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REGULATING THE EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE

Invoking the 'Republic of Letters' as a Speech Act

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Introduction

The early modern history of knowledge is characterized by dramatic changes in European people's conceptualization of the world they were living in. The advance of print capitalism, the encounter with and subjugation of the Americas, the Reformation, the wars of religion, the developments in historical and textual criticism, the rise of natural sciences all concurred to new and sometimes radical ideas associated with the Enlightenment. These changes shook the world of learning to the core, both physically and metaphysically. Huge differences in interpretations of God and man, of the kosmos and the world, of nature and culture, of man and history divided the world of learning, and these divisions were played out in unpublished and published texts. Yet, it is a well-established fact that learned men and women kept on communicating across all sorts of political, religious, linguistic, and social boundaries. How was this possible without written rules about how to communicate knowledge? Books and manuscripts were easily lost in transmission and dispatching letters was a costly business. Up until the end of the seventeenth century, there were no explicit reflections about the rules of engagement in the exchange of knowledge. There was an increasing awareness of something like intellectual ownership and true authorship, but these were not translated into copyrights that were respected outside of sovereign jurisdictions. Pirating ideas and texts was daily business, and libraries were notoriously difficult to get access to.

The question therefore rises how people in the early modern period could build enough trust amongst each other to expect fair treatment and reciprocity. This article seeks to answer this question by adopting a socio-linguistic approach. I will analyze the way in which early modern learned letter writers employed the phrase 'Republic of Letters' as a speech act in the Austinian sense:

an illocutionary act.¹ The repetition of these acts created patterns of behavior that, overtime, started to act as regulative ‘rules’ about what and how to communicate. The ‘Republic of Letters’ is hence regarded in this article as a speech community with shared norms that became more and more explicit and finally even codified.

Although this explicit codification near the end of the seventeenth century is acknowledged by historians, scholars routinely describe the Republic of Letters as an early modern phenomenon tout court without taking head of its discursive development.² The aim of this article is not to describe this development in terms of its ideals, but to analyze seventeenth-century usages of the term from a functional perspective, answering the question what scholars were doing when they employed the term. In the last part of the article, I do review some normative codifications that explicitly regulated the exchange of knowledge in a century which preceded such codifications, but I ignore most of the content. This article then is not so much an exercise in the history of ideas, but a historical socio-linguistic experiment.

Already in 1996, Marc Fumaroli called for a conceptual history of the Republic of Letters, mapping the semantic field of its usage, and for an account of the shifting institutional and intellectual contexts in which the term Republic of Letters operates.³ Fumaroli discussed a number of occurrences of the term, but the image remains patchy. We still know very little of the career of this concept in terms of its popularity and its functionality. The current article takes a first step in quantifying its use, drawing on a body of 20,000 scholarly letters. Subsequently, it tries to bridge the gap between conceptual and sociological history by adopting a socio-linguistic approach.

Defining the Republic of Letters

As is well known, early modern scholars and scientists often referred to the learned world they inhabited by using the expression *respublica literaria* (or *res publica literarum*): the Learned Republic, Commonwealth of Learning, or Republic of Letters. The phrase makes a first solitary appearance in the historical archive in 1417, then drops from the radar until it resurfaces in the 1480s, after which Aldus Manutius and Erasmus make the concept popular.⁴ It then remains in use throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, after which it becomes a more nostalgic idea or even a mere historiographical category.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the Republic of Letters became a beloved category of historians to describe the early modern world of learning, and its currency has increased ever since. Much of the popularity of the term is due to the fact that it is not a label that has retroactively been stuck on a community. It therefore appears to be less normative than labels like the ‘Renaissance’ or ‘humanism’. Even the ‘Enlightenment’, a concept that is closely associated with the Republic of Letters, is a category that was not in use during much of the

period to which it is today applied. In other words, the Republic of Letters is an actor's category: a phrase that learned men and occasionally women in the early modern period used to denominate some kind of learned commonality.

Exactly what they meant with this label is open to interpretations that vary from one scholar to the other, and much of that variety is caused by the different periods on which modern interpreters focus ~~on~~ or by the changing contexts in which early modern people themselves employed the phrase. Despite the abundance of rhetoric praising good behavior, in particular liberality in sharing knowledge, early modern scholars were seldom naively fooled by high-spirited protestations of mutually shared purposes. But the fact that they usually employ the phrase 'Republic of Letters' when they praise the services that their interlocutors contributed to the learned common good (*res litteraria*, *bonae litterae*, i.e. the learned cause, the arts and sciences) was performative as well as discursive, for it meant not only a description of merits, but also a prescription to heed codes of conduct that were not laid down but that were socially constructed and transmitted. The Republic of Letters was, in other words, not merely a utopian intellectual ideal, but discursive practice.⁵ One of the things I want to show in this contribution is how this worked: how did mentioning the 'Republic of Letters' become a speech act or how did a discursive ideal transform into discursive practice? The political overtones of the very word 'Republic' invite such a discursive analysis; the idea that the Republic of Letters is associated with republican ideals readily offers itself – not least because so many of the humanists we assume to have been its members used Cicero as their stylistic model.⁶ To be sure, there were alternative terms in use that referred to the same concept of learned commonality.

Early modern alternative indications such as the *orbis literarius/-atus/-arum*, the *sodalitas doctorum*, the *mundus eruditorum*, *omnis litteratorum cohors*, *omnes literatores*, *ordo litteratus*, *chorus litteratorum*, *res litteraria*, the Commonwealth of Learning, and *Gelehrtenrepublik* (*Republik derer Gelehrten*, *gelehrte Republik*) seem to capture both the idea that this was a social world of learned people as well as a wider 'world' that included not only people but also institutions and infrastructure. Indeed, some early modern scholars thought of the Republic of Letters as the assembly of learned institutions such as universities and societies.⁷ In conducting a discourse analysis, we therefore have to make sure that we do not miss out on alternative labels that point to the same referent (the world of learning).

Method and Theory

Rather than attempting to come to a universally applicable and generally acceptable definition of what the Republic of Letters entailed, it is **wiser** to acknowledge that early modern scholars themselves failed to agree as much as modern historians do. In other words, we need to accept the multiplicity of meanings of the Republic of Letters and its varying reaches across time and space.

This article will ~~therefore~~ limit itself to a distinct epistolary corpus (that of the *ePistolarium*) that resulted from the correspondences of people who were active in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. This corpus is geographically anchored in the Low Countries, but covered a wider compass, with links to France, England, and Germany, and to lesser extent with Spain, Portugal, Italy and Nordic, Central European, and Eastern European countries. In terms of chronology, it covers a full century with letters written from 1594 to 1707, although the bulk of the corpus dates from the 1640s and 1650s. In this article I will not draw any conclusions regarding development over time of the use of the ‘Republic of Letters’ and will simply regard the seventeenth-century uses of the term at large. The method of analysis is that of a discourse analysis: I will analyze particular passages in scholarly letters where the phrase ‘Republic of Letters’ occurs, with the purpose of teasing out what letter writers tried to convey or accomplish in using this phrase. Theoretically, I draw on the idea of performativity: calling on the Republic of Letters is in fact a speech-act. Letter writers were *doing* something with it: they praise, encourage, beg, ask, mourn, complain, or warn against something, and more often than not try to move the recipient into a certain action. In other words, the Republic of Letters is not a dismissable rhetorical flourish or inconsequential embellishment, but an indirect illocutionary act with the aim to smoothen the exchange of knowledge, keep the stream of information going, seek patronage, etc.

My assumption is that some kind of border needed to be crossed: maybe a difference in confession, or perhaps a linguistic boundary, or a generation gap. As such, the Republic of Letters functioned as a ‘regime’ governing a speech community, a discursive practice meant to regulate the exchange of knowledge within a social group.

Occurrences and Languages

A keyword search of the phrase ‘Republic of Letters’ in the *ePistolarium* yields 44 hits, but the search is not without problems. First of all, the corpus is multilingual, which forced us to reiterate searches across different languages. In addition, there are variants in spellings in each language, and Latin requires searching for the keyword in at least four cases.⁸ A survey yielded the following results (hits refer to letters, not to instances in letters, but since there is only one case in which the phrase occurs twice in the same letter, this distinction can be almost collapsed) (Table 10.1).

For this article, I have looked at all instances listed in the tables above. The occurrences have been grouped in two major categories: usage in which the ‘Republic of Letters’ is employed to cement relations between letter writers and usage which goes one step further when the ‘Republic of Letters’ is mentioned to make something happen.

There was no German occurrence of the term. As far as the English corpus is concerned, it appears as the *Commonwealth of Learning* and *Republick of Learning*

TABLE 10.1 Search terms and hits

<i>Search Term</i>	<i>Hits</i>
Commonwealth of Learning	1
Republick of Learning	1
Republique des Lettres	7
Republica Litteraria (it.)	2
Repubblica Letteraria (it.)	1
Literatorum Republica	1
Reipublicae Litterariae	5
Rempublicam Litterariam	2
Remp. Litterariam	1
Republica Litteraria	4
Respublica Litteraria	1
Reipublicae Litterariae	9
Reip. Litterariae	1
Rempublicam Litterariam	4
Republica Litteraria	2
Reipublicae Litterarum	1
Litterariae Reipublicae	1
Subtotal	44
<i>Search Term</i>	<i>Hits</i>
Orbis Literarii	1
Orbe Literario	1
Litterarum Orbe	1
Litterati Orbis	1
Orbis Litterati	1
Orbis Literati	2
Literati Orbis	2
Orbi Literato	1
Orbem Literatum	1
Literato Orbe	1
Subtotal	12
<i>Search Term</i>	<i>Hits</i>
Ordo Litteratus	1
Omnis Literatorum Chorus	1
Geleerde Werelt	7
Omnes Literati	10
Subtotal	19
Total	75

(each only once).⁹ This should be no surprise since less than 3% of the corpus is in German or English. This is too small a corpus to conclude that our current English historiographical label Republic of Letters is not a seventeenth-century actor's category in English. Yet, less than 1% of the corpus is Italian, and there

are three occurrences of the term in that language (all from Leopold de Medici). More surprisingly, the expression *Republiek/-que der Letteren* does not occur in Dutch, although over one-third of the corpus is in Dutch (37.1%). Slightly more than a quarter of the letters are in French (26.5%), rendering seven hits in that language. The vast majority of the hits are in Latin, which makes up 32.8% of the corpus.¹⁰

The term ‘Republic of Letters’ thus seems to be most peculiar to the use of Latin and less characteristic of French, to say nothing of its virtual absence in English, German, and Dutch. In absolute terms, the chance is 4.4 times larger a hit is in Latin than in French. In relative terms, in the *ePistolarium* only 0.13% of the French letters mention the *République des Lettres* against 0.46% of the Latin ones. The chance of coming across the Republic of Letters in a random Latin letter is therefore 3.6 times higher than in a random French letter. Thus, the currency of the term is clearly predominantly Latin.

I have included the phrase ‘the learned world’ in the search (again, in different languages and spelling variants), but have drawn the line with ‘the world of the learned [men]’. *Literatorum coetus*, *eruditorum orbis*, *omnes literatores*, and the like have not been taken into account, despite the fact that praising Claude Saumaise (1588–1653) as the ‘*literatorum princeps*’ is semantically hardly distinguishable from the ‘*reipublicae literariae princeps*’.¹¹ The criterion is that there was a collective singular noun involved, like ‘state’ or ‘world’ or ‘society’, and not a mere plural referring to people, such as *gens de lettres* or *homines literati/literatores*, not even if accompanied by the adjective ‘all’.¹²

‘Republic’ or ‘Republic of Letters’?

The letters in the *ePistolarium* betray an ambiguity of the term ‘republic’: Nicolaas Heinsius (1620–1681) used ‘republic’ in emphatic opposition to the world of learning.¹³ But in other letters, the ‘*res publica*’ denotes not a state or state affairs, but the common interest of learning, as in a letter from Georg Michael Lingelsheim (1556–1636) to Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) of 1617 or one from Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687) to Claude Saumaise of 1644.¹⁴

Sometimes, the word ‘republic’ is used to denote a particularly Christian public interest with or without a connection to learned services to Christianity. Thus, the Lutheran Swedish diplomat Johann Adler Salvius (1590–1652) in a letter to the (remonstrant) Dutch ambassador of Sweden Hugo Grotius in 1639 deplores the early death of the Duke Bernhard von Sachsen-Weimar (1604–1639) as ‘injurious for the evangelical republic’, that is, for the ‘protestant public cause’ (his death strengthened the position of both France and of the Holy Roman Empire).¹⁵ When Willem de Groot (1597–1662) in 1640 admonished his brother Grotius to continue to serve the common good in a variation of a much used formula, he wanted him to ‘continue to help the Christian republic’. This phrase must be understood in the context of Grotius’s idealistic ecumenical arguments for a reunification of the Protestant and Catholic Churches.¹⁶

Analysis of Occurrences: Cementing and Using the 'Republic of Letters'

Cementing Relations

The cementing of relations aims to build trust among the correspondents. Praising the interlocutor (or a third person) is meant to invest in a new relation, to maintain an existing relation, or to make it better. The praise can be straightforward, but can also be expressed through the use of honorary titles, for example, by addressing the recipient as the consul or prince of the Republic.¹⁷ Surprisingly, the recipient of many such praises, Hugo Grotius, himself never employed the phrase 'Republic of Letters'; in all his extant letters, the term occurs not a single time. There is just one anonymous letter to the States General in which the Republic of Letters is mentioned, but according to the modern editors of his correspondence, this letter is 'probably not written by Grotius: style and content make ascription to Grotius unlikely'.¹⁸ The letter praises Grotius contributions to the commonwealth of learning, stating that he merely wanted to be important in the Republic of Letters and not to stir up any civil unrest.¹⁹ All instances of the use of the phrase are found in letters *to* Grotius. This one letter is almost the only instance in the entire *ePistolarium* in which an author would have praised his own services to the common good; the context of Grotius defending himself against his former prosecutors could explain this boastfulness, but more likely this letter was drafted by someone else to exonerate Grotius. The fact that the Republic of Letters is usually employed in a context of praise suggests that Grotius never praised his correspondents the way they praised him. In other words, Grotius occupied a high place in the intellectual hierarchy of the Republic of Letters, at least high enough to get away with being not as deferential as his correspondents. It might also mark a certain skepticism on Grotius's part about the vitality of a Republic of Letters. After all, Grotius was very aware of his own talents and felt wronged ever since he was imprisoned at Loevestein. When he was appointed ambassador to the queen of Sweden, his brother ensured him he had heard that his friends Gerard Vossius (1577–1649) and Caspar Barlaeus (1684–1648) had thanked the Swedish chancellor Axel Oxenstiern (1583–1654) on account of 'all the learned men'.²⁰ Correspondents were aware of Grotius's sensitivity: in 1643, one of them ensured a third correspondent that he had always spoken highly of Grotius 'with the reverence that all learned men owed to his huge merits'.²¹ It is well known that Grotius showed himself angry that some correspondents failed to address him with the honorary titles that he was entitled to as a royal ambassador.²² Grotius also never used the phrase 'orbis literarius', although he speaks four times of 'all the learned men'. The only other occasion where he referred to a collective noun ('the whole chorus of learned men') is in a letter that he wrote with obvious deference as a seventeen-year-old to the much older professor of Greek Bonaventura Vulcanius (1538–1614), whose accomplishments together with those of Joseph Scaliger (1540–1609) he takes as encouragement

not to rest in his zeal for studying.²³ In short, invoking the Republic of Letters to praise an interlocutor is to place oneself below the addressee in terms of intellectual standing. Of course, star scholars also praised their students, but they did not mention the Republic of Letters – a great servant of the Republic of Letters was an honorary title reserved for the ones who had proved themselves. Not all great citizens of the Republic of Letters were assumed to sit on a high horse, though. Henry More (1614–1687) praised and thanked Descartes in a letter, not because Descartes or the Republic of Letters needed that, but simply because he learned so much from Descartes’s writings.²⁴ A similar move is made by Matthias Bernegger (1582–1640), who praised Grotius in a cover letter to a book he presented: a freshly published edition of Tacitus in which he applied part of Grotius’s studies to public use. He did not do this for Grotius himself, who stood above childish glory, but for the Republic of Letters, which he believed would benefit much from Grotius’s work.²⁵

Yet, as said, the letter to the States General purportedly written by Grotius is *almost* the only example in the *ePistolarium* of someone praising himself. All other instances are found in an entirely different context: in Dutch letters from Anthoni Leeuwenhoek (1632–1723) in which he defends himself as a vernacular underdog in the world of learning. Moreover, he uses the phrase ‘learned world’ rather than ‘Republic of Letters’. ‘I have understood with great satisfaction that the learned world takes pleasure from the labour I have invested’, he wrote in 1683, boasting that his observations were published by a French journal.²⁶ In other letters, Leeuwenhoek claims that the whole Learned World would support him²⁷ or takes on an otherwise defensive tone: he would serve the Learned World if he could.²⁸ In letter to the Elector Palatine, he offers some of his observations and claims to make them clear for the entire Learned World to silence obstructionists; the context is again that of a defense or an attack.²⁹ Drawing a contrast with an overly confident adversary, he claims to have adopted a much more careful tone in presenting discoveries that were new to the learned world.³⁰ Indeed, he assumes the Learned World is wise enough not to believe certain phantasies.³¹ These examples suggest that Leeuwenhoek, writing in Dutch, felt the urge to defend his own accomplishments; it is the same context as the one in which Grotius supposedly claimed services to the Republic of Letters. It indicates that Leeuwenhoek obtained a low position in the authorial hierarchy of the Learned World: the tone of his letters points to a feeling of being wronged. But as any author of grant proposals in the twenty-first century knows, authority cannot be desperately claimed but ought to be sovereignly implied. Leeuwenhoek’s use of the phrase ‘Learned World’ thus confirms what his biographers have observed: ‘this self-taught man was businesslike, sensitive to status’. Such a habitus did not match the ideal of the learned scholar and ideal citizen of the Republic of Letters, in particular not because Leeuwenhoek struggled with Latin and was not trained in the learned and literary canon. His claim to merit for the common learned good is exceptional in the corpus, and it confirms his exceptional

position as an autodidactic vernacular scholar.³² In other words, the study of the phrase 'Republic of Letters' seems to confirm the already existing biographical interpretations.

Less obviously titular are expressions such as 'utter delight', 'ornament', or 'propitious support' of the learned community.³³ Even unspecified members of the Republic of Letters are affectionally described as the '*corculi* (intelligent little hearts) to whom it is given to dwell in the world of learning' – and for whom the great Vossius, as one correspondent of Grotius reports, had no time to do anything, since his work was all day long, constantly interrupted by people who wanted something from him.³⁴ Grotius's brother shows himself relieved that Grotius does have time to splendidly help the Republic of Letters.³⁵ This brings us to praise that is not expressed in terms of titles of honor, but in terms of the services paid to the learned community: through his merits, Grotius illuminates and enriches the Republic of Letters.³⁶ With these, he obliges the other scholars (e.g. by sharing books)³⁷ and earns glory³⁸ and fame.³⁹

Letter writers not only praise the merits and services of their correspondents, but frequently encourage them or pray to God to carry on the good work. Here, the Latin signal words are 'perge' and 'insiste': carry on, go on, continue to oblige, adorn, promote, serve, or enrich the (good of the) Republic of Letters and gain glory for yourself in the process. Such wishes are most frequently expressed in the valedictions.⁴⁰

Very close to this category is the wish or prayer that the correspondent be kept safe and sound. These phrases are usually variants on the Latin phrase 'Deus te Reipublicae literariae incolumem (con)servet'.⁴¹ The wish that a correspondent remain healthy for the good of the Republic of Letters also betrays anxiety: to share fear about the well-being of the addressee in connection with the well-being of the Republic of Letters at large creates a communal identity, in which both interlocutors are assumed to identify with the common good or common interest of learning (*res publica literaria*). Often such utterances of anxiety take the form of prayers. A long letter from Vossius about the precariousness of his own health is followed by the news that Saumaise is recovering from illness, to the huge benefit of the Republic of Letters.⁴² When a scholar died, he was praised by noting that his death was a loss for the Republic of Letters at large. For example, when the Amsterdam printer Cornelis Blaeu (ca. 1610–1642) died, Vossius showed himself relieved that he had left his money to his brother Joan, saving the large Blaeu firm from bankruptcy – which would have been 'an even larger blow to the Republic of Letters'.⁴³ When Caspar Barlaeus mourned the death of the Italian scholar Domenico Molino (1572–1635), he thought it was 'a loss for the Republic of Letters', in particular for the Paduan scholarly community, who lost a Mécenas, an Apollo, a Pallas, and a curator ~~in him~~.⁴⁴

Despite such mourning, there are surprisingly few complaints about the dismal state of affairs in the Republic of Letters. Of course, there are people who fail to live up to the codes of conduct in the Republic of Letters. Christiaan Huygens (1629–1695) in 1661 complained about the monks who

guarded the Spanish Royal Library at El Escorial. They were sitting on an enormous treasure of manuscripts and books, but had no clue of what was happening in the wider world of learning, and they failed to care for scholarship and science.⁴⁵ Complaints of malicious monks who shielded libraries were commonplace in the protestant provinces of the Republic of Letters.⁴⁶ In fact, the very word ‘monk’ was for scholars like Joseph Scaliger a pejorative term.⁴⁷ But Christiaan Huygens himself was also not very obliging, even if numerous correspondents praised his contributions to the Republic of Letters. John Collins (1625–1683) condemned the way in which the mathematician and astronomer James Gregory (1638–1675) rebutted Christiaan Huygens – ‘it were to be wisht, that Mister Gregory had been more mild with yt generous person, who hath deserv’d well of ye republick of Learning’ – even if Huygens himself was partly to blame because he had held Gregory in slight esteem.⁴⁸ In other words, a reputable citizen of the Republic of Letters could have enough credit to treat others disrespectfully while maintaining an honorable position. But that credit could be lost. Vossius, for example, accused his colleague Daniel Heinsius (1580–1655) of ‘constant betrayal of everyone who has an excellent reputation in the Republic of Letters’. He hoped that Saumaise would teach him a lesson in modesty, and that he would stop believing ‘the flatterers who instead of actually honouring him, heap honorary titles of Fenix, Dictator and Atlas of Studying on him’.⁴⁹

These three complaints are indirect: they concern third parties and the interlocutor was not meant to bring that third party to better conduct. But, very often, the Republic of Letters was invoked to regulate the flow of knowledge, that is, to make knowledge exchange happen. We will now move on to this more explicitly performative use of the Republic of Letters.

Using the Republic of Letters

The Republic of Letters referenced a collectively held value: ‘res *l*iberaria’ (the learned good or cause, or the interest or sake of learning) that could **have recourse to** whenever a member of the group actually wanted something for his own benefit. In such cases, the private interest was presented as an instance of the public interest. In 1614, the librarian Janus Gruterus (1560–1627) in Heidelberg was working on an edition of Cicero, inspired by the working notes of Janus Gulielmus (1555–1584) who had died three decades before at a young age. Gruter realized there was a lot of good material amongst the handwritten and unpublished commentaries by Gulielmus and he resolved to publish the commentaries of Gulielmus and add them to his own edition. But he wanted more: he asked Grotius to share with him any commentaries or annotations that Grotius might have written down about Cicero, promising Grotius to publish these. Evidently, Gruter wanted to use the fame of the deceased Gulielmus and of the living Grotius on the title page of his own edition to boost the sales and increase Gruter’s own fame. How could he sponge off the fame of better scholars

to put himself in the spotlight? By telling that Grotius was not indebted to him, but to the Republic of Letters:

Right now I am working on Gulielmus' papers on Cicero. If you can support that with any insight or endeavour of your own, as I think you can, please share this and add it your other services to the Republic of Letters and communicate it swiftly with me. It will be published in good faith under your own name, not without honour and all due praises.⁵⁰

This letter turns the tables on Grotius by not asking for a favor, but by allowing Grotius to fulfill his public duties to the common learned good.

Membership of the Republic of Letters comes with obligations. Robert Boyle (1627–1691) obliged himself to obey Robert Moray (1608–1673) and Christiaan Huygens who are 'persons, that have deserved so well of the commonwealth of learning, that J should think myself unworthy to be looked upon as a member of it, if J declined to obey them, or to serve them'.⁵¹ Inability to share material leads to feelings of sadness; Constantijn Huygens was 'sad for the Republic of Letters and for myself in particular' that he had no manuscript of Aulus Gellius to send to the philologist Johannes Fredericus Gronovius (1611–1671) to thank this friend.⁵² This time, Huygens takes personal responsibility: the Republic of Letters is sad, but Huygens is even sadder.

In 1636, Leiden professor Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612–1653) wrote to Constantijn Huygens about Jean-Louis Guez de Balzac's (1597–1654) critical discussion of Heinsius's play *Herodes infanticida* (1632), a play that 'the whole *ordo litteratus* read, flabbergasted with admiration'. Balzac seemed the only critical reader. Heinsius, the 'prince of ingenious men' responded to Balzac with a letter. Boxhorn edited this letter, not with the aim of annoying Balzac, but to serve those who have the courage to admit that they can still learn something. 'I thought it was in the interest of the learned world to prevent these things from getting lost because of the modesty of the author'.⁵³ This passage smacks of a carefully arranged scenario, of course. It seems far more likely that Heinsius asked Boxhorn to act as an **intermediate** so that he himself could pose as indifferent to having the last word in print. As we have gathered from Vossius's letter to Grotius, the reputation of Heinsius was rather ambiguous.⁵⁴ The Republic of Letters is invoked here as a reason to publish the letter: publishing is a service to the common learned good.

Correspondents often referred to the collective interest to encourage each other to publish material. Grotius was eager for Isaac Casaubon (1559–1614) to publish his convictions regarding predestination, right in the middle of the Arminian controversies over the subject – at a time that Casaubon himself was considered the mouthpiece of the English King James I (1566–1625). Casaubon, however, was reluctant, given the precariousness of the Arminian controversy in relation to the Anglican Church. Grotius therefore tries to convince Casaubon by reminding him to live up to the love for learning and learned men that he

has always claimed he had. 'If in anything you want to bear witness to the love with which you follow not only all learned men but also all lovers of learning, I beg and implore you not to refuse me this favour'.⁵⁵ Here, Grotius comes close to referencing the Republic of Letters, but limits himself to 'all the learned men' in an attempt to persuade Casaubon to publish something that could raise confessional antagonism.

Similarly, Willem de Groot asked his brother to expand a set of critical notes on a work of André Rivet (1572–1651) into 'a book that all learned men and lovers of fine literature will always greatly appreciate', deploring that his work is not yet available.⁵⁶ In another letter, the same Willem de Groot deplores that fact that Johannes Arnoldi Corvinus (1580–1650) has authored a juridical treatise that remains unpublished, as many other writings by Corvinus 'much to the detriment of the Republic of Letters'.⁵⁷ There is one rare case in which the letter writer thought that publishing was *not* necessary and that the manuscript that was printed had been too easily communicated: Ismael Boulliau (1605–1694), writing to Nicolaas Heinsius, made sure to first praise the ones who had supplied the manuscript (the brothers Pierre [1582–1651] and Jacques Dupuy [1591–1656]), only to note subsequently that the edition was 'of little interest to the kingdom [of France] and to the Republic of Letters' – not that the edition would really stir things up, but it was not the best work to refute an opponent.⁵⁸

Another act to which letter writers took refuge to bring their correspondents to perform and deliver was to take care of a student. This occurred in the familiar genre of the recommendation letter. The student is worthy of attention on account of his fine disposition to the Republic of Letters and his love of letters (students usually had no actual track record of services already paid). Good behavior gives the student credit, even if he has not yet published anything. 'The young man is morally very upright, devoted to letters, and a lover of *all learned men*, a devotee and admirer above all of your name', Vossius wrote to Grotius in Paris, recommending the bearer of the letter.⁵⁹ Grotius used the same language himself. Writing to Meric Casaubon (1599–1671) in 1639, he vouched for the excellence of Justus Rijckwart (b. 1607) by reminding Casaubon of his eagerness to oblige learned men (just as he had asked Casaubon's father Isaac 25 years earlier to live up to his love for learned men):

I know you are such a good man that you not only seize every opportunity offered to oblige all men of letters, but also to seek opportunities actively and therefore I thought I would do what I must to do, both: acquainting him with you, together with your virtues, and recommending him to you.⁶⁰

Apart from publishing books and helping students, the Republic of Letters was invoked to add force to petitions for collaboration. Thus, mathematician René-François de Sluse (1622–1686) (writing in Liège) petitioned Christiaan Huygens in The Hague to make available and communicate 'to the learned world'

observations of the comet of 1664–1665. Bad weather conditions had obscured his own view. Sluse reported that colleagues in Leuven had observed that the comet’s tail subtended an arc of 80 degrees when it appeared between the constellations of Crater and Corvus. He hoped people in Rome, with their accurate telescopes, could observe the same matter.⁶¹ Clearly, the *orbis literatus* here serves to connect the shared interests of astronomers in Rome, Liège, Leuven, and The Hague.

Codification of the Republic of Letters

From the seven occurrences of the phrase ‘République des Lettres’ in French, three are actually references to Pierre Bayle’s (1647–1606) journal *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*. By using this phrase in the title of the first ever review journal, Bayle institutionalized the idea of the Republic of Letters. It is interesting to note that these three letters in the *ePistolarium* read more like reports or articles, headed by a bibliographical reference to the journal than like actual letters: this suggests that institutionalization also stimulated a matter-of-fact style.⁶² One such letter suggests that the combination of ‘nouvelles’ with ‘république des lettres’ stuck in scholars’ minds. ‘There is no real news at all in the Republic of Letters’, Henri Justel (1619–1693) wrote in 1690 from London, somewhat apologetically, to Christiaan Huygens in The Hague, ‘although they write to me more from Paris, I knew they weren’t doing anything there. You can only see malicious booklets there, not worth reading’. Note that ‘news’ relates here to ‘newly published books’.⁶³ Leeuwenhoek referred to the journal by mentioning a ‘booklet, entitled *Nouvelles de la Republique*’, leaving out the crucial ‘des lettres’ from its title. In quoting from it, he translated an original Latin reference to unspecified *eruditi* as ‘the learned world’ (*de geleerde werelt*), for whom observations were ‘made common’ (*vulgari*), that is, published.⁶⁴

Bayle gave the journal a specific program. In the preface to the first issue of 1684, he put it thus:

on doit donc mettre bas tous les termes qui divisent les hommes en différentes factions, & considerer seulement le point dans leque ils se réunissent, qui est la qualité d’homme illustre dans la République des Lettres. En ce sens-là, tous les Savans se doivent regarder comme freres, ou comme d’aussi bonne maison les uns que le autres. Ils doivent dire,

Nous sommes tous égaux
 } comme enfans d’Apollon.⁶⁵
 Nous sommes tous parents

This idea of the Republic of Letters of all scholars constituting an egalitarian community is closely connected to the idea of tolerance, primarily religious tolerance. In drafting his program, Bayle drew on tropes that characterized earlier

occasional reflections about the Republic of Letters. Take for example the letter of Jacques Dupuy to Nicolaas Heinsius of 1649:

the Free traffic of letters (i.e. *commercium literarium*) with Heinsius is one of the best results of the peace of Rueil [which ended the first Fronde]. War and social disorder had a negative impact on free traffic and communication within the Republic of Letters.⁶⁶

Such explicit terminology about the norms of the Republic of Letters is relatively scarce in the seventeenth century. They anticipate the words, uttered a hundred years later in 1751, by Voltaire (1694–1778):

Jamais la correspondance entre les philosophes, ne fut plus universelle; Leibnitz servait à l’animer. On a vu une république littéraire établie insensiblement dans l’Europe malgré les guerres, et malgré les religions différentes. Toutes les sciences, tous les arts ont reçu ainsi des secours mutuels; les académies ont formé cette république. L’Italie et la Russie ont été unies par les lettres. L’Anglais, l’Allemand, le Français allaient étudier à Leyde. Le célèbre médecin Boerhaave était consulté à la fois par le pape et par le czar. Ses plus grand élèves ont attiré ainsi les étrangers, et sont devenus en quelque sort les médecins des nations; les véritables savants dans chaque genre ont resserré les liens de cette grande société des esprits, répandue partout et partout indépendante. Cette correspondance dure encore; elle est une des consolations des maux que l’ambition et la politique répandent sur la terre.⁶⁷

It is this high-minded discourse of a ‘spiritual society’ uniting Europe that continues to dominate the historiography of the Republic of Letters. Before Bayle, Voltaire and other French and primarily German scholars writing in the eighteenth century theorized the Republic of Letters, only few treatises had dealt with the phenomenon: *De politia litteraria*, authored around 1450 by Angelo Decembrio (1415–after 1467) but published only in 1540, describes an idealized learned community at the court of Ferrara; Trajano Boccalini (1556–1613) describes the Parnassus, an allegory of the Republic of Letters, in his *Ragguagli di Parnaso* (1612) as a politically autonomous community.⁶⁸ Diego de Saavedra Fajardo (1584–1648) satirized the overload of bad books in his *La republica literaria* (written perhaps around 1612, but published posthumously in 1655/1670), in the tradition of Erasmus’s *Praise of Folly*. But even if these works evocate a community of learning, the ways in which members of this community should interact with each other is not necessarily explicit. For more generalized ideas about the codes of conduct, loose instances scattered in letters are probably more representative of normative ideas and practices.

The letters in the *ePistolarium* suggest that there was an increasing generalized idea of the codes of conduct. Thus, the private teacher of the Constantijn Huygens’s children, the ill-fated Henrick Bruno (1617–1664), reported to

Huygens in 1639 that he had stopped with the lessons in poetry composition because they had reached a level that 'will be comparable, through usage and constant exercise, to the whole Republic of Letters'. Apparently, they had learnt to write poems like any other member of the Republic of Letters and thus ticked the box of one skill that any learned citizen had to master.⁶⁹

But what were these skills? As noted, Boccalini and Saavedra Fajardo gave no detailed instruction on how to become a good citizen of the Republic of Letter. There were, of course, handbooks on proper behavior, such as Baldassare Castiglione's (1478–1529) *Il Cortegiano* (1528), Erasmus's (1466–1536) *De civilitate* (1530), Henry Peacham's (b. 1578) *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622), and others, but such books do not specifically deal with the conduct of a scholar. Erasmus's writings give ample and detailed instruction on how to write well and compose effective letters. Petrarch (1304–1374) and Macchiavelli (1469–1527) offered models of behavior, but there was no treatise that treated the Republic of Letters anthropologically as a social or historical phenomenon in its own right. Surely, the phrase was used to denote the world of learning, but more normative descriptions occurred only in the second half of the seventeenth century.

In 1659, we learn from a letter of Boulliau that the recently deceased Paolo del Buono (1625–1659), member of the Accademia del Cimento, had thought of establishing a *Republica litteraria ac philosophica*:

It was the plan of a high mind and a man born to do great things; but it must not look for a place amongst the Europeans in our times, because in all kingdoms and states of our world, no society can be formed that is not suspect for the ruling powers.⁷⁰

Boulliau, in other words, was pessimistic about the chances of constituting a truly independent scholarly community.

In 1667, astronomer Stanislaas Lubienietzki (1623–1675) published a thick *Theatrum cometicum* that reflected on the comet of 1664–1665. The sections in the book take the form of letters written to famous men. Lubienietzki time and again refers to the *Respublica litteraria* and to related concepts such as *res literaria*. In a letter to Christiaan Huygens, entitled *Commentatio Hugeniana* and printed in this 'Theatre', he declares that if anyone, it is Huygens who 'knows best what laws should be lived by in the Republic of Letters'. And he continues to expand the metaphor in style: 'I call upon the Philosophical Senate, now that I am made consul, not through my own merit, but through the sole Queen of good minds, the Liberty that is devoted to the Republic of Letters.'⁷¹ Interestingly, the 'theatre' metaphor suggests a centralized concentration from a circle of onlookers: on 'orbis' of learned men acknowledging the value of the lessons taught by an individual who works from an elevated space.⁷² This idea of a circle returns in the bleaker expression *orbis literatus*, which might read not merely as the 'learned world', but also as 'learned circle'. Lubienietzki is one of the few people who reflected on the idea of a *respublica literaria*: he sees the liberty to think, the *libertas*

philosophandi, as constitutive of this republic. In Lubienietzki's letter to Huygens, we see how he internalized knowledge of how to behave as a scholar: he refers not merely to implicit patterns of conduct in the moral economy, but to explicit 'laws'. Such articulations were anticipated by Decembrio's *De politia litteraria* (written around 1450) and Erasmus's *Anti-Barbari* (written around 1494).⁷³ We do come across incidental references to the Republic of Letters in book titles, such as in the inaugural address of the professor of Greek Cosme Damian Çavall (fl. 1520–1530) at Valencia (1531)⁷⁴ or a hundred years later in the title of a funeral address (1633) praising the deceased as 'de Republica literaria meritissimus'⁷⁵ or other funeral speeches (for Jacobus Thomasius [b. 1622] in 1684 and for Valentin Alberti [b. 1635] in 1697), using the same phrase⁷⁶ – precisely the expression that occurs often in the vicinity of the expression in the letters studied above. Likewise in 1670, there appeared an anthology of study programs authored by Heinrich Bullinger (1504–1575), Erasmus, Juan Luis Vives (1493–1540), Johann Jacob Breitinger (1575–1645), and François du Jon (1545–1602), *de Ecclesia christiana et Republica literaria meritissimi*.⁷⁷ When physician Johann Hannemann (1640–1724) in 1694 published four letters to famous scholars, he praised them in the title as in *Republica literaria primates*.⁷⁸ Elsewhere in that same year, he observes:

we already live in an age in which the Republic of Letters is experiencing its largest growth. For whole peoples [*gentes*] are coming together in an already laudable initiative to enhance the cause of learning [*rem literariam*] and are founding Colleges and Societies that study Nature and Man with the utmost zeal.⁷⁹

In short, the Republic of Letters is gaining official currency in the second half of the seventeenth century.

The rising popularity of the term should be seen as part of a growing self-awareness of the Republic of Letters, symptomized by the emergence of *Historia literaria*. This 'learned history' was envisioned by Francis Bacon (1561–1626) in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), but spearheaded only at the end of the seventeenth century by Daniel Morhof (1639–1691) in his *Polyhistor*. It is in this tradition that the Republic of Letters started to assume a modern history of its own. In the wake of *historia literaria*, countless disputations, dissertations, and treatises about the Republic of Letters started to appear. They included reflections on the conduct proper (or not) of scholars.⁸⁰ A German student in 1698 publicly defended 'an academic dissertation about the Republic of Letters'.⁸¹ The great Ludovico Muratori (1672–1750) in 1704 pseudonymously published his *Primi disegni della Repubblica letteraria d'Italia esposti al pubblico*, which outlines the plan for a society dedicated to literature in the Italian vernacular.⁸² Christoph August Heumann (1681–1764), a central figure in the early history of *historia literaria*, gave further boost to the Republic of Letters as an institution in his *Overview of the Republic of Letters or a Map to the History of Letters, Opened Up for the Studious Youth* of 1718 (republished eight times, the last time posthumously in 1791).⁸³ For Heumann, the Republic of Letters and the history

of learning were interchangeable. Note that 'history' of learning means not primarily the 'past' but has retained the Greek and Latin meaning of a 'description'.⁸⁴ When Johann Friedemann Schneidemann (1669–1733), professor in Halle, gave a valedictory address in 1727, he translated the Latin title of his *Oratio solemnis de forma reipublicae litterariae* as 'von der besten Art zu regieren in der Republic der Gelehrten'.⁸⁵ In short, although ideals about the Republic of Letters were occasionally explicated before the second half of the seventeenth century, substantial theorizing of what it required to become a member of this society increased dramatically from this period onwards.

Conclusion

In the first decades of the eighteenth century, then, we can observe that codes of conduct were codified into ethical rules on how to behave. The performative regulative discourse of a Republic of Letters became institutionalized into explicit prescriptive regulations, which involved religious toleration, awareness of hierarchy, and gentlemanly conduct. As such, the discourse of the Republic of Letters became only stronger in the course of eighteenth century as a way to regulate the exchange of knowledge across religious and political borders.

That type of discourse only took off because it drew on existing practices that are revealed in the daily communications of scholars. These letters show that invoking the Republic of Letters was not an inconsequential rhetorical embellishment, but an appeal to a supranational regime: a moral economy with certain patterns of conduct that one was supposed to heed to become fully integrated into the speech community. The conscious accounts of what the Republic of Letters was and what it entailed to be part of it do not necessarily reflect the actual practices of how scholars benefitted from such a shared regime. These practices demonstrate that the Republic of Letters helped to regulate the communication of knowledge through mutually understood and socially constructed patterns of conduct that were recognized time and again, calling for more systematic treatments. The regime thus constructed proved immensely popular in the eighteenth century. What happened to the regime of the Republic of Letters after the end of the *Ancien Régime* itself is altogether the subject of another analysis, but the institutionalization of formal regulation and communication in domestically oriented universities is bound to have been a competitor in catering to the demand of regulating the exchange of knowledge.

Notes

- 1 Austin, 'How to Do Things with Words'.
- 2 The most recent general account, Bots, *De Republiek der Letteren*, 14, 16, 17, observes that the notion of the *Respublica litteraria* as a *community* of scholars is developed near the end of the seventeenth century, but Bots's subsequent description of the main characteristics of the Republic of Letters across the whole early modern period draws heavily on these normative descriptions without providing a chronological development.

- 3 Fumaroli, *La République des Lettres*, 37.
- 4 See Van Miert, Hotson, and Wallnig, 'What Was the Republic of Letters?', 33–34, for a list of occurrences of the phrase near the end of the fifteenth century.
- 5 For an example on how the necessity to communicate via letters created similar discursive practices (rather than explicit intellectual reflexion) in a community that partly overlapped with the Republic of Letters, see Trivellato, 'A Republic of Merchants?', 145, 149.
- 6 Carel Peeters in his review of Bots's *De Republiek der Letteren* (Peeters, 'De Republiek der Letteren is van iedereen') makes this connection with 'republicanism' much more forcefully than scholars tend to do, which betrays a lack of historical sensitivity. In modern usage, the word 'Republic' takes on an anti-royalist meaning, whereas the first early modern connotation was with that of a political body or 'state'. Yet, the fact that famous scholars were styled as 'consuls', 'triumviri', and 'principes' and not as 'rex' betrays humanists' sensitivity toward the political overtones of the concept of 'res publica'.
- 7 Hans Bots has recently styled the Republic of Letters as the 'intellectual world of Europe' and described it not only anthropologically as a community of people bent on the exchange of knowledge, but also as a 'world' that included practices such as epistolary traditions, institutions such as universities and societies, commercial stakeholders such as the book printers and traders, and a reflective discourse embodied in the medium of the journal; Bots, *De Republiek der Letteren*.
- 8 In Latin, the word *literaria* can have a double *tt*; the adjective *literaria* is often replaced by the genitive plural *lit(t)erarum*; the word *respublica* is sometimes separated as *res publica* (although never as *publica res*) and the word order is sometimes switched to *literaria respublica*. Each form can occur at least in the single nominative, genitive, accusative, or ablative (the dative being isoform in some cases to the genitive). The total number of permutations in the Latin expression is 192 (see skillnet.nl/blogs). Unfortunately, the Lucene query syntax of the *ePistolarium* seems unable to cope with combining wildcards and double quotes. The formula 'Re*publica* lit*erar*' OR 'lit*erar* re*publica*' proved too complex and even 'Re*publica* lit*erar*' gave no hits.
- 9 The terms 'Gelehrtenrepublik', 'gelehrte Republik' and 'Republic of Letters', 'Republic of Letters', 'Literary Republic', 'Literary republic', and 'Republic of Learning' yielded no hits.
- 10 For the percentages, see the breakdown in *ePistolarium*, 'Corpus Metadata'.
- 11 Grotius (Paris) to Etienne de Courcelles (Amsterdam), 23 June 1640 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 11, no. 4705; *ePistolarium*; groo001/4705): 'Bene admodum fecisti, quod et litteratorum principi Salmasio et aliis piis atque eruditis libellos illos legendi fecisti copiam'.
- 12 The word 'litteratores' occurs 26 times, but only as genitive: *lit(t)eratorum*, never in the other cases.
- 13 Nicholas Heinsius to Christiaan Huygens, 4 February 1662 (CHC, no. 966): 'Nuper epistolas nonnullas ad alios amicos exaratas tibi curandas commisi, quod literas ad rem publicam non pertinentes negligentius a Bisdommero haberi sim expertus'.
- 14 Georg Michael Lingelsheim to Grotius, 9 August 1617 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 1, no. 524; *ePistolarium*; groo001/0524):

Mihi longe gratissimum fuit cognoscere ex scripto tuo multa acerrimo iudicio excogitata; liber est refertus exacta doctrina, ac multa noviter explicata magno iudicio. Sic perge bene mereri de re publica. Iam librum tuum habet sub manibus Scultetus noster, a quo obtinebo quoque censuram suam, quam etiam ad te mittam.

Constantijn Huygens to Claude Samaise, 23 September 1644 (Huygens, *Briefwisseling* 4, no. 3773): 'Perge tu vero, summe vir, implere saeculum sublimioris momenti eruditissimis commentarijs, quae aut affecta nunc, aut parata habes, et a quibus qui te his talibus nimis avocaret, equidem de re publica parum bene mereri statuere'.

- 15 Johann A. Salvius to Grotius, 2 August 1639 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 10, no. 4235; *ePistolarium*; groo001/4235): 'Angit nos hodie appulsus de immatura ducis Vinariensis morte nuncius, rei publicae evangelicae hoc tempore magnopere nocivus. Sed solabimur nos Dei dispositione cuncta, etiam quae nobis mala videntur, in bonum vertentis'.
- 16 Willem de Groot to Grotius, 24 September 1640 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 11, no. 4849; *ePistolarium*; groo001/4849): 'Vale, frater optime, et tuis consilii et studiis rem publicam christianam juvare perge'. Whether the juxtaposition of the Church (or the *Respublica Christiana*) and the Republic of Letters was a typically protestant idea is a question I reserve for another article.
- 17 Matthias Bernegger (1582–1640) (Strasbourg) to Grotius (Paris), 10 July 1630 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 4, no. 1523; *ePistolarium*; groo001/1523):

Instituti mei rationem tibi Robertinus credo meus explicavit; et ego nunc amplius, cum tibi, tum itaque veluti civis in literatorum hac republica sub Ex[cellen]tiae v[es]trae patrocinioproductum ultra omnia cupio. Salmasio, hoc est incomparabili illi consulum in republica litteraria pari explicarem.

Grotius and Saumaise together constitute 'that incomparable pair of consuls of the Republic of Letters', to whom Bernegger enfolds his plans in detail. Stanislas Lubienietzki (1623–1675) (Hamburg) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 30 October 1665 (Huygens, *OC* 5, no. 1490; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/1490): 'Senatum voco Philosophicum, nullo meo merito, a sola Regina bonarum mentium Libertate Reipublicae literariae Studiosissima, Consul creatus'. Here, the metaphor of the Republic of Letters is extended to not only have a consul but also a senate under the reign of Liberty. Gustaf Rosenhane (1619–1684) (Stockholm) to Grotius (Paris) 8 June 1641 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 12, no. 5223; *ePistolarium*; groo001/5223): 'Sufficiat una mihi laus constanter amavisse litteras et litteratos et horum si licet fateri principem, quem titulum etiam mea natio Excellentiae vestrae attribuit. Itaque veluti civis in literatorum hac republica sub Excellentiae vestrae patrocinioproductum ultra omnia cupio'. Rosenhane not only claims that Sweden has bestowed on Grotius the title of prince of the learned men, but inscribes himself as a 'citizen' of this republic of the learned under Grotius's patronage.

- 18 Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 17, 276, note 1.
- 19 Anonymous to States General (Den Haag), August 1625 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 17, no. 995A; *ePistolarium*; groo001/0995A):

Quantum etiam reipublicae literariae profuerim testantur libri mei tam in iure quam literis editi. Ea in republica gubernanda mea ratio fuit, non ut seditiones moverem aut Belgium contra semet ipsum armarem, ut multi fecere, sed ad id vos incitarem unde respublica utilitatem, vos gloriam ac magnanimitatis nomen referre possetis.

- 20 Willem de Groot (Den Haag) to Grotius (Paris), 29 July 1635 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 6, no. 2202; *ePistolarium*; groo001/2202):

Narravit et mihi ille [Christoffel Sticke, lord of Breskens] Vossium et Barlaeum cancellario Oxensterniensi gratias omnium literatorum egisse, pro dignitate in te collata: consules item Amstelodamenses ostendisse id gratum sibi esse: ipsumque cancellarium dixisse non cogitasse se tam multis gratam futuram fuisse tui promotionem.

- 21 Martinus Ruarus (1588/1589–1657) (Straszyn) to Paulus Pels (1587–1659) (Gdansk), 1 October 1643 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 14, no. 6464, appendix; *ePistolarium*; groo001/6464-01]:

Non bene memini omnium quae antehac scripsi ad dominum Mercierum de facto domini legati Sueciae, attamen conscientia mihi mea testatur me nunquam

neque locutum esse neque scripsisse de viro hoc magno, nisi cum reverentia quam omnes literati maximis eius debent meritis.

22 Nellen, *Hugo Grotius*, 667–668.

23 Grotius (The Hague) to Bonaventura Vulcanius (1538–1614) (Leiden), 1600 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 1, no. 14; *ePistolarium*; groo001/0014): ‘Quo modo enim nos, quibus fervet aetas maximum animo adminiculum, quiescere poterimus, ubi Musagetem Scaligerum, ubi te quoque ipsum cogitatione perpendimus, qui fugientis aevi supremo gratissimos omni literatorum Choro foetus quotidie parturitis obstetricante Camoenarum Collegio’.

24 Henry More (Cambridge) to Descartes (Egmond-Binnen), 11 December 1648 (More, ‘Epistolae quatuor’, 234; *ePistolarium*; desc004/8648): ‘Quorsum autem haec? Non quod putarem, vir Clarissime, aut tua interesse aut Reipublicae Literariae, ut haec conscriberem; sed quod mirabilis illius voluptatis ac fructus, quem ex scriptis tuis percepi, conscientia extorqueret hoc, qualecunque est, animi in te grati testimonium’.

25 Matthias Bernegger (Strasbourg) to Grotius (Paris), 26 February 1638 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 9, no. 3469; *ePistolarium*; groo001/3469):

Quo fine Tacitum hunc opera mea generique Freinshemii recens editum muneri mitto; gratiosum vel ideo uti spero futurum, quod in eo tuorum quoque studiorum partem usibus publicis applicatam conspicies, quod quidem factum adeo non excuso, ut impudem etiam si non tibi, qui virilibus curis intentum iuveniliū laborum gloriolam non captas, at certe reipublicae litterariae, quam crediderim ex ista parallelorum locorum collectione tua non multo minus quam ex iusto commentario profecturam.

26 Leeuwenhoek (Delft) to Antoni Heinsius (1641–1720) (Paris), 14 October 1683 (Leeuwenhoek, *Alle de Brieven* 4, no. 78; *ePistolarium*; leeu027/0078):

dat mijne Stellingen, aldaar veel geestimeert waren, als mede dat eenige van mijne observatien, in Frankrijk in soo danige agtinge waren, dat deselve in het journaal de Medicine, dat nu met den jare 83 was begonnen, waren in gelijft, en andere stonden omme daar mede ingesteld te werden, welke saaken ik met groot aen genaamheijt heb verstaan, om dat hier uijt blijkt dat mijn arbeit, die ik daar aan besteet heb, de geleerde Werelt, daar in een goet behagen schept.

27 Leeuwenhoek (Delft) to the Royal Society (London), 30 March 1685 (Leeuwenhoek, *Alle de Brieven* 5, no. 84; *ePistolarium*; leeu027/0084):

Ik en twijffel niet, bij aldien in voorgaande tijden de geleerde Werelt soo kundig hadde geweest, ende met mij hadden gesien, dat in alle mannelijke Zaaden levende dierkens waren, ende daarop mijne stellingen van voorttelingen hadde gehoort, off, daarmen nu 70 autheuren weet op te halen, die tegen mijn gevoelens hebben geschreven men geen een vandeselve soude gevonden hebben, die vande Eijeren ende Eijernesten soudē gedroomt hebben.

28 Leeuwenhoek (Delft) to the Royal Society (London), 6 August 1687 (Leeuwenhoek, *Alle de Brieven* 7, no. 102; *ePistolarium*; leeu027/0102):

Soo ik wist dat ik de Geleerde Werelt dienst konde doen, met de angel van de Luys die hy in 't hooft draagt, den angel die hy achter in 't lijf draagt, en het mannelijk lit van deselve aan te wijsen, ik soude deselve laten afteikenen.

29 Leeuwenhoek (Delft) to Johann Wilhelm von Pfalz-Neuburg (1658–1716) (Düsseldorf [de]) 18 September 1695 (Leeuwenhoek, *Alle de Brieven* 11, no. 157; *ePistolarium*; leeu27/0157):

Hier heeft zijn Doorlugtigste Keurfurst mijne aantekeninge die ik gehouden heb in de na speuringe van de voortteeling der twee byzondere Schulp-vissen, ...

was het niet alle, wy zouden ten minsten voor het meerendeel, hare voortteeling ontdekken, ende dezelve de geleerde werelt voor de ooggen leggen, en alzoo, die geene die nog willen beweeren dat de Schulp-vissen van zelfs, ofte uit slik voortkomen, zoodanige dwars-dryvers nog meer de mont stoppen.

- 30 Leeuwenhoek (Delft) to Hamen van Zoelen (1625–1702) (Rotterdam), 17 December 1698 (Leeuwenhoek, *Alle de Brieven* 12, no. 196; *ePistolarium*; leeu027/0196):

Dat de Heer Hartsoeker de woorden voert, dat hy, na zyne kennisse, de eerste van allen is, die het zaad der Dieren met de vergroot-glasen heeft beginnen te ondersoeken, komt my vreemt voor. Ik hebbe in myne ontdekkingen, die al veel zyn, waar van de Geleerde Werelt geen kennisse hadde, sodanige taal niet willen voeren, maar liever het oordeel daar van laten vellen aan anderen.

- 31 Leeuwenhoek (Delft) to NN, 16 June 1700 (Leeuwenhoek, *Alle de Brieven* 13, no. 213; *ePistolarium*; leeu027/0213):

Dog ik hebbe soo nu als dan daar maar een weynig in gesien. Ik beeld my in, dat de Geleerde Werelt nu wijser is, als sulke en diergelijke verdigtsels aan te nemen, en het geene ik van desen kome te seggen, dat sullen na alle aparentie andere van my seggen.

- 32 Jorink, *Reading the Book of Nature*, 241.

- 33 Rutgerus zum Bergen (1603–1661) (Strassbourg) to Grotius (Paris), 6 March 1630 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 4, no. 1483; *ePistolarium*; groo001/1483):

S.P. Literas tuas, clarissime vir, summa literatorum omnium voluptas, recte accepi, quas quanta cum voluptate legerim, tam exiguo papyri spatio vix deformari, nedum accuratius depingi queat. Quem enim vel morosissimum non penesime officiant tam abundantes eruditione, humanitate, officio, et, quod palmarium puto, ab Hugone Grotio hominum fidem quali et quanto viro scriptae! Cuius nomen ob amplas ingenii dotes iam dudum aequissimo, nec inconsulte propitio literati orbis suffragio divinitati transcriptum est.

Note the use of both 'omnes literati' and 'literatus orbis'. Vossius (Amsterdam) to Grotius (Paris), 2 September 1641 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 12, no. 5358; *ePistolarium*; groo001/5348): 'Cum gaudio intellexi ex literis filii Isaaci, ut salvus Parisios venerit, Excellentiam t[ua]m compellarit et, quod fore sciebam, acceptissimus fuerit; clarissimum Salmasium, alterum orbis literati decus, cum dolore suo non repererit, eo quod in Burgundiam abiisset'. Vossius praises Saumaise as the 'other/second ornament of the literate world', implying that Grotius is the first. Note that Bernegger paired Saumaise and Grotius as the consuls of the Republic of Letters (see above, note 17). Leeuwenhoek (Delft) to Antonio Magliabechi (1633–1714) (Firenze), 20 February 1698 (Leeuwenhoek, *Alle de Brieven* 12, no. 191; *ePistolarium*; leeu027/0191): 'Vale multum diuque, Vir Illustrissime, Orbis Literati Decus et Ornamentum, et mihi meisque, ut coepisti, favere perge'. Leeuwenhoek (Delft) to Magliabechi (Firenze), 17 April 1698 (Leeuwenhoek, *Alle de Brieven* 12, no. 192; *ePistolarium*; leeu027/0192): 'Vale tandem Vir Illustrissime, Orbis Litterati Decus et Ornamentum, Vale aeternum, et mihi, ut coepisti, favere perge'.

- 34 Harald Andersson Appelboom (1612–1674) (Amsterdam) to Grotius (Paris), 2 July 1640 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 11, no. 4716; *ePistolarium*; groo001/4716):

Quod saepe facio, hesterno die compellavi clarissimum Vossium, qui impense petiit, ut suo nomine vestram Excellentiam salutarem plurimum. Me viri miseret, quem sic a mane ad vesperam civium studiosorum et peregrinantium compellationibus video distringi. Conqueritur hanc potissimum esse causam, cur tam pauca praestare possit, probanda iis, quibus in literato orbe corculis esse datum est.

- 35 Willem de Groot (1597–1662) (The Hague) to Grotius (Paris), 14 November 1639 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 10, no. 4386; *ePistolarium*; groo001/4386): ‘gaudeo tantum tibi a publicis curis superesse otii, ut tam luculenter rempublicam litterariam juvare possis’.
- 36 Martinus Fogelius (1634–1675) (Hamburg) to Christiaan Huygens (Paris), 6 October 1666 (Huygens, *OC* 6, no. 1561; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/1561): ‘Ceterum diu est, quod tua merita in rempublicam literariam aestimem, & propterea valde desideravi tuam amicitiam’. Willem de Groot (The Hague) to Grotius (Paris) 14 September 1637 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 8, no. 3252; *ePistolarium*; groo001/3252): ‘Ex iis magna cum voluptate didici, quam multa et varia ad illustrandam rempublicam litterariam tibi in promptu sint’.
- 37 Jean-Paul de la Roque (d. 1691) (Paris) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 12 July 1684 (Huygens, *OC* 8, no. 2349; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/2349):

Je verray pour cet effet Mons. Cassini, aujourd’huy, et je luy demanderay l’exemplaire que vous luy en avez enuoyé, et qu’il ne fera sans doute pas difficulté de me prester. Les Sçavans vous ont de grandes obligations d’enrichir ainsy la Republique des lettres, de vos excellentes productions.

- 38 H. Coets (fl. 1687) (Leiden) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 25 October 1687 (Huygens, *OC* 9, no. 2499; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/2499):

illis ... qui praeclara inventa ex ignorantiae abyssio in lucem trahendo, sibi gloriam et orbi literato commodum pepererunt haud contemnendum. In quorum numero te nulli secundum esse, cum omnes uno ore exclament, quotquot sunt studii mathematici cultores facile veniam dabis, si non statim fidem datam liberaverim.

- 39 Grotius Paris (Paris) to Nicolas-Claude Fabry de Peiresc (1580–1637) (Belgentier), 6 September 1630 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 4, no. 1539; *ePistolarium*; groo001/1539):

Haec cum mihi persuadeant Nicolai Damasceni esse, quibus hoc nomen in *Eclogis* tuis inscribitur, valde mihi gratum hoc accidit, quod eadem opera haud sane gravi licuit et tibi, nostro saeculo viro apud omnes literatos celeberrimo, morem gerere et illius viri suo saeculo celeberrimi memoriam suscitare.

- 40 Willem de Groot (1597–1662) (The Hague) to Grotius (Paris), 21 December 1637 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 8, no. 3393; *ePistolarium*; groo001/3393): ‘Perge de republica litteraria et magis etiam de ecclesia bene mereri; nos qui nihil aliud possumus, votis certe favebimus et te tuosque ardentibus precibus Deo commendabimus’. René François de Sluse (Liège) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 20 July 1663 (Huygens, *OC* 4, no. 1137; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/1137): ‘Tu, vir Praestantissime, perge orbem literatum tuis εὐρημασιν ornare, meque quo soles affectu semper prosequere’. Frans van Schooten (1615–1660) (Leiden) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 19 September 1658 (Huygens, *OC* 2, no. 517; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/0517):

Id solum opto, ut, quo coepisti pede non desistas, sed in ijs, quae Rempublicam Literariam promovere valent, aut utilitati publicae inservire possunt, meditandis continuo alacriter pergas; ut tua fama, quae jam per totum terrarum orbem illucere coepit, indies magis magisque inclarescat.

Frans van Schooten (1615–1660) (Leiden) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague) 13 February 1659 (Huygens, *OC* 2, no. 587; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/0587): ‘Tu modo, vir Amicissime, ut coepisti, perge tuis praeclarissimis inventis Rempublicam Literariam continuo ornare. Vale’. Leopoldo de Medici (1617–1675) (Firenze) to Christiaan Huygens (Paris), 5 November 1660 (Huygens, *OC* 3, no. 802; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/0802): ‘Resta che Vostra Signoria si compiacca al suo ritorno di Francia di arricchire il Tesoro della Repubblica Litteraria con nuoui parti del suo sapere, come ella mi accenna’. The phrasing is original; the common good of the Republic of

Letters is metaphorically referred to as a 'treasure'. Leopoldo de Medici (Firenze) to Christiaan Huygens (Paris), 16 August 1666 (Huygens, *OC* 6, no. 1558; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/1558):

Sequitur pure Vestra Signoria le sue degne fatiche sotto la direzione di un Rè così grande, et vniuersale protettore della Virtù, e de Virtuosi, onde per la Republica litteraria, e per il mondo tutto, mercè della di lui regia munificenza si può aspettare utili, e gloria grande nei nostri Tempi.

Leopoldo de Medici (Firenze) to Christiaan Huygens (Paris), 1673 (Huygens, *OC* 7, no. 1941; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/1941): 'io le rendo grazie del libro ... godendo intanto sommamente di udire, che ella si sia liberata dalle sue indisposizioni a segno che abbia potuto applicare ad arricchire la repubblica letteraria di nuoue gemme erudite, parti del suo intelletto'. Johannes Hevelius (1611–1687) (Gdansk) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 19 February 1663 (Huygens, *OC* 4, no. 1099; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/1099): 'Bene Vale, et non istum duntaxat, quem Dei gratia exorsi sumus; sed et plures insecuturos annos, quos Tibi Divina destinavit Providentia faustos felicesque experire; tum magno Reipublicae Literariae bono, magnis conatibus insiste' (earlier on in this letter, the term 'commercium literarium' is used: 'alacriter commercium literarium vicissim aggredior'). René François de Sluse (1622–1685) (Liège) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 19 October 1658 (Huygens, *OC* 2, no. 538; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/0538): 'Multa in libro reperi de quibus alias tecum, quando feriatum intellexero. Timeo enim, vt ait ille, ne in publica commoda peccem, si longo sermone morer tua tempora, quae studijs reipublicae litterariae vtilioribus impendis'.

- 41 Gerardus Vossius (Amsterdam) to Grotius (Paris), 1 July 1635 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 6, no. 2166; *ePistolarium*; groo001/2166): 'Deus Optimus Maximus te, illustrissime domine, cum familia tota, diu, Christiani orbis bono et reipublicae literariae conseruet'. Willem de Groot (The Hague) to Grotius (Paris), 14 October 1641 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 12, no. 5417; *ePistolarium*; groo001/5417): 'Interea Deus Opt. Max. te nobis totique ecclesiae et reipublicae litterariae diu seruet incolumem'. Daniel Lipstorp (1631–1684) (Leiden) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 20 April 1653 (Huygens, *OC* 1, no. 156; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/0156):

Equidem non diffiteor extollendos esse istos Tuae Nobilitatis liberales conatus, quibus continuo Rempublicam literariam sibi devincire studes, cuius oculos in te defixos esse non ignoras, esse autem cum discrimine salutis famae pericula tentanda non approbo, sed potius valetudinis habendam esse rationem suadeo, ut diutius de Orbe literario benemereri queas.

René François de Sluse (1622–1685) (Liège) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 19 October 1657 (Huygens, *OC* 2, no. 416; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/0416): 'Interest nedum Reipublicae vestrae sed litterati orbis vniuersi eum [parentem tuum] cito restitui'. Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678) (Utrecht) to Constantijn Huygens (The Hague), 22 June 1666 (Huygens, *Briefwisseling* 6, no. 6566; huyg001/6566): 'Deumque Opt[imum] Max[imum] veneror, ut te diu ecclesiae, patriae, reipublicae literarum et tuorum omnium ingenti bono seruet incolumem'. Matteo Campani (1620–1678) (Rome) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 2 December 1664 (Huygens, *OC* 5, no. 1304; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/1304): 'Vale literariae Reipublicae bono: et me ama, ut ipse te diligo atque ueneror'. Bernhardus Fullenius, (1640–1707) (Franeker) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 10 August 1683 (Huygens, *OC* 8, no. 2317; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/2317): 'Vale diu feliciterque Reipublicae litterariae et publico bono, et amica me responsione dignare'. Note the juxtaposition of the Republic of Letters and the public good. Grotius (Hamburg) to Gerardus Vossius (Amsterdam), 22 October 1632 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 6, no. 1794; *ePistolarium*; groo001/1794): 'Deus te cum conjuge ac liberis sospitem diu Batavis literatisque omnibus praestet'.

- 42 Gerardus Vossius (Amsterdam) to Grotius (Paris), 4 June 1639 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 10, no. 414; *ePistolarium*; groo001/414): ‘Simul illud addo magnum Salmasium, – quem diu salvum ac sospitem esse non paullo majoris interest Reipublicae literariae – post morbum gravissimum nunc convalescere magis et magis’.

- 43 Gerardus Vossius (Amsterdam) to Grotius (Paris), 17 June 1642 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 13, no. 5752; *ePistolarium*; groo001/5752):

exquiram ex Blauwio: sic enim, non Blauwiis, nunc scribendum mihi, fratrum eo qui iunior erat paucos ante menses defuncto. Magis ea res obsesset reipublicae literariae, nisi fratrem propemodum ex asse haeredem fecisset. Absque eo foret qui superest impar esset sumptibus faciendis tantis, quippe, ut mittam caetera, typographiae ergo alit quotidie supra homines XL.

- 44 Caspar Barlaeus (Amsterdam) to Cornelis van der Myle (1579–1642) 16 December 1635 (Barlaeus, *Epistolarum liber*, no. 312; *barl001/0312*): ‘Nec minus Respublica literaria, Patavina praesertim, in eodem viro Mecoenatem amisit, quo gaudebat; Apollinem, cujus se hortatu monitisque erigebat: Palladem, cujus se aegide tuebatur; purpuram, qua spendescebat; curatorem, a quo fovebatur tenerius’.

- 45 Christiaan Huygens (The Hague) to Nicolaas Heinsius, 13 October 1661 (Huygens, *OC* 3, no. 907; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/0907):

Pater meus ante paucos dies in Galliam profectus est, Arausionensis arcis restitutionem Principis nomine a Rege petiturus. Comitem habet fratrem Ludoicum qui non multo ante ex Hispania redierat. Rogas quid ibi rerum gesserit; atque ego pro illo tibi respondeo, in ea quidem re quam illi commendaveras aliquid egisse, sed minus quam optaverat. Varias lectiones aliquot ex optimo Ovidij manuscripto ac pervetusto descripsit, in quo frequenter easdem quoque emendationes quae a te proditae sunt se reperisse dicebat. In ijs quas collegit nullae sunt admodum magni momenti; sed nec multas colligere licuit, quod res non ferebat ut diutius in Bibliotheca regia moraretur. Caeterum incredibilem inscitiam socordiamque tum monachorum illorum qui in celeberrimo Escurialiensi Coenobio degunt, tantaque librorum optimorum copia potiuntur, tum omnium in universum Hispanorum, satis praedicare non poterat; quippe qui non tantum literas scientiasve non curent, sed nec quid in reliquo literarum orbe rerum geratur aut norint aut nosse laborent.

- 46 Scholten and Pelgrom, ‘Scholarly Identity and Memory’.

- 47 See, e.g., Joseph Scaliger (Leiden) to Richard Thomson (1569–1613) (Cambridge), 26 December 1600: ‘...quando cloacae illae et colluvies monachorum sese in Europam effuderint, ut Loiolitae odie et Capuccini’, in Scaliger, *Correspondence* 3, 551, ll. 12–13.

- 48 John Collins (1625–1683) (London) to Robert Moray (1608–1673) (London), February 1669 (Huygens, *OC* 6, no. 1709; *ePistolarium*; huyg003/1709):

Vpon ye whole, Monsieur Hugens seems blameable for beginning these comparisons, quasi ex animo vilipendendi, as appears from his reason rendred, why Gregory’s quadrature of ye Hyperbola should not seem new to ye Royal Society; on the other side it were to be wisht, that Mister Gregory had been more mild with yt generous person, who hath deserv’d well of ye republick of Learning.

- 49 Gerardus Vossius (Amsterdam) to Grotius (Paris), 25 September 1639 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 10, no. 4310; *ePistolarium*; groo001/4310):

Facile credo hanc contentionem non parum detracturam nomini Heinsiano, sed partim eo me solor, quod nemo ignoret ipsum sibi hoc malum intrivisse, dum perpetuus est in traducendis omnibus, quorum praeclarum est in republica literaria nomen, partim ac imprimis isto, quod contentionis hujus bonum sperare liceat eventum. Sine dubio enim multa etiam doctissimos quosque docebit Salmasius et fortasse etiam Heinsius hinc discet modestius de se sentire caeterisque suis

laudibus hanc addet, ut ne tam credulus sit palpatoribus, qui eum phoenicis, dictatoris, Atlantis studiorum elogiis onerant verius quam honorant.

- 50 Janus Gruterus to Grotius, 13 April 1614 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 1, no. 325; *ePistolarium*; groo001/o325): 'Ego quieti devotus, adhuc dum versor in Cicerone Gulielmiano: cui si quid ingenio industriave adstruere potes, ut potes, da quaeso id quoque ceteris tuis in remp[ublicam] literariam meritis, ac nobiscum ocyus communica. Bona fide sub nomine tuo publicabitur, non sine honorifico, hoc est, debito tibi praeconio'.
- 51 Robert Boyle (1627–1691) (Oxford) to Robert Moray (London), December 1663 (Huygens, *OC* 4, no. 1193; *huyg003/1193*).
- 52 Constantijn Huygens (The Hague) to J.F. Gronovius (Leiden), 16 September 1670 (Huygens, *Briefwisseling* 6, no. 6769; *ePistolarium*; *huyg001/6769*): 'A. Gellium, si inter membranas meas repertus fuisset, illico misissem; non fuisse, et reipublicae literariae et mea praecipue causa doleo, quod hanc occasionem tibi, tanto amico, gratificandi occupare non contigerit'.
- 53 Marcus Zuierius Boxhorn, Marcus (Leiden) to Constantijn Huygens (The Hague), 12 July 1636 (Huygens, *Briefwisseling* 2, no. 1405; *ePistolarium*; *huyg001/1405*):

[Balsaci] *Herodem*, scilicet, *Infanticidam*, tragoediam, ut breviter hoc dicam, excitatam et coelestem, quam universus ordo litteratus cum stupore admirationis legit, praedicatque. ... Multa quippe ex ultima antiquitate, qua sacra, qua profana, singulari cum genio hic eruuntur, quae ne modestia auctoris perirent, orbis literarii interesse existimabam.

- 54 For Heinsius's dubious character, see the most devastating character murder by a modern scholar ever committed of his early modern intellectual subject, viz. Ter Horst's 1934 dissertation *Daniel Heinsius*.
- 55 Grotius (Rotterdam) to Isaac Casaubon (London), 20 April 1614 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 1, no. 329; *ePistolarium*; groo001/0329):

Siquid, vir citra comparationem doctissime, meae in te reverentiae, quae summa est, tribuendum putas, si qua in re testari cupis amorem, quo omnes non literatos modo sed et literarum amatores prosequeris, unum hoc beneficium ne mihi deneges oro te atque obtestor.

On the contexts, see Hardy, *Criticism and Confession*, 94–100.

- 56 Willem de Groot (The Hague) to Grotius (Paris), 19 January 1643 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 14, no. 6045; *ePistolarium*; groo001/6045):

De iis quae ad Rivetum notasti cogitabo, sed id si solum prodiret, vereor ne et tu deridiculo futurus sis ob nimiam brevitatem. Florum sparsionem tuam magna ex parte legi, et volupe mihi fuit videre aliorum scriptorum cum iurisconsultis consonantiam in arte aequi et boni. Correctionibus vero tuis, paucis quidem illis sed insignibus, ut accedam, non suades, sed cogis. Liber iste apud omnes eruditos et politoris litteraturae amantes semper fiet maximi, quare dolet exempla tua nondum comparere.

- 57 Willem de Groot (1597–1662) (The Hague) to Grotius (Paris), 8 July 1639 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 10, no. 4194; *ePistolarium*; groo001/4194):

[J.A. Corvinus] vir optimus, jam laborat in pertexendis juris Erotematis, quorum ego jam partem aliquam in formam manualis vidi impressam. Scio id opus a te expectari nimisque jam diu suppressum ut et alia ejus viri scripta magno cum reipublicae litterariae incommodo.

- 58 Ismael Boulliau (Paris) to Nicolaas Heinsius (The Hague), 30 July 1660 (Huygens, *OC* 3, 508, no. 762A; *ePistolarium*; *huyg003/0762a*):

Illustrissimos Viros Petrum et Jacobum Puteanos sine Laudum titulis mihi nunquam nominandos in concedenda Historiae Concilii Florentini e Regio codice

transcriptione minus faciles ac indulgentes optassem; illam enim vulgari, et publici juris fieri nec Regni, nec Reipublicae Literariae multum intererat. tantas tamen turbas inde excitandas non praevideo; neque ad Leonis Allatii revincendam erroneam assertionem illa historia opus erat, aut unquam erit.

- 59 Gerardus Vossius (Amsterdam) to Grotius (Hamburg), 5 April 1634 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 5, no. 1923; *ePistolarium*; groo001/1923): ‘Juvenis est eximiae probitatis literarumque cultor literatorumque omnium amantissimus, tui imprimis nominis et cultor et admirator’.

- 60 Grotius (Paris) to Meric Casaubon (Canterbury), 19 March 1639 (Grotius, *Briefwisseling* 10, no. 4025; *ePistolarium*; groo001/4025):

Ego qui te norim ea esse bonitate, ut omnes literatos demerendi occasiones non arripias tantum oblatas, sed et quaeras ultro, facturum me putavi, quod utrique debeo, si te ipsi [Justo Richewartio] notum cum virtutibus tuis facerem, ipsum autem tibi commendarem.

- 61 René François de Sluse (Liège) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 26 December 1664 (Huygens, *OC* 5, no. 1292; [huyg003/1292](#)):

Cometae aspectum qualem optarem, tum aedes vicinae, tum vel maxime pluuium illud et turbidum coelum hactenus mihi invident. Ex Lovaniensium relatione intellexi, cum nuper inter Craterem et Coruum observatus est, totos octodecim gradus cauda subtendisse. Certiora tu orbi literato propones si coelo clementiore vsus es, aut nostri saltem Romani observatores, qui accuratis illis telescopijs ipsam etiam fortassis cometae materiam scrutari poterunt.

- 62 Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 8 October 1687 to (Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz [1646–1716]) (Huygens, *OC* 9, no. 2489; [huyg003/2489](#)): ‘Solution du Probleme proposé par M. Leibnitz dans les nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres du Mois de Septembre 1687’. Leibniz (Hannover) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), January 1688 (Huygens, *OC* 9, no. 2512; [huyg003/2512](#)): ‘vostre figure dans les Nouvelles de la republique des lettres mois d’octobre 1687’. Christiaan Huygens (The Hague) to (Leibniz), September 1690 (Huygens, *OC* 9, no. 2490; [huyg003/2490](#)): ‘Problema propositum a D[omino] Leibnitz in diario Eruditorum (*Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*) mensis Sept. 1687’.

- 63 Henri Justel (London) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 19 May 1690: (Huygens, *OC* 9, no. 2593; [huyg003/2593](#)): ‘il ny a aucune nouvelle considerable dans la Republique des lettres, quoy qu’on ne m’ecriue plus de Paris, i’ay sceu qu’on ny faisoit rien. on ny uoit que de mechans petits liures qui ne meritent pas d’estre leus’.

- 64 Leeuwenhoek (Delft) to the Royal Society (London), 9 June 1699 (Leeuwenhoek, *Alle de Brieven* 12, no. 200; *ePistolarium*; leeu027/0200):

Tis sulks, dat seker Doctor Medicine mij ter hand stelt een Boekje genaamt *Nouvelles de la Republique*, en toonende mij daar in op het 552. bladzijde, een extract int Latijn uijt een Brief geschreven vande Heer Dalepatius, aan de schrijver vande *Nouvelle de la Republique*.

This Dalepatius (astronomer François de Plantade [1670–1741]) is quoted (accurately) as ‘having wanted, in the meantime, to make this public for the Learned World to say what they feel about it’ (‘Ondertusschen hebben wij dit willen gemeen maken, op dat de geleerde werelt uijten zoude, wat zij hier van gevoelen’). For the source, see Dalenpatius, ‘Article V, Extrait d’une Lettre’, 554: ‘Interim haec vulgari volumus, ut Eruditis, quid hac in re sentiant edere velint’.

- 65 Bayle, ‘Preface’ [March 1784], printed in: Bots and De Vet, *Stratégies journalistiques*, 11–12.

- 66 Bots, *De Republiek der Letteren*, 138.

- 67 Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV* 6, 43–44, lines 194–208.
- 68 Fumaroli, *République des lettres*, 294–297.
- 69 Henrick Bruno (The Hague) to Constantijn Huygens (Philippine), 11 July 1639 (Huygens, *OC* 1, 542–543, no. 1c; [huyg003/0001c](#)): ‘Prosodiae nuper supremum vale diximus, quod expeditis satis in recitandis regulis, ac usu caetera jugique exercitatione comparanda, cum omni, nî fallor, republica litteraria, existumarem’.
- 70 Ismaël Boulliau (Paris) to Leopoldo de Medici (Firenze), 19 December 1659 (Huygens, *OC* 2, no. 697; *ePistolarium*; [huyg003/0697](#)):

Quoniam iniecta mihi est a Serenissima Celsitudine Tua mentio de nuper defuncto in Poloniae Regis Aula Paulo de Bono, luctum de illo amisso comprimere meum hic nequeo. Ingenio enim in mathematicis, ac praecipue in mechanicis valebat, moribusque probis ac honestis praeditus erat; sique diutius in vivis egisset, plura proculdubio praestiturus. De Republica litteraria, ac philosophica, quam animo conceperat, quamque statuere cogitabat, aliquid intellexi. Excelsae quidem mentis, & ad magna viri nati propositum erat; sed hisce temporibus sedes inter Europaeos quaerere non debebat, cum omnibus in regnis & rebuspublicis orbis nostri nulla societas iniri queat, quae suspecta dominantibus non sit.

- 71 Stanislaus Lubienietzki (Hamburg) to Christiaan Huygens (The Hague), 30 October 1665 (Lubienietzki, *Theatri Cometicis pars prior*, 931; Huygens, *OC* 5, no. 1490; [huyg003/1490](#)):

Postquam multos Praestantissimos omni eruditione et laudis genere Viros, Rautensteinium, Brussellum, Guerichios, Hevelium, Bullialdum, Bartholinus, Kircherum, Ricciolum, Curtium, Schottum, aliosque, quos enumerare longum foret, sed & Tuum juxtaque meum Heinsium, scripto conveni, Te quoque convento opus fuit. Non sunt mihi, puto, hujus facinoris operose apud Te quaerenda praesidia, qui quibus legibus in Republica literaria vivatur, optime, si quisquam alius, nosti. Senatum voco Philosophicum, nullo meo merito, a sola Regina bonarum mentium Libertate Reipublicae literariae Studiosissima, Consul creatus.

- 72 I thank Manuel Llano Martínez for his reflections on the notion of a ‘theatre’.
- 73 Decembrio, *De politia litteraria*; Erasmus, [Antibarbarorum liber](#).
Donatus’s *Pro impetrando ad rempublicam litterariam aditu* gave grammatical lessons, not reflections on conduct or the scholarly community’s history.
- 74 Damian Çavall, *Oratio parenetica de optimo statu reipublicae constituendo*, translated by Helena Rausell Guillot as *Discurso exhortativo sobre la consecución del mejor estado de la República Literaria*. Note that the original title speaks of ‘Respublica’ only. See also Rausell Guillot, ‘Oratoria y clasicismo’.
- 75 Schellhammer, *Threni cum Epitaphio super Obitum ... Pauli Sperlingii ... de ... universa Republica literaria meritissimi*.
- 76 Zschoche, *Memoriae semper-vivae viri incomparabilis deque Republica Literaria immortaliter meriti ... Iacobi Thomasi; Hoffman, Honori et memoriae ... viri, de Ecclesia Christi et Republica Literaria universa immortaliter meriti ... Valentini Alberti*.
- 77 Heideggerus, *De ratione studiorum opuscula aurea virorum de Ecclesia Christiana & Republica literaria meritissimorum, Henrici Bullingeri, Desid. Erasmi, Lud. Vivis, Jac. Breitingeri, Fr. Junii*.
- 78 Hannemannus, *Quatuor epistolarum fasciculus ad quatuor perillustres, excellentissimos et amplissimos in Republica Literaria primates*.
- 79 Hannemannus, *Sciagraphia*, sig. A2v: ‘Vivimus enim iam tali seculo, quo Respublica Literaria maximum incrementum capit. Coeunt enim iam laudibili instituto ad agenda rem literariam integrae gentes, et Collegia Societatesque erigunt, quae naturam hominemque summo scrutantur studio’.
- 80 See the delightful monograph by Kivistö, *The Vices of Learning*.
- 81 Romanus, *Dissertatio academica de republica litteraria*.

- 82 Muratori, *Primi disegni della repubblica letteraria d'Italia*, 178–179. For the broader context of Muratori's project to create an Italian republic of letters, see Generali, 'Repubblica delle lettere fra censura e libero pensiero'.
- 83 Heumannus, *Conspectus reipublicae literariae*, Hannover: N. Foerster, 1718; 2nd. ed. *ibid.*, N. Foerster et fil., 1726; 3rd ed. *ibid.*, J.J. Foerster, 1733; 4th ed. *ibid.*, Heredes N. Foerster et filii, 1735; 5th ed., item, 1740; and again 1746; 6th ed., item, 1753; 7th ed., item, 1763; 8th ed. by J.N. Eyring, Hanover, Fratres Helweghi, 1791. Note that the fifth edition appeared twice, in 1740 and 1746. I have used the third edition of 1733.
- 84 Siraisi and Pomata, *Historia: Empiricism and Erudition in Early Modern Europe*; Van Miert, *Communicating Observations*.
- 85 Schneiderus, *Oratio solemnis de forma reipublicae litterariae. Von der besten Art zu regieren in der Republic der Gelehrten*.

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