenth Century*, Ideas in Context 99 (Cambridge: 2012).

64 Jardine L., "'O decus Italiae virgo', or The Myth of the Learned Lady in the Renaissance", *The Historical Journal* 28.4 (1985) 799–819.

part, two chapters consider the role of universities and learned societies as vehicles for memory cultures and the values and virtues instilled in them. In Chapter 6, Constance Hardesty takes the Dublin, Oxford, and Royal natural philosophical societies to show that learned societies went to great lengths to establish a collective memory in the form of rituals, statutes, minutes, and a shared view of the past. The Royal Society in London, for example, was organised around epistemic virtues and a shared ideal of knowledge production, which in turn became an example for the Oxford society. Institutional memory and identity, thus, imposed a distinct learned identity upon its members. In a similar way, Richard Kirwan shows in Chapter 7 how German universities actively promoted an institutional identity with festivities, centennials, but also the celebration of individual scholars in print. More than learned societies, the universities focused on producing institutional histories. Such histories presented a lineage of illustrious professors who served the university in question, where the professors became solidified in an institutional memory culture.[65] Both Hardesty and Kirwan show the complicated relationship between the individual and the institutional identity enshrined in institutional memory practices.

The last part of this book focuses on how memory cultures were kept alive within learned communities. In Chapter 8, Paul Hulsenboom and Alan Moss show how objects of knowledge such as epitaphs, graves, and other memorabilia helped establish the historical centrality of legendary scholars.[66] These places and objects of knowledge inspired scholarly reflection and strengthened one's identity as a member of a learned community. Whether it was Erasmus's testament, an epigram written to Anna Maria Schurman, a book chest which allegedly hid Hugo Grotius, or the skull of Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484–1558), both Protestant and Catholic scholars found ways to interact with the forefathers of the imagined learned community they considered themselves to be part of. The Grand Tour was, thus, an important element of the pan-European learned memory culture that helped foster a sense of a scholarly community beyond confessionalism and borders.[67]

This does not mean that places of knowledge could only be linked to one narrative. Similarly, a narrative can only thrive when there are stakeholders

65 This also happened with the placement of funeral monuments, see Knöll S.A., *Creating Academic Communities. Funeral Monuments to Professors at Oxford, Leiden and Tübingen, 1580–1700* ([n.p.]: 2003).

66 Jacob C., "Lieux de savoir: Places and Spaces in the History of Knowledge", *KNOW. A Journal on the Formation of Knowledge* 1.1 (2017) 85–102.

67 Scholten K. – Pelgrom A., "Scholarly Identity and Memory on a Grand Tour: The Travels of Joannes Kool and his Travel Journal (1698–1699) to Italy", *Lias* 46.1 (2019): 93–136.

to perpetuate someone's memory. As Dirk van Miert shows in Chapter 9, the memory of Isaac Casaubon (1559–1614) and his bladder were remembered in different contexts. Yet, both helped to sustain Casaubon's memory. First, scholars saw Casaubon's monstrous bladder as evidence of his martyrdom for the cause of knowledge and science, since the bladder was a symbol of his sedentary work despite pain.[68] Second, medical scholars marvelled at the bladder, because it was a unique specimen and showed the ways in which a bladder could change. Both contexts, however, helped to allow the memory of Casaubon to flourish in a framework of a historico-philologically minded Reformed Protestantism, confessionally ranging from Arminianism to Orthodox Calvinism. Regardless of this framework, the existence of material evidence ensured the livelihood of historical narratives through the ages. In the wider European learned world, aspects of learned memory cultures (such as travelling to places of knowledge and engaging with historical evidence of exquisite scholarship) helped to anchor the idea of a commonwealth of learning, the imagined community also referred to as the Republic of Letters.

As stipulated before, there is no one authoritative imagining or representation of the Republic of Letters or any learned community. By looking at learned men and learned women who considered themselves part of a learned community, either real or imagined, we can catch a glimpse of contemporary ideals of knowledge and who could possess it. The vast plurality of representations of learned communities we encounter in the case studies in this book attests to the difficulty to define *the* learned world. Indeed, it was a pluriform world and each conception of a learned community was mediated by personal, institutional, regional, confessional, and epistemic factors.

Further research could try to uncover how diverse the ideals of knowledge in learned communities were throughout Europe. Were regional learned communities looking up to metropolitan learned communities to consequently inscribe themselves in the memory culture and collective identity of a wider trans-national learned community? The tension between centre and periphery in the diffusion of templates of learned communities, as well as the circulation of knowledge, could be meaningfully assessed in the plethora of historical sources that reveal collective identities and memory cultures, such as historical travel literature and journals, collections of histories and lives, tomb monuments, and material remnants, as well as extensive correspondences.

68 Nuttall A.D., *Dead from the Waist Down. Scholars and Scholarship in Literature and the Popular Imagination* (New Haven – London: 2003); Vila A.C., *Suffering Scholars. Pathologies of the Intellectual in Enlightenment France*, Intellectual History of the Modern Age (Philadelphia, PA: 2018).

Since the scope of this book is limited to the European learned world, an important question that remains to be addressed is to what extent the cultural icon of the learned man and learned woman is translatable to different cultures beyond the early modern, European framework. Similarly, it remains an open question whether learned communities formed and flourished, as well as built a strong sense of memory and identity in other regions, states, and continents. We hope future transnational, comparative research will offer insights into such valuable questions.

Hopefully, this book will provoke further research into the many facets of early modern learning and scholarship that remain unexplored. Taken together, these case studies offer a first tentative step into seeing learned communities as imagined communities – communities with a history, a collective memory, and a collective identity. We hope that the case studies in the following chapters will guide and inspire scholars in further explorations of how learned men and learned women considered themselves part of learned communities, and consequently how these communities formed and reformed in early modern Europe.

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