Talking numbers?
Toos Streng

Database Streng contains descriptions of all the novels which appeared in the Netherlands between 1790-1899, both original Dutch and translated. The descriptions are based on contemporary sources, and include title, author, translator, publisher, execution (hardcover, not bound), price(s), illustrations, series, author of preface, etc. To show the importance of hard numbers the presentation will focus on two traditional themes in Dutch literary history of the nineteenth century and compare conventional explanations to insights based on the database.

- the title production, e.g. numbers of novels (first editions, reprints) per year, 1799-1899;

- the discrepancy between the importance of French novels in the Dutch debate on the novel in the nineteenth century and the lack of translations of the works of French authors.

The oral presentation will focus on the usefulness of results of the database for a literary historian. Of course, it will also be possible to give some form of demonstration of the database, its structure and its content.

Once funding is found, the database will be publicly available, not only to be consulted, but as research-database as well.