Research Assessment 2012

Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies

Radboud University Nijmegen
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Acknowledgements

We would like to express our gratitude for the way we were received at Radboud University Nijmegen. We appreciate the open and constructive discussions with the management team and the members of the HLCS and with the Faculty Board, who informed us extensively and without any hesitations or reluctance. We hope the institute can profit from this assessment.

Prof. dr. J.L. Goedegebuure, chair of the Evaluation Committee
1 Introduction

1.1 The Netherlands System of Quality Assessment of Research

In October 2012, a Committee of peers evaluated the quality of research at the Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands. In this report, the Committee presents its findings. This evaluation of the Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies was commissioned by the Executive Board of Radboud University Nijmegen.

This quality assessment of research is part of the assessment system for all publicly funded Dutch research, as organised by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

The aims of the assessment system are:

- Improvement of research quality, including scientific and societal relevance of research, research policy and research management
- Accountability to the board of the research organisation, and to funding agencies, government and society at large

The assessment takes place at the level of research institutes and their research programmes.

According to the system, each institute is visited once every six years by an external Evaluation Committee. Before the visit, the research institute to be reviewed submits a self-evaluation report. During the site visit, the Evaluation Committee conducts interviews with the institute’s director and management team and with the programme leaders, and takes a view of the facilities.

1.2 The Evaluation Committee

The Evaluation Committee was appointed in October 2011 and consisted of:

- Prof. Dr J.L. Goedegebuure (chair), Leiden University, the Netherlands
- Prof. Dr P. Funke, University of Münster, Germany
- Dr P. Seaward, History of Parliament Trust, London, UK
- Prof. Dr J. Tollebeek, University of Leuven, Belgium

Mrs W. van Strien (science journalist, Leiden, the Netherlands) was appointed secretary to the Evaluation Committee.

A short curriculum vitae of Committee members is included in Appendix 2.
Independence
All members of the Committee signed a statement of independence to ensure that:

- they would judge without bias, personal preference or personal interest, and
- their judgment is made without undue influence from the institute, the programme or other stakeholders

1.3 Scope of the Assessment
This assessment covers the research of the Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies over the years 2006-2011. Recent developments have been taken into account as much as possible. The institute had been evaluated before, in 2006.

The Committee was asked to operate according to the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2009-2015 for Public Research Universities. This protocol specifies the criteria for the information that must be provided to the Committee and the assessment to be performed.

1.4 Data provided to the Committee
The Evaluation Committee received a detailed self-evaluation report of the institute, containing a short outline of its mission and goals and of the objective of each individual programme, a description of the results that have been achieved during the previous six years (including quantitative data about staff input, PhDs, publications, financial resources), and developments anticipated for the future. In the appendix, an overview is given of PhD training and supervision, as well as a full list of publications. The self-evaluation included all the information required by the protocol. During the visit, some books written by HLCS researchers were available for inspection.

The Executive Board of Radboud University Nijmegen formulated terms of reference for the Evaluation Committee, specifying what the Committee was expected to do. The board asked the Committee to not only assess the research quality over the past six years, but also to provide a prospective analysis.

1.5 Procedures followed by the Committee
All Committee members read the self-evaluation report. Committee members also read the previous evaluation report (2006), which was available on the internet. Before the site visit, the Committee chair assigned each of the four research programmes to one of the Committee members, according to their expertise. He asked each Committee member to give a preliminary assessment of the institute as a whole and of the programme that was assigned to him.

A programme of the visit is given in appendix 3.
On the first evening, after a welcome meeting, the Committee discussed the preliminary assessments and formulated questions to be asked and items to be discussed during the visit.

Next day, the Committee was welcomed by the Rector Magnificus of Radboud University Nijmegen and met representatives of the Faculty of Arts. Then four successive interviews took place with the four programme coordinators, each of whom was accompanied by one staff member. In these interviews, the Committee member to whom the programme was assigned took the lead. Thereafter, the Committee met with delegations of PhD students, postdocs, associate and assistant professors.

The Committee visited the Centre for Parliamentary History. A tour around the campus was offered and the library was visited.

During lunch and coffee breaks, the Committee discussed their findings.

On the second day of the visit, the Committee prepared a first draft of the evaluation report. At the end of this day, a meeting was arranged with the representatives of the University and Faculty Board, the HLCS management team and staff members, in which the chair reported the main findings of the Committee.

A draft version of this report was sent to the HLCS and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts in November 2012, for factual corrections and comments. After some minor corrections and clarifications, the Committee submitted the report to the Executive Board of the Radboud University in the first week of January 2013.

### 1.6 Aspects and Assessment Scale

The *Standard Evaluation Protocol* requires the Evaluation Committee to assess the research on four main criteria:

- Quality (the level of the research conducted)
- Productivity (relationship between input and output)
- Societal relevance (social, economic and cultural relevance of the research)
- Vitality and feasibility (flexibility, management and leadership)

The ratings used are: Excellent (5); Very good (4); Good (3); Satisfactory (2); Unsatisfactory (1). This five-point scale used in the assessment is described in the *Standard Evaluation Protocol* as follows:
Excellent (5)  Research is world leading. Researchers are working at the forefront of their field internationally and their research has an important and substantial impact in the field.

Very Good (4)  Research is internationally competitive and makes a significant contribution to the field. Research is considered nationally leading.

Good (3)  Work is competitive at the national level and will probably make a valuable contribution in the international field. Research is considered internationally visible.

Satisfactory (2)  Work adds to our understanding and is solid, but not exciting. Research is nationally visible.

Unsatisfactory (1)  Work is neither solid nor exciting, flawed in the scientific and or technical approach, repetitions of other work, etc.
2 Assessment of the Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies

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2.1 Mission, goals and research activities

The Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies (HLCS) focuses on literary and cultural studies, history, art history and archaeology, primarily of the western world. The studies range from classical antiquity to the present. They are organized in four programmes: The Ancient World; Public and Private Life; Studying Criticism And Reception Across Borders; and Memory: Cultural and Religious Identities.

The results of the research are targeted at a scholarly audience of peers, but often to a wider audience as well.

The institute seeks to provide the necessary tools and facilities for the research and organizes the educational programme and supervision of the PhD students. Some additional information is given in appendix 1.

2.2 Quality

2.2.1 Leadership

The leadership of André Lardinois is outstanding; his dedication, creativity, and vigorous actions add dynamism to the institute. The research quality of HLCS was assessed previously in 2006. Most recommendations have been implemented. Many changes have been made; focus and coherence have improved, as has collaboration within the institute. Also collaboration with other faculties of Radboud University Nijmegen has been intensified, as have collaborations on an international level. We regard this as a sign of dynamism. Among the research staff, we witnessed good morale. Most staff members are ambitious and enthusiastic – and proud of their institute. The extra financial resources provided by the Faculty Board earlier this year can definitely be seen as a very positive influence on the working conditions and the atmosphere.
2.2.2 Academic reputation
The Committee regrets that the system requires only an evaluation of the institute in isolation, and does not provide opportunities to compare this institute with other similar institutes in the country. This, we believe, would provide a fairer and more comprehensible result. Given that, the overall quality of the institute seems very good, although there are differences to be observed between the four programmes, as will be clear from the next chapter. A significant number of the institute’s members are clearly international leaders in their field.

2.2.3 Resources
The institute’s growing success in applying for secondary funding is impressive, as well as the institute’s relative share in NWO-funding, although we would draw attention to our remarks below on our ability to gauge the comparative success of the institute in relation to other similar bodies in the Netherlands. Now that a dedicated post has been created to support the writing of funding proposals, further improvement is to be expected in the institute’s ability to attract funding.

The library for Humanities and Social Sciences is an important basis for the success of the research of the HLCS. Therefore the budget for the purchase of new books and scientific journals should be significantly increased in order to ensure the high quality of HLCS-research.

The structure of the staff seems somewhat unbalanced. The number of assistant professors is relatively high, whereas the number of internally funded PhD students is low compared to tenured staff. The drop-out rate for PhD students is high.

We noticed the lack of a policy on postdocs. While postdocs are content with the opportunities to do research and write proposals, they feel uncertain about the development of their careers on the long term.

2.2.4 PhD training and supervision
The structure of PhD training is in good shape now that the faculty’s Graduate School for the Humanities is fully functioning. There is a reasonable relationship between general training at the local level and more specialized courses within national schools. A PhD advisor is available to help when difficulties arise, as well as a confidential counsellor. The institute’s PhD students explicitly expressed their satisfaction with the present conditions, and also convinced the Committee that the way they are supervised and coached, and also that many of the other relevant facilities (such as budgets for travelling abroad, offices, and so on) are of the best quality. They have offices in their departments and consider themselves to be full members of staff.
International mobility of PhD students is good.

2.3 **Productivity**

2.3.1 **Productivity strategy**

We noticed two trends in the publication activities of members of the institute: on the one hand there is a (slight) increase of articles (in English) in international peer-reviewed journals, on the other hand some of the best research is published in Dutch in the form of books and book chapters. This duality is not uncommon in the disciplines brought together in HLCS. However, we felt it important to remark on these trends, not only in relation to the PhD students who are starting to publish, but also to the competitive position of the institute and its programmes. Publication in Dutch is natural and proper especially for those studying the history, culture and literature of the Netherlands. However, given the current system for rating journals, there is a danger that this will result in less international prominence for the work of researchers at the institute. A point of concern is the shift from writing monographs to editing volumes of collected essays.

Most HLCS publications are single-authored. It is recommended that the institute should consider whether to encourage more multi-authored publications, which are no longer exceptional in parts of the humanities and in large parts of the social sciences. The institute’s coherence and corporate spirit are demonstrated by the number of multi-authored publications. This goes also for the interdisciplinary focus of a good deal of the projects undertaken within the institute.

2.3.2 **Productivity**

Overall productivity is good, but there are remarkable differences between the four programmes. This might be related to teaching load, but the Committee has the impression that the standard apportionment of time of 60% teaching and 40% research can easily be maintained. A practice developed within some research groups and departments to create their own ‘internal’ sabbatical system has helped to encourage concentration, where necessary, on output.

There only was a slight increase in English publications (The Ancient World programme excepted). We would welcome an ambition to publish more in refereed journals.

2.4 **Societal relevance**

Several members of the institute frequently participate in public debates on subjects of current interest relevant to their research and expertise. Nevertheless, the Committee recommends the development of a clearer and better structured strategy for valorization. The recent appointment of a special policy advisor could encourage this.
2.5 Vitality and feasibility

2.5.1 Strategy of the institute

We were generally content with the strategy of the institute as a whole though we remark on particular issues relating to the individual programmes below. However, a number of issues affecting more than one programme are outlined here.

The research of the cultural historians in the Public and Private Life programme is hardly connected to that of the others, while on the other hand a cultural-historical input in the Memory programme would be a welcome extension (see below). We recommend to move the position of a cultural historian from PPL to Memory when the present holder of this position retires.

Visiting professors Glenn Most and Willem Frijhoff strongly contributed to the reorganization of the research programmes and their coherence. We think that the institute would profit from inviting visiting professors on a regular basis.

We noticed that there is little collaboration between the institute’s members and members of the Faculty of Social Sciences. This is odd, given the fact that many research projects have an explicit sociological or anthropological dimension. Such collaborations would help to drive innovation within the programme. We recognize that there are some significant institutional obstacles to achieving this, and we would urge the university to work to encourage inter-faculty collaboration in research to help to drive innovation.

We would also like to point out that, with one exception (the literary criticism-project of Joosten and Schellens), there is no visible collaboration between the institute and the neighbouring Centre for Language Studies, although there are great opportunities here (we only refer to the work of Antal van den Bosch, that focuses on example-based language modeling, with a promising spin off for research innovation in the humanities).

2.5.2 Robustness and stability of the institute

The institute can look forward to a bright and promising future, especially now that the Faculty Board recently provided substantial additional funding for new posts.

There are, however, potential risks involved in the new posts. The appointment of new assistant professors can be welcomed, but in the long term they have to prove themselves as productive and successful researchers. Furthermore the future financial basis of the new positions depends on their ability to increase student numbers and attract secondary funding.
The Committee therefore thinks that it would be a better idea to invest eventual extra finances funded by the Faculty Board in creating extra PhD positions, so that the incongruent proportion of tenure staff and PhD’s can be corrected.

2.6 General remarks

Associate and assistant professors

We noticed that associate and assistant professors cannot operate as promoters, only as co-promoters for PhD students. We think that this situation does not reflect the substantial supervising tasks with which many associate and assistant professors are charged. It is disadvantageous for those who apply for a full professorship abroad, who are not able to show evidence of supervision of PhD students on a similar basis to applicants from other countries. We therefore suggest that the University Board and the Faculty Board open a national discussion on this point.

Documentation for the assessment

Much of the content and format of the self-evaluation is set by the Standard Evaluation Protocol, and therefore it is recognized that the university and the institute are limited in the extent to which they can or should provide information in a different format. However, we believe that the Protocol limits the value of the overall assessment process. In particular we would make the following points:

• Table 5.3 (Main categories of research output at institutional and programme level) aggregates very different research outputs, and poorly defines a number of them. Little guidance is given in the Protocol, for example on the definition of professional publications. The overall total does not weigh different contributions, but in effect ranks the publication of a review at the same level as a monograph.

• Figures provided in Part C for grants obtained by the institute do not disaggregate the actual amount of funding received by the institute in the case where a grant has been obtained in collaboration with other institutes or universities, making it difficult to compare the relative success of the programmes.

• Figures were not available on the relative success of the institute in obtaining funding from NWO and KNAW compared to other institutes and universities in the Netherlands. This is key information in order to assess the standing nationally and internationally of the work carried out by the institute, and should be a standard part of the assessment process.
3 Assessments per programme

The Committee has carried out an assessment at the level of the programmes, as defined by the HLCS.

Comments that are applicable to all programmes have been made in Chapter 2 (Assessment of the Institute) and are not repeated below.

3.1 The Ancient World

Programme coordinator: André Lardinois, Marc van der Poel
Academic staff in 2011 10.84 fte
Assessment: Quality : 4
Productivity : 4
Societal Relevance : 4
Vitality and feasibility : 5

Objectives and research activities

The programme brings together classicists, ancient historians and archaeologists studying ancient Greek and Roman civilization and its reception from the Middle Ages until the present day. The main focus of the programme is the Roman Empire. This period is given special attention by scholars from all three related disciplines (Greek and Latin literature, Ancient History and Archaeology). The programme is closely coordinated with the research perspectives of the national research school of Classical Studies: OIKOS. The programme’s members, who are all very active and committed members of OIKOS, work primarily on two aspects of the OIKOS-programme:
1. Disclosure and publication of literary and non-literary texts and materials;
2. Historiographical analysis of the ancient world.

Quality

The research programme The Ancient World is very clearly structured. It offers an excellent platform for the cooperation of all participating disciplines in the field of classical studies and the reception of the Greek and Roman civilization from the Middle Ages until the present day. Although the concentration on a single period from classical antiquity – the period of the Roman Empire – is characterized as a possible weakness in the SWOT analysis, we regard this focus as a particular strength of the programme, on which its great national and international reputation is based.
A sign of this reputation is the fact that the leadership of the national research school OIKOS was transferred to Nijmegen. This recognition of the programme at a national level is a great success.

At the international level the members of this research programme have built up many fruitful and effective networks, which have contributed to a further strengthening of its international reputation. The cooperation within the HLCS and between the faculties has also been strongly intensified in the last years. That is the result both of the excellent management of the coordinators of The Ancient World (A. Lardinois and M. van der Poel, now E. Moormann), as well as the very good cooperation of all members of the research group.

The independently funded research company Auxilia is well integrated into the research programme. Since the chair of Provincial Roman Archaeology has not been refilled, most research activity on Provincial Roman Archaeology has been handed over to Auxilia. Even though the collaboration with Auxilia is working well, efforts to reintegrate Provincial Roman research into the university should be supported.

**Productivity**

The programme covers a wide group of excellent researchers with a good output of very good publications. Although an increase in the number of refereed articles over the last three years is noticeable, we would expect a further augmentation in their number.

The productivity of the programme suffers from a relatively low number of PhD students. However, in 2012 the number has again risen slightly, so that a change is detectable. Some of the MA students obtain PhD positions at renowned foreign universities (Berlin, Heidelberg, New York etc.). As the MA is very closely interlocked with the research programme, an ‘exodus’ of this kind demonstrates the programme’s academic quality. The same could be said of the fact that a remarkable number of Nijmegen PhD’s receive postdoc positions at other universities at home and abroad once they have completed their dissertations. We welcome the fact that staff numbers in the programme have recently been allowed to grow again – after many years of cuts in direct funding.

The very good earning capacity of the programme also needs to be emphasized. All disciplines of the research programme (incl. Auxilia) have been very successful in acquiring third level funding and grants.

**Societal relevance**

Many activities of the members of the research programme contribute to the valorization of its research. Not only are the publications for the Open University worth mentioning,
but also the participation of the research group in the organization of exhibitions and many other museum activities. Remarkable is also the large number of translations of Latin sources into Dutch, for which Vincent Hunink has received several awards. In addition, many professors are involved in national and international committees.

But the existing potential for the valorization could be even better exploited if a better structured strategy would be developed.

**Vitality and feasibility**

The research programme is characterized by an extraordinarily high national and international visibility. The programme’s great vitality and openness to innovative questions guarantee its success in the future. There is very great potential for further development. The planned intensification of the cooperation with the faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies and the new chair for Byzantine History will secure the exceptionally great international success of the research programme.
3.2 Public and Private Life

Programme coordinator: Theo Engelen, Peter Rietbergen
Academic staff in 2011: 24.49 fte
Assessment: Quality : 4
Productivity : 4
Societal Relevance : 4.5
Vitality and feasibility : 4

Objectives and research activities
The group studies the interaction between the demographic and the political and cultural factors determining human life courses. The programme consists of three subprogrammes: (1) Western European culture after the Middle Ages; (2) demography and human life cycles; (3) political culture. Closely affiliated with subprogramme 3 is the Centre for Parliamentary History.

Quality
The quality of the research outputs is clearly high and well-respected, encompassing both traditional scholarship and some innovation. The Centre for Parliamentary History has a reputation for strong, solid authoritative and politically impartial work; the political historians are bringing their expertise to bear beyond Europe, and undertaking cultural and linguistic histories of politics and democracy; the demographers are engaging in innovative comparative studies; and cultural historians are active in interpreting academic material for a wider audience. All this testifies to a lively intellectual mood, and original and significant thinking.

The academic reputation of the work done within the programme is clearly high, and recognized nationally and internationally, with its scholars leading and engaging in national (e.g., Posthumus Institute, Research School for Political History) and international (e.g. EuParl.net; demography networks) networks, and receiving significant distinctions both in the Netherlands and abroad.

Productivity
Productivity overall within the programme is good, and generally above the average within the institute as a whole. The drop in the number of outputs between 2010 and 2011 (at a time when the programme was rapidly expanding) is noticeable, but there is no evidence to show that this is significant, and is likely to be explained by the high output in 2010.
The overall productivity of the programme has been considerably increased, especially in 2010, by a large number of media appearances. We have also noted a divergence within the programme between those largely social and economic historians who are publishing in English, in international journals, and others, particularly the historians of Dutch politics, who are tending to publish in Dutch journals. This potentially limits the international visibility of the programme as a whole.

**Societal relevance**

The number of publications aimed at the general public is high, and indeed this is clearly part of an effective culture within the programme of engaging with the local community through, for example, work on Nijmegen, and the work of Rietbergen. The work of Van Baalen and the Centre for Parliamentary History is clearly of considerable national significance. The frequency with which some members of the programme are making media appearances show a very strong impact on public life. This programme is clearly achieving societal impact.

**Vitality and feasibility**

The key strategic issue for the programme is its overall coherence. The three groups each have a different focus and methodology. A strong interest in international relationships is common to two elements of the programme – the cultural historical element and the social historical element. The political part of the programme however largely concentrates on Dutch history and politics alone (although the work of Van Meurs is an important exception to this).

One consequence is the contrast between the global reach of part of the programme and the more local focus of much of the other. Those studying political and parliamentary history reflect a genuine need for a continued focus on Dutch history and Dutch political culture. Research into national political life is clearly a key part of the university’s role, and one that the programme and the centre manages highly successfully. It is also the case that some of the work has focused on the European issue in Dutch politics. However, there is a risk that the Dutch focus of this part of the programme may limit its ability to present itself as internationally competitive.

Another consequence is the contrast in methodologies, between the political history of parliaments and cabinets, the cultural historians, and the investigation of statistical trends undertaken by the social and economic historians. The methodologies used are equally valid, but there is a sense that different languages are being spoken with little real connection between them.
In part the problem of coherence is the result of the success of Radboud University Nijmegen in maintaining its long-term relationship with Dutch political institutions through the Centre of Parliamentary History. Its existence within the programme naturally weights it towards traditional political history of the Dutch state. These issues are recognized, and we were given evidence of serious efforts to address them. The leading role of the CPG within EUParl.net and other initiatives has helped to give it a much broader reach and recognition beyond the Netherlands. The programme has also been considering new projects including one on ‘life scripts’, bringing together cultural and demographic historians; another on ageing, bringing together political and demographic historians; and a third on parliamentary buildings, drawing together cultural and political historians.

However, we think much further and deeper consideration needs to be given to the question of the coherence of the programme over the next period if it is to ensure that it is fully recognized internationally as it deserves. It seems to us that there are two main choices:

• To reorganize the programme further, perhaps by dividing it into two separate programmes – social and economic history and political history, with cultural historians involved in both of the new programmes.

• Much deeper efforts to find the connections and commonalities between the projects and researchers within the programme, to think harder about the relationship of the proposed projects with the theme of ‘Europe and its worlds’ and to focus on innovation within new projects. This will be to some extent to build on existing thinking, but it should be taken much further in order to gain real international prominence for the programme as a whole as well as to build a much more coherent programme.

We recognize an overall reluctance to engage in continual reorganization, and therefore we favour the second of these, but believe that serious consideration needs to be given to both options over the next few years.
3.3 Studying Criticism And Reception Across Borders

Programme coordinator: Jos Joosten
Academic staff in 2011: 10.16 fte
Assessment: Quality : 3
Productivity : 3
Societal Relevance : 4
Vitality and feasibility : 3.5

Objectives and research activities
The programme’s subject of study is the role of literary professionals – such as printing and publishing firms, book reviewers and critics, translators and periodicals – as instruments in the production, dissemination and consumption of literary culture, over the centuries and across boundaries and languages.

Quality
Splitting the current programme from the former programme Literature, Culture and Media has proven to be a good decision. Even though the research group experienced a drop in numbers, the coherence and focus of its research improved. However, although the success of external fundraising is significant, it should be stated that it depends on a minority of the group’s members. Therefore stronger effort should be made to involve the rest of the senior staff in attempts to obtain subsidies and grants.

Furthermore, the paragraph on strategy in the self-evaluation is brief, nondescript and vague and suggests little sense of a strategy or plans for the future. We missed a feeling of community within the group.

Productivity
The number of refereed journal articles falls short and has diminished during the last two years (less than one article per year per fte). Not all senior members of the SCARAB programme are equally productive, which is of course problematic especially for a relatively small programme, and there should be a better balance between professional and scientific publications. The current mismatch could be related to the desire to ensure valorization, but it goes without saying that a body of fundamental knowledge is needed to base valorization upon.

Too small a proportion of the publications is in English.
The number of defended PhD-theses is disappointingly low. This is a weak point that should be taken care of. The overview of PhD projects (Part C, p. 17-18) shows that 3 of 13 projects stopped before finishing, which is problematic.

**Societal relevance**
Members of SCARAB often speak before a general audience and participate in important cultural networks. The topics they are dealing with figure high on the nation’s cultural agenda.

**Vitality and feasibility**
The future of this programme is still promising, given the successes in external financing, by which its research capacity can be maintained or even improved. Of course this will demand special care and effort on behalf of the programme management. Internationalization, by means of cooperation and fundraising, offers good opportunities. Also, the programme would profit from intensifying collaboration with the faculty of Social Sciences of Radboud University Nijmegen.
3.4 Memory: Cultural and Religious Identities

Programme coordinator: Marit Monteiro, Lotte Jensen
Academic staff in 2011: 28.14 fte
Assessment:
- Quality : 4
- Productivity : 4.5
- Societal Relevance : 4
- Vitality and feasibility : 4

Objectives and research activities

The programme’s research deals with the analysis of and theoretical reflection on processes of memorialisation and (self-)historisation. The subprogramme Re-Mastering the Past concentrates on processes of memorialisation and the shaping of identities in the past; one of its key concerns is about the relationship between memory and religion. The subprogramme Performances of Memory and Identity examines forms of remembering and forgetting in popular culture, art and media as an active process and dynamic practice.

As outlined in the self-evaluation, the research programme Memory: Cultural and Religious Identities (MCRI) has a complex origin. Its ‘broken’ history has only recently come to an end.

Quality

The quality of the research done in both subprogrammes is good to excellent, with some highly esteemed and very productive scholars. A wide variety of topics is researched, in an often inventive and attractive way.

The coherence of the programme has been strengthened in the past years in a very deliberate way. However, a reflection upon the concepts of the programme – ‘memory’, ‘memorialisation’, ‘(self-)historisation’, ‘identity’, the relation between ‘cultural’ and ‘religious’ identities and ‘performance’ – could lead to a more coherent research agenda and to a stronger visibility. In times of a ‘memory boom’ the Nijmegen programme does not have a monopoly on this kind of research. A greater visibility also requires a clear definition of the programme’s specificity and originality.

The strengthening of the research programme’s coherence should not be a one way process. Researchers of Re-Mastering the Past have shown great openness to the more theoretical work of Performances of Memory and Identity, which can clearly be a great
The study of religion is an important element in the programme. It testifies to a Nijmegen tradition and is innovative in its ‘spatial turn’. However, it is felt that a more conceptual legitimation of its place within MCRI is necessary. A stronger focus on the way religious practices and religious places embody religious memories and identities would also strengthen the coherence of MRCI.

It is odd that a programme dealing with the appropriation of the past and with its performative creation is developed without cultural historians working in the field of historiography and the history of historical culture. This paradoxical situation makes it more difficult to connect to (some) international networks in the field, while the appointment of a cultural historian could also help to conceptualize the programme in a more explicit way and to bridge the gap between the subprogrammes.

While a lot of the research is good to excellent, members of the programme find it difficult to define the great intellectual achievements they want to be remembered for. More explicit ambitions might strengthen the existing research and make it more adventurous.

In the coordination of the programme, relatively young staff members play an important role. Something seems to be out of balance here. The coordination of a research programme, which still lacks some coherence and visibility, is time consuming (as is remarked in the SWOT-analysis of the programme) and needs experience. The new coordinator has shown a lot of leadership in the past months and has done an excellent job so far. But the management of MCRI might take too much of her research time.

**Productivity**
The research output has been very good. The number of refereed articles, monographs, volumes of collected essays, and book chapters is high.

**Societal relevance**
The research group has been very active in very different projects aimed at a large audience: for instance exhibitions and catalogues, an event around the cultural remembrance of 9/11, and an investigative committee on sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Church. Important work has been done.
**Vitality and feasibility**

The complex and recent origin of the programme, compared to the three other programmes, requires a careful and well-developed policy regarding its stability.

It is encouraging to note the appointment of several new junior staff in 2012 (some of them from abroad, and a number of whom already have an excellent track record).

The earning capacity of MCRI has been very strong so far, except on the European level (with the understandable consideration that applying for these European grants is time consuming; an exception should be made for the ERC grant obtained by M.C.M. Corporaal). The balance between direct funding and funding by research grants is excellent: in 2011, 47% direct funding / 44% research grants. However, this might cause problems in the near future since the level of funding by NWO is decreasing generally. Direct funding remains essential.

Notwithstanding the programme’s success in applying for grants, the number of internally funded PhD students remains low. The facts for 2011 are telling: 34 tenured staff members / 22 PhD students, which means 0.65 PhD students per tenured staff member. This causes great concern regarding the next generation of scholars and teachers.
4 Response of the institute

We would like to start by thanking the committee for a very thorough and fair report. We are particularly pleased with the trust the committee places in the vitality and feasibility of the institute, for which it awarded the institute with a 4.5. It confirms our own impression that the institute is on the right track and can look forward to a bright future, if the amount of funding can be maintained and the right decisions are made. The report also suggests a number of improvements, which we most certainly will take to heart. These include

1) Valorisation
The committee asks us to develop a strategy for the valorisation of HLCS research. We will do so in accordance with new guidelines that are developed by a committee of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences (KNAW).

2) Post-docs
The committee recommends a closer monitoring of the post-docs. We are considering inviting post-docs for an assessment interview with a staff member of the institute twelve months after the initial appointment, based on a detailed progress report.

3) Publications
The committee asks us to encourage our researchers to publish more in refereed journals, to adequately reward multi-authored publications, and to guard against a shift from monographs to edited volumes. We will develop appropriate policies to address these issues.

4) Coherence
The committee asks us to look into the coherence of both the Life and the Memory programmes. We will go about this in two ways: a) we will further evaluate the functioning of these programmes and, if necessary, restructure them; b) we will develop some inter-programme thematic foci, based on the research topic “Europe and its worlds”, which will lead to further collaborative projects in the future.

5) SCARAB
The committee rates the SCARAB programme as the least successful of the four research programmes of HLCS (and the only scoring on average below 4.0). With the committee we believe that it has great potential, but we will address its weaknesses and will consider restructuring it in light of changes made to the research institute as a whole (see above).
6) Collaboration
The committee recommends further collaboration with the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies and the Faculty of Social Science, as well as with the research institute CLS. We will develop appropriate incentives for this, for example by establishing groups combining researchers of HLCS, CLS and the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies within the common Humanities research topics “Europe and its worlds” and “Language in Mind and Society”.

7) Budget
The committee would like to see an increase in the library budget, more PhD positions funded by the institute itself, and the continuation of the practice of inviting visiting professors for longer periods of time. It will be hard to implement these measures without an increase in direct funding. We will try to find extra funding for them and in the meantime we will see if within the current budget some funds can be made available to support these measures.

Prof dr. André Lardinois, Director HLCS
Appendix 1  Description of the institute and its research activities

The Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies (HLCS) is one of seventeen research institutes of Radboud University Nijmegen, and one of two research institutes in the Faculty of Arts. It comprises the faculty's research in the fields of literature and literary theory, cultural studies, art history and archeology. It brings together the research of staff teaching in the departments of Classics, History, Art History, Literary and Cultural Studies, Dutch language and Culture, English Language and Culture, German Language and Culture, and Romance Languages and Cultures.

Affiliated to HLCS are (in 2011): 89 tenured staff members (32.43 fte), 26 non-tenured staff members (6.59 fte), and 50 Phd students (34.08 fte).

Overview of research activities
The Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies (HLCS) focuses on literary and cultural studies, history, art history and archaeology, primarily of the western world. The studies range from classical antiquity to the present. They are organized in four programmes:

The Ancient World
Classicists, ancient historians and archaeologists study ancient Greek and Roman civilization and its reception from the Middle Ages until the present day. The main focus of the programme is the Roman Empire.

Public and Private Life
The group studies the interaction between the demographic and the political and cultural factors determining human life courses. The programme consists of three subprogrammes: (1) Western European culture after the Middle Ages; (2) demography and human life cycles; (3) political culture, i.e. the basic structuring aspects of the political praxis. Closely affiliated with subprogramme 3 is the Centre for Parliamentary History.

Studying Criticism And Reception Across Borders
Subject of study is the role of literary professionals – such as printing and publishing firms, book reviewers and critics, translators and periodicals – as the instruments in the production, dissemination and consumption of literary culture, over the centuries and across boundaries and languages.
Memory: Cultural and Religious Identities
The research deals with the analysis of and theoretical reflection on processes of memorialisation and (self-)historisation. The subprogramme Re-Mastering the Past concentrates on processes of memorialisation and the shaping of identities in the past; one of the key concerns is about the relationship between memory and religion. The subprogramma Performances of Memory and Identity examines the forms of remembering and forgetting in popular culture, art and media as an active process and dynamic practice.

Within Radboud University Nijmegen, the HLCS closely collaborates with the Centre for Language Studies (also within the Faculty of Arts) and with the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies in two common, interfaculty research themes: ‘Europe and its Worlds’ and ‘Language in Mind and Society’.
Appendix 2  Curricula vitae of the Evaluation Committee members

Prof. Dr J.L. Goedegebuure
Jaap Goedegebuure is Emeritus-Professor of Modern Dutch Literature at Leiden University. Prior to this he was Professor of General and Comparative Literature at Tilburg University from 1986 until 2005, and from 2003 to 2006 he held the Chair of Extraordinary Professorship in Monumental Literary Heritage at the Radboud University Nijmegen. Following his studies in Dutch Language and Literature and General and Comparative Literature in Leiden and Utrecht, Goedegebuure obtained his PhD-degree with a dissertation on the poetics of the Dutch author H. Marsman (1899-1940). In commemoration of Marsman's centenary birthday, he wrote the biography Zee Berg Rivier (Sea, Mountain, River).
He also published monographs on contemporary Dutch novelists as Jeroen Brouwers and Cees Nooteboom, on the literature of the nineteenth and twentieth century (Decadentie en Literatuur, Nederlandse Literatuur 1960-1988, and Nieuwe Zakelijkheid) and on the relationship between the Bible and present-day literature (De schrift herschreven and De veelvervige rok). He edited and contributed to Histore de la literature néerlandaise (1999) and A literary history of the Low Countries (2009). His latest book is Nederlandse schrijvers en religie 1960-2010.
Goedegebuure was dean of the Faculty of Arts, Tilburg University (1993-1995, 2003-2005). In 1999 he was appointed as honorary member of the Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde, Gent, Belgium. Since 1984 he is fellow of the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences and Humanities at Wassenaar.

Prof. Dr P. Funke
Peter Funke is Professor for Ancient History at the University of Münster since 1988, and Director of the Institute of Ancient History, the Institute of Epigraphy and the Institute for Interdisciplinary Cypriote Studies at the University of Münster. After his study of History, Archaeology and German Philology and Literature at the University of Münster (1969-1974) and at the University of Cologne (1975-1978), Funke performed his PhD (Dr.Phil. /1978) and Post-Doctoral Degree (Habilitation /1985) in Ancient History at the University of Cologne. He was Professor for Ancient History at the University of Siegen from 1985 to 1988. Currently, he is Vice-President of the DFG (German Research Foundation); member of the „Zentraldirektion“ of the German Archaeological Institut; Project Manager of the „Inscriptiones Graecae“ of the Berlin Brandenburg Academie of Sciences and Humanities; Principal Investigator of the Cluster of Excellence „Religion and Politics in Pre-Modern and Modern Cultures“.
Dr P. Seaward
Paul Seaward has been Director of the History of Parliament Trust since August 2001. Seaward holds MA and DPhil degrees from the University of Oxford. He was a Research Fellow at Christ’s College, Cambridge 1984-88, and a Clerk in the House of Commons, 1988-2001. His published work has been mainly on seventeenth century English politics and political thought, and includes: The Cavalier Parliament and the Reconstruction of the Old Regime (1989); The Restoration, 1660-1688 (1991); and an edition of Behemoth for the Oxford edition of the complete works of Thomas Hobbes (2009). Current research projects include a biography and edition of the works of the statesman and historian Edward Hyde, first Earl of Clarendon (1609-1674). Seaward is also planning a multi-volume project on the place of Parliament within the British mind from the seventeenth century to the present day.

Prof. Dr J. Tollebeek
Jo Tollebeek is Full Professor of Cultural History since 1750 at the University of Leuven, Belgium. He has published work on university history, the history of historiography, and the history of the humanities in the nineteenth and twentieth century’s, including Writing the Inquisition in Europe and America (2004); Men of Character: The Emergence of the Modern Humanities (2011); and Henri Pirenne, Historian: A Life in Pictures (2011, with Sarah Keymeulen). He headed the Belgian lieux de mémoire project: België, een parcours van herinnering (2008). Tollebeek was elected member of the Royal Commission of History, the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences and the Academia Europaea.
Appendix 3  Programme of the site visit

October 7
16:00  Reception by Prof. Paul Sars, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Prof. André Lardinois, HLCS Director
17:00  Preparation of the site visit (Committee only)
19:00  Dinner
20:30  Preparation of the site visit – continued (Committee only)

October 8
9:00   Welcome by Prof. Sebastian Kortmann, Rector Magnificus of Radboud University Nijmegen; Prof. Paul Sars, Dean of the Faculty of Arts; Prof. Theo Engelen, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Arts; and Prof. André Lardinois, HLCS Director
9:30   Meeting with Prof. Eric Moormann, former HLCS Director; Lisenka Fox, MA, Policy Advisor of the Faculty of Arts; Laura Pander, MA, Policy Advisor Acquisition and Valorisation; and Tanja Döller, MSc, Coordinator of the Graduate School for the Humanities; and Prof. André Lardinois, HLCS Director
10:15  Coffee break
10:25  Discussion Committee with Programme Leader and member of The Ancient World (Prof. André Lardinois and Prof. Marc van der Poel)
11:05  Discussion Committee with Programme Leader and member of Public and private life (Prof. Remieg Aerts and Prof. Theo Engelen)
11:45  Discussion Committee with Programme Leader and member of SCARAB (Prof. Odin Dekkers and Prof. Jos Joosten)
12:25  Discussion Committee with Programme Leader and member of Memory (Prof. Sible de Blaauw and Dr. Lotte Jensen)
13:00  Lunch (Committee only)
14:15  Discussion Committee with HLCS PhD students (Roald Dijkstra, Renée Gabriël, Lennert Savenije, Lies Wijnterp)
15:10  Discussion Committee with HLCS postdocs, Associate and Assistant Professors and other HLCS staff the Committee would like to meet (Maarten De Pourcq, Brigitte Adriaensen, Mathijs Sanders, Wim van Meurs)
16:05  Coffee break
16:30  Discussion Committee with Centre for Parliamentary History (Carla van Baalen, on request of Committee) and tour around campus (Committee and André Lardinois)
17:30  Informal meeting Committee with all discussion partners
19:00  Dinner Committee with Prof. Paul Sars, Prof. Theo Engelen, Prof. Eric Moormann, Prof. André Lardinois and Programme Leaders
October 9

9:00  Internal Committee Meeting to discuss results and preparation of site visit report
12:30 Lunch
14:00 Preparation of site visit report – continued
15:30 Presentation preliminary findings Committee for Prof. Sebastian Kortmann, Prof. Paul Sars, Prof. Theo Engelen, Prof. Eric Moormann, Prof. André Lardinois, Programme Leaders and HLCS staff
16:30 Drinks
17:00 End of the programme