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**‘Despairing Rage’ and ‘Courageous Pride’: exploring the acting style of Johannes Jelgerhuis through practice-based research**

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NEUMAN (Laila Cathleen), « ‘Despairing Rage’ and ‘Courageous Pride’. Exploring the Acting Style of Johannes Jelgerhuis Through Practice-Based Research »

RÉSUMÉ – Alors que l’acteur néerlandais Johannes Jelgerhuis (1770–1836) est surtout connu pour son traité sur le jeu de l’acteur *Theoretische Lessen* (1827), ses écrits privés peu étudiés révèlent l’acteur passionné au-delà de la théorie. Particulièrement détaillé, son manuscrit *Toneel Studien* de 1811, met en lumière les pensées et les préparatifs de Jelgerhuis relatifs à la création et l’interprétation de six rôles.

MOTS-CLÉS – Amsterdam, cri, geste, attitudes, déclamation, tragédie, peinture, personnages, émotions, technique.

NEUMAN (Laila Cathleen), « “Rage désespérée” et “Fierté courageuse”. Exploration du style de jeu d’acteur de Johannes Jelgerhuis par la recherche fondée sur la pratique »

ABSTRACT – While Dutch actor Johannes Jelgerhuis (1770–1836) is best known for his acting treatise *Theoretische Lessen* (1827), his lesser-known private writings reveal the passionate actor behind the theory. Particularly detailed, his manuscript *Toneel Studien* of 1811, casts light on Jelgerhuis’s thoughts and preparations behind the creation and performance of six roles.

KEYWORDS – Amsterdam, screaming, gesture, attitudes, declamation, tragedy, painting, character, emotions, technique.

## ‘DESPAIRING RAGE’ AND ‘COURAGEOUS PRIDE’

### Exploring the Acting Style of Johannes Jelgerhuis Through Practice-Based Research

*een Electricque Schok greep my aan door met de geheele Ligbaams gestalte de felle Spijt uittedrukken [...] de handen dan tot Vuijsten brengende en de spieren spannende, de oogen Vinnig opwaarts heffende met een Eenigsints agter over geworpen hooffd, en de trek der Spijt op het gelaat maalende, [...] vergat ik de teedere gevoelens tot almais en gedroeg mij als of ik al wilde verslinden Wat Zig op dat oogenblik by mij bevond.*

“an electric shock went through me, by expressing spite with my whole body, [...] my hands then forming fists, and the muscles tensing, lifting my eyes furiously with my head slightly inclined backwards, and painting the image of spite on my face, [...] I forgot my feelings for Almaïs, and behaved as if I wanted to devour everything in front of me.”<sup>1</sup>

Johannes Jelgerhuis, *Toneel Studien*, 1811

Thus Johannes Jelgerhuis Rienkszoon (1770–1836) describes one moment in his rendition of a role in which he excelled: Siméon, in the Dutch translation of Pierre Marie Louis Baour-Lormian’s five act tragedy *Omasis, ou Joseph en Egypte*.<sup>2</sup> It is one of many examples in Jelgerhuis’s manuscript *Toneel Studien* [*Stage Studies*], an illustrated journal of 1811, which provide insight into the actor’s stage actions, and reveal the passionate actor behind the treatise on acting theory.

1 Johannes Jelgerhuis: *Toneel Studien Bevattende Ontwikkelingen der Gedachten van Onderscheydene Toneel Studien Welke slegts tot op de helft van het Voorgenomen plan zijn afgeschreeven door den Hollandschen Toneel Speeler J. Jelgerhuis Rz.* [*Stage Studies Containing Reflections on Various Stage Studies, of which Only Half of the Predetermined Plan Has Been Completed by the Dutch Actor J. Jelgerhuis Rz.*] Ms, 1811, Allard Pierson, University of Amsterdam, theatre collection, BK B 10, pp. 138-140. All translations are the author’s own. For an analysis of a quite different and better-known manuscript by Jelgerhuis that also dates from 1811 see Laila Neuman, ‘Three Jelgerhuis Manuscripts’ in *European Drama and Performance Studies*, ed. Sabine Chaouche, 2019-2, No. 13, 115–142.

2 Pierre-Marie-François Baour-Lormian, *Omasis, of Jozef in Egypte: Treurspel*, tr. Maarten Westerman (Amsteldam: Ambrahim Mars, 1810).

Jelgerhuis was a Dutch painter, draughtsman, educator, and a member of the acting company at the Koninklijke Hollandsche Schouwburg (the main theatre in Amsterdam, hereafter referred to as the Amsterdam Schouwburg) from 1805 until the year of his death. The skills and experience garnered from his various professions are discernible in his treatise, entitled: *Theoretische Lessen over de Gesticulatie en Mimiek* [*Theoretical Lessons on Gesticulation and Facial Expression*] published between 1827 and 1829.<sup>3</sup> This handbook contains the material Jelgerhuis presented in his lessons at the school for aspiring young actors connected with the Amsterdam Schouwburg, and treats theoretical aspects of stagecraft from basic acting tools to stage perspective, and costume design.<sup>4</sup> The treatise is a well-known source of reference for many present-day performers and stage directors working with historical acting techniques, and in scholarly work on (Dutch) historical theatre practice.

However, Jelgerhuis's various illustrated manuscripts, although they have received comparatively less (international) attention, reveal information on acting which can help us better to understand the *Theoretische Lessen*. It must be noted that the latter is not a complete acting manual; it was intended to cover theory only. The actual lessons on acting and declamation were given at the acting school by Jelgerhuis's colleagues, and were therefore not repeated or mentioned in his treatise. It was in his private writings that he described the more personal elements of acting, such as interpretation, character creation and emotion, which are pivotal for a more complete understanding of his way of performing. Particularly detailed, the manuscript *Toneel Studien* not only documents Jelgerhuis's account of performing selected roles from his repertoire, but also the preparation, thoughts, and emotions behind his acting. Using the information in Jelgerhuis's manuscripts to supplement the *Theoretische Lessen*, not only in scholarly work, but also in productions using historically informed performance practice, seems therefore overdue. The two works provide a rare opportunity to combine didactic and private material, written (and drawn) by the same actor.

3 [Johannes] Jelgerhuis RZ. *Theoretische lessen over de gesticulatie en mimiek, gegeven aan de kwekelingen van het fonds ter opleiding en onderrichting van tooneel-kunstenaars aan den stadsschouwburg te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: P. Meyer Warnars, 1827/1829).

4 See Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 315.

This article documents how one of these studies from the *Toneel Studien* manuscript – the abovementioned study of the role of Siméon in *Omasis, of Jozef in Egijpte* [*Omasis, or Joseph in Egypt*] – was compared to and combined with the *Theoretische Lessen* in order to create and stage a character based on Jelgerhuis's oeuvre.<sup>5</sup> By engaging with both sources through analysis, comparison and artistic practice, my aim is to cast light on the lesser-known side to Jelgerhuis's techniques and acting style, and to investigate how actors today can make use of Jelgerhuis's manuscripts in historically informed performance. In this endeavour, the following observation will be considered: the manuscript's text records Jelgerhuis's acting like a camera zooming in on one detail only of his performance; his passionate style of writing, full of strong adjectives, captivates the reader and sweeps them through successions of details. But the reader does not experience the full range of simultaneously occurring acting parameters which an actor requires to execute the scene described. The challenge for the actors lies in staging scenes from *Omasis, of Jozef in Egijpte* in line with Jelgerhuis's writing, thereby attempting to create as complete a picture as possible of the actor's actions on stage.

### TONEEL STUDIEN, THE MANUSCRIPT

Of all Jelgerhuis's extant unpublished works, this manuscript (*Toneel Studien*) presents the most detailed and intimate record of his own acting technique and performance practice. Written in 1811, after Jelgerhuis's first six years at the Amsterdam Schouwburg, it reveals his passion and dedication to his new profession, and the desire to document and share his knowledge. In those years he performed more than one hundred and fifteen different roles, the majority of which were new to him; but this period was also extremely trying on a personal level, as Jelgerhuis lost six close relatives.<sup>6</sup> As he states on the title page, he wrote most of

5 Jelgerhuis (1811), op. cit. pp. 115–180.

6 Fons Asselberg listed the roles Jelgerhuis performed in *Johannes Jelgerhuis rzn. acteurschilder, 1770–1836* (Nijmegen: Gebr. Janssen n.v., 1969), pp. 217–221; A. E. D'Ailly, 'Johannes Jelgerhuis Rienksz' in *Amstelodamum*, 35 (1938), p. 228.

the 1811 manuscript while sitting at the sickbeds of various members of his household.

In the preface, Jelgerhuis expresses his wish to reveal the work behind the performer, so that this information may be shared with his contemporaries and left for future generations, counteract the ephemerality of the attended performances, and serve as a memento to the reader/spectator. Time and again throughout the manuscript, Jelgerhuis addresses the reader, drawing attention to the role's most difficult passages and to the preparation, thought and practice involved in the creation of a character. His chosen characters are all from Dutch tragedies or from tragedies translated into Dutch: Koning Lear (in *Koning Lear*); Avogaro (in *Gaston en Bayard*); Gysbrecht van Amstel and the Bode (both roles from *Gysbrecht van Aemstel*); Siméon (in *Omasis, of Jozef in Egijpte*); and Nero (in *Epicharis en Nero*).<sup>7</sup> Of those six roles, only Jelgerhuis's study of Koning Lear was published during his lifetime, in 1832, whereas Gysbrecht and the Bode were not published until in 1987 by theatre historian Ben Albach.<sup>8</sup> The studies relating to the roles of Avogaro, Nero, and Siméon are as yet unpublished.

The study of Siméon has my special interest, and was selected for the staging experiments described in this article because of Jelgerhuis's passionate interest in the role, the amount of detail, and the practical information on acting that Jelgerhuis describes regarding specific lines of text.

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7 Jean-François Ducis (1733–1816), *Koning Lear*, tr. Maria Geertruid de Cambon; Pierre-Laurent Buiette de Belloy (1727–1775), *Gaston en Bayard*, tr. Jan Gerard Doornik; Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679), *Gysbrecht van Aemstel*; Pierre-Marie-François Baour-Lormian (1770–1854), *Omasis, of Jozef in Egijpte*, tr. Maarten Westerman; Gabriel-Marie Legouvé (1764–1812), *Epicharis en Nero*, tr. Pieter Johannes Uylenbroek.

8 Johannes Jelgerhuis Rz., *De tooneelspeler J. Jelgerhuis Rz., in zijne voornaamste Treurspel-Rollen, op den Amsterdamschen Schouwburg vertoond sinds 25 jaren* (Amsterdam: Gebroeders van Arum, 1832); Ben Albach. 'Johannes Jelgerhuis over zijn rollen in Gijsbrecht van Aemstel: twee van zijn Toneel-studien ingeleid en uitgegeven', *Spektator*, 17 (1987–1988), pp. 415–430.

## THE FIFTH STUDY: SIMÉON

Jelgerhuis singles out the role of Siméon for its unique quality and its goal '*de folteringen van een kwaad geweeten levendig voor te draagen de woorden daartoe zijn wel gekoozen en geeven den Acteur gepaste gelegenheid zig te kenmerken*'.<sup>9</sup> Praising the 'respectworthy' subject of the play, Jelgerhuis recounts his preparatory research into the background, costume, and character of this cherished role.<sup>10</sup> While he refers to the Bible as a source to contextualize the play in terms of the time, the place and Siméon's age, Jelgerhuis turns to the visual arts, treatises on costume, and illustrations in his quest for historically accurate costumes and Siméon's hairstyle and beard. For instance, he consults engravings by Charles-Nicolas Cochin (1715–1790) in *Gewoonten der aloude volken* as a reference for Siméon's costume.<sup>11</sup> Several pages of this book can be found in a large portfolio Jelgerhuis created, containing illustrations by himself, as well as assembled pages with engravings by others such as Cochin and Jan de Bisschop. He intended this collection to serve as study material concerning all ages and cultures, to be used by actors and painters.<sup>12</sup> Jelgerhuis also examined and used Jan Luyken's (1649–1712) Bible illustrations for Siméon's costume, even allowing himself to 'follow them blindly'; the more so as Cochin himself stated that he had copied his plates on Egyptian costume from Jan Luyken. Jelgerhuis included two illustrations with his study of Siméon; one of his costume, and one of Siméon's portrait in profile, clearly showing the style of his headdress and beard (see Fig. 1-3).

9 'To display the tortures of a bad conscience in a lively manner, through well-chosen words, which give the actor the appropriate opportunity to distinguish himself', Jelgerhuis (1811), op. cit., p. 116.

10 Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 115.

11 *Gewoonten der aloude volken*, tr. Michel-François Dandré-Bardon (Amsterdam: Allart en Holtrop, 1786) Vol. 3. The engravings are by Charles-Nicholas Cochin.

12 *Studiën van klederdrachten voor alle tyden en volken tot nazigt van den Tooneelspeler of Kunstschilder verzameld door J. Jelgerhuis* Rz., Allard Pierson, University of Amsterdam, theatre collection, t000725.000, (n.d.).





FIG. 1 – Headdress for the role of Siméon by Johannes Jelgerhuis. Ink and wash, from *Toneel Studien*, Ms, 1811, Allard Pierson, theatre collection, UvA, BK B 10.



FIG. 2 – Headdress for Siméon, engraving by Johannes Jelgerhuis in *Theoretische Lessen*, plate 64. Author's collection.

Almost twenty years later, Jelgerhuis included these two illustrations as engravings in the publication of his *Theoretische Lessen*, along with costume illustrations for two other roles from the same play: Jakob and Joseph.<sup>13</sup> Not only the costume, but the entire picture of the latter is clearly copied directly from either Cochin or from Jan Luyken's engraving of 1708, depicting Joseph selling corn to his brothers.<sup>14</sup> It is interesting to see that Jelgerhuis has only elaborated, but not changed the concept of Siméon's headdress and costume in the timespan between the writing of the manuscript (1811) and the publication of his treatise (1827–1829).

After describing his choices regarding Siméon's costume, Jelgerhuis depicted various aspects of Siméon's character. He created a sad, sombre Siméon oppressed with painful remorse. A Siméon with sudden passionate outbursts at the smallest offence, and oversensitive to everything,

13 Jelgerhuis (1827/1829), op. cit., p. 209. Costume illustrations for Jakob and Joseph/Omasis: plate 63, Siméon: plate 64. Images available here: <https://jedwentz.com/neuman-edps/> (last accessed 11-04-2022).

14 Johannes Luyken, *Joseph verkoopt Koorn aan syn Broeders* (1708). Amsterdam Museum: object number: A 52503, <http://hdl.handle.net/11259/collection.61417> (last accessed 27-10-2021); Cochin, op. cit., Vol. 3, plate 74, pp. 33 and 34.

including the beauty of Almaïs, with whom he's secretly in love. Jelgerhuis even decided not to add 'roodsel' ('rouge') to Siméon's make-up, so that his pallor might mirror '*de inwendige foltering der Ziel*' ('the inner torture of [Siméon's] soul').<sup>15</sup> Jelgerhuis's preparation of the character, then, is a complete creation, involving the outer aspects as well as the role's historical and emotional background, Jelgerhuis's feelings in the moment, and as he himself repeatedly puts it, even his character's soul.



FIG. 3 – Costume for Siméon, engraving by Johannes Jelgerhuis, in *Theoretische Lessen*, plate 64. Author's collection.

<sup>15</sup> Jelgerhuis (1811), op. cit., p. 119.

Once Siméon's background, costume, make-up and character are clearly outlined, Jelgerhuis moves to the staging. Starting with his first entrance on stage, he writes about Siméon's state of mind, his gestures, and emotions. But more significantly, he tells the reader his own thoughts about the motivations behind Siméon's actions: the thoughts or words triggering the emotions that make him react, recoil, lash out, and lower or raise his voice. The intensity of Jelgerhuis's writing is heightened in the more dramatic scenes, which show instances of a profound identification with Siméon's character.<sup>16</sup> The following passage gives an idea of Jelgerhuis's involved state of mind while writing; the most dramatic moments are marked by confusing phrases, an almost breathless successions of his actions and thoughts, and a remarkable alternation between the personal pronouns 'ik, mij' ('I, me') and 'zijn' ('his'). *'Daar nu Almais [...] van haar aanstaande Huwlyk Spreekt met Omais, word eenen minnenijdigen trek op zijn gelaat gebooren, de oogen dan eensklaps opslaande en Brandende van de Eene naar de andere Zeijde wendende, deed ik ontwaaren wat in mij omging'*.<sup>17</sup> Jelgerhuis continues with the passage that was partially quoted in the introduction to this article.

Here it is in full:

*maar een Electricque Schok greep my aan door met de geheele Lighaams gestalte de felle Spijt uitdrukken op het hooren bevestigen dat zijn Vader en broeders in Waarbeijd koomen Zullen de handen dan tot Vuijsten brengende en de spieren spannende, de oogen Vinnig opwaarts heffende met een Eenigsints agter over geworpen hoofd, en de trek der Spijt op het gelaat maalende, drukte ik de Woedende Spijt uijt die Simeon alle de felle gemoeds drift opbruijschend deed gevoelen, met eene Sterk onderscheidenden toon en Luijder Stemme Welke ontzetting baarde, vergat ik de teedere gevoelens tot almais en gedroeg mij als of ik al wilde verslinden Wat Zig op dat oogenblik by mij bevond.*<sup>18</sup>

16 Jelgerhuis's manuscript is grammatically confusing in some places, making translation problematical, as certain passages or words can be interpreted in several ways. In order to stay as closely as possible to the original text, I have prioritized the meaning of Jelgerhuis's words or phrases over English grammar, even when this occasionally results in a slightly awkward translation.

17 'As Almais now speaks of her coming marriage with Omais, an expression of jealousy is born in his face, the eyes then suddenly opening, burning, and turning from side to side, I showed what was happening inside of me.' Jelgerhuis (1811), op. cit., p. 138.

18 'but an electric shock went through me, by expressing spite with my whole body, on hearing that his father and brothers truly would arrive, and my hands forming fists, and my muscles tensing, lifting my eyes furiously with the head slightly inclined backwards, and painting the image of spite on my face, I expressed the angry spite that Simeon felt in that moment, with a most characteristic tone and a loud voice, which caused dismay,

Passages such as these may also explain why the role of Siméon left Jelgerhuis emotionally drained after a performance. He writes: '*Veelen Mijner Rollen geeven dien Ligbaams Vermoejing teevens Welke afmat, maar in deese Rol was mij altoos over eene Vermoejing der Ziel welke naa afloop der taak naar rust Snakte.*'<sup>19</sup> His exhaustion is not surprising when one takes his manner of acting into account: not only does Jelgerhuis change between various emotions more than one hundred and twenty times in this role, the high level of physical and emotional tension also indicates an extremely intense acting style.

#### ANALYSIS OF AN ACTING STYLE

The following analysis of Jelgerhuis's preparations and acting style as described in the manuscript focusses on six points. For the sake of brevity and legibility, I will use the term 'actor' to refer to persons of all genders.

1. Direct references to lines from the play text.
2. Jelgerhuis's own interpretation of Siméon's character and the thoughts and mental images behind his acting.
3. Emotions/passions (the term passion can be understood as a strong but specific emotional state, such as love, hate, joy or anger).
4. The voice: declamation, vocal colour, volume.
5. Notes on acting: eye movements, gestures, muscle tension, stance, etc.
6. Indications regarding the actor's position and movements on stage.

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I forgot my feelings for Almaïs, and behaved as if I wanted to devour everything in front of me.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 138–140.

19 'Many of my roles cause extreme physical fatigue, but after this role there was an enervation of the soul, gasping for rest.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 179.

## DIRECT REFERENCES TO LINES FROM THE PLAY TEXT

The three levels of text used here are: the published text of the play *Omasis, of Jozef in Egijpte* (hereafter *Omasis*), Jelgerhuis's study of Siméon in the *Toneel Studien* manuscript, and Jelgerhuis's quotations of the *Omasis* play text in the manuscript. The quotations which Jelgerhuis inserted in the manuscript made it clear which stage actions and emotions he performed in which scenes, lines, or on which exact words of the play text. These could be lines and words of Siméon's text, as well as words spoken by the other characters. Jelgerhuis's thoughts on his interpretation clarified why certain actions and emotions came together in specific lines of text – not only when he speaks, but also when he listens and reacts to the other characters in the play. Jelgerhuis also listed several passages from the *Omasis* text which illustrate Siméon's character. These are mostly lines spoken by different characters than himself, but indeed are indicative as they depict Siméon's '*verbrijzelt hart*' ('shattered heart'), his '*verkropte smart*' ('suppressed pain'), his untameable anger, and a fire which he tries to conquer in vain, but which devours him.<sup>20</sup> By thoroughly analysing the text of the play in this manner, and through his understanding of Siméon's past, Jelgerhuis created and assembled thoughts and mental images which later served him on stage. He wrote:

*Beoordeelt hoe veel verbeeldens kracht 'er verEyst word om zulk Een mijmerende Zin verwarring wel aftebeelden [.] Wat kan daar toe lijden, dan alleen het gebeele Character alle de Omstandigheeden voor af klaar te doorgronden en te vatten, al eer men Zelfs tot het memoriseeren der Rol overgaat. — en dan levendige denkbeelden en geestkracht door naadenken optezamelen om het vermoogen van voorstelling te verkrijgen.*<sup>21</sup>

## JELGERHUIS'S OWN INTERPRETATION OF SIMÉON'S CHARACTER AND THE THOUGHTS AND MENTAL IMAGES BEHIND HIS ACTING

Again, we see three different levels here: Jelgerhuis's interpretation of Siméon, thoughts which may be defined as technical (ensuring control

20 '*in Zijn verbrijzelt hart | dring ik tot de oorzaak van zijn verkropte smart*'; '*Wel dra zal ik zijn woede ontembaar bruijschen zien | vergeefsch bestrijd by t vuur, waar door hij word verslonden*'. Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 120–1.

21 'Judge how much imagination is necessary to represent well such a pensive and confused state of mind. How else can one reach this other than by grasping, and thoroughly understanding in advance[,] the entire character and situation before one even starts to memorize the role.- and then through reflection to gather lively mental images and strength of mind in order to acquire the ability to imagine.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 136.

over the voice, preparing a transition, etc.), and the construct of Siméon's inner thoughts. This preparatory process, based on the understanding of his character, enabled Jelgerhuis to draw on a mental storehouse of thoughts and images, to trigger a particular emotional reaction in Siméon. Having created a Siméon whose main emotion is remorse, he worked with a character who repeatedly relives the past in his mind. In the following example, we see how Jelgerhuis used Siméon's vivid childhood memories, provoked by a dialogue between Siméon and Omais, to generate feelings of remorse and anger:

*dit nadenken bragt hem levendig voor den geest, [...] het beginzel van de Oorzaak zijner uroeging, snel gelijk een bliksem straal schiet dat gevoel hem door de Zinnen. – en hoorende onderwijl Een voorstel van het geen hem tans door de Zinnen Zweeft, Zegt hij in volle woede, geheel in zig zelve gekeerd, met donderende wrevel en woede de tanden op Elkander slaande en trillende van razernij als in een vlaag van geheel zig Zelfen te vergeeten, en nu niets meer om zig heenen bespeurende de Zeer opmerksaame Reegels.<sup>22</sup>*

Such passages illustrate how Jelgerhuis manoeuvred Siméon from one emotion to the next, but they also explain the reason behind Siméon's actions. Through the process of imagination, Jelgerhuis created Siméon's character and inner world to such extent that he could move seamlessly between his own thoughts and memories and those of Siméon. Such thoughts also continue during the lines of his fellow actors, so that he can react accordingly, and build up the right tension for speaking his next lines. In the third act, for instance, he constantly navigates between Siméon's feelings of anger and offence – now triggered by the words of another character, now by his own thoughts – and the dissimulation of these emotions by looking away, or by a sombre appearance and a soft tone of voice.

Observations such as these reveal why Jelgerhuis made certain choices in his interpretation of this role. In understanding which thoughts he used to create the image of Siméon, and how he guided his imagination

22 'This thinking vividly brought to his mind's eye, [...] the origin of the cause of his remorse. Swiftly as by lightning, this feeling strikes through his senses, and meanwhile hearing a proposal of what is on his [Siméon's] mind, he speaks in full rage, completely withdrawn into himself, gnashing his teeth with thundering resentment and anger, and trembling with rage as if in a fit of complete self-abandonment, and not noticing anything around him anymore, the very remarkable lines' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 155–6.

to achieve the passions he sees fitting for the lines in the text, we get an idea of the actor's mental work and preparation.

#### EMOTIONS / PASSIONS

By separating the emotions Jelgerhuis describes in the manuscript from the other parameters mentioned above, two observations stood out as supplements to the information in the *Theoretische Lessen*. I noticed that Jelgerhuis went through a large number of passions in various passages of Siméon's role, and that he predominantly described combinations of emotions which are not listed in the *Theoretische Lessen*. In the treatise, Jelgerhuis includes almost thirty passions – such as joy, anger, and fear – which he mostly explains and compares separately. But the study of Siméon displays a broader range of passions, including those mixed with and coloured by other passions, such as 'Woedende Spijt' ('angry spite'); 'moedige trots' ('courageous pride'); 'Wanboopende Razernij' ('despairing rage'); and the combination of; 'Schrik en Schaamte en hartverscheurende Wroeging' ('fright, shame, and heart-wrenching remorse').<sup>23</sup> In the manuscript, combinations of passions such as these can rapidly follow each other within a few lines of text, suggesting Jelgerhuis's thorough command of the actor's craft. In fact, there are more than seventy-five different passions and combinations of passions in his description of Siméon's scenes. Where such emotional states of mind are accompanied by Jelgerhuis's (or rather, Siméon's) thoughts, vocal colour, facial expression, gestures, postures, and movements, it shows the layered and complex construct of Jelgerhuis's way of acting and perceiving his role. Again, this adds to the information in the *Theoretische Lessen*, in which the various layers are didactically separated, and not all the layers are present. In contrast, the *Theoretische Lessen* contains illustrations and basics of posture and gestures that are lacking in the manuscript. For instance, chapters thirteen to twenty of the treatise concentrate on facial expression and postures for each passion. Jelgerhuis uses examples from Gerard de Lairese's (1640/1641–1711) *Groot Schilderboek*, Johann Jakob Engel's (1741–1802) *Ideën zu einer Mimik*, Le Brun's (1619–1690) *Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les Passions*, and his own examples, to illustrate and describe the characteristics of each passion in the face and in full body postures.<sup>24</sup> He advises the students to observe,

<sup>23</sup> Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 139, 172, 145 and 171.

<sup>24</sup> Gérard de Lairese, *Groot schilderboek* (Amsterdam: Hendrick Desbordes, 1712); J. J. Engel, *Ideen zu einer Mimik* (Berlin, 1785), Dutch translation by J. Konijnenburg: *De kunst*

compare and reflect on the examples he provides, to reread the descriptions, and imitate the illustrations in the lessons in order to become so familiar with the images that they may easily recall them while acting.<sup>25</sup> Jelgerhuis thus shares his knowledge of the basic passions, but there is no indication in the treatise of how to bring variation to the passions, or how to convert the given information into a role. That is where the manuscript comes in: Jelgerhuis's descriptions in the Siméon study can be seen as the key to the next level of the curriculum, as the private lessons with an acting teacher, and a glimpse of what happens on stage as well as in the actor's studio.

#### THE VOICE: DECLAMATION, VOCAL COLOUR, VOLUME

Every aspect of Jelgerhuis's use of the voice in the Siméon manuscript directly enriches the *Theoretische Lessen*. Jelgerhuis stated in his treatise: '*ik handel van Gesticulatie en Mimiek, en mag dus van geen spreken gewagen; dit is anderen aanbevolen.*'<sup>26</sup> In the manuscript, however, he could write freely. He used various parameters to describe the vocal colour for Siméon's lines: emotion, volume, articulation, contrast, but also indications such as '*holle*' ('hollow') and '*zuivere*' ('pure') tones.<sup>27</sup> In several passages, he expressed Siméon's emotional state by adding sighs, whispers, stammering, or pauses in his text.<sup>28</sup> Naturally, the exact interpretation of such indications is subjective, but by using them as a guideline, the actor's vocal progression of the spoken lines changes significantly.

The observation of the vocal indications and their application throughout the Siméon study suggests an acting style marked by contrasts, oftentimes manifested through emotional colour and volume. Such contrasts can be achieved by rapid alternation of contrasting passions, but also by a slow crescendo of emotion and volume throughout an

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*van nabootzing door gebaarden.* (Vol. I, J. van Walré, Haarlem, 1790; Vol. II, F. Kaal, Amsterdam, 1791); Le Brun, *Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les Passions* (1702), Dutch translation by F. de Kaarsgieter: *Afbeelding der Hertstochten, of middelen om dezelve volkomen te leeren afteekenen, door de Heer Le Brun* (Amsterdam: François van-der Plaats, 1703).

25 '*De bespiegeling dezer zaken kunnen niet anders dan den Tooneelspeeler nuttig zijn, die dikwerf te beschouwen, natelezen, natemaken en er eigen mede te worden, is het doel dezer lessen.*' (Jelgerhuis (1827/1829), op. cit., p. 138); '*maak U bekend met deze afbeeldingen, dat ze gemakkelijk voor den geest komen onder het spelen, en bedien uw altoos van de beste.*' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 142.

26 'I deal with gesticulation and facial expression, and therefore am not allowed to speak of speech; this is dealt with by others.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 108.

27 Jelgerhuis (1811), op. cit., pp. 145, 168 and 169.

28 Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 141.



entire passage, reaching an extreme against which yet another contrast could be placed. Jelgerhuis even made use of vocal colour to emphasize the contrast between single words within the same sentence:

*deese Reegel gaf ik dan de Onderscheijding waar voor hij vatbaar is, naamlijk in den wenschenden en verlangenden toon te paaren, het gepaste geluid der stem Zagtheijde op kalmte en daar teegen overstaande Ruuwen toon voor 't woord verscheurd en vermeerderde alzoo eene toonwisseling die my voorkwam Zoo te behooren.*<sup>29</sup>

Descriptions of rapid changes such as these indicate Jelgerhuis's attention to detail to create a particular dramatic effect. He also used vocal expression to hide or reveal Siméon's true feelings. In Scene 5 of Act III, for instance, the words spoken by Omais anger Siméon; instantly forgetting that someone else is with him, he raises his voice in dismay, but quickly checks himself by disguising his anger behind a softer, even a slightly sweet, flattering tone of voice.<sup>30</sup>

In his search for a differentiated performance, Jelgerhuis took the audience into account, and organized his vocal build-up to achieve the desired effect on them. Knowing which passages were the most moving, and which ones 'ontzetting baarde' ('caused dismay'), he made sure such moments were well prepared.<sup>31</sup> In the important moments he made sure to be perfectly understood by placing himself mid-stage when the situation allowed for it, and by articulating clearly.<sup>32</sup> Yet Jelgerhuis does not hide the difficulty he experienced in performing certain passages to perfection, nor the fact that he does not always succeed. He relates of one passage in the third act, so touching that he would be almost overwhelmed by his own emotions. Here, Jelgerhuis feared not being able to speak the simple words 'o ja' ['oh yes'] in the right tone, and needed to muster all his concentration to suppress his true feeling and postpone his tears until after he had uttered those words, so that his voice would still be audible.<sup>33</sup>

29 'I gave this line the differentiation of which it is capable, namely combining it with a wishing and desiring tone. The appropriate soft tone on [the word] calm and in contrast the rough tone for the word torn thus increased a change of vocal colour which I deemed appropriate'. Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 137–8.

30 Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 152–5.

31 Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 140.

32 Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 143.

33 Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 159–161.

NOTES ON ACTING: EYE MOVEMENTS,  
GESTURES, MUSCLE TENSION, STANCE, ETC.

The previous quotations from the Siméon manuscript show that Jelgerhuis's thoughts and emotions are also reflected in his descriptions regarding acting such as eye movements, muscle tension, gestures, and full body postures. Jelgerhuis mentions the intensity of the eyes (wide open, burning, fiery, vacant, direct) as well as their direction (eyes cast down, heavenwards, darting from side to side, looking away, etc.). And again, he also explains the expression of the eyes by indicating the emotion (boldly looking forward, casting the eyes down in sadness). Some stage actions seem to reflect an instinctive consequence of the emotion felt in that moment: covering the face with both hands in shame, anxiously wiping the forehead with the hand, recoiling in fear, and clenching the hands into fists during an angry passage. Other passages describe entire, full body sequences of movements, the physical action always being preceded by the emotion:

*mijne Reeden gestuijt ziende door Haar, deed ik Eene allerfelste ontroering, door het gebeele gestel ontwaaren, die mij [...] het vermoogen benam om Zonder Steun punt te blyven, Ja gebeel ontzet greep ik de bystaande Zeetel om my te ondersteunen, de hand op 't hart leggende en met het booffd op de andere hand neederdaalende op den Rug des Zeetels, trilde ik met het gebeele Lighaam.<sup>34</sup>*

These relatively instinctive movements on one hand, and extremely dramatic sequences of movements on the other, are essential to deepen our understanding of Jelgerhuis's acting style.

INDICATIONS REGARDING THE ACTOR'S POSITION  
AND MOVEMENTS ON STAGE

The *Theoretische Lessen* focusses mainly on an actor's own acting technique and less on interacting with other characters – apart from a section on groupings, and the advice to search for contrast between the actors' positions, instead of standing exactly like one's counterpart.<sup>35</sup>

34 'seeing my words interrupted by her, I felt a most vehement emotion throughout my system, [...] which impeded my capacity to remain standing without support. Yes, in full dismay I grabbed the chair near, to support me, placing my hand on my heart and lowering my head onto my other hand on the back of the chair, my entire body trembled.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 140–1.

35 '*niets is lelijker, dan dat twee Acteurs eveneens staan, omdat de contrasten zoowel in het gebeele tafreel moeten heerschen, als in een bijzonder personaadje; hierop moeten wij leeren letten, als wij*

But Jelgerhuis's directions for Siméon consist of his own movements as well as interactions between him and other actors. Siméon's monologue in Act III even contains several dynamic elements: Jelgerhuis recounts how he left the mid-stage position, and continues: '*naar eene Zeijde snellende, en ontzet met alle de Schrik op het bezef der misdaad als Eene geoopende affgrond, waande ik die te zien en deijnsde agterwaards.*'<sup>36</sup> This rapid succession of movements caused by intense emotion and imagination does not exclude the actor's speaking and moving simultaneously. We see this again in a scene with Siméon's young brother Benjamin: '*week ik eijzende van Benjamin af, agter uyt, en verliet woest het Toneel onder het uijtroepen van de Woorden Zorg voor al dat gy mijn Schreeden vlied.*'<sup>37</sup> Elsewhere, the manuscript displays moments of seemingly straightforward physical interaction between the actors. Even when performed with decorum, the actions themselves are still uncomplicated expressions of communication. Such examples include Siméon pushing Omasis from him with both hands; Ramnes seizing Siméon's hand; Siméon placing his arm around Benjamin's neck; Siméon dragged forward in chains '*met die decentie welke de Sombere Ernst van dit Toneel vordert*' and thereafter being unchained on stage;<sup>38</sup> Benjamin assisting Siméon to reach the arms of his father, who receives him in his arms and lifts him up.<sup>39</sup>

Additional stage directions as well as acting indications are listed in the appendix that follows this article. They are the result of a comparison between the Siméon study and the *Theoretische Lessen*. As Jelgerhuis's observations on technique, character and emotion at times require lengthy explanations, I have selected only the practical information on acting and staging practice.

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*en scene staan*' ('nothing is more hideous, than two actors standing in the same position, because the contrasts must reign in the entire picture, as they do in a single character; we have to learn to pay attention to this, when we are on stage'). Jelgerhuis (1827/1829), op. cit., p. 90.

36 'hastening to one side, and filled with horror at the realization of the crime as an open abyss, [I] imagined seeing this, and recoiled'. Jelgerhuis (1811), op. cit., p. 144.

37 'I chillingly shrank back from Benjamin, moved backwards, and wildly left the stage while crying out: "above all, make sure that you stay away from me."' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 170.

38 'with that decorum which the somber seriousness of this scene requires'. Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 171.

39 Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 147, 158, 168, 171 and 178.

## METHODOLOGY AND BOUNDARIES

It is important to state at this point the problematic sides of transforming written text into physical action, and putting the results of artistic practice back into written words. Both the interpretation of the source and the description of artistic research are, although subjective in nature, essential for an understanding of the physical and mental processes the actor engages in when preparing a role. Historically informed artistic practice is by default performed by a different person, usually in a different physical surrounding (the costumes, sets, and theatre) than in the original version, and with a contemporary audience. This means that in our search for a 'historically informed staging' we must be able, at least on reflection, to distinguish the actual indications in the source from our own additions. Our aim in this project has therefore not been to recreate a historical event, to show 'how it was done', but rather an attempt to learn about the sources by doing, and recognizing tendencies in the acting style as Jelgerhuis describes it. My work in the staging project and its preparations involved training with the actors as well as leading the project. The following paragraphs therefore include sections written using the personal pronouns 'I' and 'we', as well as descriptive sections.

The following questions were the basis of our investigations: how could the process of staging three scenes from *Omasis* contribute to our knowledge of preparing and staging a role in agreement with Jelgerhuis's writings? Following Jelgerhuis's indications in his study of Siméon, how could we extend our understanding of the *Theoretische Lessen*, and consequently of the acting style in the Amsterdam Schouwburg in the early nineteenth century? The answers to our questions were to be sought through experimentation and comparison with other sources, generally in the following succession: question, research (whether through artistic practice or consulting and comparing sources), discussion, hypothesis, experimentation, reflection, answer or new question.

In order to stage the scenes in this style, the actors were to base their stances, gestures and the other elements inherent to acting on their

knowledge of and experience with historical treatises on acting and painting, both before and during Jelgerhuis's time. In particular, the actors and I intended to optimize our interpretation of Jelgerhuis's acting style by working with the material in his *Theoretische Lessen* – such as the examples concerning facial expression, contrast in the body and gestures, and 'attitudes' – according to Jelgerhuis's idea of 'welstand'. I will use the Dutch word *welstand* from here on, as its complete definition is lost when translated into one single word in English. The concept of *welstand*, essential to Jelgerhuis's teaching, may be defined as: gracefulness and beauty created through a physical balance of contrapposto<sup>40</sup> and contrast in the body and gestures, thereby depicting Nature '*minder zoo als zij is, dan wel behoorde te zijn*'.<sup>41</sup> The attitudes presented in Jelgerhuis's acting manual can be described as full body stances, including gestures and facial expressions, which follow the rules of contrapposto and *welstand*. The attitude is more than one moment's beautiful but static image only; in fact, it can include a passion, and therefore contain movement (of the eyes, of the arms and hands, or of the body).

This project's approach to rehearsing, analysing, documenting, discussing and experimenting is not a historical one, but an opportunity for us to engage with and obtain an understanding of Jelgerhuis's interpretation of Siméon. This was the role we had the most information about, and the interpretation of the other characters was adjusted in order to come closer to our reading of Jelgerhuis's manuscript. I selected the scenes in which Jelgerhuis was the most generous in his descriptions – Act III, Scenes 3, 4, and 5 – so that we might incorporate as many details from the manuscript as possible. As these scenes only involved three roles, this also made the project more manageable in terms of participants, time, and – as 2020 and 2021 presented the complications caused by Covid-19 – logistics. At this stage of our endeavours, the aim of this project was not to obtain a perfectly finished end product, but to learn

40 Definition of contrapposto in Lexico.com: An asymmetrical arrangement of the human figure in which the line of the arms and shoulders contrasts with, while balancing, those of the hips and legs. Origin: Italian, past participle of *contrapporre*, from Latin *contraponere* 'place against'. <https://www.lexico.com/definition/contrapposto>. (last accessed on 27-10-2021).

41 '*den slechten smaak die te algemeen heerscht, leeren verbannen en welstand bewaren, de Natuur leeren afbeelden, minder zoo als zij is, dan wel behoorde te zijn.*' ('learning to ban the bad taste which reigns too much in general, and maintaining *welstand*, so as to depict Nature less as she is, than as she should be.') Jelgerhuis (1827/1829), p. 119.

through experimentation, and it will remain a work in progress until such collaborations in a theatre are possible again.<sup>42</sup> I will not expand here on all aspects of delivery such as the poetic metre, speed of delivery, vocal pitch and historical Dutch pronunciation, but only on those parameters which were discussed extensively in Jelgerhuis's manuscript, such as vocal volume and colouring the voice through affect.

In order to stage the selected scenes from the manuscript according to the ideals of decorum and stage behaviour of the early nineteenth century, I wanted to work with actors who would be willing to use historical acting techniques. Jed Wentz, João Louís Paixão and Andreas Gilger, three colleagues from the Dutch Historical Acting Collective (DHAC) who, in previous years had studied and trained according to various principles in the *Theoretische Lessen*, kindly agreed to collaborate. With their cooperation, the project could commence with a collective understanding of this source. Moreover, they were familiar with other treatises (such as Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia* and Aaron Hill's *An Essay on the Art of Acting*), and had experience with acting techniques as described in these sources.<sup>43</sup> This facilitated communication and group work, as we could easily refer to a mutual frame of reference regarding decorum, techniques, and sources. Our focus during this staging process, however, was on sources directly concerning or mentioned by Jelgerhuis. The *Theoretische Lessen* was the main manual of reference and Jelgerhuis's other works have been consulted time and again in search of answers to the questions that arose during the preparation and staging process. The treatise would also serve as our guide to staging the gestures and attitudes described in the manuscript, according to Jelgerhuis's ideals of stage practice.

Rather than seeing myself as the director of the staging process, it was my aim to let Jelgerhuis be our guide and teacher. I suggested working on elements of the staging, such as entrances, exits, etc., and assisting the actors with inserting most of Jelgerhuis's descriptions in their staging in the appropriate acting style. But there was one complication: I soon

42 I will leave aside any comparison between the Dutch translation of *Omasis, of Jozef in Egijpte* and the French original, as well as between *Omasis, of Jozef in Egijpte* and the biblical narrative, as such comparisons were, at this stage, beyond the scope of our project.

43 Gilbert Austin, *Chironomia, Or, A Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1806); Aaron Hill, 'An Essay on the Art of Acting', *The Works of the Late Aaron Hill, Esq.* (London: 1753), Vol. IV, 353–414.

realized that I needed to be mindful of the distinction between simply voicing Jelgerhuis's indications, and interpreting them. Although I was more familiar with this material than the other actors, through my previous research on Jelgerhuis and my experience as a performer and teacher of acting techniques based on the *Theoretische Lessen*, and could provide suggestions accordingly, they had their own expertise which I valued, and I wanted to leave them as much artistic freedom as possible.<sup>44</sup>

At this stage of the project, we neither had the opportunity to work in a theatre, nor to have actual costumes, but Jelgerhuis's costume illustrations for Siméon, Omasis, and Jakob gave us an idea of the style of costume and headdress to envision for these characters. As Jelgerhuis did not mention any stage sets in his study of Siméon, I turned to the theatre critics in *De Tooneelkijker* to discover which kind of sets were used for *Omasis, of Jozeph in Egijpte* at the Amsterdam Schouwburg. The authors of *De Tooneelkijker* comment on sets depicting a Roman court hall in the *Omasis* performance of August 1817. Although they deemed the Roman court hall 'little suitable for the time', I used their description to search for similar sets designed for the Amsterdam Schouwburg in the early nineteenth century.<sup>45</sup> The Allard Pierson collection in Amsterdam holds set designs for a court hall and a court gallery by the Dutch set painter François Joseph Pfeiffer jr., who worked for the Amsterdam Schouwburg in Jelgerhuis's day.<sup>46</sup> Again, even if we could not work in a theatre at the time, it was inspiring to have an idea of the surroundings in which the acting should be placed.

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44 A video, created in 2021, documenting some of my work with Jelgerhuis's *Theoretische lessen* can be found here: <https://jedwentz.com/neuman-edps/> (last accessed 26-02-2022).

45 *De Tooneelkijker*, (Amsterdam: Delachaux, 1818), Vol. III, p. 41.

46 François Joseph Pfeiffer jr., *Decorontwerp voor hofgallerij*: t003448.000, and *Decorontwerp voor een hofzaal*: t005787.000, Allard Pierson, University of Amsterdam, theatre collection. The Allard Pierson collection also holds images of sets depicting a court hall from before Jelgerhuis's time, including *De Aloude Hofgallerij* by Gerard De Lairese, which burnt down with the previous Schouwburg in 1772, but of which many prints remain, such as *Het coulissendecor "De Aloude Hofgallerij" met scène uit Het huwelijk van Orontates en Statira*, g002183000, and various designs by Pieter Barbiere, such as a court hall dated 1781–85 for the miniature Slingelandt theatre: *Decor "de hofzaal" voor het Slingelandttheater*, Allard Pierson, University of Amsterdam, theatre collection, p.00022.008.

## THE STAGING PROCESS

## ACT III

The first project was to prepare and stage Act III, Scene 5 of *Omasis, of Jozef in Egijpte* with Jed Wentz as Siméon and João Louís Paixão in the role of Omasis. In order to follow Jelgerhuis's remark on thoroughly understanding the entire character before even starting to memorize the role, the actors and I read the play and the manuscript together and discussed the characters and their function in the play. Wentz and Paixão then memorized their own parts as well as Jelgerhuis's descriptions from the manuscript corresponding to their specific lines. Another reading followed in which they incorporated the descriptions concerning affect and vocal colour in their declamation. Only then did we proceed to the actual staging. Throughout the staging process, we followed Jelgerhuis's basic advice on contrast as presented in the *Theoretische Lessen*: to search for contrast not only within the actor's own posture and gestures, but also between two actors on stage. This meant that two actors mirroring one another, or adopting each other's attitude or gesture immediately, had to be avoided at all times. From the very beginning, the two actors had to work in different ways: Wentz, as Siméon, had to insert a multitude of Jelgerhuis's descriptions into his acting, whereas Paixão had no descriptions for Omasis, but interacted with Wentz by anticipating and acting in a way that made Siméon's actions and reactions more plausible. It took adjusting on both sides to create the right emotional build-up and tension between the characters, but this process enabled Wentz to obtain the desired vocal colour, affect, gestures, eye movements, and accentuation of specific words.

As Scene 5 began to take shape, the dramatical construction of the text, guided by Jelgerhuis's remarks, propelled the actors into an ever-increasing intensity of passions, and the volume reached a high level, resulting in an overwhelming impact on the observers. The question emerged whether this loudness did not exceed the limits of stage decorum in Jelgerhuis's time. In Scenes 3 and 4 of Jelgerhuis's Siméon study, Jelgerhuis regularly mentions taking the voice to its extremity, and using a rising tone. It is not certain whether Jelgerhuis here speaks



of vocal pitch, volume, or perhaps both. While the question of pitch for now remains unsolved, the following sources provided information on vocal volume on stage. *De Tooneelkijker's* review of his performance as Siméon in August 1817 praised Jelgerhuis for his management of the passions, yet criticized him for his excessive screaming:

*Jelgerhuis heeft in de rol van Siméon uitgeblonken: minnenijd, hoogmoed, hoop, wroeging van het geweten waren in stem, houding en gebaren sprekend te lezen; en hoezeer wij in het vijfde bedrijf, bij de bekentenis van de op het hart brandende misdaad, meer bedaardheid en innige weemoedigheid verlangd hadden, boven zijn ontzettend geschreeuw, zettede zijne duidelijke uitspraak (iets, dat niet altijd bij hem het geval is,) zijn spel, dezen avond, niet weinig luister bij.<sup>47</sup>*

Surprisingly, even though the authors of *De Tooneelkijker* had similarly criticized Jelgerhuis on several other occasions, he himself had already written, in an unpublished document of 1808, that too much shouting took place among the tragedians of the Amsterdam Schouwburg, particularly at the end of an important line.<sup>48</sup> He related how one actor induced the other to shout, and how this habit persisted because it was applauded by the audience. He also remarked: '*Hij, die het waagt, daarvan af te wijken, verliest het openlijk handgeklap en vervalt dus, tegen beter weten in, tot navolging. Hoe moeilijk is het, deze dwaling te overwinnen! [...] Het natuurlijk verheven spel, dat de zinnen betoovert, ontbreekt nog geheel.*'<sup>49</sup> Jelgerhuis compares this behaviour with the acting of the famous French actor François-Joseph Talma (1763–1826), who impressed Jelgerhuis in his role as Nero, in which he seemed to remain '*in het vermogen zijner*

47 'Jelgerhuis has shone in the role of Siméon: jealousy, haughtiness, hope, remorse of the conscience were clearly readable in [his] voice, posture, and gestures; and however much we would have preferred more calmness and inner melancholy to his terrible screaming in the fifth act, at the confession of his heart-burning crime, his excellent diction (something which is not always the case with him) added lustre to his performance on this evening.' *De Toneelkijker* (1818), Vol. III, p. 41.

48 *De Tooneelkijker* (Amsterdam: Delachaux, 1817), Vol. II, pp. 19 and 433; See also Neuman, art. cit., pp. 127–8.

49 'He, who dares to diverge from this, loses the applause and, against his better judgement, is reduced to conform. How difficult it is, to master this error! [...] The naturally elevated way of acting, which enchants the senses, is as yet entirely missing.' Johannes Jelgerhuis, 'Antwoord op de vraag: Welke was de verleden staat van het Nederlandsch Tooneel, welke is de tegenwoordige, en welke zoude die behooren te zijn? 1 Januari 1808', *Noord- en Zuid-Nederlandsche Tooneel-Almanak voor 1877* (G. Theod. Bom: Amsterdam, 1877), p. 111.

*kracht* ('within the bounds of his power') during the entire performance.<sup>50</sup> Jelgerhuis added:

*Angst en wroeging was het hoofddoel van zijn spel, en ofschoon hij bij al den eenvoud van zijn spel dikwerf deed ijzen, schreeuwde hij nooit. Zulks was om nimmer te vergeten! Zonder hier iemand te noemen, zeg ik alleen, dat men van niet één onzer Hollandsche Tooneelsten hetzelfde zeggen kan.*<sup>51</sup>

These examples suggest that Jelgerhuis was aware of the current imperfections, but also conscious of the difficulty in eliminating bad habits within the acting company, as the audience's approval was crucial to the actor's career. Desirous of change, Jelgerhuis reflected upon solutions to improve both the audience's taste and the acting level. However, judging by Jelgerhuis's own *Toneel Studien* of 1811 and *De Tooneelkijker's* reviews between 1816 and 1819, the issue of screaming on stage had not yet been resolved. These reviews still mention Jelgerhuis's excessive screaming, but also decry this tendency as a general flaw among the actors of the Amsterdam Schouwburg.<sup>52</sup>

Now that we had learned that there had been a tendency among the Dutch actors to raise their volume to a level described as screaming, we faced that dilemma which so often tortures historically informed performers: do we offer our interpretation of what we think actually happened in the performance (reality), or do we apply our interpretation of what the performer may have desired had it been possible (Jelgerhuis's ideal)? As the passionate moments in Scene 5 had naturally brought Wentz and Paixão to raise their voices, I decided not to ask them to limit their volume. The impact of their vocal crescendo created a contrast with moments of sensibility which I found effective. Vocal volume has been listed for our future research, as one of the elements to experiment with in an actual theatre, when the occasion arises, particularly Siméon's behaviour in Act V, which had given rise to *De Tooneelkijker's* criticism.

50 Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 121. François-Joseph Talma was a famous actor at the Comédie Française. It is likely that Jelgerhuis here refers to Talma's performances at the Théâtre Français, in 1803 and 1806. See Dr J. A. Worp, *Geschiedenis van den Amsterdamschen schouwburg; 1496–1772* (Amsterdam: S. L. van Looy, 1920) p. 254.

51 'Fear and remorse were the main aim of his acting, and although he often caused cold chills with the simplicity of his acting, he never screamed. This was unforgettable! Without naming names, I only say that one cannot say the same of any one of our Dutch actors.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 121.

52 *De Tooneelkijker* (Amsterdam: Delachaux, 1816), Vol. I, p. 29.

## TRAINING, IMAGES, WORKING WITH THE CAMERA

The second project involved staging Scenes 3 and 4 of Act III with Wentz as Siméon and Andreas Gilger as Ramnes. In this case we had more time to train and experiment before the actual staging began. Apart from understanding and creating the characters before staging the scene, I wanted us to think more profoundly about the notion of *welstand* and incorporate Jelgerhuis's advice to create lively images in the mind, as he describes it in both the manuscript and the *Theoretische Lessen*. In the treatise, Jelgerhuis encourages the observation of antique statuary as a vast source of inspiration in our study of the attitudes: '*Slechts de oppervlakkige kennis van den Griekschen Apollo, – of van den Laocoon, [...] geeft ons de beste denkebeelden, van onder pijn en smerten, nog edele en groote schilderachtige bewegingen, voortstellen.*'<sup>53</sup> Elsewhere, regarding his illustrations on gesticulation, he remarks: '*men dient zoo lang daar op te zien, tot men de eene uit de andere als het ware ziet voortvloeyen, en als Gesticulatie voor het oog zweven ziet [...].*'<sup>54</sup> By visualising the transition from one image to the next, the actor trains his imagination to transform a still image into movement. The movements are then executed by the actor, and adapted to the character he is studying. The actor's training therefore takes place on an imaginary as well as physical level. With this in mind, I asked both Wentz and Gilger to select visual images as inspiration for their characters, attitudes, and gestures. These images were mainly paintings and illustrations mentioned or drawn by Jelgerhuis, but also included other contemporary sources. Wentz and Gilger then each inserted these images into their text, creating a visual roadmap for their movements and attitudes, while reflecting on a possible route for the passions behind these movements.

The process of combining images with the text of Scenes 3 and 4 was done in alternation with preparatory readings and discussions of the text, similar to the work done earlier on Scene 5; however, due to Covid-19 restrictions, all meetings had to be held online. In a series of 'virtual' sessions, I proposed physical training in combination with

53 'Even the superficial knowledge of the Greek Apollo or of the Laocoon [...] gives us the best images for representing noble and grand movements as in a painting, even in great pain and suffering.' Jelgerhuis (1827/1829), op. cit., p. viii.

54 'One needs to observe these images until one can see one gesture flow into the next, as it were, as gesticulation, floating before the eyes.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 86.

readings, discussions and videos made of Scenes 3 and 4. The training consisted of exercises – based on the lessons on facial expression, gesticulation, and full body attitudes in the *Theoretische Lessen* – as well as work on embodiment of the images Wentz and Gilger had selected. Although these exercises did not exist in the sources, I designed them closely following the instructions in the *Theoretische Lessen*, so as to lead to intuitive moments on stage, based on our interpretation of Jelgerhuis's ideal of *welstand*.

In working on facial expression, we observed that some of Jelgerhuis's indications in the *Theoretische Lessen*, particularly on the movement of the eyebrows, proved more of a challenge to some of us than to others.<sup>55</sup> It also became clear that the passion we tried to convey through facial expression was not always recognizable as such to the other observing two. It became clear why Jelgerhuis urged aspiring actors to study their own facial features, and to learn which traits can become strengths or weaknesses in the expression of a character. By knowing how to accentuate or cover the specific visual features with make-up, and through awareness of the effect of one's facial expression on the observer, the actor can mould these elements to his advantage. He might use this knowledge so that the imitation of the passions on stage '*in de oogen der Aanschouwers, dezelfde denkbeelden zichtbaar verwekken, die de natuur elkander nabij staande doet.*'<sup>56</sup>

This last observation on the distance between the actor and his audience raised questions concerning the intensity of the facial expressions in our staging. As the facial expressions in the treatise were taught to the students of the Amsterdam Schouwburg (the theatre at the time of Jelgerhuis's lessons could hold an audience of more than one thousand), were we to adapt such strong features to the situation of online meetings, using a camera?<sup>57</sup> Or were Wentz and Gilger to

55 Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 117–184. Jelgerhuis presents examples from sources by, among others, Charles Le Brun, Gerard de Lairese and Johann Jakob Engel, which he accompanies with comments, comparisons, and solutions of his own.

56 'that the imitation on stage noticeably induces the same mental images in the eyes of the spectators as they would naturally experience when standing next to one another.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 117.

57 For calculations of audience capacity at the Amsterdam Schouwburg see Henny Ruitenbeek, *Kijkcijfers: De Amsterdamse Schouwburg 1814–1841* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), pp. 104–110.

soften their facial expressions so as to return to the situation of a person ‘standing nearby’, and consequently adapt a facial *welstand* appropriate to the distance to the camera? The aim of the project was to stage the *Omasis* scenes as described in the manuscript, which is directly based on stage experience. In addition, this project and its staging process are a preparation for ultimately working on an actual stage. Deviating from Jelgerhuis’s instructions so early on in the process, by definitely moderating the expression, would be likely to influence our result. Scaling down the actor’s actions then, though it might be an effective exercise to obtain more contrast with the grand version, was not adapted as a new goal.

The online format became particularly problematical in the final stages of recording Scene 4. Wentz and Gilger were working from their respective homes in differently shaped rooms, impeding their moving at the same distance to the camera. This resulted in video recordings with disproportionate images of Wentz and Gilger: one of the two looked significantly smaller, while supposedly on stage they would be standing near one another. Both actors were also restricted in their movement, as certain movements could cause a body part to be left out of the frame. In addition, the unstable internet connection occasionally hindered the dialogue, causing delays, and even momentarily blocking the video entirely. Not having better options at the time of the recording (larger rooms with a better internet connection), we decided to keep these recordings for documentation only of our work in process, instead of adding them as an accompaniment to this article as planned.

#### STAGING EXAMPLE: ACT III

The staging process of Scenes 3 and 4 involved elements of timing, gestures, and interaction between Siméon and Ramnes which are found neither in the *Omasis* text, nor in the *Theoretische Lessen*. Jelgerhuis wrote about an increase in intensity towards the final lines of Siméon’s monologue, where, having reached the extremity of volume and despairing rage, he changed his tone to speak the next line as follows: ‘*grillende van de daad Zelve Zeijde ik die Vreeslyke Woorden, tot den Heemel spreekende ‘K geboorzaam Ja, Maar weer de Wroeging uit mijn hart terwijl ik met Eene vuijste slag op het hart, Een afgewend gezig*

*en oog ten Heemel maakte*'.<sup>58</sup> Jelgerhuis's interpretation of this passage is manifested in physical action (the act of striking his heart with a fist, and the direction of his face and the eyes), in thought and emotion ('while abhorring the deed itself'), as well as Jelgerhuis's own opinion of Siméon's text '*Zeijde ik die Vreeslyke Woorden*' ['I said those terrible words']. After this passage, Jelgerhuis mentions a gesture and a pause before speaking the next line, '*Ach Wat heb ik gezegt*' ['Alas, what have I said']:

*Hier Sloeg ik dan beijde de handen voor het voorhoofd; bezon mij en een Pauze maakende Zeijde ik de genoemde Woorden, onder de Uytdrukking van angstig berroepen van't gebeugen, en van zig zelven gruwende nu in Een geheele Sombre gedagten Stortende, kwam ik tot die gewoone mijmering te rug, waarin ik mij het Eerst vertoonde.*<sup>59</sup>

Not only are the gestures in this monologue an addition to the vocabulary of gestures in the *Theoretische Lessen*, but Jelgerhuis's description of words, gestures and vocal pauses also cast light on the timing. Jelgerhuis's use of gestures while speaking the text is at least as valuable for the actor working with the manuscript as the gestures which occur in silence. Regarding the matter of timing, the 'how long' and 'how short' will remain unknown variables. But the fact that there was a pause at all, and that the pause was filled with a gesture and with Jelgerhuis's/Siméon's thoughts, is crucial to the interpretation of the entire role. The options of an expressive pause, and of movements in silence, give the actor the freedom to construct his timing according to his interpretation, even between lines of text. At the beginning of Scene 4, Jelgerhuis depicts Siméon's interaction with Ramnes: '*Op Zijn gezigt, swoegt hy [Siméon] van deeze ruwe bestorming en deijnst een weijnig te rug, waar op deeze [Ramnes] bem aan de hand grijpt.*'<sup>60</sup> Again, these stage directions are not found in the published *Omasis* text, but they were clear indications for Wentz and Gilger to work with. Jelgerhuis continued using the pantomimic

58 'while abhorring the deed itself, I said those terrible words, speaking to heaven I obey, yes!.. but ban remorse from my heart, while I struck my heart with [my] fist, with an averted face and eyes cast heavenwards.' Jelgerhuis (1811), op. cit., p. 146.

59 'Here I threw both hands before my forehead, considered, and pausing, I spoke those words, while expressing the memory of the fearful recollection, and disgusted with myself, now plunging into [...] entirely sombre thoughts, I returned to that habitual pensive state, in which I had appeared the first time.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, pp. 146–7.

60 'On seeing [Ramnes], [Siméon] pants from this rough assault and retreats slightly, upon which [Ramnes] seizes his hand.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 147.

element of gestures and expression in Siméon's part during the dialogue with Ramnes:

*Het klamme angst sweet stelde ik nu voor mij uijtteebreeken. eene handveege over het voorhooffd was de uijtdrukking daar van teevens eenige Rust Zoekende door Stille Stand en stem toonen die nu in den aanvang van dit gesprek Een angstig fluijsteren gelijk waaren[;] deeze voorstelling paarde ik met Zeekere hartklopping te vertoonen die angst en gejaagdheid verraaden.<sup>61</sup>*

This sequence of Simeon's actions proved to be more complicated to interpret than the previous ones. Firstly because expressing palpitations and breaking out in a cold sweat, apart from the hand's movement on the brow, may be performed in many different ways, and secondly because it is not evident from this passage during which lines of the play text this manifestation of anxiety should take place. In search of a solution, Wentz tried out various moments to act out the gestures and whispering that Jelgerhuis refers to. Some versions felt slightly better than others to him, Gilger, and myself as a spectator, yet we found most versions convincing as long as they arose from Siméon's underlying anxiety and agitation.

In both projects we saw how, by changing each acting parameter, the scene could change entirely, oftentimes resulting in multiple acceptable and unexpected outcomes.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Throughout the entire staging period and its preparation, the search for new information and answers to our questions was undertaken through a combination of artistic practice and comparison between sources. The continuous rotation between experimentation, comparison, and

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61 'I now imagined breaking out in a cold sweat. Wiping my forehead with my hand was the expression thereof [,] at the same time searching for some calmness though a motionless stance and (soft) tones of voice, which in the beginning of this dialogue were like fearful whispering [,] I combined this representation by showing some [possibly unmistakable] palpitations which revealed fear and agitation.' Jelgerhuis, *ibid.*, p. 148.

reflection was a creative process in itself, demonstrating the possibilities for various outcomes. Jelgerhuis's *Theoretische Lessen* and his Siméon study complemented each other in providing the material to create a basic construction of the characters. Where those two works could not bridge the gaps in our information, additional sources including Jelgerhuis's study of other roles in the *Toneel Studien*, articles in *De Tooneelkijker*, and Jelgerhuis's document of 1808, were useful aids in constructing historically informed pieces of our puzzle. The following list is the result of our project (including its preparation), and summarises (my interpretation of) the building blocks needed to create a character according to the acting style Jelgerhuis describes. The order is not fixed, as it will vary for each actor and each character, and most of these steps are interrelated. Elements of this list may seem like an obvious part of a modern actor's routine, but research is necessary as one cannot merely assume that this routine was the same in the early nineteenth century, since many of the acting treatises of that time do not include all of these elements.

Tools extracted from Jelgerhuis's study of Siméon to build up a character are as follows:

- The play text (including lines by others) is analysed to find indications of the character.
- Historical facts or narratives (and/or additional sources such as the Bible) are studied to understand the character's background and the context of the play.
- This information can be used to create the character's/actor's thoughts and emotions and to gather lively images in the imagination, which can be recalled on stage.
- Hair, headdress, and costume are based both on historical sources and the visual arts, and are adapted, as is the make-up, to suit the age and character traits of the part.
- The emotions and dissimulation of emotions allow for variety of expression in the voice.
- The actor organizes the build-up of his role while consciously planning its effect on the audience. He seeks to balance between emotion and technique, in order to represent the emotion sufficiently to move the audience, while attempting to stay in control of his voice.



- The actor uses nuanced transitions as well as contrasts of affect and effect. He can make use of artistic freedom in timing while speaking, and between his lines, while the continuity of thought guides the character throughout the play.
- The staging can include striking attitudes and gestures, pantomime, and physical exchanges between the actors (this can include taking someone's hand, pushing, etc. For more details: see appendix).

Modern actors engaging with these building blocks can increase their understanding of historically informed acting techniques and acting style based on Jelgerhuis's writings by:

- Training based on information in the *Theoretische Lessen* (such as basic attitudes, examples of *welstand*, gestures, and facial expression) and enhanced with information from the *Toneel Studien* manuscript (additional gestures, mental images, and emotions).
- Incorporating additional examples and inspiration (for attitudes, gestures, and postures, etc.) from the visual arts.

This list was devised taking the following results and observations, to be treated hereafter, into consideration: imagination, dissimulation and declamation.

#### IMAGINATION, IMAGES AND THE MENTAL ARCHIVE

The Siméon study reveals Jelgerhuis's use of imagination to create the thoughts and the passions at the core of his character, which may be built up from elements such as the character's age and character traits, the historical context in which the character finds himself, etc. Once the actor has established this core, all the acting elements, including gestures, eye movements, and vocal delivery and colour, can interact and become a unity: *they are connected, as they are generated from the same source*. This does not imply that practice or preparation have become superfluous; the actor can practise all these elements together or separately, as long as they come together to fit into the full picture on stage, including his costume, his colleagues, and surroundings. Starting from

the unity described here, the actor can work with extreme contrasts as well as nuanced transitions and *crescendi* in vocal colour, volume and passion which Jelgerhuis describes. Moreover, Jelgerhuis's study indicates a certain freedom regarding timing between lines for expressive pantomime, as well as for movement on stage during a monologue, and physical interaction with other actors. The continuity of thought (as described in the manuscript) links these elements together, and results in acting and reacting not only during one's own lines, but also during one's entrance, or while another actor speaks.

We found that these guidelines resulted in a major sense of artistic freedom for the actor as compared to working with the *Theoretische Lessen* only, and that this can be important for the construction or creation of other roles.

#### DISSIMULATION, AUDIENCE, EMOTION VERSUS TECHNIQUE

In the scenes we staged, the three characters are feigning most of the time. Their real emotions can be revealed momentarily during an aside, a monologue, when an actor is positioned so that his true intentions are visible to the audience only (i.e. not to the other character/s), or when the characters agree (Ramnes and Siméon, as their ambitions become the same – albeit for different personal reasons). The actor must ensure that the audience can perceive the difference between the character's emotional disguise and glimpses of the character's emotional sincerity. In the case of Siméon, the actor has to balance out three levels: the character's true emotions, the emotions the character wishes to show, and the emotions the character wants to hide. In addition, he also needs to consider the emotions the character tries to hide, but which become visible, as they overwhelm his own better judgement. Meanwhile, the actor (behind the character's emotions) continuously monitors his own feelings, kept in check through technique as much as possible. Among all these layers of real emotion and make-believe, the moments which Jelgerhuis signals as most touching also stood out in our staging; they are those few moments in which the character opens up, shows his vulnerability, or is overcome by his feelings.

It seems clear from Jelgerhuis's own description that on stage, after all the preliminary work on thought and practice, he passionately dedicated his thoughts, emotions, and even soul, to his performance of

Siméon, while ideally keeping enough control to continue playing his part, and to keep his voice audible. Yet he also openly draws the reader's attention to his struggle to control his emotions in particular passages. And even though strong emotions could be a hindrance to expressing himself on stage artfully (to speak the text as he had envisioned it), he did not block his feelings out. He allowed himself to engage with the emotional situation on stage, even at the risk of being overwhelmed. This suggests a prioritization (whether this was a conscious choice or not) of the passionate engagement with his role over technical perfection; at least in the most dramatic passages.<sup>62</sup> For modern actors engaging with the acting style as described by Jelgerhuis, this is an invitation to explore the fine line of control between one's own feelings and technique, keeping in mind: the ideal to keep control, without sacrificing a moving performance.

In addition to the *Theoretische Lessen*: preparation and build-up of an actor's role include taking into account the passages that will move the audience most, and to ensuring such passages are well prepared and articulated with care. This preparation not only involves gestures and attitudes, but also skill in managing the various layers of emotional engagement between the actor and his character.

#### DECLAMATION

Jelgerhuis's descriptions in the manuscript did not provide answers to all the questions concerning declamation on stage in the early nineteenth century: we are still searching for more information on elements such vocal pitch, accentuation of the poetic metre, pronunciation, and speed of delivery. But his search for contrast in the different passages, and the variety of descriptions regarding the voice, including, sighs, pauses, stammering, and vocal quality coloured by emotion, fill in small gaps of information on declamation in the *Theoretische Lessen*. The staging process shaped our ideas on voice colour and volume, as it confirmed the emotional effect of the nuanced build-up and vocal contrasts described in the manuscript on the observers and the actors. By instinctively using a loud vocal delivery, we could address and

<sup>62</sup> Possibly only in roles he felt particularly connected with, and not in those roles he considered a waste of his time.

investigate the issue of the delicate balance between a loud voice and screaming.

#### RESULTS OF THE TRAINING

One of the most surprising results was the importance of the training for Scenes 3 and 4, and the way that training developed during and after our work. As we alternated between working with the sources, stage work, and training, our understanding of the attitudes and mental images increased, changing the training itself. Instead of a predefined preparation routine, it had become flexible; ready to be adjusted as needed in order to better shape and understand the characters of Siméon and Ramnes. It was enriched by information from the sources and the practical work.

A next step, once the actor has achieved a basic understanding of ideal stage behaviour, is to adapt images and movements from daily life to extend one's repertoire of movements and expressions. The advice given by Jelgerhuis to the aspiring acting student is to learn from excellent actors, statues and paintings, and then to turn 'to nature' for further inspiration (such as someone's gesture, posture, or facial expression). The examples taken from nature are then to be adapted for the stage and perfected through the ideals of decorum, contrapposto and *welstand*, so that they are represented in their highest form, through art. This could give the actor *carte blanche* to fill in any gap in the historical information on staging. Here, again, the *result* cannot be called historical, as the modern actor creates in present time; but the *method* is. We did not take this last step, since it is important to see the gaps clearly first, so that the actor/researcher is aware of the moments he or she fills in with nature-inspired movement and expression. Staying as close to the sources as we did in this project, exposed these gaps, some of which may be filled in by future research projects.

Even when adding all the sources we had at our disposition, acting remains a living process, in which the outcomes cannot be pinned down as unchangeable facts. Wentz's experimentation with Siméon's expression of anxiety in the beginning of Scene 4 showed several acceptable outcomes of the same scene. Although the actors followed the same descriptions in the manuscript, knowing exactly which actions and reactions to aim for, the resulting staging and atmosphere differed slightly every time.

Similarly, the dramatic tension and the energy with which Wentz and Gilger Scenes played 3 and 4 was very different when preceded by a reading of previous scenes in the play. It is no great surprise that the dramatic context changes a scene, but it meant that by staging only a small section of the play, we could not anticipate the influence a first and second act could have on these scenes. The ideal would be eventually to stage the whole play, or at least the entirety of Act III, so as to get an understanding of its impact on Scenes 3 to 5 of the same Act. Having experienced the limitations of working and recording online, however, I would certainly not stage a bigger project in a virtual format. The more so because the things to be explored further – such as vocal volume, timing, and staging scenes that involve multiple actors – depend on physical presence and a larger working space. On the other hand, having observed the benefits of working on the attitudes, some of us decided to continue this training online until it is again possible to travel internationally and work together in person. Other steps include having costumes made, based on Jelgerhuis's illustrations, so that we can see how the costumes affect the actors' gestures and delivery. In addition, Pfeiffer's illustrations of the court hall and court gallery will be used as point of reference in choosing stage sets, once the project can take place in a theatre setting, as was intended for May 2021 in the restored Valtice castle theatre. This has now been postponed until May 2022.

## CONCLUSION

Jelgerhuis's study of Siméon reveals a passionate craftsman who recorded not only his manner of creating and performing a role, but also the difficulties he experienced in achieving his conception of an ideal performance. If the *Theoretische Lessen* prepares the actor's body, the *Toneel Studien* prepares his mind and emotions. This means that, although Jelgerhuis did not propose a didactic function for the 1811 *Toneel Studien*, elements of this manuscript can be used as teaching material, following the tradition of learning through imitation. Jelgerhuis's lesser-known works therefore deserve to be used alongside the *Theoretische*

*Lessen* as a source for HIP practice and in the discussion of European theatre history of the early nineteenth century. When put into practice, Jelgerhuis's writings may bring us one step closer to understanding early nineteenth century acting techniques in the Netherlands, and can therefore contribute to a better comparison between acting practices across Europe.

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## APPENDIX

What follows as an appendix to the previous article is a selection of staging indications, paraphrased from Jelgerhuis's study of Siméon in his 1811 manuscript *Toneel Studien*, that are not mentioned in the *Theoretische Lessen* (1827/1829).

## SIMÉON'S STAGE ACTIONS AS DESCRIBED BY JELGERHUIS

- p. 122 Entrance – hands folded under the face
- p. 125 Facing the audience
- p. 132 Entrance in thought/pondering, somber
- p. 143 Positioning himself mid-stage
- p. 144 Running to one side
- p. 144 Recoiling (backwards)
- p. 147 Recoiling, another actor grabbing his hand
- p. 158 Pushing the other actor away with both hands
- p. 163 Turning away from the other actor
- p. 164 Turning his back to the other actor
- p. 165 Walking back and forth
- p. 166 Standing as if 'pegged down', petrified
- p. 167 Standing a while
- p. 168 Speaking with one arm around the other actor's neck
- p. 171 Dragged forward in chains, with that decorum which the somber seriousness of this scene requires
- p. 171 Being unchained on stage
- p. 175 Kneeling and bending downwards
- p. 177 Descending in the other actor's arms
- p. 178 Another actor, supporting him, leads him to his father, who raises him up and embraces him

## OTHER NOTES ON ACTING

- p. 123 Slightly bowing
- p. 123, p. 134 Casting the eyes down
- p. 124 Facial expressions being made as reaction while the other actor speaks
- p. 126 Attentively listening to another actor, and expressing great surprise
- p. 127 Making sure his attitude had been brought back to that silent humbleness which the soul's situation causes on the body
- p. 127 Standing in that regal attitude of one who believes himself to be of the same rank as kings
- p. 135 Recovering, coming to his senses
- p. 140 Behaving as if wanting to devour whatever was near him at that moment.
- p. 148 Expressing of fear and sweating: wiping the hand over the forehead.
- p. 150 Being beside himself with rapture
- p. 158 Tears being wrenched from him
- p. 162 Looking boldly at the other actor
- p. 164 Interrupting the speech of the other actor with a movement, not wishing to hear anything more
- p. 175 Hitting one hand on the other, remaining in this pose
- p. 176 Raising the hands in front of the face

## VOCAL EFFECTS

- p. 124, p. 170 Sighing
- p. 125 Speaking as a human who is oppressed by his own feelings
- p. 130 Taking a moment, breathing
- p. 131 Sighing in rapture
- p. 144 Stammering in a soft, interrupted tone, while calming himself, breaking into tears
- p. 144 The voice climbing continuously
- p. 145 Tone of dismay and strength in the voice
- p. 148 Despairing rage – maximum volume in the voice (and pure tones) to prepare a strong change of tone
- p. 148 A still attitude and soft, fearful whispering tone of voice
- p. 149 Speaking with an expression of fear and oppression of the soul



## COMBINATIONS: GESTURES, VOICE, EYES, STAGE MOVEMENTS

- p. 125 Reaction: eruption, stance and gestures expressing a certain alarm, opening the eyes wide and facing the audience, paring a loud voice to the vehement feeling Siméon suffered at the thought of seeing his father and brothers humiliated
- p. 138 Jealous expression on his face, the eyes suddenly opening, turning from side to side
- p. 139 Angry spite: hands to fists, all muscles braced, his eyes turned upwards in anger, his head slightly tilted backwards, and painting the expression of spite on his face, speaking with a loud voice which caused dismay
- p. 141 Unable to stand without support. One hand on his heart, and lowering his head onto his other hand on the back of the chair, his whole body trembled and expressed great dismay
- p. 143 Mid-stage: speaking with such emphasis and clarity so as to assure that he would be well understood
- p. 144 Leaving the mid-stage position, hastening to one side – imagining to see an open abyss, and recoiling in fear
- p. 146 Speaking to heaven: his eyes heavenwards, striking his heart with his fist, and his face averted
- p. 146 Throwing both hands before his forehead, pausing in consideration
- p. 148 Showing the heart's palpitations, revealing fear and agitation
- p. 149 Showing an ebullition of anger, kept in silence
- p. 170 Recoiling, away from another actor, furiously leaving the stage, while screaming
- p. 151 Omasis enters, Siméon tries to escape, but not daring to disobey Omasis's order to stay, he steps forward again
- p. 152 The fright striking Siméon's entire body at the sight of the person he will murder must shock him terribly. He tries to disguise this with the usual somber expression, now however combined with unrest
- p. 153 Siméon speaks with an insulted tone, but pretends to be pondering again by turning away with his eyes completely cast down so that they cannot be seen
- p. 154 Opening his eyes wide, looked forward, fiery, while shaking. Interrupting this entrancement with a sideward glance at Omasis, which [reminded Siméon] to disguise his true feelings and answer softly. While speaking, the feelings overrule this disguise, and Siméon forgets that he is not alone, and raising his voice in anger he speaks
- p. 156 Speaking in full rage, completely withdrawn into himself, gnashing his teeth with thundering resentment and anger, and trembling with rage as if in a fit of complete self-abandonment, not noticing anything around him anymore
- p. 157 Anger in the face, all muscles tensed, boldly looking forward

REFLECTION

- p. 142 This should be performed in a way that remains deeply engraved in the mind of the audience
- p. 150 The alternating thoughts of this role require true self-control and fully occupy the mind