



*Economic advancement and reputation strategies: Seventeenth-century Dutch women writing for profit**

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Female authors' self-representation in the early modern period was vital. It is generally acknowledged that by writing, and especially publishing, women entered the public domain and, thus, needed to protect their reputation.¹ In current scholarship of early modern women's writing, factors that are regarded decisive for chosen strategies of self-representation are as diverse as religious, political, social, and material factors, as well as factors related to literary and intellectual contexts.² Considering the complexity of women's strategies when they were writing for profit it is surprising that scholarship has yet to carefully examine the fundamental importance of economic factors.³ Women writing for profit needed to protect their honour even more as they sold themselves as authors within a literary culture that rejected earthly moneymaking and glorified social impact and eternal fame.⁴ This essay examines the complex strategies of self-representation employed by two women writing in the Dutch Republic, Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken (1605–after 1662) and Katharina Lescailje (1649–1711).

In the Dutch Republic, the presence of a dominant book market provided a relatively extensive freedom of publication, but few possibilities for

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¹ Martine van Elk, *Early Modern Women's Writing: Domesticity, Privacy, and the Public Sphere in England and the Dutch Republic* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

² See for example: Van Elk, *Early Modern Women's Writing*, Amanda Pipkin, *Rape in the Republic 1609-1725. Formulating Dutch Identity* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2014); Patricia Pender and Rosalind Smith (eds.), *Material Cultures of Early Modern Women's Writing* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

³ Economic factors are only discussed in detail in scholarship on English women writers, for example very profoundly in Sarah Prescott, *Women, Authorship and Literary Culture, 1690–1740* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). For a comparative perspective see Carme Font Paz and Nina Geerdink (eds.), *Economic Imperatives for Women's Writing in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2018).

⁴ About this culture see for example Rietje van Vliet, 'Print and Public in Europe 1600–1800', in J. Rose and S. Elliot (eds.), *A Companion to the History of the Book* (Malden/Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 247–58, 254 or Prescott, *Women*, 2–3.

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literary authors to profit.⁵ This was also due to the marginality of literary patronage in Dutch court culture.⁶ Literary authors turned for support to all kinds of wealthy people within and outside the country. When compared to court-dominated countries, patronage in the Dutch Republic was relatively occasional and informal. It was commercial in nature: time and again authors had to show their availability, explain their need for support, and make clear what they could offer in return.⁷ As in other European countries there was no copyright law and Dutch publishers were infamously stingy, so it was not easy to profit directly through the market.⁸ This situation made it essential and difficult for those authors who required financial gain from their writing to manage their reputations: they needed to advertise themselves and their works to make money, but to protect their literary reputation, they had to connect themselves not to profit but to glory and social impact.

Female authors encountered even more difficulties than their male counterparts. As in other European countries, Dutch women writers were theoretically excluded from the literary field due to their lack of educational opportunities and their assigned role of staying within the domestic sphere and running their households.⁹ At the same time, on average Dutch women were highly literate when compared to women in neighbouring countries. Indeed, many women wrote, and during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries their number increased, as did their contributions to secular literature and their public visibility in print-published collections and their own printed publications alike. Notwithstanding the abundance of female role models in the Dutch Republic, most women operating within the public realm put forth very modest self-representations. At first sight these reveal barely any sign of an evident commercial strategy. As a consequence, in Dutch historiography women writers have only rarely been included among studies considering literary authors' economic advancement.

International scholarship advanced reasons to analyse Dutch women's writing in connection to financial gain. Sarah Prescott has convincingly argued

⁵ Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, *The Bookshop of the World. Making and Trading Books in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2019).

⁶ Whereas the Dutch stadholder Frederick Henry and his wife Amalia van Solms are known for having created a court to the liking of other European, royal, courts by means of art and architectural patronage, their patronage of Dutch literature was only marginal in comparison, see Marika Keblusek and Jori Zijlmans (eds.), *Princely Display. The Court of Frederik Hendrik of Orange and Amalia van Solms* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1997).

⁷ About commercial patronage Helen Smith, *Grossly Material Things: Women and Book Production in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); and Prescott, *Women*. About literary patronage in the Dutch Republic Nina Geerdink, 'Possibilities of Patronage. The Dutch Poet Elisabeth Hoofman and Her German Patrons', in Font Paz and Geerdink (eds.), *Economic Imperatives*, 124–46.

⁸ Van Vliet, 'Print and Public', 254–5. In the Netherlands, the first copyright agreement dates from 1812, which is late in comparison to, for example, England (1710).

⁹ All claims about Dutch women in this paragraph are based on Lia van Gemert et al. (eds.), *Women's Writing from the Low Countries 1200–1875: A Bilingual Anthology* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010).

that the modesty displayed by English amateur writers could be regarded as a marketing strategy as much as the more assertive gestures of professional women writers.¹⁰ In her comparative study of English and Dutch women writers, Martine van Elk, too, shows how ‘women could use the label of pastime to present their artistic expressions as “private” and yet suitable for publication, gradually moving into more public modes of expression’.¹¹ Moreover, Van Elk has observed that whereas English female authors often came from the gentry or the nobility and did not consider marriage an obstacle to writing, Dutch female authors were more often from the middle classes, hailing from regent or mercantile families for example, and they often stopped writing after they had married.¹² One could suppose that for these women, economic advancement was of greater importance than for their English colleagues.

To explore the strategies of self-representation of women writing for profit within the specific Dutch context, I bring to the fore Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken and Katharina Lescailje. Both women writers have claims to fame in literary history. In the Dutch Republic, Van Akerlaecken was in 1654 the first woman writer to print-publish her own, secular, work, whereas Lescailje was in 1731 the first woman whose complete works were published in collected volumes, albeit posthumously. More importantly for our purposes here, neither married, and each came from the (upper) middle class and was responsible for her own income after the death of her father. Van Akerlaecken published a collection of poetry, some separate poems, and a rhymed treatise about the praises of women. Lescailje’s collected works consist of plays and poems, many already print-published by her father or herself during her lifetime. Although their works and strategies were in many ways comparable to those of other Dutch women writers from the seventeenth century, their cases are especially suitable for my purposes because we know they had financial motives for their print-publications.¹³ Moreover, both their financial strategies and their strategies of self-representation are very different, which allows me to analyse a wide range of possibilities available to Dutch women writers. Van Akerlaecken represented herself in her writings for patrons, with whom she maintained relatively lengthy relationships, with a markedly gendered strategy, whereas Lescailje employed a neutral, genderless strategy in her market publications. Whereas the differences between them may in part be due to incompatible periods and places of activity as well as familial circumstances, my analysis of both oeuvres in this essay, first Van Akerlaecken’s, then Lescailje’s, will show first and foremost how the

¹⁰ Prescott, *Women*, 7–8.

¹¹ Van Elk, *Early Modern Women’s Writing*, 9.

¹² *Ibid.*, 13–16.

¹³ There are only few Dutch women writers from the early modern period for whom we have enough sources to argue they had economic imperatives. Another exception is Elisabeth Hoofman (1664–1736), see Geerdink, ‘Possibilities of Patronage’.

economically motivated publication contexts at the time strongly influenced these women's self-representations.

MARIA MARGARETHA VAN AKERLAECKEN

Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken was from an elite background,¹⁴ but after her father's death in 1646 she appears to have needed money. Her poems reveal she had endured some misfortune, but do not provide further details and whatever might have happened is not referred to in the archival material. It is also unclear why her siblings, who presumably had means to do so, did not take care of her financially.¹⁵ In any case, she began to write and publish poetry after her father's death, as well as to elaborate on and publish his genealogical studies. She dedicated her works to rich, powerful patrons within the Dutch Republic and abroad, whom she asked for financial support, sometimes successfully.¹⁶ She thus openly sought profit as a literary author, which was rather unusual in the Dutch context, and as a genealogist. This context of patronage with a financial orientation accounts for Van Akerlaecken's only collection of poetry, *Den Cleefschien Pegasus* (The Pegasus of Cleves, 1654), a separately published poem (1660), the genealogical volume *De (...) genealogien* (Genealogies, 1655), and a genealogical folio publication (1660).¹⁷ Her last publication, *Den lof der vrouwen, tegen der vrouwen lasteraars* (The praise of women, against women's libellers, 1662), was not dedicated to a patron, but was evidently focused on the market for

¹⁴ She has been often referred to as being of noble descent, but this appears to be untrue. See 'Van Akerlaken,' *Nederland's Adelsboek*, 79 (1988), 43–9. Biographical sources: Els Kloek, 'Akerlaecken, Maria Margaretha van', *Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon van Nederland*, <http://resources.huigens.knaw.nl/vrouwenlexicon/lemmata/data/Akerlaecken> (accessed February 2019); Ton van Strien, 'Maria Margareta van Akerlaecken (Dordrecht, 1605–Antwerpen?, c.1670). Verdiensten aan het hof', in Riet Schenkeveld-van der Dussen et al. (eds.), *Met en zonder lauwerkrans. Schrijvende vrouwen uit de vroegmoderne tijd 1550–1850 van Anna Bijns tot Elise van Calcar* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1997), 200–7; José van den Besselaer, 'Die Sängerin des Cleefschien Pegasus', in G. de Werd (ed.), *Soweit der Erdkreis reicht: Johann Moritz von Nassau-Siegen 1604–1679* (Kleve: Stadt Kleve, 1979), 107–16.

¹⁵ Information about two of her four siblings is available in Westfries Archief Hoorn, inv. nr. 1471–2, 3. Her sister Geertruid married a nobleman, but it is unknown whether she outlived her father. Her brother Adriaan was an Amsterdam merchant and would be nominated for the town government in 1672.

¹⁶ She received: 200 guilders by stadholder Frederick Henry in 1648, maybe as an advance for *De (...) genealogien* (Marika Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad: Haagse boekcultuur in de Gouden eeuw* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 1997), 183–4); a pension of unknown amount and duration from the Great Elector from 1652 onwards (see below); a gift by John Maurice of Nassau in 1653 (see below); 30 guilders from Nijmegen for *De (...) genealogien* (D. van Akerlaken and C. A. Chais van Buren, *Verzameling van eenige geschriften vervaet in het familie-archief van jhr. mr. D. van Akerlaken* [Haarlem: J. Enschedé, 1889], 69); and 50 guilders from the house of Orange for a genealogical work that has not survived (Van Akerlaken and Van Buren, *Verzameling*, 69).

¹⁷ Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken, *Den Cleefschien Pegasus* (Nijmegen: N. van Hervelt, 1654). [Royal Library The Hague, 841 D 26]; Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken, *Het vrolyck banquet der goden (...)* (Den Haag: J. Rammazeyn, 1660) [Royal Library The Hague, pft 8208]; Bartholdus van Akerlaecken, *De oude, groote ende warachtighe genealogien der hertogen van Gelre, Gulick, Cleve, Berge ende graven vander March*. [Etc.] Ed. Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken (Nijmegen: Nicolaes van Hervelt, 1655) [Royal Library The Hague, 2153 B 1]; Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken, *De Croon van Coninck Carel de II*, s.l.s.n. [1660] [Collectie Atlas van Stolk, inv. nr. 11126-2281].

educational books, since she asked for an approbation by the canon and surveyor of ecclesiastical education ('scholaster') of the Church of Our Lady in Antwerp, where it was printed, and she herself requested and received a privilege to publish it.¹⁸

Gendered Modesty

Two aspects of Van Akerlaecken's self-representation functioned ambiguously as a commercial strategy and a protection of her reputation at the same time: she represented herself, first, as utterly modest in publications dedicated to patrons, and, second, as prioritizing genealogy above literature. In *Den Cleefschē Pegasus* (1654), Van Akerlaecken's self-representation as a modest woman turns out to be a strategy that resulted in commercial ramifications as well as effects on her reputation. Van Akerlaecken lived in Cleves between 1649 and 1654, and *Den Cleefschē Pegasus* was intended to consolidate her informal patronage relationships with both the Great Elector of Brandenburg, Frederick William (1620–88), his wife Louise Henriette (1627–1667, notably the daughter of the Dutch stadholder Frederick Henry and his wife Amalia van Solms), and the Elector's Stadholder in Cleves, Mark and Ravensberg, John Maurice of Nassau (1604–79) – who was also related to the Dutch stadholderate. She dedicated one part of the volume to the Electorate couple and one part to John Maurice. It was printed by a Nijmegen publisher who principally targeted the local and regional market.¹⁹

In this case, the primary intended public seems to have been limited to the rulers themselves and their networks.²⁰ In the 1650s, the German town of Cleves became an important social hub both for members of the Dutch burgher elite, for whom it was a holiday resort, and those of the German elite connected to the residential court of the Great Elector. John Maurice invested heavily to make Cleves's culture and architecture worthy of the Elector's

¹⁸ Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken, *Den lof der vrouwen, tegen der vrouwen lasteraars* (Antwerpen: Marcellis Parijs, 1662) [Royal Library The Hague, KW 841 E.35]. In the Southern Netherlands, books could be published only with a privilege and requesting it was a relatively common practice for authors. See Jerome Machiels, *Privilegie, censuur en indexen in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden tot aan het begin van de 18de eeuw* (Brussels: Algemeen Rijksarchief, 1997).

¹⁹ Paul J. Begheyn and Els F. M. Peters, *Gheprint te Nymeghen: Nijmeegse drukkers, uitgevers en boekverkopers, 1479–1794* (Nijmegen: Commanderie van Sint Jan, 1990), 36–41, 40.

²⁰ This is evident, for example, in the absence of privilege, publisher's imprint, and laudatory poems by other poets. I was able to identify one owner, belonging to John Maurice's network: Constantijn Huygens. *Catalogus der Bibliotheek van Constantyn Huygens* (The Hague: W.P. van Stockum & Zoon, 1903), nr. 384. Years before, in 1647, Van Akerlaecken wrote a short letter to Huygens, asking for genealogical information, see Huygens' correspondence, nr. 4630: <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/briefwisselingconstantijnhuygens> (accessed February 2019).

presence.²¹ The area was politically divided and Van Ackerlaecken's many laudatory poems about both men show her part in the validation of their authority and the development of Cleves as an electorate residential town.

The rhetoric of modesty within *Den Cleefschē Pegasus* paradoxically underlined Van Akerlaecken's contribution to her patrons' agendas. It relies on many conventional utterances. Van Akerlaecken presents herself throughout the whole volume markedly as a woman, who was purportedly not sufficiently skilled and in fact not even allowed to write and publish poetry. In the dedication to John Maurice, she writes, for example, that she has taken the liberty of describing his life and the praises of him and the Elector 'niet tegenstaende ick maer een Iuffer ben' (although I am but a young woman).²² Her message is emphatically that she is a poet willy-nilly, and time and again she emphasizes how her poems are not products of her own poetic ambitions but instead of the greatness of her patrons and the obligations she feels towards them.²³ Welcoming the Elector's wife Louise Henriette upon her return in Cleves after a trip, she writes how she had feared she would not find the spirit of poetry again, suggesting it had departed together with the Electress. In another poem, Van Akerlaecken asks the Electress to forgive 'Dat myne Pen soo stoudt, / Dit hier heeft derven schrijven, / Maer 't is om dat ick ben, / U Dieners' (That my pen so bold / Has dared to write this, / But it is because I am / Your servant).²⁴ Throughout the volume, her pen, as a synecdoche, plays an important role in the rhetoric of modesty, making Van Akerlaecken herself even less responsible for her writings.²⁵

Entangling the life narrative of the Great Elector and the narrative of Van Akerlaecken's authorship strongly reinforces the image that emerges from these many modest utterances, rendering her an instrument rather than an agent. The part of *Den Cleefschē Pegasus* dedicated to Frederick William consists of two layers. Some of the poems written in his honour are presented in conjunction with poems reflecting on their genesis. The first poem in the Elector's section, celebrating the birth of his first son in 1648, is significantly

²¹ About John Maurice: E. Boogaert (ed.), *Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen, 1604–1679: A Humanist Prince* (The Hague: Johan Maurits van Nassau Stichting, 1979); De Werd, *Soweit*, Murk van der Bijl, 'Johann Moritz von Nassau-Siegen (1604–1679): Eine vermittelnde Persönlichkeit', in Horst Lademacher (ed.), *Oranien-Nassau, Die Niederlande und Das Reich* (Münster: Zentrum für Niederlande-Studien, 1995), 125–54. About Frederick William: Ernst Oppenoorth, *Friedrich Wilhelm: Der Grosse Kurfürst von Brandenburg: Eine Politische Biographie* (Frankfurt/Zürich: Musterschmidt Göttingen, 1978). About the relationship between them, see: Van der Bijl, 'Johann Moritz'; E. Oppenoorth, 'Johan Maurits as the Stadholder of Cleves under the Elector of Brandenburg', in Boogaert (ed.), *Johan Maurits*, 39–53.

²² Van Akerlaecken, *Pegasus*, A1v–r.

²³ Defending one's authorship by referring to its fulfilment of a sense of duty and usefulness is conventional in women's self-representation; see Gillian Wright, *Producing Women's Poetry, 1600–1730: Text and Paratext, Manuscript and Print* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 12.

²⁴ Van Akerlaecken, *Pegasus*, B8r–C1r.

²⁵ About this trope, see Helen Smith, 'Women and the Materials of Writing', in Patricia Pender and Rosalind Smith (eds.), *Material Cultures*, 14–35.

accompanied by not one but two self-reflective poems.²⁶ In these, Van Akerlaecken presents the birth poem as the first poem she ever wrote. She explains how Minerva woke her in the night after the birth of the young prince and forced her to write this poem, although she had wanted to stay in bed and sleep. In other words: she became an author not out of improper ambition, but against her own will.

The importance of the birth of the young prince in the narrative intertwining her own authorship and the Elector's greatness is further emphasized by the arrangement of the section for Frederick William, which is only chronological at first, and the decorations in the volume, which are significantly rich around the first poem and the first poem's paratexts. Like the front matter, the first poem and its paratexts are accompanied by embellished characters and printer's flowers.²⁷ The second poem, about the early death of the prince in 1649, starts with an embellished character, but afterwards the volume takes on a more sober character.

By emphasizing the importance of the Elector and Electress for her poethood, Van Akerlaecken paradoxically shows how able she is to praise them. Indeed, the suggestion that their greatness can enable a woman to write poetry functions as an important reinforcement of the praise.²⁸ In this way, the volume served as an advertisement for Van Akerlaecken's works in service of her patrons, especially the Elector, who had promised her a pension in 1652 and with whom she began to negotiate future exchanges of favours in one of the closing poems.²⁹ It seems she also wanted to appeal to potential new patrons, since she states that people who gave her 'stof tot lof' (matter for praise) could obtain a place in her next volume (which did not see the light).³⁰

A second feature of Van Akerlaecken's rhetoric of modesty is the emphasis on her financial misfortune, which she does not elaborate on, but which nevertheless could motivate patrons. In *Den Cleefschē Pegasus* Van Akerlaecken mentions the rewards she has received from John Maurice (a large, gilded silver goblet, filled with two-and-a-half guilder coins) and the Elector in poems of thanks.³¹ She frames these rewards not as a straightforward payment in return for poems, but either as a gift in honour of her poetry or as a kind gesture to make up for her misfortune. Many women framed patronage with reference to their sufferings, to make it fit the expectations of their gender.³² Doing so thus functioned both as a commercial strategy, motivating patrons to

²⁶ Moreover, it is referred to again in the closing section of the volume.

²⁷ About printer's flowers as an indicator of 'the interior architecture of books': Juliet Fleming, 'Changed Opinion as to Flowers', in Helen Smith and Louise Wilson (eds.), *Renaissance Paratexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 48–64, 50.

²⁸ There is one remarkable exception when Van Akerlaecken presumes that the Elector must appreciate her poetry especially since she is a woman (Van Akerlaecken, *Pegasus*, B7r–v).

²⁹ Van Akerlaecken, *Pegasus*, D3r–v; H1r–v.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, H6r–v.

³¹ *Ibid.*, G2r–v and D3r–v.

³² Prescott, *Women*, 118.

support her for this reason, and a reputational strategy, underlining that she asked for money only because she had no other choice and that powerful men appreciated and protected her and her poetry.

Prioritizing Genealogy

As a whole, Van Akerlaecken's modest self-representation, closely connected with the Elector's life narrative and placing emphasis on her difficult financial situation, could protect her reputation (being a woman writer asking for money) and account for commercial incentives within the networks of her patrons. The other aspect of Van Akerlaecken's self-representation, emphasizing her being a genealogist, functioned on the same two intertwined levels, but in a different way. This strategy is not gendered and should, in opposition to the rhetoric of modesty, be connected not only to her (possible) patrons but also to the broader public.

Van Akerlaecken came to Cleves to draw up the family trees of the ruling elite in Dutch and German provinces, duchies, and counties. Van Akerlaecken discussed this genealogical work with John Maurice, whose lineage had a prominent position in it. Indeed, in *Den Cleefschien Pegasus*, genealogy plays an important role. She writes, for example, about the fame of John Maurice's lineage,³³ and a recurring topic in her poems for Louise Henriette is the plea for a new heir after her first child died at the age of one.³⁴ An appealing visual reference are the crowns on the title pages, instead of a printer's imprint: an electorate on the first (Fig. 1) and a ducal crown on the second title page (of John Maurice's section, see Fig. 2). These crowns refer, of course, to the dedicatees, but they also create an association with Van Akerlaecken's upcoming genealogical publication, since they are similar to the crowns used there to represent the functions of persons in its pedigrees (as in Fig. 3).

Significantly, references to Van Akerlaecken's genealogical studies occur most often in poems referring to (possible) profits for the author. A representative poem from the closing section is Van Akerlaecken's defence of her poetical defects.³⁵ She presents her obligation to finish her father's work as an important reason for the minor quality of her poetry: he deserved his work to be completed, given his investment of time, energy, and funds, and because it would be to the greater honour and glory of prominent rulers. In the slipstream of this justification, she announces the upcoming genealogical publication and asks to be rewarded for it. That is to say, she emphasizes both the time and money spent by her father and herself and repeatedly emphasizes that without an income carrying out genealogical research is impossible and

³³ Van Akerlaecken, *Pegasus*, E4v–E6v.

³⁴ Uttering a wish for a new heir is a trope in the (self-)fashioning of courtly women because of the importance of the dynasty: Sara Smart, *The Ideal Image: Studies in Writing for the German Court 1616–1706* (Berlin: Weidler, 2005), 20–1, 134–9.

³⁵ Van Akerlaecken, *Pegasus*, H3v–H6v. Another example in *Ibid.*, F6r–F7r.



Fig. 1 Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken, *Den Cleeffchen Pegafus* (Nijmegen: N. van Hervelt, 1654), title page. (Royal Library The Hague, sign. 841 D 26) [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

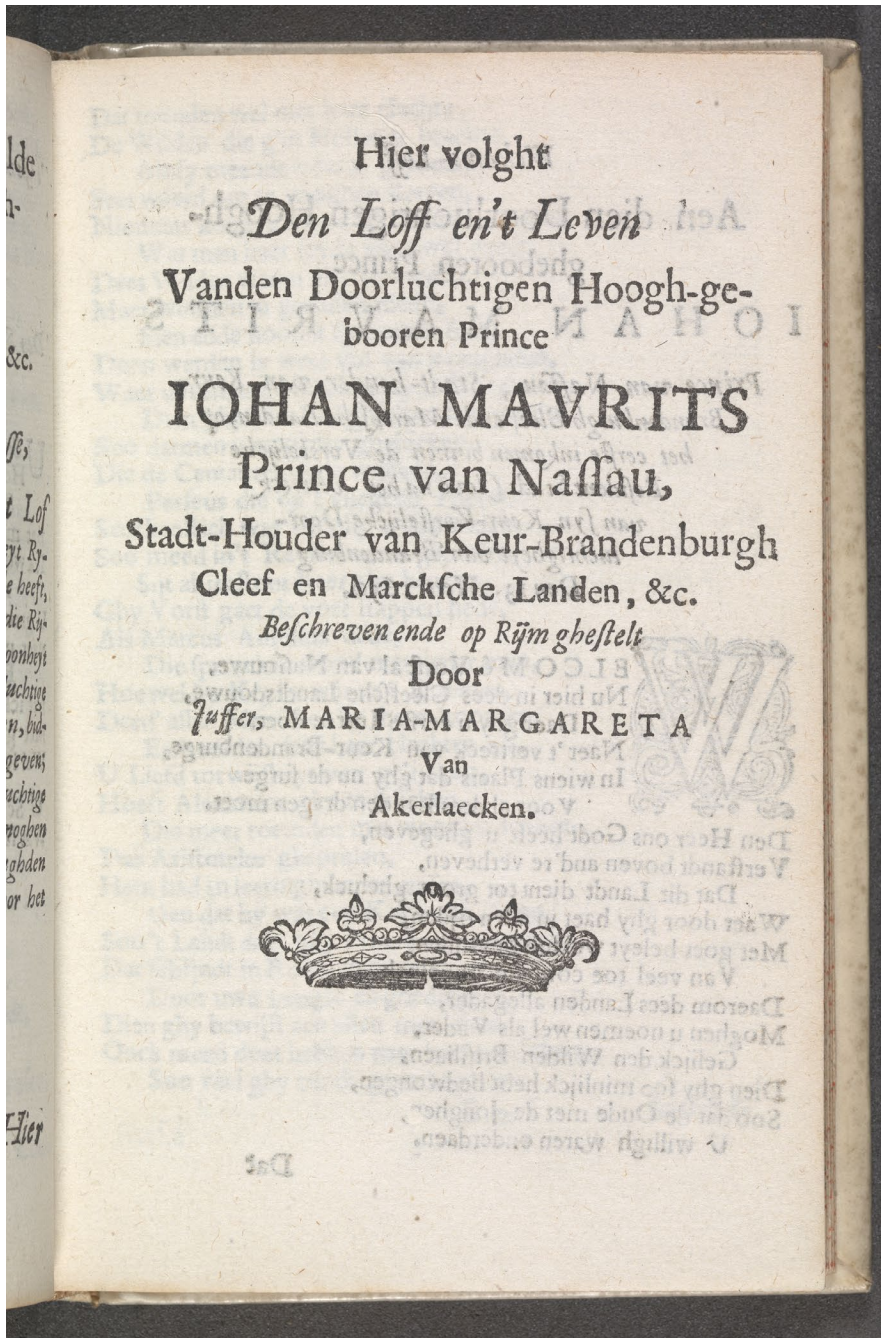


Fig. 2 Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken, *Den Cleefschen Pegasus* (Nijmegen: N. van Hervelt, 1654), title page second part. (Royal Library The Hague, sign. 841 D 26) [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

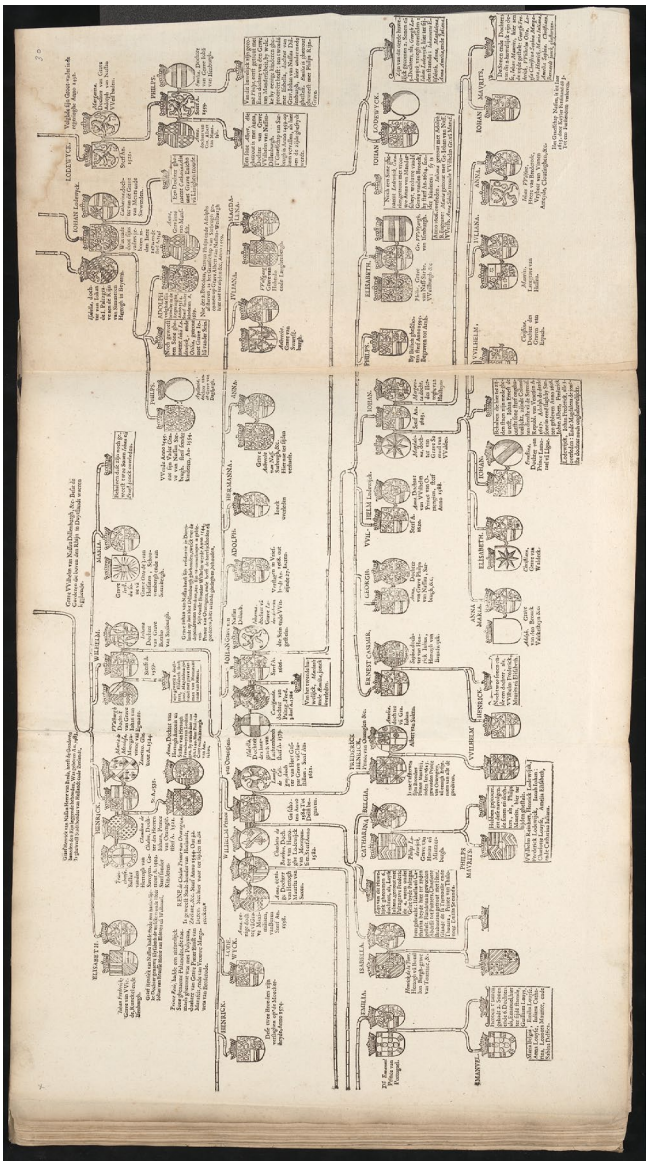


Fig. 3 Bartholdus van Akerlaecken, De oude, groote ende wanuchighe genealogien der hertogen van Gelre, Guldick, Cleve, Berge ende grauen van der Markk. [Etc.] Ed. Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken (Nijmegen: Nicolaes van Hervelt, 1655), pedigree with crowns. (Royal Library The Hague, sign. 2153 B 1)

that work like her father's deserves payment. In this poem the modest self-representation, combined with its emphasis on her need for support, is thus connected to her image as a genealogist, turning the volume of poetry into an advertisement for the upcoming publication of her father's work, addressed to her patrons, to whom the project must have been of major importance.³⁶ Whereas openly asking for money did not fit the reputation of a literary author, for a genealogist payment was apparently not considered a problem. Indeed, in the front matter of the genealogical folio edition of 1655, Van Akerlaecken explicitly asks for financial support.³⁷

In later works, too, Van Akerlaecken maintains her image as a genealogist. On the title page of her pamphlet poem *Het vrolyck banquet der goden* (The jolly Gods' banquet, 1660) and *Den lof der vrouwen* (1662), 'Genealogiste', the feminine form of genealogist, is added to her name. Moreover, on the title page of *Het vrolyck banquet*, celebrating the Restoration of the English monarchy, the imprint of the 1655 *De (...) genealogien* is copied, featuring a herald of arms with an empty escutcheon (see Figs. 4 and 5).³⁸ It is accompanied by a small poem about the disappearance and reappearance of the Royal arms. On the last page of the pamphlet, the Royal arms are displayed, representing the Restoration of the Stuarts. This pamphlet is dedicated not only to Charles II himself but also to the Dutch States General and the representational board ('gecommiteerde raden') of the province of Holland, since the Republic is praised as being the place where Charles had accepted the crown and had been celebrated appropriately in the days that followed. It is very plausible that John Maurice played a role as a (mediating) patron, since he hosted Charles's stay and the festive meal in the king's honour in his The Hague residence on May 25, 1660 (N.S.), the same day Van Akerlaecken published her pamphlet.³⁹ Later that year, she also sent it to grand pensionary Johan de Witt, accompanied by a personal dedication.⁴⁰ Like *Den Cleefsch Pegasus*, this poetical publication was followed by a genealogical one shortly thereafter: *De Croon van Coninck Carel de II* (Charles II's Crown), a broadside showing Charles's pedigree, drawn within a picture of his crown.⁴¹ Again, Van Akerlaecken signs with 'genealogiste', and in accompanying poems she praises Charles II, describes the events around his exile and restoration, and elucidates the illustration. The intertwining of Van Akerlaecken's poetical and genealogical roles thus strengthens her position as a client.

³⁶ About the significance of genealogy for early modern rulers see Smart, *The Ideal Image*, 18–19.

³⁷ Van Akerlaecken, *De (...) genealogien*.

³⁸ The imprints look identical, thus maybe the printers used the same plate.

³⁹ About Charles's reception in The Hague see Eva Scott, *The Travels of the King: Charles II in Germany and Flanders 1654–1660* (London: A. Constable, 1907), 470–1. I did not find any proof of payment for Van Akerlaecken's 1660 publications.

⁴⁰ Letter from Van Akerlaecken to Johan de Witt, dd. 30 December 1660, National Archive The Hague, Archief Johan de Witt 3.01.17, 2069.

⁴¹ Van Akerlaecken, *De Croon. Het vrolyck banquet* was written on May 25, 1660; *De Croon* must have been written after May 29, because Charles's entry into London on that day is described.

DE OUDE,
Groote ende Warachtighe
GENEALOGIEN

Der ~~23~~ 17

Hertogen van Gelre, Gulick, Cleve, Berge
ende Graven vander Marck.

MITSGADERS VAN VERSCHETDEN ANDERE VORSTEN

ALS

KEYSERS, CONINGEN, HERTOGEN,

PRINCEN, GRAVEN ENDE HEEREN,

Door Aliantien vande selfde mede af-dalende.

*Aldus by een vergadert, & samen gevoeght,
ende in dese Orde gestelt.*

DOOR

BARTHOLDUS VAN AKERLAECKEN, In syn Leven J. C. &c.

Verneerdert ende met Rymen verciert, en nu de Eestmael nyt-gegeven,

Door Iuffr. **MARIA MARGARETA** van AKERLAECKEN,

Dochter vanden Aurbew.



Den Herault oft Wapendraeger spreeckt,

*Mijn Eeeren desen Schilt bequaem is, wilt op letten,
Daer jeder Vorst die wil, syn Wapen in kan setten;*

*Was sit, dit Boeck hout in, de Grooten haer geslacht,
Daerom is dat dit Schilt, op allen Vorsten macht.*

TOT NYMEGEN,

Gedruckt by **NICOLAES** van **HERVELT** Boeckdrucker. 1655.

Fig. 4 Bartholdus van Akerlaecken, *De oude, groote ende warachtighe genealogien der hertogen van Gelre, Gulick, Cleve, Berge ende graven vander Marck.* [Etc.] Ed. Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken (Nijmegen: Nicolaes van Hervelt, 1655), title page. (Royal Library The Hague, sign. 2153 B 1) [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



Fig. 5 Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken, *Het vrolyck banquet der goden* (...) (Den Haag: J. Rammazeyn, 1660), title page. (Royal Library The Hague, sign. pfl 8208) [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

Van Akerlaecken's modest self-representation occurs specifically in publications dedicated to patrons and most dominantly so in *Den Cleefschien Pegasus*, which was dedicated to patrons who had already rewarded her for poetical works and whom she knew personally. However, profiling herself as a genealogist was, although combined with modesty, directed to a broader public, made up both of possible patrons she did not know personally (Charles II, for example) and of all potential buyers of the one text she evidently intended for the market. The profile of genealogist could be lucrative, since it was easier to get paid by patrons for genealogy than for literary works, and at the same time the role of genealogist protected Van Akerlaecken's reputation since it meant she would not be easily criticized for an unfeminine preoccupation with either fame or profit as a literary author. Indeed, in *Den lof der vrouwen*, which was intended for the market of educational books, on the title page Van Akerlaecken presented herself emphatically as genealogist, whereas she scarcely mentions her own femininity, and there are far fewer utterances of modesty than in her publications meant to circulate within networks of patrons.⁴²

KATHARINA LESCAILJE

Whereas Van Akerlaecken turned to the book market only at the end of her literary career, all of Katharina Lescailje's publications were printed within this context. She was the daughter of an Amsterdam printer, publisher and bookseller, and after his death in 1679 she and her sister managed his firm, which as the privileged printer of the public theatre produced mainly plays and other literary works.⁴³ She was thus in the rather unique position to decide for herself what to print and what not to. Almost all her own printed poems and plays were published by her father or herself, allowing for some extra income.⁴⁴ Moreover, Lescailje strategically used her poetry to advance business. Her self-representation played a key role in this regard. Like Van Akerlaecken's self-representation, it ambiguously functioned at once as a commercial strategy and a protection of her reputation, although Lescailje presented herself completely differently. In what follows, I will elaborate on

⁴² Simone Veld gives an extensive analysis of Van Akerlaecken's argument in *Den lof der vrouwen*: Simone Veld, *Tot lof van vrouwen? Retorica, sekse en macht in paradoxale vrouwenloven in de Nederlandse letterkunde (1578–1662)* (Utrecht University, 2005).

⁴³ In between 1679 and her death in 1711, Lescailje printed almost 400 books, of which circa 280 plays (Short Title Catalogue of the Netherlands). Biographical information: Lia van Gemert, 'A Life of Books: Katharina Lescailje', in Lia van Gemert et al. (eds.), *Women's Writing*, 308–15; Ellen Grabowsky, 'Lescailje, Katharina', *Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon van Nederland*, <http://resources.huylgens.knaw.nl/vrouwenlexicon/lemma/ta/data/KatharinaLescailje> (accessed February 2019).

⁴⁴ She thus did not refrain from publishing her own work as suggested in Paul Hoftijzer, 'Women in the Early Modern Dutch Book Trade', in S. van Dijk et al. (eds.), *Writing the History of Women's Writing: Toward an international Approach* (Amsterdam: KNAW, 2001), 211–22, 218.

two aspects. First, it will appear that Lescaijle's self-representation was mostly neutral and genderless⁴⁵ and involved refraining from making any reference to profits. Tellingly, this is comparable to Van Akerlaecken's self-representation in her one market publication. Aside from this dominant self-representation, there are the gendered but conflicting images of, on the one hand, the author as a dependent woman who needs intellectual support, and, on the other hand, the author as an independent (business)woman.

Gender-neutral Professionalism

Lescaijle's neutral and genderless representation was dominant in her oeuvre as a whole, but it occurs most strikingly within three specific genres in which she was remarkably active: political poetry, nuptial poetry, and other occasional poetry. Her political poetry targeted the market, while with nuptial poetry she served many occasional patrons, and she wrote other occasional poetry for patrons with whom she had longer relationships and for professional contacts such as authors from her publisher's list. They might in some cases be regarded as patrons, too. Lescaijle's neutral self-representation functioned strategically in publications within these different genres, respectively.

Traditionally, politics were considered a male domain, and few women participated in the genre of political poetry. The number of political poems Lescaijle wrote, about twenty, is striking.⁴⁶ Since it was a profitable genre to print-publish, one could wonder whether it was a coincidence that she started to engage poetically in political debates in the Year of Disaster, 1672, when the theatre, the most important customer of the family publishing house, closed because of the war.⁴⁷ After the first publication of one of Lescaijle's political poems in 1672, her father had published five more of these as pamphlets, and she published two more herself.

Reading Lescaijle's print-published political poems without knowing who wrote them, one would probably not guess the author was a woman. Lescaijle did sign her poems, but in the texts themselves she adapted the prevailing genre conventions without making reference to her own position or sex. Whereas other women writing political poetry at the time often took either a religious or a very personal perspective on the political occasions for their poems and made wide use of the rhetoric of modesty, Lescaijle operated as a political commentator without any personal involvement. In her political poetry an anonymous lyrical 'I' provides the staged (political) figures as well

⁴⁵ Note: this does not mean her work was not gendered. Pipkin, *Rape*, 230–4.

⁴⁶ About Lescaijle's political poetry see Pipkin, *Rape*, 230–3 and Nina Geerdink, 'Cultural Marketing of William III: A Religious Turn in Katharina Lescaijle's Political Poetry', *Dutch Crossing* 34, 1 (2010), 25–41.

⁴⁷ This paragraph's argument was presented earlier in Geerdink, 'Cultural Marketing'.

as the poems' readers with advice.⁴⁸ By adapting the conventions of the genre, Lescailje probably enlarged her audience and thus her income. At the same time the fact that she did not mark her femininity might be regarded as a way to hide her involvement as a woman active in a genre not considered suitable for her sex.

Lescailje was a particularly prolific author of nuptial poetry, and the neutral self-representation in the greater part of her more than ninety nuptial poems also conceals her femininity. It is the marker of yet another strategy of securing her income. Lescailje wrote about a third of her nuptial poems for couples whom she did not know. In each case (relatives of) these rich couples gave her, in return, the paid commission to print a booklet with their collected nuptial poems.⁴⁹ Lescailje thus had a small primary public of occasional patrons to please. The poems did not have to appeal to a wide audience because in addition to bride and groom only the wedding guests would read them. From the perspective of financial gain, it was important that the bridal couple were happy with the poem and that their pleasure would be evident to their wedding guests, since among them were possible new patrons for Lescailje, people who one day would be looking for someone to print nuptial poetry. Within the poems, Lescailje mainly adheres to the (male) conventions of the genre and scarcely stages herself as a presence. She operates as a distant commentator in the service of the glorification of the bridal couple.

As opposed to the (relatives of) bridal couples who were occasional patrons for Lescailje, she had longer relationships with certain other patrons. One would expect her to be more personal in poems for these people, and indeed there are some examples of such poems, but none of them survived in print. In print-published poems for her patrons, she showed neither her own engagement nor her femininity, and she scarcely referred to the favours she and her patrons exchanged, although this was conventional in poetry written for patrons.⁵⁰

One of these patrons was Joan Pluimer (1646–1718). Pluimer was an authority in the Amsterdam world of theatre and of major importance for Lescailje as a professional in the book trade. He was well represented on her list with both plays and poetry, and as one of the directors of the public theatre he had the power to help decide whether her firm would continue to be privileged to

⁴⁸ Geerdink, 'Cultural Marketing', 28. For a comparison of elegies on the occasion of the death of Mary Stuart (1695) by both male and female Dutch authors, see Nina Geerdink, 'Rouw om een 'cieraat groeter vrouwen', *Historica* 32, 1 (2009), 3–5.

⁴⁹ Nina Geerdink, 'The Appropriation of the Genre of Nuptial Poetry by Katharina Lescailje (1649–1711)', in Anke Gilleir, Alicia C. Montoya, and Suzan van Dijk (eds.), *Women Writing Back / Writing Women Back. Transnational Perspectives from the Late Middle Ages to the Dawn of the Modern Era* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 163–200; and Nina Geerdink 'U vraagt, wij draaien? De huwelijksgedichten van Katharina Lescailje (1649–1711) voor rijke doopsgezinden', *Gedooft: Vijf eeuwen doopsgezinden in Nederland: Doopsgezinde bijdragen, nieuwe reeks* 35/36 (2010): 267–85.

⁵⁰ See for example Susanna de Beer, *The Poetics of Patronage: Poetry as Self-Advancement in Giannantonio Campano* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).

print the texts of the plays performed in Amsterdam. Lescaijle's father had already owned this privilege and Lescaijle had inherited it, but she could not take it for granted that she would hold on to the privilege for the rest of her life. Since the commissions from the theatre that came with the privilege were her main source of income, she must have wanted to maintain it. To make sure Pluimer supported her, she had to perform well as the printer of the plays and his own works. But she could do more: she could write successful plays herself to be performed at the theatre as well as write laudatory poems about Pluimer and his literary work. Indeed, she did both.⁵¹ Her poems for Pluimer, eight in total, give him high praise for his literary works. She calls him a worthy successor to Joost van den Vondel, the most famous poet of the Dutch Golden Age, and emphasizes repeatedly how Pluimer's political poems had incited stadholder and king of England William III to give him a golden medal.

The differences in how Lescaijle presents Pluimer's praise and herself as an author between her manuscript and printed poems appear from a comparative analysis of two poems addressed to Pluimer: one published in the preliminaries of Pluimer's collected poems (*Gedichten*, 1691) and one that she presumably presented him in manuscript on the occasion of the performance of her own play *Nikomedes* (1692). The first, 'Op de gedichten van den Heere Joan Pluimer' (On the poetry of Lord Joan Pluimer),⁵² is written in first person plural. 'Zo zien *we* uw Poëzy (...) in het licht' (*We* are looking at your poetry seeing the light), Lescaijle writes in the first line (my emphasis), and in the rest of the poem she asks the rhetorical question of who would be able to follow Pluimer on his successful literary path. Who would, for example, lead William III to England with his poetry, as Pluimer did (lines 19–22)?⁵³ Who would equal Pluimer when playing a pastoral song to inaugurate the new bailiff of Muiden (lines 55–57)? At the end of the poem, Lescaijle concludes that no one would be able to follow him without giving up ('in moed bezwyken', sagging his spirits, line 78), 'Terwyl gy voorstreeft, en alle and'ren na laat kyken, / Op eigen wieken dryft, als de Agrippynsche Zwaan' (While you [Pluimer] progress, and let all the others look on, / While you fly on your own wings, like the Agrippan Swan [Vondel], lines 79–81). In other words: he is alone at the top. The only position for Lescaijle herself that we can derive

⁵¹ About Lescaijle's plays, see: P. van Oostrum, 'Dutch Interest in 17th- and 18th-century French Tragedies Written by Women', Suzan van Dijk et al. (eds.), *I have heard about you: Foreign Women's Writing Crossing the Dutch border: From Sappho to Selma Lagerlöf* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2004). All of Lescaijle's staged plays received several performances during her lifetime, between three and fourteen times. Her most successful play, *Nikomedes* (1692), may have been performed for the burgomasters of Amsterdam, and one evening its revenue came to 342.5 guilders. This was a fairly high gross, although a real box-office success could make double that in this period. See the online database Onstage: www.vondel.humanities.uva.nl/onstage/ (accessed February 2019). Note: one of Lescaijle's plays, *Herkules en Dianiva* (1688) cannot be found in Onstage. The play has probably been mistaken for another author's play about Hercules.

⁵² Joan Pluimer, *Gedichten* (Amsterdam: Albert Magnus, 1692). [Royal Library The Hague, 758 C 26]

⁵³ This is a reference to Pluimer's poems for William III.

from this laudatory poem is a position among the other poets, not at the top, but directly below it. She does not make explicit what her exact place is, but by using 'we' in the first line she suggests that she is there.

Whereas her position remains vague in this poem, she does write about her own position below Pluimer in a much shorter, unpublished poem she wrote a year later, 'To the same lord; when his Honor performed my play *Nikomedes*'.⁵⁴ She stages her muse ('Zangster'), who says she feels indebted to Pluimer's poetry, which has inspired her and which she has so often tried to imitate. The muse writes that she has dedicated her play to him, and although she hopes the larger public will like it, his appreciation is most important. Even in a handwritten poem, then, she uses a mediator to detach herself from her personal position and feelings. The mediator, her muse, is a woman, but writing from the perspective of your muse was as conventional for men as for women, and the muse's femininity is in no way connected to Lescaijle's. By contrast to the way Van Akerlaecken presented herself in poems for patrons, with whom the difference in standing was evidently greater than between Lescaijle and Pluimer, Lescaijle's self-representation thus remains much more neutral.

Gendered Representations

That Lescaijle represented herself in the same neutral, genderless, and detached way in published and thus very public poems for people like Pluimer⁵⁵ as in her publicly oriented political poetry and the nuptial poems for occasional patrons suggests that she was eager to reinforce her public image as one of the authorities in the Amsterdam literary scene, consisting almost completely of men. This self-representation has to be connected to a wish to be taken seriously as a poet and a professional in the book trade. Lescaijle's more personal and gendered representation in poems for her patron Willem van Zon (1653–1713) paradoxically further reinforces this image. In these poems she shows herself to be a woman who is intellectually dependent on his support and hospitality. And thus we arrive at the first of the two conflicting aspects of Lescaijle's gendered self-representation that differ from her dominant, neutral self-representation.

Whereas Pluimer and others indeed had social standing and positions in the literary field comparable to Lescaijle's, Van Zon was an authority outside of the Amsterdam literary hub, and he was from a distinctive class. Van Zon was a wealthy businessman and lover of the arts living in Utrecht. He held the highly esteemed position of canon, awarded only to city dignitaries, and he

⁵⁴ Katharina Lescaijle, 'Aan den zelfden here; toen zyn E. myn treurspel *Nikomedes* ten tooneele voerde'. The poem only survived in her posthumous collection: *Tooneel- en Mengelpoëzy* (Amsterdam: Erfg. J. Lescaijle en Dirk Rank, 1731), Vol. I, 313.

⁵⁵ Others are Pieter Nuyts and Harmannus Amya, both key figures in the Amsterdam theatre network and well represented in Lescaijle's oeuvre and, in the case of Nuyts, on her publisher's list.

owned a large country estate. Lescailje wrote sixteen occasional poems for Van Zon and his family between 1682 and 1708. The patronage relationship with Van Zon had a more traditional character than Lescailje's relationships with her occasional patrons among rich brides-and-grooms-to-be or those with colleagues from the Amsterdam literary scene. This also appears from her poems for Van Zon, which show the conventional rhetoric of modesty in combination with praise for the patron and emphasize the connection between the quality of her poetry and Van Zon's patronage, just like Van Akerlaecken emphasized the Electorate's importance for the quality of her poetry. But whereas Van Akerlaecken's relationships of patronage had effects on both her economic advancement and her reputation, Lescailje's patronage relationship was above all profitable for her public image – all the more so because she could show that an influential man with a flawless reputation approved of her public activities as a poet, although she was a woman. To Lescailje, direct financial support or an enhanced public image were of secondary importance in this case.⁵⁶ She concealed her dependence in other poems, apparently wanting to be seen an equal in the literary scene. The same is true of her nuptial poetry, which was written out of a clear desire to make money and therefore would not enhance her stature as a literary author. But in the case of Van Zon, she actually highlighted her dependence on him.

Lescailje's dependence for example shows in the poem she wrote in praise of Van Zon's country estate, 'Gezang op Doornburg, lusthoove van den heere Willem van Zon, Domheer van Oud Munster' (Song about Doornburg, garden of delight of Willem van Zon, canon of Oud Munster, no date).⁵⁷ The country estate poem about Doornburg is addressed to the estate itself, which is praised as a beautiful place that inspires Lescailje's muse, especially because it is Van Zon's estate, whose name means 'sun', and 'his sunrays' make it grow. By personifying the estate instead of including Van Zon, as well as let her muse represent herself, the poet again creates some distance between her poem and reality, but this time she does so in a printed poem where she elaborates extensively on the relationship between the estate and her muse, representing the patron and the poet, especially in the opening section:

Ik voel dat gy myn poëzy,
 Als ge u gewaardigt haar te hooren,
 Door uwe heusheid noopt met spooren,
 En zet haar kracht en leeven by,
 [...]

⁵⁶ See also, in this connection: Lia van Gemert, Marringje Pajmans, and Sabine Müller, 'Big Business, Literatuur als handelswaar in de Gouden Eeuw', *Vooy's* 30, 2 (2012), 6–22, 7–10.

⁵⁷ Katharina Lescailje, *Gezang op Doornburg, lusthoove, van den heere Willem van Zon* (s.l.s.n.). [Utrecht University Library, Rariora 441 D 4:6]

Uw borst is my een Hengstebren,
 En streeft de Hippokreen te boven;
 Gy myn Parnas, ô Eer der hoven!
 Waar op uw Voedsterheer, uw Zon,
 Zal, als Apol, myn dichtlust wekken,
 En voor Mecenas my verstreken.

(I feel that you,
 If you deign to hear it,
 Spur on my poetry by your honesty
 And give it strength and life.
 [...])

Your chest for me is Pegasus's well,
 Even surpassing Hippocrene;
 You are my Parnassus, o virtue of all country estates!
 Where your foster father, your Sun,
 Will, like Apollo, wake my desire for writing,
 And act like my Maecenas.)

[Lescailje, *Gezang*, lines 7–10; 31–6]

The country estate is a place of inspiration for the muse, as Maecenas's garden and the gardens of the country estates he famously gave to the poets he supported and protected had been, and indeed, Lescailje calls Van Zon the Maecenas of her muse (line 36). Mentioning her muse is not a gendered act in itself (and she wrote from her muse's perspective in one of the poems for Pluimer too), but by referring to her as a virgin she creates a strong association with herself, being an unmarried woman. She writes how her muse feels safe in the gardens of Van Zon, because her 'maagdezangen' (virginal songs, line 28) will not be attacked by Satyrs.

Lescailje's self-representation is also, and more explicitly, gendered emphatically in the dedication poem she published – in marked contrast to her dedication of *Nikomedes* to Pluimer seven years later – with her play *Genserik* in 1685.⁵⁸ After a presentation of the play, mixed with a plea for approval with Van Zon, the last lines of the poem mention people who tend to criticize poetry by women and who might seek fame with such displays of disdain. But, Lescailje writes, 'Geen nood: 't komt met den glans van uwen naam in 't licht' (Have no fear: it comes to light with the glow of your name, line 30). Lescailje shows herself confident that her patron will like the play and that his appreciation will protect her from people who criticize female poetry. In her country

⁵⁸ Katharina Lescailje, *Genserik* (Amsterdam: Erfg. J. Lescailje, 1685). [Royal Library The Hague, 448 H 174].

house poem, she made a similar reference in highlighting the safety of her 'virginal songs' in Van Zon's garden. Indeed, protection must have been one of the reasons why her relationship with Van Zon was important for her and needed to be propagated in print: as a publishing woman writer, she needed the approval of an established authority like Van Zon. In addition, her representation of the relationship with Van Zon also contributes to the image she maintained in the poems I discussed earlier, since she frames the relationship with references to traditional, classical patronage common among lofty literary authors and does not mention possible financial gain.

Reading some of the nuptial poems Lescailje wrote for female friends and their husbands-to-be, one would not think of her as a dependent woman in need of protection. Lescailje appears gendered, too, in these nuptial poems, but differently from the virginal representation we saw in the poems for Van Zon. This is the last aspect of Lescailje's self-representation advancing both her reputation and financial gain to be discussed here. Lescailje's nuptial poems for female friends have received much attention, relatively speaking, because of their striking anti-marriage discourse.⁵⁹ Whereas it was a convention in nuptial poetry to describe the groom's conquest in winning his bride, Lescailje sometimes magnified this conquest and thereby not only represented her female friends very positively in contrast to their husbands-to-be, but also glorified virginity as such. In poems for literary friends, this glorification was emphatically connected to poetic activities: the only possible conclusion of the poems is that women who married thereby gave up being authors. The nuptial poem Lescailje wrote for Elisabeth Hoofman speaks volumes.⁶⁰ Lescailje's muse cannot believe that 'de schrand're Elizabeth' (the bright Elizabeth),

[...]

De Grieksche Saffo, en haar toverende toon,
In eeuwig Liergedicht, aan 't Spaaren scheen te boven
Te zullen streeven, en noch meerder te belooven,
Zo haast die grootehoop veryd'len zou, en 't oor
Den Minnaar leenende, meê treên op 't minnespoor!

⁵⁹ Lia van Gemert, 'Hiding Behind Words? Lesbianism in 17th-Century Dutch Poetry', *Thamyris: Mythmaking from Past to Present* 2, 1 (1995), 11–44; and 'De vrouwenzucht van Katharina Lescailje', in A. J. Gelderblom et al. (eds.), *Klinkend boeket: studies over renaissancesonnetten voor Marijke Spies* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 1994), 143–9; Ellen Grabowsky, 'Katharina Lescailje (1649–1711) en de 'vrouwenzucht': Schijn of werkelijkheid?', *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman* 23 (2000), 65–79; Geerdink, 'The Appropriation'.

⁶⁰ About Elisabeth Hoofman see Geerdink, 'Possibilities of Patronage'.

(Who seemed to strive to surpass
 The Greek Sappho and her enchanting sound,
 In everlasting lyric poetry, on the Spaaren [in Haarlem]
 And seemed to promise even more,
 Would so hastily shatter this great hope, and lend her ear
 To the lover, treading the lover's path with him!)

[Katharina Lescaijle, *Op het huwelyk van de heer Pieter Koolaert, en mejuffrouw Elisabeth Hoofman* (Erfgen. J. Lescaijle: Amsterdam, 1693),⁶¹ lines 8; 12–16.]

The largest part of the poem consists of a description of the bright literary future that has now been thrown away by Hoofman, and the consideration that this marriage, because of the qualities of both bride and groom, in the end will prove to be an exception in which love and literature might be combined. Although Lescaijle in this poem, too, does not explicitly reflect on her own position, her unmarried status does imply that a bright future like the one she sketches for Hoofman is still possible for her.⁶² This indirect representation as a virgin fits her public image within the Amsterdam literary world: it shows her willingness to write and publish (her own and others') poetry. There is no reason, she seems to say, to treat her differently than her male colleagues, whose poetry indeed equals hers in form, content, style, and use of tropes. Both the poems for Van Zon and the nuptial poems for her friends thus support, albeit in a gendered way, Lescaijle's dominant, neutral, and genderless mode of self-representation.

CONCLUSION

From this examination of both women writer's strategies, it is evident that Maria Margaretha van Akerlaecken's economic advancement was based on patronage, during the larger part of the period when she wrote her oeuvre, while Katharina Lescaijle's poetry was mainly oriented towards the public market and advanced her as poet-publisher, differences that possibly can be explained by factors such as the periods and places in which they were active. This is not to say that Van Akerlaecken did not use market mechanisms or Lescaijle did not use patronage mechanisms. On the contrary, since Van Akerlaecken needed to stimulate her patrons to reward her financially and had to refresh her patronage relationships time and again, she used her poems as 'marketing' tools, just as Lescaijle did. And since Lescaijle's ability to support herself and her business relied on favours from people with central

⁶¹ University Library Leiden, 1099 H 18:2.

⁶² See how, decades earlier, Anna Roemers Visscher used her virginity as a sign of her superiority in the world of literature: Van Elk, *Early Modern Women's Writing*, 107–11. From a societal perspective, being a single woman was not something to strive for: Pipkin, *Rape*, 12–14.

positions in literary culture, she, like Van Akerlaecken, needed patrons to protect her reputation and obtain printing and publishing jobs.

Each woman's strategy of self-representation can be related to a double aim of financial and reputational advancement. Whereas their dominant modes of self-representation are antipodal – gendered and utterly modest for Van Akerlaecken, genderless and neutral for Lescailje – we can in both discern deviations from these dominant modes in contexts that differ from their main context: patronage by foreign rulers, in the case of Van Akerlaecken, and the commercial book market, in the case of Lescailje. In both instances, their self-representations are more gendered and less neutral when writing for patrons in the more traditional sense of the term, like the Elector and John Maurice for Van Akerlaecken and Van Zon for Lescailje, whereas their self-representations are more neutral when writing for a broader public.

These two cases, thus, show the range of strategic possibilities in self-representation open to early modern women writers with economic imperatives in the Dutch Republic and ask for comparisons with a larger number of female authors from both within and outside of the Dutch Republic. As such, these cases add an important economic perspective to the study of early modern women writer's self-representation. Within the economic realm, both financial strategies and publication contexts turn out to be decisive factors for self-representation.

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