P.J.A.N. RIETBERGEN

THE LIBRARY OF A DUTCH COUNTRY SQUIRE,
THOMAS WALRAYEN VAN ARKEL
(1615-1694)
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF DUTCH ARISTOCRATIC CULTURE
IN THE 17TH CENTURY.

In the first week of November, 1694, the burghers of Bois-le-Duc, the quiet capital of the Dutch province of Brabant, heard their towncrier, on his daily round through the narrow, winding streets, announce the auction of what, surely, even then was termed, in age-old advertising jargon, 'an important gentleman's library', belonging to the late baron Thomas Walraven van Arkel, lord of Ammerzoden (1)*. Our knowledge of 17th century Dutch private libraries being scanty, a short study of the auction's catalogue might shed some light on the reading and culture of a minor nobleman of the 17th century (2).

Thomas Walraven van Arkel, lord of Ammerzoden, Well, Wordragen, Ter Lucht and Ypelaar (1615-1694) (3), was the last of an ancient line of Dutch noblemen, who traced their ancestry back to mythological times, when the Trojans trod the earth (4). In the Middle Ages, when Arkels were bishops of Liege and Utrecht, and their lordship extended far around the important city of Gorcum on the lower reaches of the Rhine and the Meuse, the family had been a considerable power in the politics of the Netherlands, warring with the counts of Holland and Zeeland and the dukes of Brabant. When the House of Burgundy embarked upon its policy of conquest and annexation, incorporating an ever-increasing number of towns, lordships, counties and duchies in their recreation of the Carolingian Middle Empire, the Arkels lost their power and prominence. When, in the 16th century, the Burgundian territories devolved upon Spain, and the Dutch parts subsequently became independent in the struggle against Philip II, the main line of the Arkels had become extinct, and the junior branch had fallen back to the position of just one of so many noble families, ruling the estates which they had been able to retain or acquire through judicious marriages, only distinguished from their peers by their claim to a largely fictive mythological descent. In the 15th century the junior branch of

* Notes see p. 282
the family through marriages had acquired the castle and lordship of Ammerzoden and its dependent villages (5) in the watery region of the estuary of the Rhine, the Linge, the Lek and the Merwede. What with their resources being limited to the revenue of their landed property, and their pretence to aristocratic living greatly exceeding the possibilities of their income, their part of the family, too, fell upon bad times in the 16th century, conforming to a picture fairly common of the age (6). However, when disaster overtook the family in 1590, as fire completely burned the castle and its contents, taking the life of its master, George van Arkel, and many of its inhabitants, the Arkels seemed to take a new lease on life. George's widow, Anna van Lokhorst, decided to sell her part of the paternal inheritance, and embarked upon a vigourous policy of financial reconstruction of the heavily encumbered Arkel estates (7). When she died in 1592, the guardians of the three Arkel children -three, as shows their portrait by Cuyp, not two as has been suggested (8) – continued what she had started and succeeded in establishing the heir, the young boy Otto (1586-1650), upon a sound financial footing, when he came of age and took the reins of the management of his estates. Though his own stewardship certainly cannot be termed distinguished, or even prudent – what with wasting a considerable amount of his patrimony on his mistress and bastard – he had not yet entirely ruined the estate when he turned it over to his son Thomas Walraven, who had consented to a marriage arranged for him by his father on the condition that Otto cede to him the lordship and manor of Ammerzoden (9).

This was in 1640. While Otto lived in retirement till 1650, his son and his daughter-in-law, Johanna Barbara de Ia Kethulle (1622-1690), restored and ruled Ammerzoden.

While Otto had been absent from the castle over long periods of time, preferring to serve in the Dutch army under stadholder Frederick Henry of Orange, instead of being hurried in the Ammerzoden backwater, his son Thomas was, apparently, of a more peaceful disposition, and almost never left the estate except to visit the neighbouring towns like Bois-le-Duc. Maybe he was vividly aware of the dangers which absenteeism held for the family finances. However this may be, he quickly ousted his bastard brother Gideon from his post as the manor's judge and steward, as well as sacking some of Gideon’s cronies, officials attached to the castle and the village, and personally took charge of the administration of his estates. His rule proved beneficient, for notwithstanding a period of almost unintermittent warfare raging over the region up till the 1670’ies, and the devastating floods which frequently endangered his riverbound lands, by judicious management he succeeded in improving his rentroll and redeeming his father’s many debts, assuring a comfortable, though certainly not wealthy existence (10) for himself and his wife; their marriage, though prearranged and though remaining childless, was a happy one, to judge by the more than normally tender words with which man and wife designate each other in their testaments.
It is to the library of this prudent country squire that I would now like to turn. What recently has been said about the many problems involved in studying a medieval library (11), holds equally true for the early modern period. Correlating a library's contents with the intellectual activity of its creator, owners or users is not an easy task. Is it admissible to use the library as an indicator of intellectual activity or as the reflection of a cultural climate? Especially on the level of an individual's library, however, a study may yield some profit, which, of course, increases with the availability of biographical data about the owner.

A study of the Ammerzoden library offers one advantage usually denied to those looking at collections amassed in ancient castles and country-houses. Whereas most of these tend to reflect the combined interests and idiosyncrasies of succeeding generations, creating serious problems of interpretation, the library at Ammerzoden virtually must have been the creation of a single man. For assuming that whatever books that had been present in the castle in the 16th century did not escape the fire of 1590, as is indicated by a contemporary description of the event, and assuming likewise that the constantly travelling, warlike Otto probably did not collect a sizeable library, excepting, perhaps, a small number of works of a military and chivalrous nature extant in the collection, we may consider the books auctioned in 1694 to be mostly acquired by Thomas Walraven.

This assumption is confounded by the fact that those books in the catalogue which are dated – admittedly only a small part of the library's total contents – are, mostly, 17th-century editions; while only six books predate the year 1600, three are from the period 1600-1609, six from the period 1610-1619, twelve from 1620-1629, six from 1630-1639, nine from 1640-1649, eight from 1650-1659, eleven from 1660-1669, three from 1670-1679, and eight from 1680-1689. This clearly indicates that the library is not the resultant of the acquisition and tastes of succeeding generations, but of the selection of its last owner. It is, therefore, unfortunate that we know so little about him, except for what we may deduce from the books he left. Of his education we know next to nothing. His father had been reasonably well-educated, attending the Latin school at Amersfoort, as is shown by the accounts kept by his guardians during his minority (12). No comparable documents survive for his son, and though we know that, as well as in England and the German territories, in the Dutch Republic, too, an ever increasing number of young nobles flocked to the universities in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries (13), it has not been possible to ascertain whether Thomas Walraven ever attended a university; if he did so at all, it must have been a foreign institution, for owing to his being a Roman Catholic, the young man could not go to either of the three Dutch universities existing in the first half of the 17th century, the ones at Leiden, Franeker or Groningen. He may, however, have gone to Leuven or Douai, in the Spanish Netherlands, where his family had connections – his mother was from Liege –
or to any of the German or French universities. The considerable amount of French books in the library would point to the latter possibility, for in the first decades of the 17th century French had not yet become such an integral part of Dutch upperclass education and culture as to automatically belong to every young nobleman's intellectual 'bagage'. That Thomas Walraven was a very well-educated man is, however, an incontestable fact, a complete lack of data notwithstanding. Of that his library bears ample witness: about forty per cent of the ca. 700 titles are in Latin, or Greek, while another forty per cent are in French, the remainder being mainly in Dutch.

Before considering some of the interesting details of Thomas's library, let us first look at the global division which can be made between the various fields of science and learning. To enable us to do this I have completely reordered the catalogue's division. Normally auction catalogues are reasonably well-ordered, offering an instant view of a library's contents. The bookseller VanderHoeven, however, clearly did not wish to spend much money on a proper catalogue - his account shows that he paid the cataloguer three guilders (15) - and as a result he offered the prospective buyers an unintelligible jumble of titles. The catalogue is grandly presented as 'Catalogus Variorum et Insignium in omnia Ungua Librorum, praecipue Historicorum, Juridicorum, Medicorum, et Antiquarium, Quorum Auctio habebitur Sylvae-Ducis, in Aedibus Henrici vander Hoeven, Bibliopolae, Ad diem 10. November 1694'. Sales conditions are given as well. Books will be sold for cash only. After the auction, buyers will have to put them back in their appropriate place in the stacks. The books have to be collected and paid for within six weeks. Uncollected lots will be put up for sale again; any financial losses will be at the first buyer's risk, while a profit will, of course, benefit the auctioneer.

The catalogue's title, though not, properly speaking, inaccurate, is certainly incomplete. As table I shows, the library's main strength lay in history, medicine, law, modern languages and literature, classical languages and literature, theology, manners and chivalry, philosophy and geography, in that order. The catalogueing itself had been a sloppy job, as I have already indicated. Contrary to what a prospective buyer might expect from the title, the catalogue only had three sections: juridical tomes - in folio, quarto, octavo and duodecimo -, historical works, likewise divided, and medical books. Among the juridical books the auction visitor might find such ill-assorted items as Plutarchus' works, Erasmus' Adages, a philosophical tract, the œuvre of Descartes, as well as some bibles, dictionaries and sermons. The historical section quite astonishingly opens with Ovid's Metamorphoses, and then goes on to enumerate some books of travels in India and China, two treatises on gardening and a number of plays. The medical books were indiscriminately intermingled with dictionaries, treatises on military architecture, and extensive series of editions of the classics. One thing seems clear: Thomas Walraven's library at the castle had not been catalogued before, or the auctioneer would have used the existing
catalogue as the basis for his auction – it could hardly have been less informative than the one he offered his prospective clientele. If we conclude that a previous catalogue did not exist, we may also give a negative answer to the question whether or not Thomas Walraven employed a librarian. Moreover, we should consider that a library of this size – it cannot have covered the walls of more than one room, though that a fairly sizeable one, of which there were, of course, many in the castle – did not really warrant professional attention.

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The auction catalogue shows all the characteristics of the 17th-century species. Whereas Latin titles are printed in Roman, titles in the vernacular - French or German - are in italics, while the Dutch ones are in the Gothic type. As often happened, only the editions in folio or quarto were presented bibliographically complete with place and year of publication. Of the octavo and duodecimo editions, only the short titles are given (16). Perhaps this reflects the rather more ephemeral character ascribed to editions of this size. The book trade of the 17th century was still characterized by the division between ponderous, learned tomes in folio - the great editions of sacred texts, of the Fathers, etc. - and small size literary and polemical works, where quarto and octavo were preferred for their greater readability or even portability (17).

The catalogue makes no mention of any special bindings. Wealthy collectors, of course, used to have their books rebound - or had them bound to order immediately after printing - in vellum or moroccan, sometimes heavily embossed in gold and adorned with their coat-of-arms. This, however, was a costly caprice, and it is unlikely that Thomas Walraven's finances would have enabled him to indulge in this kind of collector's pleasure. One may, perhaps, conclude that Thomas Walraven was not a bibliophile, but rather more interested in the books' contents. The absence of incunables or early editions, and the fact that most dated books stem from the second half of the 17th century, seem to confirm this conclusion.

A study of the auction catalogue, as the assumed reflection of Thomas Walraven's library, is quite revealing, confirming a number of characteristics of his person which the few historian of the family have tried to sketch, and casting new light upon the reading of a minor nobleman of the 17th century, living in comparative isolation in the rural provinces of the Dutch Republic.

Thomas clearly emerges as a judicious and prudent manager of his estates: a great number of his juridical books deal with the more practical aspects of the law; though all the fundamental texts are well represented, usually in a commentariated edition - Justinian's *Institutions*, the *Pandects*, the *Corpus Juris* - most titles cover such eminently practical topics as feudal and hereditary law, while a number of books treat the problems involved in dealing with tenants, or the intricacies of contractual law.

Of a tendency to assimilate with the ruling class of the Dutch Republic - protestant and mercantile - the family shows no trace: the Arkels either took their brides from the remaining Catholic nobles, like the Van Lokhorst - reduced, as they themselves were, to a position without power though still fairly prosperous through the ownership of land - or they foraged into the neighbouring Catholic Spanish Netherlands, marrying, as Thomas' father did, a wealthy banker's daughter, or a noble lady, like Thomas' wife Barbara de la Kethule. But though the Arkels uncompromisingly adhered to the old faith - continually harbouring a priest at their priest-holed castle, to serve the Catholic community of their villages even though public worship
was forbidden by the authorities of the Republic - they were anything but a narrow-minded, bigoted family, which is clearly shown by Thomas Walraven's library.

In the field of theology a number of bibles provided the library with a solid base, upon which judgement and appraisal could be built with commentaries and sermons and with such works as Saint Augustine's 'City of God', Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Excercices* and cardinal Baronius' *Annales Ecclesiastici*, representing the Roman Catholic point of view; there was, however, no lack of protestant commentaries like Burman's, or of tracts about the protestant church order in the Republic and England - the *Acts of the Synod of Dordt*, of 1618, establishing the Dutch Reformed Church, were included, as was the *Book of Common Prayer* - and treatises like Grotius' *De Veritate religionis*. This collection clearly indicates the owner's eclectic interests and broad-minded views.

In the 17th century reading Erasmus was not, of course, a sign of liberal views any more; nevertheless, Thomas Walraven liked such works of the master as his *Adagia*, his *Colloquia* and his *Praise of Folly* enough to own several copies of each of them. Reading Descartes, however, most certainly was an indication of an inquisitive and broad mind and it is surprising to find the library very well-stocked indeed with a great number of the French philosopher's works, as well as with several sets of his *ceuvres completes*. Thomas Walraven must have been something of a 'fan' of Descartes', voraciously reading his works, as well as studying other philosopher-scientists like Gassendi and Boyle, or indulging in such pleasant and speculative studies as Pascal's *Pensees* or Montaigne's *Essays*, representing moral and cultural philosophy. This indicates that the 17th century as a 'century of revolution' which witnessed major upheavals in the fields of philosophy and science, and in the neighbouring field of theology, did not pass unnoticed in the quiet castle of rural Ammerzoden.

Continuing our exploration of Thomas Walraven's interest in those fields of learning which particularly characterised and shaped the 17th century, philosophy should be followed by science, if such a division is viable at all. However, of the topics of the day, especially in the field of astronomy, nothing is represented in the library apart from Descartes: no works by Copernicus, Kepler or Huygens can be found. Notwithstanding the presence of basic texts like Euclid's *Elements*, Ramus' *Arithmetics* and Descartes' *Geometry* - to name but a few of the works which, of varying importance and from various angles, illustrate the new science -, the numerically most important scientific part of the library presents us with both a surprise and an insoluble problem.

The number of medical and biological studies included in the auction catalogue is absolutely staggering: they make up almost thirteen per cent of the Ammerzoden library. For a non-medical man to have a near profes-
sional interest in the field is very rare indeed; one would almost be inclined to conclude that Thomas Walraven must have trained as a doctor, to account for such a considerable medical collection, which included all standard works on general medicine, surgery and pharmacology, from Hippocrates' *Opera Omnia*, Avicenna's works, the learned studies by Van Helmont and Van Diemerbroeck's famous work on the bubonic plague, *De Peste*, to Boyle's *Physiologica*. But Paracelsus was included, too.

However, for a nobleman to study medicine was most unusual; though the medical profession was held in high esteem during the 17th century, it still was a profession and as such did not offer an acceptable career for a Dutch baron. For a moment one is tempted to explain this strange phenomenon by assuming that Van der Hoeven had added a separate medical collection – some deceased doctor's library – to the auction of the Ammerzoden library to ensure its sale; as his account to the trustees of the Ammerzoden estates does not specify the amount of books sold on their behalf (18), which deprives us of the possibility to reach a firm conclusion about the question whether or not the Ammerzoden books really covered the entire catalogue, we are left with an intriguing but insoluble problem.

The most extensive category of the Ammerzoden library was its historical section, which included both ancient and contemporary history. Indeed, the history of his own times must have held a great fascination for Thomas Walraven, for most books in this category deal with people and events of the 16th and 17th century. Apart from such general works as Morel's multi-volume *Dictionnaire Historique* (1681), there was a goodly number of books published in the first half of the 17th century about the early history of the Dutch Republic – its struggle for independence, as recorded in best-sellers like Famiano Strada's *Bello Belgico* and Giucciardini's *Histoire des Guerres des Pays-Bas*; then, of course, the history of the 17th century could be studied in the library: the Peace of Munster of 1648, when Spain acknowledged the Republic's existence, as described in Lieuwe van Aitzema's *Historia Pacis* and his *Herstelde Leeuw*, or the history of the virtual ruler of the Dutch Republic, the stadholder, prince Frederik Henry of Orange, in whose army Thomas' father had served, and whose life had been written by Commelin. To these should be added numerous works dealing with important military events, such as the siege of Bergen-op-Zoom by the Spanish general Spinola in 1622, which had been courageously and successfully withstood by Thomas' father-in-law, the baron Louis de la Kethule de Ryhoven. The library also held – as was to be expected – a number of regional histories or chronicles, dealing with the ancient counties and duchies which made up the Netherlands: Guelderland, Holland, Brabant, Flanders, etc. If one descends to the level of historical studies dealing with a single family, we find, last, but for Thomas certainly not least, two works extolling the ancient line of the Arkels, though one of them, Abraham Kemp's *'t Leven der Heeren van Arckel*, was not uncritical of the family's pretence at
a Trojan descent. Thomas' interests were not, however, limited to the history of the Netherlands only. In his library one might come across such works as Machiavelli's *Historiae Florentinae*, Giucciardini's *Histoires des Guerres d'Italie*, or *his La Istoria d'Italia* – which, together with the presence of an Italian-French dictionary, may lead us to suppose that Thomas Walraven tried *his* hand at reading Italian. Then, of course, there were histories of the Thirty Year's War which, after all, had seriously affected the lot of the Dutch as well. Undeniably, however, most of Thomas' historical works in the contemporary field deal with France. This, I think, may be explained from the fact that, during the first period of Thomas' life, the French had been what the Dutch hoped they would always remain: *Gallia arnica sed non vicina*, a strongly-felt influence, but of the benevolent kind; however, from the 1650's onwards, the reality of French aggression made itself felt, culminating in the war of 1672, when Louis' armies invaded the Republic. The Ammerzoden region constantly had been front territory; the Catholic Arkels, like all their co-religionists distrusted by the protestant Dutch authorities, nevertheless paid heavily to the French, to keep the village, its inhabitants, and the castle spared from excessive plundering or complete destruction. Till the Peace of Nijmegen ended the war in 1678 they were severely bled. French policy must have severely disappointed the Roman Catholic Dutchmen who had expected their co-religionists to re-establish the pre-Reformation order, though the extent of actual collaboration cannot really be measured. Nevertheless, the religious link was undeniable, and strongly-felt. There was a cultural link as well, with the French aristocracy providing a way of life which the Dutch nobility would like to emulate as much as others of their class all over Europe. Moreover, there were family ties with one of the great noble houses of France and of the Southern, French-speaking counties - Barbara's sister had married a Montmorency; and between all these contradictory feelings there must have been sheer fascination with France's greatness. All *this* may explain the preponderance of historical works about France and Frenchmen.

In the field of languages and literature, Thomas' library was a reflection of all the conventional gentleman's tastes. The classics are well represented with complete series of all the important poets, playwrights and prosaists. Contemporary literature there was as well. Apart from a great number of plays, such as Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, and prose writings, like Rabelais' *Lettres*, and *his Ckuvres*, there were works of a more theoretical nature as well, on such matters as the *Ars Poetica*. Conspicuously lacking, however, are the works of the major Dutch poets and prose writers of the period, Vondel, Hooft and Huygens. One is tempted to speculate whether this, too, reflects the growing international, cosmopolitical orientation of the Dutch nobility -which, of course, was mainly a penchant for all things French, and easily led to a disdainful attitude towards Dutch culture.

As bordering on, and often merging with the field of contemporary literature,
the quite considerable item of 'Manners and Chivalry' should be mentioned, for I have designed this category to harbour a great number of works from the library which, to my opinion, reflect the origin and aspirations of Dutch aristocratic culture in the latter half of the 17th century. To begin with there are a number of plays and novels, the greater part characteristically presented without the author's name, which indicates their ephemeral character; some of them are identifiable as the works of authors like Honore d'Urfe, whose Astree was the perfect example of the sentimental novel, called the 'breviary of ladies and court galants' (19). Also found were Mme. de La Fayette's Princesse de Cleves, and Mme. de Scudery's Czelie. The works of lesser authors abounded, like Brantome's Dames Galantes, the Reveil Matin des Dames and the Secretaire à la Mode, identifiable as works of the playwright and novelist Jean Pugel de La Serre, as well as Pierre de Larivey's Les Coemodies facetieuses. Then there were numerous novelettes, whose titles certainly do not indicate 'serious reading', such as Le Jaloux par Force, L'advocat des Femmes, Le Facetieux Reveilmatin, Roger bon temps et belle Humeur, l'Alphabet de la malice des Femmes. Together with an undisclosed but evidently numerous number of instalments of such periodicals as Donneau de Vise's Mercure Galant, to which the Ammerzoden family apparently subscribed, one must conclude that Thomas Walraven and, perhaps, his wife, showed a marked predilection for the 'novel of manners', the 'livre galant', works with ad adventurous, classical or historical background, but nearly always of a courtly and amorous nature (20), in a way representing the French counterpart to the English restoration comedies. To these titles should be added a number of works which reflect the Ammerzoden baron's concern with the practical aspects of a gentleman's education and courtly living, a Traite de la Cour as well as Pluvinel's Instruction de l'exercice de manter a cheval or Wicquefort's Ambassadeur, and also such works as L'Art de bien dire and Les Fleurs de bien dire. Combined with, on the one hand, a number of works on medieval chivalry and the glorious exploits of the knightly orders - the Arkels had been famous crusaders once - and, on the other hand, the several editions of Montaigne's culturally and morally influential Essays, a picture comes to mind of a Dutch nobleman immersing himself in the French court culture of the middle decades of the 17th century. At that time the Christian Knight of the Middle Ages and the Courtier of the Renaissance tried to find a new balance, a symbiosis, between chivalry, courtly refinement of speech and manners and the ethical, neo-Platonist interpretation of the Christian virtues as extolled by Erasmus; this resulted in the quest for a way of life which may be summed up as the cult of honnetete (21). It is doubtful whether this cult is as originally French as has been stated, for example by Elias (22). One might, I think, maintain that French aristocratic culture of the early 17th-century is largely a derivative of the earlier, 16th-century Italian figuration. Nevertheless, its European radiation was, in the age of the Sun King, felt to be specifically French. It is fascinating to see at least one Dutch nobleman
proving, through his library, that the cultural influence of France on the Dutch Republic went, at least partly, along these paths, shaping the minds and aspirations of the nobility through the force of example and emulation induced by books. Thomas' idiosyncrasy might, of course, be proven if one accepts that the medical books were, indeed, the other, scientific part of his library, which would mark him not only as an *honnete homme* in the French sense, but also as something of a striver after the ideals of the *christian virtuoso* as propounded by Bacon and Boyle.

A fascination with all things strange and exotic was, of course, a specific characteristic of the 17th century. Books about travels to faraway countries, describing journeys amongst deliciously savage, but sometimes surprisingly cultured people, were sure to be bestsellers. Thomas Walraven was no exception to the rule that an educated gentleman should show an interest in the culture of the non-European world. That he should mainly concentrate on the exploits of the Dutch in the field of discovery and exploration should not surprise us: after all, the Dutch East and West India Companies were among the major agents in this field. Thus Thomas owned descriptions of the first travels of the Dutch to the East Indies, of their first circumnavigation of the world, as well as copies of recent 'blockbusters' like Johan Nieuhof's report on the Dutch embassy to the imperial court at Peking, which, with its extensive historical introduction and its exposition of the Chinese system of government and bureaucracy, of Confucianism, and of the Chinese exploits in the field of astronomy, had been an instant success when it appeared in 1665; characteristically Thomas owned a French copy. He also bought the 1667 French edition of Athanasius Kircher's learned work on China, based on the Jesuits' reports; these propagandistic works of the Society of Jesus had, of course, done much to establish the myth of China in Europe, contributing, as did Nieuhof and Kircher themselves, to the first significant wave of *chinoiserie*.

After this expose of the library's main holdings and the knowledge they impart of the reading and culture of Thomas Walraven van Ammerzoden, it has to be admitted that there are, alas, a number of questions which must remain unanswered.

Because Thomas Walraven was not a public figure - being a Roman Catholic meant being excluded from public office - and did not find much occasion to travel, not even within the Republic, he probably did not purchase his books in such major centres of the trade as Amsterdam or Leiden. As no accounts survive to illustrate such minute details of the castle's household as expenses for books, we do not know how, when or where Van Arkel did acquire his books. Most likely, however, he ordered them through librarians in Bois-le-Duc or Utrecht, the two major neighbouring towns, which boasted a fair number of printers and booksellers. Did Thomas personally visit the bookshops in these towns, to browse in the librarians' stacks, or did he order his books, comfortably seated in his library? He might, of course, have done just that. The 17th century
saw the genesis of the learned periodical, with its reviews of new books, and its announcements of forthcoming publications often inserted by their printer-publishers in these very journals. Though that influential periodical, Pieter Rabus' Boekzaal van Europe, the first learned journal in Dutch, was only published from 1692 onwards, catering largely to a public interested in the triumphs of recent scholarship and popular science, but not necessarily blessed with a knowledge of Greek and Latin (23), Thomas Walraven's apparently sound classical education must have enabled him to consult other journals. He could have read such eminently informative periodicals as the French Journal des Savans, or the German Acta Eruditorum, or perhaps even the Transactions of the London Royal Society, all of which started appearing in the mid-century decades, addressing themselves to the learned and the scholar, but not, of course, inaccessible to a well-educated nobleman. Though not very likely, a series of periodicals like these may just possibly have been included in one of the three 'various lots of new tracts, novels', etc. from the Ammerzoden library, which were mentioned in the auction catalogue as well.

The last question concerns the why of the auction of the library's contents after the death of Thomas Walraven. On his demise, the Arkel barony became extinct. The inheritance was claimed by a distant cousin, baron Johan Ferdinand van Lichtevelt, whose grandmother had been a sister of Thomas' father. The new lord of Ammerzoden did not chose to live in the castle, which, by late 17th century standards, probably was considered an old-fashioned residence. Perhaps he did not share the late baron's literary and scientific tastes either, or he might have transferred the Ammerzoden library to his own seat. However this may be, the fact that the library was auctioned has provided us with a valuable source of research; for surely an auction catalogue or a library inventory equals the value of probate registers - which document the material life - in offering an important insight into the cultural context of a Dutch nobleman's life in the second half of the 17th century.

NOTES

1) State Archives of Gelderland at Arnhem, Collection 'Huisarchief Ammerzoden', vol. 188B, folder 15, auction catalogue 1694. Inserted is the final account of the auctioneer, who mentions expenses for the town crier: forty cents.


3) B.H. Slicher van Bath, "Thomas Walraven van Arkel, Heer van Ammerzoden, Well, Wordragen, Ter Lucht en Ypelaar, de laatste van zijn geslacht", in: Bijdragen en Mededelingen van Gelre, 44 (1941), pp. 77-86.

5) J. Box, Chronicles of the Castle of Ammelroy, or Ammerzode; with some notices of its ancient Barons, London 1870, Genealogical appendix: Otto van Arkel married Waardenburg and Ammerzoden. Box's early genealogy, which does not concern us here, is faulty. J. van Lennenp, W.J. Hofdijck, Merkwaardige kastelen in Nederland, Leiden 1853, vol. IV, pp. 188-197.


8) Box, o.c., appendix, gives two children only. However, the Cuyp portrait, of which a plate is included in his book on p. 44, shows one boy (Otto) and two girls: Catherine and Anne.

9) State Archives of Gelderland at Arnhem, Collection 'Huisarchief Ammerzoden', nr. 64.

10) Braam, De Heerlijkheid, o.c., pp. 39 sqq.; Slicher van Bath's claim of the family's wealth seems unfounded.


12) State Archives of Gelderland at Arnhem, Collection 'Huisarchief Ammerzoden', nr. 185.


14) As is shown in table 1, the auction sale catalogue numbered 702 lots, and three unspecified ones. As a considerable number of titles were, of course, multi-volume editions, running to as many as 8 or 10 volumes per title, we may estimate the total amount of books at ca. 1000.


18) The titles sold numbered 683; they fetched a total sum of Dutch florins 434,17.


23) P.J.A.N. Rietbergen, "Pieter Rabus en de 'Boekzaal van Europe, 1692-1702' ", in: J.A.H. Bots (ed.), Pieter Rabus en "De Boekzaal van Europe", 1692-1702, Amsterdam 1974, pp. 1-114. Cf. also J.J.V.M. de Vet, Pieter Rabus: een wegbereider van de Noord-nederlandse Verlichting, Amsterdam 1980. Though there was an item labeled "Tien packetjens met Alderhande Nieuwe Tractaetjens: du Mercure Galant, Heroine Mousquetaire, en anderen van die Nature", while another lot was labeled "Seven packetjens van diergelycke en Alderhanden Nieuwe Tydinghen in quarto", and a last one marked "Item noch Verscheyden Packetten met Alderhanden Nieuwe Novellen", it is not probable that one of these included a set of some learned journal, because scholarly periodicals were, at least normally, specifically mentioned. Van der Hoeven's sloppy catalogue may, however, have broken with this rule.