

CHANGING THE SCRIPT: A TYPOLOGY OF DUTCH THEATRE MANUSCRIPTS IN THE SOUTHERN LOW COUNTRIES, AND THE INTERACTION BETWEEN MANUSCRIPT AND PRINT (SEVENTEENTH–EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES)*

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Abstract: Because of an almost exclusive attention to literature in print, early modern manuscripts have until now failed to attract the scholarly attention they deserve. Literary historians of the Early Modern period have only very recently turned to manuscripts, studying for example how they functioned within circles of collective readership (e.g. rhetoricians), how they materialise social networks (e.g. *alba amicorum*), or provide opportunity to appropriate and alter canonical texts for individual audiences (e.g. chronicles). A genre that so far has not attracted as much attention in Dutch scholarship as it has abroad, is theatre. There are some individual case studies on theatre manuscripts from the Early Modern period, and theatre texts preserved in manuscript have been edited, but so far, no one has questioned the role of manuscript as a medium in early modern theatre practice. Working towards a typology of early modern Dutch theatre manuscripts, this contribution is the first comprehensive attempt to chart various types of codices with Dutch theatre texts, and their respective functions and contexts of usage. The analysis is based on theatre material preserved in the Royal Library of Belgium, but has implications for theatre manuscripts generally, and for our understanding of theatre practice in the Early Modern period, especially in the southern Low Countries.

INTRODUCTION: EARLY MODERN MANUSCRIPTS

When asked what they imagine a ‘manuscript’ to be, people will either think of the lavishly illustrated handwritten codices of the Middle Ages, or of modern texts intended to be printed – preliminary drafts, so to speak, that were often discarded when the text acquired its ‘definitive’ form, in print. In the common imagination, the printing press seems to have wiped out the manuscript as a medium for literary expression. To a certain extent, this harsh divide between a literary world *before* and *after* the general availability of printing, persists also in scholarship. While we are very well aware of the wealth of medieval manuscripts preserved in institutional collections, through catalogues and online directories, and while initiatives to disclose printed heritage are abound, there is still a lot of work to be done on

inventorying manuscripts written from the period of 1500 onwards.¹ Research into this corpus is difficult not only because of the lack of efficient inventories and catalogues, but also because of the traditional organisation of scholarship into separate periods. To state it a little boldly: medievalists work with manuscripts, and scholars of the Early Modern period work with texts in print. It is a great relief that in the past decades, the periodisation of scholarship has faded, with medievalists moving into the sixteenth century, and early modernists broadening their scope as to the medium of the sources they study.² This interdisciplinarity is bearing ever more fruit for the study of the early modern manuscript.

In medieval codicology, there has been a rising attention for the materiality of the manuscript since the 1980s. Depending on the scholarly tradition, the German *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Methode*, the French *critique génétique* and the Anglo-Saxon *New* or *Material philology* all propagated to steer away from the old philological quest for the auctorial ‘ideal’ text, and devote more attention to the subsequent manuscript reception stages in which the ‘original’ text was rewritten, reinterpreted and appropriated by later scribes and authors.³ In focusing more on the materiality of literature, scholarship has gained new insights into traces of usage, library collections, manuscript miscellanies, scribal production, appropriation of text, etc.⁴ Only in recent years, early modernists have taken some of the insights of the (late) medieval codicology to material in their field of study. The corpus of *alba amicorum* manuscripts, for example, has been studied extensively and has yielded important insights as to the sociability of the manuscript as a medium, especially after the introduction of the printing press.⁵ In the same way, scholarship on medieval miscellanies has been used to broaden our understanding of similar manuscripts in rhetoricians’ contexts in the Early Modern period.⁶

(*) We would like to thank Ton Harmsen (University of Leiden) for his useful comments and additions in an earlier stage of this article.

(1) See Nelleke Moser, “‘Poezijlust en vriendenliefd’: literaire sociabiliteit in handschrift en druk na 1600,” in *Literatuur in handschrift en druk in de late middeleeuwen en vroegmoderne tijd*, (eds) Wim van Anrooij & Joris Reynaert, (Special issue of: *Spiegel der letteren* 49/2 (2007): 87–264), 248.

(2) Wim van Anrooij & Joris Reynaert (ed.), “Inleiding,” in *Literatuur in handschrift en druk in de late middeleeuwen en vroegmoderne tijd*, (eds) Wim van Anrooij & Joris Reynaert, (Special issue of: *Spiegel der letteren* 49/2 (2007): 87–264), 87–92.

(3) For an introduction to German scholarship, see Werner Williams-Krapp, “Die überlieferungsgeschichtliche Methode,” *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur* 25/2 (2000): 1–21. Comp. In French Bernard Cerquiglini, *L’élégie de la variante* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1989); and in English: Stephen Nichols, “Why Material Philology?,” *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 116 (1997): 10–30.

(4) See for example Hans Kienhorst, *Lering en stichting op klein formaat: Middelnederlandse rijmteksten in eenkolomsboekjes van perkament* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005); Erik Kwakkel, *Die Dietsche boeke die ons toebehoeren: de kartuizers van Herne en de productie van Middelnederlandse handschriften in de regio Brussel (1350–1400)*. (Leuven: Peeters, 2002); Wim van Anrooij, *Handschriften als spiegel van de middeleeuwse tekstcultuur* (Leiden: Universiteit Leiden, 2006) and *A bunch of books: book collections in the medieval Low Countries*, (eds) Suzan Folkerts & Renée Gabriël, (Special issue of: *Queste* 20/2 (2013), 63–147).

(5) Sophie Reinders, *De mug en de kaars: vriendenboekjes van adellijke vrouwen, 1575–1640* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2017).

(6) Nelleke Moser, “Verspreid verzameld. Rederijkersteksten in vroegmoderne verzamel-handschriften,” *Nederlandse Letterkunde* 8/2 (2003), 101–15, here 106–7; Nelleke Moser, “‘Poezijlust en vriendenliefd’” (see note 1).

And in the genre of chronicles, a focus on early modern manuscript material has shown that the divide between early modern and medieval historiography is far less sharp than was often believed on the basis of printed chronicles from the sixteenth century onwards.⁷

A genre that so far has generated considerably less interest among Renaissance scholars looking at Dutch manuscript material, is theatre. This lack of attention may well derive from a certain tension between the relative absence of medieval manuscript material on the one hand, and the abundance of early modern printed theatre texts on the other. Early modern scholarship has yet to explore the full breadth of the vast amount of material preserved in print⁸ and whereas in other genres, medieval codicologists set the example for manuscript study, there is very little scholarship on medieval theatre manuscripts that surpasses scholarly editing.⁹ Of course, the tension between the media of print and manuscript is especially pertinent in theatre, because of its evidently performative aspect. In other genres, the transfer into printed books allegedly encouraged silent reading as a mode of reception. But in theatre, the collective performance of texts is essentially their prime function. To this end, the separate ‘roles’ could have been transcribed directly from a complete text into individual manuscript scrolls for each of the actors – the word ‘role’ for a part in a play derives from this.¹⁰ The existence of these has been attested as early as the late middle ages, and their usage persisted into Early Modern times.¹¹ The manuscript scrolls must have been fragile types of text carriers, being fondled and handled by actors during their rehearsals and performance, which is the reason why so little of this material has come down to us. At the same time, full texts of plays in medieval manuscript are scarce as well. The earliest Middle Dutch examples of worldly theatre, the so-called *abele spelen*, date from the late fourteenth-early fifteenth century and have been preserved in the Hulthem Manuscript (c. 1405-1408; Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium, ms. 15589-623).¹² Even if it is centuries older than the manuscript material we aim to present in this paper, the presentation of text material in *Hulthem* bears some resemblance to that in Early Modern manuscripts, for example in the

(7) See Bram Caers, *Vertekend verleden: geschiedenis (her)schrijven in vroegmodern Mechelen, 1500–1650* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2019); and *Urban history writing in north-western Europe (15th-16th centuries)*, (eds) Bram Caers, Lisa Demets & Tineke Van Gassen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019).

(8) Johanna Ferket, *‘Hy dwong het volk door klucht, te luistren naar hun plichten’: maatschappijkritiek in het zeventiende-eeuwse komische toneel in de Nederlanden* (Antwerpen: Universiteit Antwerpen, 2018: unpublished Ph.D. thesis/Hilversum: Verloren [in press: 2020]), 14–5, 18.

(9) Comp. Marjolein van Hertem, “Een codicologische beschrijving van de verzameling-Trou moet Blijcken,” *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde* 127/1 (2011), 30–49, here 32–3.

(10) Hubert Meeus, “Titelbladen van toneeldrukken in de Nederlanden vóór 1700,” in *E Codicibus Impres-sique: opstellen over het boek in de Lage Landen voor Elly Cockx-Indestege*, (eds) Hubert Meeus & Johan Hanselaer (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), t. 2, 301–28, here 301.

(11) Wim N. M. Hüsken & Frans A. M. Schaars (eds), *Sandriyn en Lanslot: diplomatische uitgave van twee toneelrollen uit het voormalig archief van de Rederijkerskamer De Fiolieren te ’s-Gravenpolder* (Nijmegen: Alfa, 1985).

(12) For an edition, see Herman Brinkman & Janny Schenkel (eds), *Het handschrift-Van Hulthem: hs. Brussel, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, 15.589–623* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1999). In English, see Johanna C. Prins (ed., transl.), *Medieval Dutch drama: four secular plays and four farces from the Van Hulthem manuscript* (Asheville: Pegasus Press, 1999).

verse count for each text, which continues to puzzle medievalists.¹³ Interestingly, one of the few preserved actor scrolls is a late seventeenth-century version of *Lanseloet van Denemerken*, one of the plays in this medieval manuscript, testifying to the continuous popularity of this theatre material over a period of no less than three centuries. Aside from the *abele spelen*, there is rhetorician's theatre from the late fifteenth and through the sixteenth century, but compared to the amount of plays that will have been performed, judging from alternative sources such as accounts, the textual evidence is rather limited.¹⁴

The generally underwhelming corpus of fully preserved medieval theatre texts most likely has to do with the performative aspect of the genre, which also explains why it took some time for theatre texts to appear regularly in print. Early printers did not prioritise the genre as they may have underestimated its market potential among readers. The intended audience of theatre was either illiterate, or was used to enjoying the genre performed, rather than through a printed or written text. In this way, late medieval theatre manuscripts will probably have circulated among theatre professionals rather than just interested readers. Also, in the crucial time period when printers were establishing themselves as brokers of literary culture, theatre was dominated by the rhetoricians, who were by definition less than eager to have their work printed, for reasons of modesty: it was considered unbecoming to strive for personal glory.¹⁵

All this does not mean that theatre texts never appeared in print. There is a printed corpus of Latin theatre from the sixteenth century, performed in the context of schools as a form of exercise.¹⁶ Classical plays by Plautus and Terence were widely popular, but in the spirit of humanism, some authors also wrote new plays, giving rise to a tradition of Neolatin theatre.¹⁷ Vernacular plays too, were printed, but only on special occasions, for example as part of text collections with the plays and texts performed and presented during rhetorician's contests, such as the Antwerp *Landjuweel* of 1561, printed by Willem Silvius in 1562.¹⁸

(13) Compare Hans van Dijk, "Verzamelhandschriften," in *'s Levens felheid in één band: het handschrift-Van Hulthem*, (ed.) R. Jansen-Sieben (Brussel: Centrum voor de Bibliografie van de Neerlandistiek, 1999), 111–27 to Daniël Ermens, "Het handschrift-Van Hulthem in vergelijkend perspectief: over het nummeren van de teksten en het tellen van de verzen," *Queeste* 20/1 (2013): 1–28.

(14) One example on the contrast between rich archival references to theatre and performance on the one hand, and scarce textual evidence on the other, is the city of Mechelen. See Eugene Van Autenboer, *Volksfeesten en rederijkers te Mechelen (1400–1600)* (Gent: KANTL, 1962). The lack of manuscript material has notable exceptions, such as the work of the Bruges rhetorician Cornelis Everaert (c. 1480–1556), most of which has been preserved in manuscript; see Wim N. M. Hüskens (ed.), *De spelen van Cornelis Everaert. Opnieuw uitgegeven, van inleiding, annotaties en woordverklaringen voorzien* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2005).

(15) Anke van Herk, *Fabels van liefde: het mythologisch-amoureuze toneel van de rederijkers (1475–1621)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 124.

(16) Goran Proot, *Het schooltoneel van de jezuiten in de Provincie Flandro-Belgica tijdens het ancien régime (1575–1773)* (Antwerpen: Universiteit Antwerpen, 2008: unpublished Ph.D. thesis). Latin theatre exists also in manuscripts that are preserved in the Royal Library of Belgium and elsewhere, for example ms. II 26166, which contains Jesuit plays. These, however, fall beyond the scope of this article.

(17) Meeus, "Titelbladen," (see note 10) 307.

(18) Elly Cockx-Indestege & Willy Vandeweghe (eds), *Uyt Ionsten Versaemt: het landjuweel van 1561 te Antwerpen* (Brussel: Koninklijke Bibliotheek Albert I, 1994); Jeroen Vandommele & Ruud Ryckaert (eds), *Menich constich gheest: het Antwerpse landjuweel van 1561 anders bekeken*, Special issue of: *Jaarboek van de*

Vernacular collections of rhetoricians' literature such as this will typically contain not only the plays and silent performances that were staged during the contest, but also the invitation of the organising chamber, the texts in other genres (song, poetry) that were presented, and information on the competing chambers and the prizes they won. Judging from the fact that these competition volumes were seldom reprinted, they will not have been intended for a broad audience, but were most likely aimed at a relatively limited circle of well-off readers, who were probably involved in organising and competing in the rhetorician's competitions themselves.¹⁹ The collections functioned as a permanent remembrance of the festive occasion, and offered the opportunity to reread the texts that had been performed – the *sinnespelen* for example were often rhetorically very complex in answering the central question that the inviting chamber had requested to answer.

The printing of vernacular theatre would become more common only from the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards, and mainly in the north. Especially in Amsterdam, where the genre of theatre was radically renewed in the beginning of the century, plays were increasingly brought to the press.²⁰ Moving away from the sixteenth-century rhetorician's tradition of performing plays in the context of competitions, for special occasions or on market squares, theatre in the seventeenth century professionalised, being performed indoors and for a paying audience. This resulted in the erection of the first permanent theatre infrastructure in the Low Countries – the *Nederduytsche Academie* (1617) and the *Schouwburg* (1637) are well-known examples from Amsterdam.²¹ The south followed these developments at a slightly slower pace, but there too, rhetoricians opened their chambers for paying audiences.²² These changes catalysed the renewal of the genre in general: regular performances for paying audiences meant that new texts had to be written at a steady pace to keep the public entertained.²³ This increase in textual production was closely watched by publishers and printers, who soon saw a market for printed reading editions. In Amsterdam, for example, the *Academie* and the *Schouwburg* worked with specific printers, who in turn acquired exclusive privileges to print the theatre texts.²⁴ Certainly when plays or their au-

Koninklijke Hoofdkamer voor Rhetorica "De Fonteyne" te Gent 61–62 (2011–2012). The texts have been edited by Ruud Ryckaert, *De Antwerpse spelen van 1561; naar de editie Silvius (Antwerpen 1562) uitgegeven met inleiding, annotaties en registers* (Gent: KANTL, 2011).

(19) Meeus, "Titelbladen," (see note 10) 306–9.

(20) Jacob Adolf Worp, *Geschiedenis van het drama en het tooneel in Nederland* (Groningen: Wolters, 1904–1908), 87; Meeus, "Titelbladen," (see note 10) 306–10.

(21) Mieke B. Smits-Veldt, *Het Nederlandse Renaissancetoneel* (Utrecht: HES, 1991), 14–7.

(22) Timothy De Paepe, *Une place pour les comédies...: de relatie tussen inrichting, repertoire en gebruik van de Antwerpse theatergebouwen tussen 1610 en 1762* (Antwerpen: Universiteit Antwerpen, 2011: unpublished Ph.D. thesis).

(23) Wim M. H. Hummelen, "1637: Jacob van Campen bouwt de Amsterdamse Schouwburg: inrichting en gebruik van het toneel bij de rederijders en in de Schouwburg," in *Een theatergeschiedenis der Nederlanden: tien eeuwen drama en theater in Nederland en Vlaanderen*, (ed.) Rob Erenstein (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1996), 202–3.

(24) Wiebe Hogendoorn, *De schouwburg in beeld. Amsterdamse toneelscènes, 1665–1772* (Houten: Hes & De Graaf, 2012), 22.

thors had gained a certain renown, there was an audience for theatre texts in printed form. Both media were mutually reinforcing, too: printed editions thrived on the popularity of performances, but could also publicise renewed performances, in the same cities as well as elsewhere. For playwrights, the medium of print meant they could reach larger audiences, and increased the longevity of their work, allowing them to rise above the single event of a live performance.²⁵ In smaller cities as well as in the south, however, the move to printed theatre texts was slower and less marked. Especially in chambers of rhetoric, which continued to dominate the literary life in the provinces and in the south, the medium of manuscript would continue to play an important role in literary expression, well into the seventeenth century, and even beyond, as we will show. Generally speaking, manuscript and print functioned side by side, with people copying texts from prints, for example, assembling text collections corresponding to their individual tastes.²⁶ In terms of text dissemination and genre, manuscript and print seem to have been communicating vessels, but the exact interplay between them has not yet been the focus of systematic scholarly analysis.

While in English scholarship for example, the role of the manuscript in theatre companies has been a focus of study for some time, their importance has still to be fully recognized.²⁷ Early modern theatre manuscripts from the Low Countries have generally received very scant scholarly attention, even if their existence is well known.²⁸ In 1968, W. M. H. Hummelen, inventorying rhetorician's drama between 1500 and 1620, included manuscripts in his survey.²⁹ In 1983, H. Meeus extended the scope to 1650, adding younger manuscript material to Hummelen's inventory.³⁰ A few years later, P. Lammens-Pikhaus inventoried shorter *tafelspelen*, listing 24 manuscript sources, in which she conveniently separated codices with only theatre texts (19) from codices containing theatre among other text material (5).³¹ The most recent – and continuously growing – online database Ceneton, managed by Ton Harmsen, lists no less than 641 plays that have been preserved in manuscript, on a total of more than 12800 theatre texts, from the earliest record up to 1803.³² While the

(25) Meeus, "Titelbladen," (see note 10) 307–10.

(26) Van Herk, *Fabels van liefde* (see note 15), 123–24.

(27) See W. B. Long, "'Precious few': English manuscript playbooks," in *A companion to Shakespeare*, (ed.) David Scott Kastan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 414–33, who accuses editors of Shakespeare's work of 'constructing a screen of flimflam, weaving explanations out of their imaginations while ignorantly (or arrogantly or both) ignoring even the mention of the existence of these surviving playbooks' (414).

(28) As an introduction to the English material, see Grace Ioppolo, *Dramatists and their Manuscripts in the Age of Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton and Heywood* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

(29) Wim M. H. Hummelen, *Repertorium van het rederijkersdrama, 1500-ca. 1620* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1968).

(30) Hubert Meeus, *Repertorium van het ernstige drama in de Nederlanden 1600–1650* (Leuven: Acco, 1983), here 24–8.

(31) Patricia Pikhaus, *Het tafelspel bij de rederijkers* (Gent: KANTL, 1988–1989).

(32) See Ceneton. As a comparison: W. P. Williams, "Review of: Paul Werstine, *Early Modern Playhouse Manuscripts and the Editing of Shakespeare*," *Shakespeare quarterly* 64/4 (2013): 473–75, compared estimates of preserved manuscripts in England between 1570 and 1642. These vary between 18 and 125 manuscripts, depending on the definition of a 'theatre manuscript', while 800 plays have been preserved in print. The ratio in the Dutch material strikingly similar, at least to the high end of the estimate.

work in inventorying and discovering new material continues to bear fruit, there has been very little follow-up in terms of scholarly studies devoted to specific theatre manuscripts, let alone to the specificity of the manuscript as a medium for theatre generally. Aside from some case studies, for example on late seventeenth-century theatre scrolls, scattered editions of manuscript material, and a few studies that look only marginally at manuscripts, the picture is rather grim.³³ At the same time, the manuscripts are known and their literary value is increasingly recognised, with eight of them for example having acquired the status of ‘Topstuk’ in Flanders (Belgium).³⁴ The scarce case studies on these manuscripts evidently show their importance: they sometimes contain uniquely preserved texts unknown from other sources, or titles that are known only from being mentioned in archival records for example. Despite their importance for our understanding of the actual practice of performing theatre in Early Modern times, and for literary history in general, especially in the southern Low Countries, they have not been studied in a systematic way.³⁵ So far, the genre of theatre has insufficiently been used as a starting point to look more generally at the diversity of manuscript forms in which these texts were recorded. The lack of scholarly interest in Belgium and the Netherlands is in stark contrast with the growing attention for manuscript material in English scholarship, for example, where the functions and contexts of usage of various types of theatre manuscripts have become a field of study in their own right.³⁶ In the Low Countries, the material study of theatre manuscripts is still in its infancy. The tone was set by a very basic exploration of medieval material by J. P. Gumbert, who tried to discern different contexts of use on the basis of the manuscripts’ format and lay-out. Gumbert distinguished between authorial copies, ‘archival’ copies (intended to collect and preserve theatre texts, e.g. in the context of a theatre company or a rhetoricians’ chamber), a director’s copy, players’ scrolls, or a reading manuscript meant for silent consultation, not necessarily by the performers themselves.³⁷ While his typology is very prudent, he made clear that aside from material aspects such as form and lay-out, scholarship should also consider

(33) E.g. Hüskén & Schaars (eds), *Sandrijn en Lanslot* (see note 11); Brinkman & Schenkel (eds), *Het handschrift-Van Hulthem* (see note 12); Wim N. M. Hüskén, Bart A. M. Ramakers & Frans A. M. Schaars (eds), *Trou moet blijcken: bronnenuitgave van de boeken der Haarlemse rederijderskamer ‘de Pellicanisten’* (Assen: Quarto, 1992–1998); Kåre Langvik-Johannesen, “Een handschriftenmystificatie opgelost – en nog meer: bio-bibliografische verkenningen omtrent Jan Frans Cammaert en Jacob de Ridder,” *Spiegel der Letteren* 33 (1991): 279–83. A notable exception is a systematic study of the manuscript material of the Haarlem chamber *Trou moet Blijcken*: Van Herten, “Een codicologische beschrijving” (see note 9).

(34) As part of its cultural policy, the Flemish Government labels some of its material heritage as ‘Topstuk’, which means, among a number of other restrictions, that it is not allowed to be sold outside Flanders. In practice, the label works as an advertiser for sometimes little-known collections, and opens up possibilities to acquire funding for restoration.

(35) The importance of the manuscript sources is underlined by Long, “Precious few” (see note 27).

(36) See for example Ioppolo, *Dramatists and their Manuscripts* (see note 28); and Paul Werstine, *Early Modern Playhouse Manuscripts and the Editing of Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

(37) Peter Gumbert, “Nederlandse toneelhandschriften: een codicologische oogopslag,” in *Spel en spektakel: middeleeuws toneel in de Lage Landen*, (eds) Hans van Dijk & Bart Ramakers (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2001), 76–82.

(para)textual evidence pointing in the direction of performances or contexts of use, such as stage directions, alterations and illustrations.³⁸ Marjolein van Herten followed Gumbert's example and delivered a detailed codicological study of one coherent collection of theatre manuscripts.³⁹ A broader approach was adopted by Anke van Herk, who compared various forms and functions of Early modern theatre manuscripts, showing differences in function and usage of three cases, and relating the content of the manuscript to parallel textual evidence in print.⁴⁰

Along these lines, we propose to look at a number of very diverse theatre manuscripts from the long seventeenth century, that we consider to be typical of the various ways in which the medium of manuscript may have functioned to record theatre, in a time when the printing press was well established as the main mode of text dissemination. We follow in the footsteps of earlier research in the sense that we are working from manuscript evidence to sketch an image of the contexts in which these manuscripts will have been used in the (long) seventeenth century. It is not our intention to be exhaustive in the types of theatre manuscripts and their modes of usage. Nor do we want to inventory all of the early modern theatre material in the Royal Library of Belgium. We merely want to move scholarship on Dutch material a step forward in looking at a corpus that is known to exist, but deserves far more attention. Within the scope of this article, we propose to discern five types of early modern theatre manuscripts: the anthology, the mixed miscellany, the single-text manuscript with a direct relation to print, the single-text manuscript as a 'playbook', and the authorial 'working manuscript'. We are well aware that English scholarship has arrived at a much more nuanced and intricate typology, but we believe it is too early to impose this model on the Dutch material, considering the very preliminary stage of research in the Low Countries.⁴¹ In discussing the cases illustrating each of our five types, we touch upon more general themes in studying early modern theatre manuscripts: the interaction of authorship and performance, the role of censorship, the relation to print, and the existence of theatre collections, or company libraries of sorts, in manuscript form. This combined approach of a material as well as a literary historical analysis will shed light on the functions and modes of usage of each individual manuscript. At this stage, we will be looking only at material preserved in the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels, which is the custodian of a number of interesting theatre manuscripts that for several reasons have remained more or less unnoticed in scholarship.

(38) Gumbert, "Middelleeuwse toneelhandschriften," (see note 37) 82.

(39) Van Herten, "Een codicologische beschrijving," (see note 9).

(40) Van Herk, *Fabels van liefde* (see note 15), 127–40.

(41) Ioppolo, *Dramatists and their Manuscripts* (see note 28), and others generally distinguish between 'foul papers' – i.e. authorial drafts – and 'fair copies' made for the company or another purpose. These could turn into 'playbooks' if they were used during rehearsal or bear annotations put in by stage directors or actors. English theatre companies often employed scribes to copy manuscripts, who were called 'book keepers'. This practice has yet to be attested for the Low Countries, and there are a number of other differences, notably in the institutional embedding of theatre, that caution against an all-too easy comparison.

TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY OF EARLY MODERN THEATRE MANUSCRIPTS IN THE LOW COUNTRIES

The Anthology

Manuscript 18398 is a miscellany including only comical plays and farces, both from the northern and the southern Low Countries (for an overview of titles, see below, Appendix 1). The collection was probably made in the early eighteenth century, with many of the plays dating to the final quarter of the seventeenth, and some to the beginning of the eighteenth century. The manuscript is a neat copy, containing only very few additions or modifications, in an extensive corpus of no less than 42 plays. These have been listed in an index – ‘Inhoudt der Comoedien’ – in the back, where their titles are followed by succinct summaries. The manuscript therefore is a very systematic collection, that contains no clues pointing towards actual performance: there are no verse counts, not all of the plays contain stage directions, and there are no traces of usage.

Many of the plays included can be traced back to earlier printed versions, some of which date to the first half of the seventeenth century, such as Jan Jansz. Starter’s *Ian Soetekauw* (1621), Jan Harmensz. Krul’s *Klucht van Drooghe Goosen* (1632) or Matthijs Gramsbergen’s *Kluchtighe tragoedie of den hartoog van Pierlepon* (1650). It would seem that the compiler apparently did not hesitate to include material that was almost a century old, but as some of these plays enjoyed several reprints, well into the eighteenth century, they may not have been aware of this.⁴² In any case, there is no attempt at chronological order: ‘older’ material is found among plays from the second half of the seventeenth century, such as Hermanus Angelkot Sr’s *Vechter* (1679), Michiel Elias’ *De ontvoogde vrouw* (1688), Thomas Asselijn’s *De spilpenning, of verkwistende vrouw* (1693) and several plays by the Brussels playwright Joan de Griefck, dating from around 1700. A limited number of plays will have been printed only very recently at the time of compiling the manuscript, such as Wybrandus de Geest’s *De geveinse zothed door liefde* (1710) and Guiliam (or Barbara) Ogier’s *Don Ferdinand, oft Spaenschen sterrekijker* (1714). As the compiler made minor changes to the titles of the plays, did not include author’s names, and did not provide dates along with the plays he copied, nor referred to any printed text, it is sometimes difficult to trace the plays back to specific printed versions. For the same reasons, it is impossible to discern if they worked with the later reprints or with older versions of the printed texts. Some of the plays they included do not seem to lead back to any titles known from printed versions, such as *Clucht van Steven den cloecken soldaet*, *Den bedroghen venetiaenschen vryer* and three interlinked Latin plays centering around the character ‘Pambo’, who is normally identified as a late Antique Desert Father, but who seems to feature in a different role in the plays in this manuscript.⁴³

(42) Data compiled using the STCV, STCN and the online databases Onstage and Ceneton.

(43) *Ökumenisches Heiligenlexikon*, s.v. ‘Pambo’. A character ‘Pambo’ is known, notably from Jesuit school theatre in Kortrijk and Ypres (e.g. Ceneton 051310), but the titles listed in the manuscript so far as we can

In these cases, it is possible that we are looking at theatre texts that so far are not known from any other source, in manuscript or print.

It is difficult to assess the compiler's own understanding of this material, and the way they dealt with the texts they found in print. In some cases, they did not follow the printed versions all too closely: some manuscript versions show deleted scenes and passages when compared to their (known) print versions, such as a shorter version of Willem Ogier's *Belachelyck misverstant ofte Boere geck* (1681), in which passages that were not essential for the plot, have been deleted.

One aspect that does become clear from the selection of plays is their wide range, not only in chronological terms, but especially in terms of the region in which they were first performed or printed. The 42 plays include texts from the northern and the southern Low Countries, without explicitly discerning between them. This is noteworthy, not only because both parts of the Low Countries are believed to have developed their own separate literary cultures in the course of the seventeenth century, but also in terms of the fact that northern prints were apparently readily available in the south, or vice versa.⁴⁴ Further research into the precise content of this manuscript and how the individual handwritten versions of the plays relate to (specific editions of) their printed counterparts, will probably shed more light on how precisely the interaction between northern and southern theatrical culture actually worked, and on the extent to which the medium of manuscript played a role in this. Research along these lines could also lead to a hypothesis as to where this collection was made.

Now what does this manuscript and its contents tell us about the way and the context in which it may have been used in the early eighteenth century? Its overall neatness, the inclusion of a table of contents and the steady, single hand, shows that we are dealing with an anthology of sorts, aiming to gather a relevant corpus of comical theatre. Aside from their comical aspect, there is little that explains the selection of precisely these 42 plays in this collection. They do not stem from the same regions, do not deal with similar themes, were not printed by one or a few regular printers, etc. This may imply that we are looking at the personal preference of the eighteenth-century compiler, who has left us no clues as to their identity. There are no verse counts, very little stage instructions, or traces of usage that point towards the manuscript being used in the context of performance. Its size also does not point in this direction. We therefore assume that the manuscript was intended as a reading book for one private reader or a circle of likeminded theatre lovers, interested specifically in the comical genre. It can serve as an example of the 'anthology' type of early modern theatre manuscripts, in its consistent focus on theatre, even on just one type of theatre, and in its paratextual reading aids, that lead the reader to specific content. While this specific manu-

see are not (comp. Goran Proot, *Het schooltoneel* (see note 16). Pambo, who plays the role of a 'hypocrite' in the first play, appears on a ship in the second, which seems to set sail for the Holy Land in the third. This is a storyline which we can hardly associate with the Desert Father and hermit Pambo.

(44) Karel Porteman & Mieke B. Smits-Veldt, *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2008), 18.

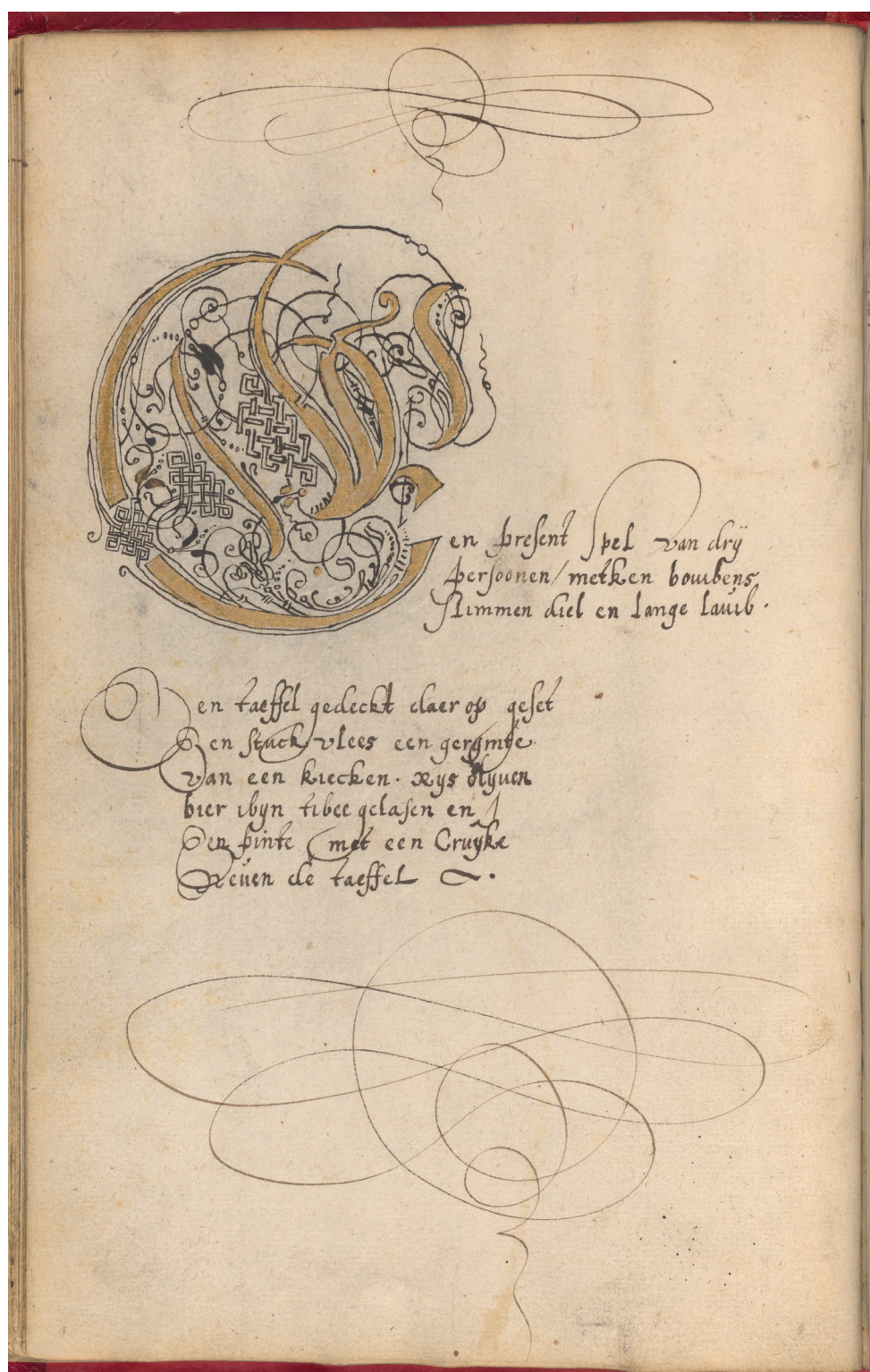


Fig. 2. Brussels: Royal Library of Belgium, ms. 15663, f. 16v. 'Een present spel van drij persoonen, metken bouwens slimmen diel en lange lauw'.

script seems to exclude the possibility of having been used as a collective book of reference, for example in the context of a theatre company or a chamber of rhetoric, other anthology manuscripts could very well have served this purpose.⁴⁵ For this case, however, we argue that the lack of verse counts, in light of their abundant presence in other theatre manuscripts, makes it unlikely that this anthology was used in a performance context.

The Mixed Miscellany

A much earlier manuscript, dated between 1599 and the early 1630s, is ms. 15663, a codex known as the miscellany of 'Adriaen Wils'. It is a mixed collection of not just plays, but also other texts that can invariably be linked to rhetorician circles, such as refrains, ballads and songs, both religious and worldly.⁴⁶ Aside from strictly 'literary' content, the manuscript also served as a record for Wils' day-to-day activities and important events in his family. Wils (1580-1634) was a rhetorician who is known to have headed the Antwerp chamber 'De Goudbloem' as *factor* for some time between 1600 and 1610, but is also recorded for an individual entry into the Mechelen rhetorician competition of 1620.⁴⁷ His manuscript will have been a work he returned to on a regular basis over the course of many years, and some of his work was continued by his son, which seems to be a common feature for many early modern manuscripts.⁴⁸

The texts in the manuscript are mostly not his own work: the refrains certainly were copied from other sources, some of which have been traced in print, and some in manuscript.⁴⁹ These include work by known sixteenth-century authors from rhetorical circles such as Anna Bijns (1493-1575), Cornelis Crul (1500-c. 1550) or Frans Fraet (c. 1505-1558).⁵⁰ From a literary historical point of view, it is interesting that Wils, who remained true to the catholic faith at least in appearance, apparently had no problem including in his manuscript both the fiercely catholic work of Bijns, and that of reformed authors such as Crul and Fraet, even if he appropriated

(45) See Van Herten, "Een codicologische beschrijving," (see note 9), who shows that some of the *Trou moet Blijcken*-codices have functioned as such. Our understanding of an 'anthology' also bears resemblance to the Ryer Gheurtsz collection, even if this is composed of several single-text manuscripts. See Van Herk, *Fabels van liefde* (see note 15), 128-38.

(46) Freddy Puts, "De codex Adriaen Wils," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde* 108/3 (1992): 223-55. There is a table of contents on pp. 229-35.

(47) See Puts, "De codex" (see note 46), 224-26.

(48) Puts, "De codex" (see note 46), 229-35, discerns three script types, which he found to correspond with stages in Wils' life.

(49) Puts, "De codex" (see note 46), 231-32.

(50) See F. J. van den Branden & J. G. Frederiks, *Biographisch woordenboek der Noord- en Zuidnederlandse letterkunde* (Amsterdam: L. J. Veen, 1888-1889), 65-6 (Bijns), 182 (Crul), 257 (Fraet). For convenience reasons, we refer to one biographical dictionary. All three authors have been the subject of more recent scholarship. For a recent orientation, see Herman Pleij, *Het gevleugelde woord* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2007); and Porteman & Smits-Velt, *Een nieuw vaderland* (see note 44).

Bijns' work to a certain extent.⁵¹ In any case, the refrains he included can be found not only in printed collections, but also in a number of other refrain manuscripts, which shows that collecting refrains in a private manuscript will have been common practice among rhetoricians.⁵² The plays, however, have not been traced to other sources, in print nor in manuscript, as far as is known in the extensive Ceneton database.⁵³ These theatre texts, eight in total, are *tafelspelen*, simple plays performed in rhetoricians' gatherings, often for special occasions; *presentspelen*, a variant of the former, performed to accompany a formal gift; and *esbattementen*, short farces:

- f. 1^v-5^v: Een present spel van twee persoonagen de namen syn dese te weeten den sorchvuldigen mensche een Man slechtelck gecleet, troost den schrifture een man degelyck gecleet⁵⁴
- f. 7^v-15^r: Een present spel van drij persoonen. Sottelijck voortstel eenen sot. Warachtige liefde een vrouwe. Goetwilligen dienst een man Statelijck gecleet⁵⁵
- f. 16^v-25^r: Een present spel van drij persoonen, metken bouwens slimmen diel en lange lauw⁵⁶
- f. 26^v-32^r: Hier begint een speel van twee peersonnagien eenen schoenlapper met syn wijf⁵⁷
- f. 32^v-38^v: Een battement spel van twee peersonnagien eenen boer genaempt Duypen en een Vrou genaempt gebuerinne⁵⁸
- f. 39^v-44^v: Een battement spel van drij peersonnagien wel gemanierd een vrowe beleeft van seden eenen man stadelyck gecleet vol verstant eenen boer wtt plomperdijen⁵⁹
- f. 136^v-144^r: Een battement van twee peersonnagien te weeten eenen bour genaempt botverstant op syn bours gecleet met een Ruyspijpe, dander personagie gecleet ghelyck een eelman genampt cloucken geest⁶⁰
- f. 147^v-151^r: Een battement spel van 2 personagen te wetten vastelauont eenen man houerdelijck ghecleedt de vasten een baghyn met een corsken en een cruyselfickx daer inne⁶¹

Their content, like the refrains, is not entirely uncritical of the Church: in one of them, a cobbler tries to deceive his wife by dressing up as a parish priest, and in another, the audience is encouraged to personally look for salvation in the reading of Scripture, without

(51) Freddy Puts, "Een geestelijk contrafact: Adriaen Wils versus Anna Bijns," *Spiegel der letteren* 34/2 (1992): 159–68.

(52) See in general terms Nelleke Moser, "'Toutes les œuvres qu'il ait jamais composées': de l'ouvrage à l'œuvre dans la littérature d'expression néerlandaise entre 1500 et 1600," *Réforme, Humanisme, Renaissance* 37/74 (2012): 185–202. Anna Bijns' work saw a considerable dissemination in manuscript, some of which are preserved in the Royal Library of Belgium.

(53) According to W. Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel (ca. 1600)," *De Vlaamse Gids* 28 (1939–1940): 25–39; 512–37; this will have had to do with their controversial nature and their being listed on subsequent *Indices librorum*.

(54) Ceneton 117250. See W. Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel," (see note 53) 31–9.

(55) Ceneton 117280. See Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel," (see note 53) 514–17.

(56) Ceneton 113110. See Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel," (see note 53) 517–20.

(57) Ceneton 116560. See Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel," (see note 53) 520–23; and for an edition Freddy Puts (ed.), "Twee esbattementen uit de codex Adriaen Wils," *Jaarboek van de Koninklijke Hoofdkamer van Rhetorica "De Fonteyne" te Gent* 39–40 (1989–1990): 147–81, here 149–65.

(58) Ceneton 106380. See Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel," (see note 53), 523–25; and for an edition Puts (ed.), "Twee esbattementen" (see note 52), 166–81.

(59) Ceneton 120450. See Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel," (see note 53) 525–27.

(60) Ceneton 104230. See Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel," (see note 53) 527–30.

(61) Ceneton 118930. See Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel," (see note 53) 531–33.

intermediation of the clergy.⁶² The controversial content of five of the plays has led previous scholars to believe that they were written before 1560, when all criticism targeting Catholicism or the clergy was prohibited.⁶³ However, no one has wondered why a rhetorician in the beginning of the seventeenth century, who in his public appearance remained true to the catholic faith, took the trouble of copying these old, subversive farces in his personal manuscript. Van Eeghem traced the plays to some very similar titles explicitly prohibited in the subsequent publication lists of the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, and pointed to the fact that Wils, in copying this content, apparently tried to disguise the texts by using alternative titles. But the question why he went through all this trouble, remains unanswered.

We believe that the medium of manuscript, again, is crucial in explaining Wils' controversial selection of text material. A choice for manuscript over print allowed him to escape the curious eyes of censorship, and to keep his opinions to himself and a restricted circle of his own choosing. The other texts in the manuscript show that it was intended as a relatively private compendium, related to the personal life of Wils, both professionally and personally. There are notes concerning his family – deaths, births, and other memories – that were continued by his son, which sufficiently shows that the manuscript was not primarily intended to leave the privacy of the Wils family. On the other hand, it contains a recipe for gunpowder and other textual material regarding the public persona of Wils, as a member of the arquebusiers shooting guild in the city of Antwerp. However, as these positions in the time of Wils' life had acquired a hereditary character, these notes too, could be placed in the context of the Wils family. In its relatively restricted scope, combined to its controversial content, the manuscript is similar to other, contemporary examples, of southerners who evaded the stern censorship by keeping their thoughts to themselves, and entrusting them to the controllable medium of a private book.⁶⁴

Considering the private nature of Wils' manuscript, it is unlikely that the farces he included were intended for public performance. At most, they may have been played by his children – who have left other traces in the book, such as translation exercises – or other members of his family, or indeed by a group of likeminded friends in the margin of the rhetorical literary life in Antwerp in the early seventeenth century, which at least in appearance had been cleansed of any rebellious sympathies. Another explanation for their presence in this text collection could be that Wils attempted to record the plays for posterity, for example in a time when it was too dangerous or controversial for a chamber of rhetoric to keep texts such as these in their archive. This would explain Wils' alterations in the titles of the plays, which testify to his intention to 'disguise' them as acceptable for possible onlookers.

(62) Comp. Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel," (see note 53) 31–4; and Puts, "De codex," (see note 46).

(63) Van Eeghem, "Contrabandetoneel," (see note 53) 512.

(64) J. Van Caudenberg, "Het verzamelhandschrift van Willem de Gortter," in *Liber lumnorum Prof. Dr. E. Rombauts: aangeboden ter gelegenheid van zijn vijftenzestigste verjaardag en zijn dertigjarig hoogleraarschap*, (eds) Norbert De Paepe & Lode Roose (Leuven: Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1968), 211–30; and Bram Caers, "'Spaensche bloet-honden' overvallen de Nederlanden: een handschrift met subversieve teksten uit de zuidelijke Nederlanden imagologisch bekeken," *Neerlandica wratislaviensia* [in press, 2019].

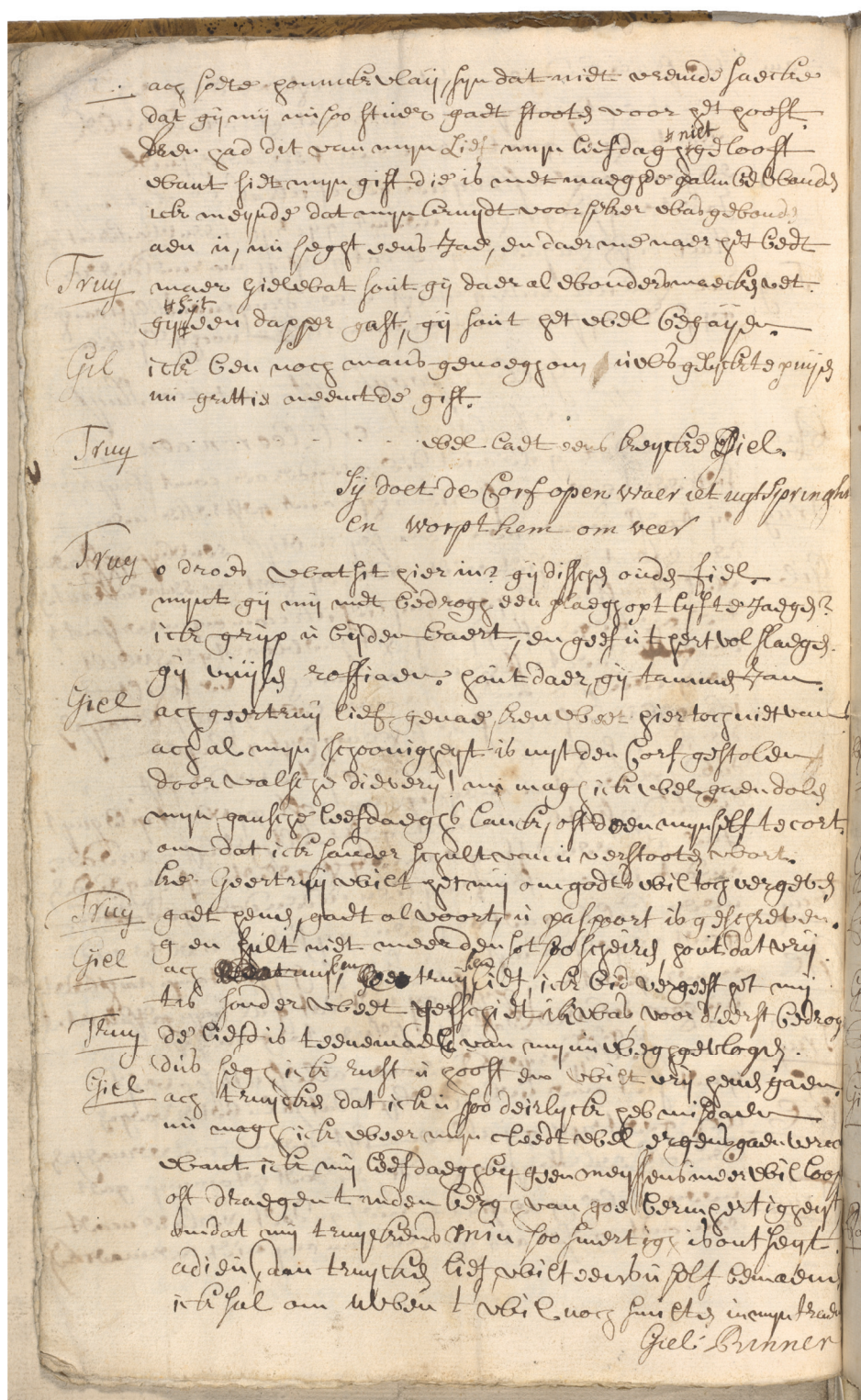


Fig. 3. Brussels: Royal Library of Belgium, ms. 19331-32, f. 7^v. part of *Gielen leepoogh* showing stage directions (middle of page).

The Single-Text Manuscript – Copies from Prints

Some manuscripts contain only theatre, and will have been intended as a single-text manuscript, even if in today's state, they are found bound together with other, often later material. Manuscript 19361-62⁶⁵ (i.e. 19361-32) contains a rather worn version of *Gielen Leepoogh*, a comical play by the Antwerp playwright Geeraerd van den Brande, who was active in the first half of the seventeenth century.⁶⁶ The play tells a very simple story about an old bachelor, Gielen, who is rejected by his maid, Truy. Ramos, Truy's lover, makes Gielen believe that he has made Truy pregnant just by talking to her, after which Truy and Ramos present a cat dressed up as a baby, to scare Gielen.

The manuscript containing *Gielen Leepoogh* is an interesting case because the text can be traced into printed versions. The anonymous writer of this manuscript apparently copied out a printed theatre text, with the intention of having it performed. Originally, *Gielen Leepoogh* was a comical interlude in the dramatic *Rosalinde, hertoginne van Savoyen*, also by Van den Brande, who was inspired by the Spanish *comedia*, known for combining comical and serious elements. The Spanish plays often feature comical interludes having little or nothing to do with the main plot, and thereby breaking classical theatre rules.⁶⁷ Van den Brande's *Rosalinde* was allegedly based on Alonso de la Vega's *Comedia de la duquesa de la Rosa* (1563), testifying to the growing influence of Spanish theatre in the Low Countries from the 1640s onwards.⁶⁸ Dutch adaptations of Spanish theatre met with great success, both in the southern and the northern Low Countries.⁶⁹ *Rosalinde* premiered in Antwerp in August 1642, and was printed in the same year (Antwerp: Jacob Mesens). There are several reprints, well into the eighteenth century. The interlude farce *Gielen Leepoogh*, which may have been performed as a standalone play as well,⁷⁰ was included in these prints, but appeared as an independent play, in a separate print, only near the end of the seventeenth century (Antwerpen: Jan Baptist Jacobs).⁷¹

(65) In the online catalogue (opac.kbr.be), the manuscript is falsely listed under 19361–32.

(66) The manuscript is a loose quire, bound together in the nineteenth century with an unrelated eighteenth-century manuscript 'argument', containing the short version of a farce ascribed to 'den heer verberght professor in het venetien (?) tot loven'. This explains the double shelfmark: in the nineteenth century, the numbers indicated individual texts, rather than books.

(67) Mary Jane Treacy, *An approach to the structure of Lope de Vega's comedies: 1585–1610* (Boston: Boston University, 1980), 100–1.

(68) Worp, *Geschiedenis* (see note 20), 110; Gustaaf Van Eemeren & Hubert Meeus, *Genres in het ernstige renaissance toneel der Nederlanden 1626–1650. Verslag van een onderzoek: Deel 2* (Leuven: Acco, 1988), 81.

(69) J. A. Van Praag, *La comedia espagnole aux Pays-Bas au 17e et au 18e siècle* (Amsterdam: H. J. Paris, 1922), 80–1.

(70) De Paepe, *Une place* (see note 22), 603, compare Porteman & Smits-Veldt, *Een nieuw vaderland* (see note 44), 445. On the reprints, see Ceneton, 013780, 013790, 013800, 013810, 013820.

(71) Ceneton dates the printed play c. 1645 (013740), probably based on the catalogue of the *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, where a single preserved copy is kept. However, the printer Jan Baptist Jacobs' attested activity is restricted to 1698 and 1699 (see USTC, and compare Frans Olthoff, *De boekdrukkers, boekverkoopers en uitgevers in Antwerpen sedert de uitvinding der boekdrukkunst tot op onze dagen* (Antwerpen: J.-E. Buschmann,

In working with theatre manuscripts from the Early Modern period, one always wonders how these texts relate to printed versions of the same plays, which were often circulating at the same time as the manuscripts. The case of *Gielen Leepoogh* allowed for a comparison with a number of reprints of the accompanying drama *Rosalinde*, as well as with the separate late seventeenth-century print. This comparison shows that the manuscript version was probably based on one of the interlude prints rather than on the single print of 1699. This concurs with the handwriting, which dates to the second half of the seventeenth, rather than to the eighteenth century. In terms of content and paratext, the manuscript shows the greatest similarity with the earliest prints (1642, 1645) in copying stage directions, for example, that do not occur in the 1699 print.⁷²

Not only the stage directions, but also the verse count in the end (394) seems to point into the direction of a manuscript that was used in a performance context. Its preservation in a single quire (albeit bound together with much younger material in the nineteenth century) makes it likely that it functioned as a loose unit in the seventeenth century: as opposed to the anthology of 42 plays discussed above, a single-quire play made it very manageable to use in a performance context, for example as a copy for the stage director.

In terms of alterations, there are a number of differences between the printed versions and the manuscript that show how the text was adapted to a new context when it was transferred into manuscript. Scenes where the characters comment on the situation in the serious play *Rosalinde*, stepping outside the theatrical reality of their interlude, were left out or altered. Further on, modifications were made in the ending of the farce:

Vrinden nemt het in danck en gaet het op sijn boers
Oft t'uwent slechter ganck, sijt daerom niet ialoers
Finis

[transl. Friends, be thankful even if it is a little blunt
And if your own lives are worse, don't be jealous]

The pattern of the modifications clearly shows that the intention was to loosen the interlude farce *Gielen Leepoogh* from the accompanying tragedy *Rosalinde* so as to turn it into an independent play. Deleting superfluous scenes will have helped in shortening this interlude, to make it more appropriate to be performed *after* any longer dramatic text. These alterations, however, were made not in this physical manuscript as it only contains a few minor

1891), 50). The *Gielen Leepoogh* print includes a list of texts available in the printer's shop, most of which were printed only from the 1680s onwards: Philip Claudius Basuel's *Bly-cyndende treurspel van het leven ende wondere daeden van den H. Rombout* (1680), Balthasar Wils' *De verliefden Periander, oft veranderlycke liefde* (1688), Cornelis Wils' *Bon Jan en Sanderien, klucht-spel oft het tweede deel van den verliefden Periander* (c. 1700), and Hermannus Franciscus van den Brandt's *De helle-vaart van den grooten vizier* (1684). It is therefore impossible that the print dates from before the first imprint of these plays.

(72) Examples (page numbers are in a more recent hand): p. 4: 'Hy smijt den sack neer en gaet daer op sitten', p. 6: 'Thoont de Bors', p. 7: 'Sy doet de Corf open, waer iet uyt-springht en worpt hem om veer'; p. 11: 'Sy kust hem'. Not all stage directions were copied into the manuscript.

corrections. This makes it likely that the playwright, in adapting the printed interlude to a shorter standalone version, worked with a draft manuscript first, or indeed copied this shorter version from a pre-existing (manuscript?) copy.

The manuscript does not contain any references to an actual performance. There is a chronogram in a younger hand in the back of the manuscript, but as part of it is damaged, it is impossible to date. Interestingly, the manuscript which opened this contribution, the eighteenth-century anthology, ms. 18398, also includes a version of *Gielen Leepoogh* that was based on the interlude version rather than the single print. Even in the eighteenth century, when the single print was relatively new, authors apparently preferred taking the interlude directly from a *Rosalinde* print.

Single-Text Manuscripts as 'Playbooks'

Some theatre manuscripts are rather more chaotic than the examples above, and contain annotations, be it interlinear, in the margins or on extra scraps of paper, deletions, and other alterations. The image they present is one of transience: either we are looking at the *text genesis* of a theatre text, or we are dealing with alterations that were made after the text was completed, during rehearsal for its premiere or on the occasion of it being performed again at a later point in time. In either case, these manuscripts testify to the fact that the (theatre) text is essentially unfinished and could be adapted and appropriated by later readers or performers at any given time. In early modern English theatre practice, some of these 'working manuscripts' were labelled 'playbooks', a term which has come to be used in modern scholarship as well. Playbooks were neat copies of the finished play, that were subsequently annotated by the author, or by actors and stage directors, on the occasion of performance, and were probably used during rehearsal.⁷³ A thorough comparison between the English and Dutch material is not our aim, but it would seem that some of the theatre manuscripts from the city of Lier preserved in the Royal Library, are at least very similar to the English 'playbooks'. It is probably no coincidence that many of these are single-text manuscripts, which makes them more readily usable in a performance context. We can imagine them having served as a stage director's copy, as rehearsal copies or as ledgers to copy individual actor scrolls from. Manuscripts such as these differ from the case of *Gielen Leepoogh* discussed above, not in their functional context, but mainly in their relative independence from the printing press. While *Gielen Leepoogh* was copied from a print and shows the 'afterlife' of a play in the medium of manuscript, the playbooks provide insight into text genesis and alteration before the text was put to the press, if indeed it was the intention to have it printed at all.

Considering its relatively minor importance, the small city of Lier boasted a lively literary scene. There were two very active chambers of rhetoric, *De Groeiende Boom* ('The growing

(73) Long, "Precious few," (see note 27) 415.

tree') and *De Jenette* ('Narcissus flower') which were both founded in the late fifteenth century and were in constant competition. The former recruited among the top layer of urban society, whereas the latter grouped people from a more modest descent.⁷⁴ These chambers performed theatre on a very regular basis, which becomes apparent not only from the preserved material, but also from archival documents, that contain references to plays that never appeared in print.⁷⁵ The most important literary voices in seventeenth-century Lier were Cornelis de Bie (1627-1715) and Joris Berckmans († 1694). The former is known not only as a playwright, but also as a poet, and his work appeared in print already during his lifetime. The latter wrote mostly plays, about forty of which were performed in Lier between 1636 and 1688.⁷⁶ These plays, however, never made it to the printing press in full form, which is why Berckmans is relatively unknown, whereas De Bie has gathered some renown and features, for example, extensively in the most recent literary history of the Low Countries.⁷⁷

Some of Berckmans' plays have been preserved in manuscript in the Royal Library of Belgium, and contain interlinear and other additions, new text fragments on slips of paper pasted over other parts of the manuscript, and modifications in contemporaneous as well as later hands, all signals that can point to them having been used as 'playbooks'.⁷⁸ All of the manuscripts with plays attributed to Berckmans, are single-text manuscripts that are very similar in their intention and their lay-out. They will typically contain a reference to the author (e.g. 'Berckmans *fecit*', or the inclusion of his motto 'Lust breckt rust'), a list of characters, a verse count and stage directions. Most of them also contain additions and alterations in contemporaneous hands, indicating that the manuscripts were annotated during rehearsal or performance. As there are several manuscripts with Berckmans' work in a very similar, if not identical hand, changing only to the extent that a writing hand can evolve over time, one wonders whether some of these manuscripts can be autographs, i.e. writ-

(74) Tine Rams, "De Rederijckers in Lier," *Lira Elegans* 10 (2000–2002): 7–116, here 18–20. Both chambers are sometimes referred to only by their mottoes: "t Dor wert groeiende" ('growing through virtue' – *De Groeiende Boom*) and 'De onghelerde' ('the unlearned' – *De Jenette*).

(75) Jan Frans Willems, "Kronyk der kamers van rhetorica, te Lier," *Belgisch museum voor de Nederduitsche tael- en letterkunde en de geschiedenis des vaderlands* 8 (1844): 288–330.

(76) See Van den Branden & Frederiks, *Biographisch woordenboek* (see note 50), 55 (on Berckmans), 64 (on De Bie).

(77) Porteman & Smits-Veldt, *Een nieuw vaderland* (see note 44), 570–71; 645, 728; 741–47; 754; 814–15. This coverage is in stark contrast with Berckmans' single mention on page 447; Pascal Calu, "*De memorie vande deught wordt door de Poësjie verlenght*". *Cornelis De Bie, een geëngageerde rederijker tijdens de katholieke reformatie* (Leuven: Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2015: unpublished Ph.D. thesis). The fact that the availability in print of course was of vital importance for the dissemination of an author's work, for its importance in the literary field of the time and, subsequently, for its present-day appreciation among scholars, is an interesting aspect to the relationship between print and manuscript that we will not take further in this paper. It is interesting to note that the first establishment of an orienting press dates to 1763 (Rams, "De rederijckers," (see note 74) 40–2). Possibly, this will have had an influence on the prevalence of manuscript.

(78) Meeus, *Repertorium* (see note 30), 24–8. Compare for the English material: John Jowett, "Exit manuscripts. The Archive of Theatre and the Archive of Print," in *Creating Shakespeare*, ed. Peter Holland. (Special issue of *Shakespeare Survey* 70 (2017)): 117, who states that manuscripts might "be developed towards performance by way of direct modification of the self-same manuscript".

ten in the author's own hand. The earliest play is dated 1636 and from the performances listed by Willems, who gleaned through archival records in the nineteenth century, we can assume that Berckmans continued to be active into old age. If indeed the manuscripts are autographs, but even if they were copied by the chamber's 'book keeper', we are dealing with an exceptional corpus of manuscript material that allows to sketch an image not only of the development of an author's oeuvre but also of the auctorial process of writing a play in the Early Modern period. Indeed, 'auctorial process' here, is to be understood both as text genesis in the hand of the author, and as annotation and alteration in dialogue with stage director and performers during rehearsal for a premiere, as is the case with the 'playbooks' in English scholarship. Manuscript 19360, for example, with Berckmans' serious drama *Stabilitas*, contains several alterations and additions, some on extra slips of paper. The altering hand is contemporaneous with the manuscript itself, and may well be attributed to a stage director or someone else involved in the first performance of the play. Indeed, there is no indication that *Stabilitas* was performed repeatedly, after its premiere in the spring of 1644, which adds weight to the argument that the annotations were made during rehearsal for the first performance and shows that we are looking into a creative process of collective text formation in the context of the rhetoricians' chamber.⁷⁹

The fact that the manuscripts were intended for performance, is obvious not only on the basis of the annotations, but also judging from paratextual evidence such as a verse count, with separate total verse numbers per character, as well as stage directions. This is the case in manuscript 19360 (*Stabilitas*), but also in most of the other Berckmans manuscripts. In ms. 19349, with Berckmans' tragedy *Pitia*, there is a contemporaneous note in the back, in the same hand as the text, stating that the play was publicly performed on 24 and 26 June 1669, and listing the names of the actors and the roles they played, followed by the number of lines for each role. A practical note, on f. 37^v, hints that the actor playing 'Floris', can also perform two other roles, and that six nobles can be reduced to three, which limits the number of actors needed to perform the play. Information such as this made it easy for performers to assign the roles and get a good idea of the length of the play and the relative weight of the individual roles. This type of single-text performance manuscript seems to have been working practice in the chamber of 'De Jenette', even before Berckmans' first play. A case dating to 1630 is the single-text manuscript 19364, containing the anonymous farce *Cluchte van den bedrogen advocaet Penninck*. This manuscript too, contains not only verse counts for each character, but also annotations and alterations.⁸⁰ This practice of playbook manuscripts functioning as rehearsal copies seems to have continued well into the eighteenth century in the chamber of 'De Jenette'.

(79) Willems, "Kronyk," (see note 75): 311; Meeus, *Repertorium* (see note 30), 27. The play was performed on 3 May, which is also the date written in manuscript on the printed announcement (see below). It is curious, then, that the book censor Gaspar Smit dates his manuscript approval 24 May, in a note on f. 37^v.

(80) The hands look alike to the extent that we assume both manuscripts were written by the same scribe, or 'book keeper', to use terminology from English scholarship. The very similar material context of both manuscripts may lead to the assumption that Berckmans is the author of the farce, or to the existence of a steady



Figs 5-6. To the left: Brussels, Royal Library, ms. 19323 (Berckmans' Captas). Title page showing Berckmans' motto 'Lust breckt rust', date of performance (1639) and author's attribution ('Joris Berckmans gommerssone'), and the number in the series (5); To the right: CL 12401 LP A4, Title page of the printed argument to Captas, with handwritten performance date (9 June) and handwritten number (5).

Interestingly, a number of the single-text manuscripts from Lier seem to have formed a set of theatre texts that was used as a literary archive of sorts, probably in the context of the chamber of 'De Jenette'. Some of the manuscripts have specific numbers on their front pages, which correspond to two systems: one ranges the manuscripts in a consecutive – and chronological – series of drama texts performed, the other seems to indicate the number of actors needed to perform the plays. At least six manuscripts still have their series numbers (4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 14) on their title pages, in the same hand and ink colour. In other manuscripts, the title pages have been replaced during binding, have been lost, or are too damaged. But the preserved numbers point into the direction of a conscious collection of plays that were kept in manuscript after

book keeper in the service of 'De Jenette'. Most of Berckmans' dramatical work is signed, either with initials or with his motto 'Lust breckt rust', but the farce is anonymous; comp. Meeus, *Repertorium* (see note 30), 24–8.

their performance by the chamber. The series corresponds to a peculiar booklet of fourteen 'arguments', printed announcements of performances to publicise an upcoming premiere.⁸¹ The printed title pages of most of these arguments leave a blank space on the printed title page for the actual date of performance, which has been filled in manually, with dates corresponding to the ones in the respective manuscripts.⁸² In the printed arguments themselves then, the plays have been synthesized into short sentences for each act, in the manner of a modern-day 'libretto'. Audiences could get acquainted with the story and its characters beforehand, and bring the announcement to the performance to follow the storyline. The plays in the booklet have been numbered as well, in the same hand as the manuscripts, following the same chronological order (see below: Appendix 2). Moreover, the author's name 'Joris Berckmans' has been altered in a similar way in some of the manuscripts and on the printed title pages, showing that we are dealing with one person collecting both the manuscripts and the printed arguments. All of this, points into the direction of a conscious ambition on the part of the 'De Jenette chamber, to collect its theatrical work in a relatively well-construed series of similar single-text performance manuscripts, in combination with a numbered booklet of arguments bound together in one volume. This collection will probably have functioned as a literary archive of the chamber.

In a way, this corresponds to the *Trou moet blijcken* collection in Haarlem, where the chamber had a series of theatre texts copied into manuscripts that we would rank under 'anthologies'. The Haarlem manuscripts are hefty volumes that included a number of plays, and that were part of a collection indicated by letters A through R, totalling 14 manuscripts containing 90 plays.⁸³ Later performers could take to these manuscripts to choose material to perform, and the manuscripts functioned as a theatre library of sorts, which is a practice that has been attested also in English theatre companies. Other than the Haarlem *Trou moet blijcken* collection, however, the Lier manuscripts show traces of usage and annotations, indicating that they were made before and annotated during performance, rather than neat copies produced *after* performance. Indeed, an author such as Berckmans seems to have chosen the medium of manuscript to cater to the performance needs of his chamber of rhetoric, and the codices were subsequently kept in the chamber archive, for repeated performance or for collective memory.

The Auctorial 'Working Manuscript' – Dutch 'Foul Papers'?

As we have seen, some of the preserved theatre manuscripts bear witness to their usage in the process of performance: they contain annotations and alterations that may well have

(81) Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium, CL 12401 LP. The prints were made by Jacob Mesens, in Antwerp, in the 1630s and 1640s. Most of the arguments announce plays by Berckmans. One, 'Philantus, blij-eyndigh-treur-spel', was written by Nicolaes Geeraerds, and was dedicated to Berckmans. See also Willems, "Kronyk," (see note 75) 310.

(82) The title page of 'Cara, Treur-Spel' has a printed date, 15 June 1648; the title page of 'Constans, bly-eyndich treur-spel', mentions a premiere on 12 June 1651.

(83) Van Herk, *Fabels van liefde* (see note 15), 138.

been the result of a creative interplay between the author of the plays on the one hand, and their performers and directors on the other. Their material function, however, seems to have been their usage in a performance context. In the case of the Berckmans corpus, the distance between the initial author and the performance context is therefore rather limited. In other cases, the alterations and traces of usage in manuscripts bear witness to a much lengthier process of text genesis, similar to what English scholarship has termed ‘foul papers’. An example of this is manuscript 19331-32, most likely also from Lier, which contains various texts that have been developed over a considerable time. The first part (fols 1-58) contains *Martellus ende de eerbare Larunda*, a serious drama by F. J. Van der Borgh, performed in 1742.⁸⁴ The text itself, however, is considerably older, and was written already in 1694.⁸⁵ A part of this history is reflected in the material context of the manuscript, which was written in several stages. Originally, the book must have functioned as a ledger of sorts, in an administrative context. Most of the pages were lineated so as to be used to note down administrative accounts, and there are places where some of the accounts were pasted over with blank paper to produce a second-hand blank notebook for the first theatre hand to note down the text of *Martellus*. On this basis, a late seventeenth-century hand, which is contemporaneous to the time of writing of *Martellus*, wrote most of the manuscript, including verse counts in the margins and stage directions. In a later stage, however, another hand added interlinear and marginal alterations, and included new text and replacement fragments on extra slips of paper. This hand also added in new stage directions to the one already present. Some passages have been deleted or have been put between brackets, to be replaced by new material. There are even pages that have been pasted over with new texts on extra sheets of paper. Both hands differ a little too much to both be ascribed to Joannes Franciscus Van der Borgh, but we can at least hypothesise that the play, originally written in 1694, was adapted for its first performance in 1742. As it may well have been Van der Borgh’s first play, it was perhaps considered unaccomplished, or it was adapted to the changing theatre taste of the mid-eighteenth-century audience. In any case, we are dealing with a manuscript that is much closer to the authorial draft than the ones with Berckmans’ work, and which bears resemblance with the ‘foul papers’ in English theatre: authorial drafts intended to be copied out in neat manuscript or to be put to the printing press.⁸⁶

The manuscript not only contains *Martellus*, but also the farce *De ghepelde ende naeckte weirelt* (fols 59-80), which shows the same process of text genesis of the same two hands. In this case, the eighteenth-century hand made considerable alterations. Towards the end of the play, there are several places where entire pages were pasted together, and replaced by new material on new sheets of paper, some of which fold out so as to contain more text (e.g. 69^v-70^r). Here, there is explicit information on repeated performances in Lier, in 1698, 1706 (twice) and 1715 (59^r), with two of the performances occurring ‘inde kersdaegen’ – *in the*

(84) Willems, “Kronyk,” (see note 75), 315.

(85) Willems, “Kronyk,” (see note 75), 315.

(86) Comp. Jowett, “Exit manuscripts” (see note 78), 114–17.

days of Christmas. These notes, in different hands and ink colours, show that at least during this period, the manuscript was in the possession of a theatre group or a coordinating stage director or playwright, who used it as a reference for consecutive performances, altering and adding text for each performance. In this case, there is a reference to *De Jenette*, one of the two chambers of rhetoric in the city of Lier (see above). In the end of the farce (f. 80), there are two handwritten notes, dated 1718 and 1731, with the approval of censorship. One of the notes mentions 'Actum Antw.', which would mean that this manuscript was brought physically to Antwerp to have its content approved for performance. The same censor notes that he has 'corrected' the text, but at first sight, there is no trace of his corrections in the manuscript, at least in the hand of the note.⁸⁷

Apart from *Martellus* and *De ghepelde ende naeckte weirelt*, there are two more plays in the manuscript. One, untitled, is dated 1722 and stages characters Passchier, Lammen, Schermots, Godefroi and Lijn (fols 80-95). Another is a farce (f. 99), explicitly intended to be performed as an interlude during the serious drama *Dorides ende Clorinia* (possibly also by Van der Borch).⁸⁸ In between both plays, there is a number of texts having to do with the installation of a Ludwina van der Nath as abbess of the Abbey of Roosendaal, near Mechelen (acted as abbess, 1719-1742). There are chronograms, songs, laudatory poems and other texts giving the impression that the makers of this manuscript had some part in the festive installation of Van der Nath.

The overall impression of manuscript 19331-32 therefore, is one of hybridity and transience. Originally an account book, the manuscript was 'blanked out' by pasting over account notes and taking out pages, so as to be used as a draft book for theatre texts. Certainly the first play, *Martellus*, bears witness to a text genesis spread out in time, which may be directly linked to an authorial process. As a whole, however, the collection seems to have evolved into a miscellany of rhetorical texts functioning in the chamber of *De Jenette* as a more collective work of reference.

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION: THE SPECIFICITY OF THE MANUSCRIPT FOR EARLY MODERN THEATRE

In an attempt to draw some very preliminary conclusions, we should look for reasons why people in Early Modern times apparently chose the medium of manuscript over that of print. Firstly, it allowed for a specific appropriation of text material, making it possible to adapt a theatre text to new contexts, to changing preferences among the audience, for example. The single-text manuscript of *Gielen leepoogh* clearly shows that the printed interlude version (1642) of this play was adapted into a standalone version in manuscript,

(87) The process of censorship is comparable, to a certain extent, to the role of the 'Master of the Revels' in Early Modern England, see for example Jowett, "Exit manuscripts," (see note 78) 115, and elsewhere.

(88) Willems, "Kronyk," (see note 75), 327.

showing the need for this adaptation (and performance?) well before its earliest appearance in print (late in the seventeenth century). Within the context of performance, the medium of manuscript allowed for a close interaction between the playwright, the stage directors and the performers, who annotated manuscript versions as they rehearsed, or repeated the performance at a later date, which has become clear in the case of the manuscripts from Lier, having functioned either as ‘playbooks’ or as ‘foul papers’.

Secondly, one wonders whether the manuscript may have functioned as a less ‘visible’ or ‘permanent’ medium than that of print, in a context of increased oversight on the part of central authorities and religious censorship. Indeed, the performance of vernacular theatre in the Southern Low Countries, certainly the first half of the seventeenth century, was still watched very closely by religious and worldly authorities alike. The rhetorician chambers had played a subversive role in the Dutch Revolt, and ever since were watched with suspicion.⁸⁹ Members of the chambers had to be undisputed Catholics and swear an oath to their faith,⁹⁰ theatre texts were read and approved by a censor before their performance, and controversial passages had to be filtered out.⁹¹ This scrutiny included also renewed performances, as it was prohibited to make any alterations in an approved text:

[...] oft die naer dat sy orlof vercreghen hebben, daerinne verandert oft daerby ghevuecht zullen hebben eenighe dinghen die soudē moghen schadelick wesen, ghelijck wy verstaen dat zomwylen eenighe quade en boose Gheesten ghedaen hebben, van arbitraerlijck ende exemplarlicken ghestraft te worden, soo met muncten ende gheldt boeten, als met correctie ende straff van hunne Persoonen, nae de ghelegentheyt vande saeke.⁹²

[transl. those who, after having been granted approval, change or add any content that is harmful – as we understand some evil spirits have done – will receive exemplary punishment, with fines as well as personal correction, depending on the cause]

Judging from the readiness on the part of authorities to punish performers for altering their texts after approval, it is all the more interesting that some of the manuscripts do not show any inclination to have later alterations and modifications approved. In the corpus discussed above, only one manuscript bears witness to repeated approval. Other theatre texts will certainly have been performed repeatedly, but do not show any traces of repeated censorship. A case in point of how the manuscript could be used to evade scrutiny is that of Adriaen Wils, who seems to have disguised the controversial plays in his manuscript, so as to avoid suspicion.

Thirdly, the medium of manuscript allowed for theatre companies and rhetorician chambers to collect their theatrical work in series of handwritten volumes, without having to

(89) A.-L. Van Bruaene, *Om beters wille: rederijkerskamers en de stedelijke cultuur in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden (1400–1650)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 174–79.

(90) Antoon Bergmann, *Geschiedenis der stad Lier* (Lier: Van Mol, 1873 [reprint 1973]), 327–28.

(91) *Tweeden Placaet-Bovck inhoudende diverse Ordonnancien, edicten, ende Placaeten* [...] (Gent: Anna vanden Steene F. Ians., 1629), 29.

(92) *Tweeden Placaet-Bouck* (see note 91), 30.

convince printers to put it to the press. In *Lier*, the single-text manuscript collection of 'De Jenette' not only shows the dialogue between the playwrights and the actors in the context of the initial performance, but also an intention to archive the plays, and remember the performances, within the context of the chamber. The fact that 'De Jenette' had separate 'arguments', theatre programmes, printed to publicise its performances, shows that they did not shun the printing press altogether, but used it in a conscious way, alongside the medium of manuscript. In the meantime, their choice for the form of manuscript to record their theatrical work was very conscious and served a certain purpose. Not only did it allow for a 'collective authorship' of sorts, inviting performers and stage director to get involved in the text genesis of the final play, it also relieved the chamber of having to convince a printer to put every single play to the printing press in full form.

Even if many questions remain, and the preliminary answers inevitably lead to new questions, we believe to have shown that incorporating manuscript material in the study of Early Modern theatre sheds new light on the transience of theatre texts, the process of text genesis, and the actual practice of collective performance, especially in the Southern Low Countries, where theatre was less eagerly put to the press. Some of the manuscripts simultaneously show the practice of writing and rewriting theatre, and the adaptation of sterile text material to the lively context of performance. In this way, they present a case in point of how looking more closely at the medium of manuscript can change the way we think about literary culture in a local context in the Early Modern period. We can only hope that our preliminary exploration into the vast corpus of early modern theatre manuscripts, can kindle research into the textual hybridity of theatre culture in the Low Countries and the complex interaction between manuscript stages of text genesis, performance appropriation, and canonisation in print.

APPENDIX 1: 'TABLE OF CONTENTS' OF MS. 18398, P. 779-786

Note: The manuscript does not mention authors. We have attempted to trace the titles to known plays, using the online database Ceneton. Where possible, we provide an author's name and the year the play was first printed. Titles are listed as they are found in the manuscript. We do not include here the short summaries of the plays that accompany the titles in the 'table of contents'.

1. *Den ghedempten hoogmoedt* [Joan de Grieck, 1700]
2. *De ghedwonghen griet* [Joan de Grieck, 1700]
3. *Den uytghetapten coopman* [Joan de Grieck, 1700]
4. *Meester Coenraedt bierborst* [Joan de Grieck, 1700]
5. *Lemmen met synen neus* [Joan de Grieck, c. 1700]
6. *Het houwelyck van niet* [Adriaan Bastiaenszoon Leeuw, 1662]
7. *Den bedroghen soldaet* [Cornelis de Bie, 1689]
8. *Den boeren geck* [Willem Ogier, c. 1681]
9. *Den geveysden moor* [no printed equivalent]
10. *Steven, den cloecken soldaet* [no printed equivalent]
11. *Den dronckaert* [no printed equivalent]
12. *Het gierigh peetjen* [no printed equivalent]
13. *Don guichot de la manche* [possibly transl. Cornelis Wils, 1682]
14. *Den spaenschen sterrekyker* [Guilliam (or Barbara) Ogier (after the French of Thomas Corneille), 1714]
15. *Den vechter* [Hermanus Angelkot Sr, 1679]
16. *De ontvoogde vrouw* [Michiel Elias, 1688]
17. *De spilpenningh, ofte de quistende vrouw* [Thomas Asselijn, 1693]
18. *De schouwvagher door liefde* [Thomas Asselijn, 1692]
19. *Passchier, en Isabelle* [B. Brand (= Petrus or Pieter de Vos), 1722]
20. *Gielen leepooghe* [Geeraerd van den Brande, as an interlude in *Rosalinde, hertoginne van Savoyen*, 1642; as a standalone farce, late seventeenth century]
21. *Den bedroghen venetiaenschen vryer* [no printed equivalent]
22. *Verwarde jalousie* [Willem Godschalk van Focquenbroch (after the French of Jean Baptiste Poquelin Molière), 1663]
23. *Den jaloerschen lammert* [Jasper Lemmers, 1680]
24. *Duyfie en snaphaan* [Jan Baptist van Fornenbergh, 1680]
25. *Styloorige egbert, ofte twee onghelycke broeders* [Pieter Verloove (after the French of Jean Baptiste Poquelin Molière), 1690]
26. *De glaesen doctoer* [Adriaen Boelens, 1663]
27. *Drooghen goossen* [Jan Hermansz. Krul, 1632]
28. *Hellevaert van grooten visier* [Hermannus Franciscus van den Brandt, 1684]
29. *De weghgheleyde vryster* [Willem Dirckszoon Hooft *Styve Piet*, 1628]

30. *Arlequyn actionist* [Pieter Langendijk, 1720]
31. *Julfus, en lais* [Andries Pels, 1668]
32. *Boers hert* [Adriaan Bastiaenszoon de Leeuw (after the French), *Broershert*, 1668]
33. *De tooverenden student* [Anonymous (*De toverende student met den horendragende meulenaar*), c. 1715]
34. *Hertogh van pierlepon* [Matthijs Gramsbergen, 1650]
35. *Het spookkende weduwtie* [Lodewijk Meyer c.s. (NVA) (after the French/Spanish of Alain le Métel d'Ouille / P. Calderón de la Barca), 1670]
36. *Sandryn haer seluen verloft hebbende...* [Cornelis Wils (*Bon Jan en Sanderyn*), c. 1700]
37. *De geveynse sotheyt door liefde* [Wybrandus de Geest (after the French of Jean François Regnard), 1710]
38. *Jan Soetekauw, ofte hollantsche vryaigie* [Jan Janszoon Starter, 1621]
39. *Rapsolium, ofte mengelmoes* [no printed equivalent]
40. *Pambo pietatem mentitus (?) humiliatus* [no printed equivalent]
41. *Pambonis hypocrysis humiliatio* [no printed equivalent]
42. *Pambonis, sive tartuffi vafrities (?)* [no printed equivalent]

APPENDIX 2: CORRESPONDENCE TABLE OF CL 12401 LP TO MANUSCRIPTS PRESERVED IN THE ROYAL LIBRARY OF BELGIUM

N° (print)	Title in print	Ms.	Title in Ms.	Ms. N°	Year
1	<i>[De geboorte Christi]</i> ⁹³	n/a	n/a	n/a	193*
2	<i>Didonis ende Hyarbae</i>	19312 (?) ⁹⁴	Title page lost	n/a	1936
3	<i>Iephthe ende sijn dochter</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	1637
4	<i>Alphonsus ende Iennevera</i>	19328	<i>Alphonsus et Jenevera</i>	4	1639
5	<i>Captas</i>	19323	<i>Treurspel van captas</i>	5	1639
6	<i>Amon</i>	19337	Title page lost	n/a	1642
7	<i>Absalon</i>	19314	<i>Den koninglijken prophet David</i>	n/a ⁹⁵	1643
8	<i>Suavitas</i>	19326	<i>Suavitas</i>	n/a	1643
9	<i>Stabilitas</i>	19360	Title page glued	n/a	1644
10	<i>[Ioseph]</i> ⁹⁶	19318	Title page lost	10	1647 ⁹⁷
11	<i>Cara</i>	19344	<i>Cara treur-spel</i>	11	1648
12	<i>Edissae (= Ester)</i>	19346	<i>Vande coninghinne Esther</i>	12	1649
13	<i>Constans</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	1651
n/a	<i>Philantus</i> ⁹⁸	n/a	n/a	n/a	1656
14	<i>Pitias ende Philotis</i>	19349	<i>Pitia</i>	14	1669

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Ms. 15663 – Mixed miscellany Adriaen Wils (1599-1630)

Ms. 18398 – Anthology of comical plays (early eighteenth Century)

Ms. 19331–32 – J. F. Van der Borcht, *Martellus ende de eerbare Larunda*; Anoniem, *De ghespelde ende naeckte weirelt*; anonymous farce with characters Passchier, Godefroij, Lammen & Lijn; Aan Ludwinna van der nath; J. F. Van der Borcht (?), *tusschen-spel omte spelen tusschen de tragedie van dorides ende clorinia* [tragedy, possibly by J. F. Van der Borcht] (seventeenth–eighteenth Century)

Ms. 19338 – Anonymous, *Gabina* (1672)

Ms. 19342 – Anonymous, *Klugt van vyftien personagien* (seventeenth century?)

(93) Not preserved in the present volume. Insertion on the basis of a handwritten table of contents in the back.

(94) Meeus, *Repertorium* (see note 30), 24, identifies this manuscript as *Dido ende Hyarba*. Indeed, this title has been written in a modern hand on the first page. However, comparison with the characters mentioned in the printed argument on the one hand, and the characters mentioned in the manuscript play on the other, makes it fairly certain that we are dealing with a different text.

(95) This manuscript is a copy made in the eighteenth century. The copyist apparently did not see the need of taking over any number that may have been on the title page of his exemplar.

(96) The printed title page has not been preserved. The argument opens with the first scene.

(97) As there is no printed title page, this date was taken from the manuscript.

(98) Included in the binding of CL 12401 LP, but not in the handwritten table of contents, and not numbered in the contemporary hand that made the series of manuscripts and the table of contents.

- Ms. 19349 – Joris Berckmans (?), *Phitias ende Philotis* (1669)
 Ms. 19360 – Joris Beckmans, *Stabilitas* (1644)
 Ms. 19361–19362 – Geeraerd van den Brande, *Gielen leepoogh* (seventeenth century)
 Ms. 19364 – Anoniem, *Cluchte van den bedrogen advocaet Penninck* (1630)
Tweeden Placaet-Bovck inhoudende diverse Ordonnancien, edicten, ende Placaeten [...]
 Gent: Anna vanden Steene F. Ians., 1629.
 CL 12401 LP, [Volume of announcements of plays]

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