Christiaan Huygens – A family affair

Fashioning a family in early-modern court-culture

Bram Stoffele, Master's Thesis, August 2006


Research pursued under guidance of: Prof. Mario Biagioli, Harvard University
Drs. Lodewijk C. Palm, Utrecht University
Prof. Dr. Albert van Helden (Emeritus), Utrecht University
# CHRISTIAAN HUYGENS – A FAMILY AFFAIR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART ONE. FASHIONING A FAMILY AT THE COURT OF ORANGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>A “GRAND TOUR” DE FORCE IN SELF-FASHIONING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. From The Hague to Oxford – the usefulness of music and poetry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Early self-fashioning through the eyes of a honnête homme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. “The perfect Courtier” – a natural authority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv. A “qualité extérieure” – Patronage and the making of an English Knight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>PRINCELY “FRIENDSHIP”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Chains of “Love,” “Affection” and “Friendship”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Seeing through linguistic fog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. The social and professional possibilities of gift-giving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv. The love for three Oranges embodied; building a court</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART TWO – FASHIONING A COURTIER-MATHEMATICIAN: A FAMILY AFFAIR</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>THE CURRICULUM AND ETHICS OF A YOUNG HUYGENS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. The curriculum – erudition from father to sons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. “Survivance” through judgment, style &amp; standing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Team play: realization of the self and the family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>THE HONORABLE ART OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION &amp; PUBLICATION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Aristocratic networking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Using and profiting from international communication-networks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Systema Saturnium: the strategic fashioning of a young courtier-mathematician</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>ZULEKOMS AT COURT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. A false start?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Attempt nr 2?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Ethos and aesthetics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>THE BUSINESS OF INSTRUMENTS – A TEAM AT WORK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. 1655 – 1665: Huygens &amp; Scientific instruments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Making and distributing instruments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Experimental showing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>PATRONAGE AND ITS PRIVILEGES – COURTING A KING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. First moves – Christiaan Jr.’s regale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Moving closer – the King’s privilege for the pendulum clock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Success – Founding member of the Académie Royale des Sciences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX.</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

Christiaan Huygens – A family affair. Fashioning a family in early-modern court-culture.

The name and work of both Christiaan Huygens Jr. and his father Constantijn Huygens Sr. are well established: the first in the history of science and the second in Dutch poetry and the history of art and music. These distinct historical disciplines have rendered Constantijn Sr. and Christiaan Jr. “incommensurable:” Christiaan Jr. is made the “pure” scientist, secluded and brilliant; Constantijn Sr. the quintessential Dutch poet and, in his spare time, secretary to the Stadholder. Present-day categorical niches rather than facts nourish these incongruent images, and they create an unnecessary tension between the worlds and works of these men.

In a more social historical approach I suggest a synthesis of this seeming tension. The Huygens family pursued upward social mobility in the competitive layers of aristocratic society in seventeenth-century Holland. Christiaan Jr.’s scientific accomplishments turned out to fit Constantijn Sr.’s social ambitions very well – first enabling Christiaan Jr. to attain a high diplomatic position, and eventually to obtain the highly privileged place at the French Court as a member of the Parisian Académie des Sciences. Constantijn Sr. helped Christiaan Jr. in many ways: Constantijn Sr. gave him an education fit for a courtier, encouraged Christiaan Jr. to frequent aristocratic courts, offered him his diplomatic and courtly contacts and network for the dissemination of his name and work, and Constantijn Sr. used his own diplomatic influence to get his son high patrons and important privileges (patents). Also, the whole family worked as a team in the business of instrument making and showing. In many ways, Christiaan Huygens Jr.’s scientific work was a family affair.
I. Introduction: Louis XIV’s Gifts – Badges of Honor

My Father notifies me that, at his latest audience, he has demanded the Privilege from the King, who has accorded it quickly enough, and if he [Constantijn Sr.] is not forced to leave too early I hope that he will be accelerating the certificate there.¹

Christiaan Huygens to Robert Moray – Oeuvres Complètes, Vol. V, No 1345 – March 6, 1665

It was on 15 February 1675 that Christiaan Huygens Jr. (Born The Hague, April 14, 1629, died July 8, 1695), the forty-five-year old natural philosopher who was one of the founders of the Royal French Académie des Sciences and its second highest paid member, at the height of his international fame, received a privilege for his horologium oscillatorum (a spring watch) at the hands of Louis XIV’s (1638 – 1715; effective reign 1661 – 1715²) first minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619 – 1683). The privilege entailed a monopoly on the production and distribution of Christiaan Jr.’s horologium oscillatorum throughout the French Kingdom for a comfortable period of twenty years. It had taken exactly ten days for Huygens to procure this remarkable privilege.³ Despite the astonishing swiftness of Colbert’s decision – for these requests could take months and involve bitter disputes between competing parties – the fact is not that surprising, considering Christiaan Jr.’s central position at the Académie, his loyalty to the crown, and the greatness of his reputation at the time.

More striking, even, was the privilege that Christiaan Huygens Jr. had received from the same hands almost ten years before in 1665 for his pendulum clock. It is remarkable that Christiaan Huygens Jr., only six years after the publication of the work that introduced him to a Europe-wide intellectual and courtly public – Systema Saturnium (1659) – received such a token of the French King’s appreciation. Privileges for books were quite normal at that time, but patenting of scientific instruments – according to the available records – was a rather new phenomenon. Though a privilege was sometimes called a patent (named after the “letter patent,” the document that contained the privilege), it was something different than our

¹ “Mon Pere me mande qu’il a demandè a sa derniere audience le Privilege au Roy, qui l’avait accordè aussitost, et s’il n’est contraint trop tost a partir j’espere qu’il en sera expedier la depesche.” My translation.
² With Louis XIII’s (born 1601) death in 1643 Louis XIV rose to the throne. However, he would not reign France effectively until the death of the prime minister, Cardinal Jules Mazarin (born 1602) in 1661.
³ BIAGIOLI, M. (2006a) From Print to Patents: Living on Instruments in Early Modern Europe. History of Science, 44, 139-213., p143
present-day patent (the monopoly on the production of the instrument). \footnote{Ibid., p140. “Early modern tools for the protection of inventions, books, prints, and music were remarkably different from those provided by modern patent and copyright law. There was, in fact, no intellectual property rights doctrine in seventeenth-century Europe, only so-called privileges. (The term ‘patent’ comes from the letter patent on which the privilege was made public.) Legally defined as expressions of the sovereign’s will, privileges came in a wide range of shapes. But despite the different applications and administrative frameworks that shaped them in different countries, all privileges shared one feature: they provided monopolies.”} A privilege could entail a patent, “but also other benefits like the authorization to set up business in a certain place, the granting of honorific titles, pensions, cash awards, free housing, capital investments in the invention, the permission to immigrate and assume citizenship, or the exemption from taxes, militia duty, and guilds regulations.” \footnote{Ibid., p147} By many, a privilege was appreciated more as a “badge[...] of honour.” \footnote{Ibid., p143} Christiaan Jr. was informed by a protégée of the French first minister Colbert that the King, “is again about to give you [Christiaan Jr.] a new mark of his esteem by the offering of the Privilege.” \footnote{HUYGENS, C. (1888) Oeuvres complètes, La Haye, M. Nijhoff., after this: HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC. Vol. V, No. 1349 (March 10, 1665). Letter of the courtier Jean Chapelain (1595 – 1674) to Christiaan Jr.: “[le Roi] a si noblement preuenu de ses graces, et qui vient tout fraisement de vous donner vne marque nouelle de son estime par la concession du Privilege [...]”} The privilege, then, was a gift by the King (not a right that Christiaan Jr. had earned), by the acceptance of which Christiaan strengthened his ties to him – for it was not the first gift that Louis XIV bestowed to Christiaan Jr..

In 1663 Christiaan Huygens Jr. had already been included on a list of illustrious men – including the poets Jean Chapelain, Jean Racine, Nikolaas Heinsius, Pierre Corneille, and Molière, the savants Samuel Sorbière and Valentin Conrart and the men of the sciences Pierre de Carcavy, Gerardus Johannes Vossius and Johan Hevelius (see Appendix C) – to receive the considerable pension (also: regale) of 1200 livres. The stipend had been presented in the same manner: a gift from the King to Christiaan Jr. The King of France, represented by Colbert, drew the young Dutch-born mathematician-inventor closer to the French Court through increasing gifts; first the pension in 1665, then the privilege for Christiaan Jr.’s pendulum clock in 1665, and finally the membership of the Académie Royale des Sciences, under Colbert’s patronage.

How did Christiaan Huygens Jr. become involved at the French Court? How did he manage to obtain such gifts from the French King, and how did he secure the high social position that was needed in order to acquire the King’s tutelage? Was there any role perhaps for his family in this socio-political process?
The Huygens family was one of the most important families of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. Christiaan Huygens Senior (1551-1624), Christiaan Jr.’s grandfather, had been a secretary to the Stadholder of the seven Dutch provinces, Prince Willem the Silent of Orange (1533 – Assassinated July 10, 1584; Stadholder 1559 – 1584) for six years (1578 – 1584), and a secretary to the Dutch Council of State for forty years (1584 – 1524). Christiaan Sr. had moved in the highest diplomatic spheres for decades and enjoyed a considerable standing within the Republic. Constantijn Huygens Senior (Born The Hague September 4, 1596, Died March 28, 1687), Christiaan Sr.’s son and Christiaan Jr.’s father, followed in his father’s footsteps as the most trusted secretary to three Stadholders, Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange (1584 – 1647; Stadholder 1625 – 1647), his son and successor Prince Willem II of Orange (1626 – 1650; Stadholder 1647 – 1650), and the latter’s son and successor Prince Willem III of Orange (1650 – 1702; Stadholder 1672 – 1702). Just like his son Christiaan Jr., Constantijn Sr. has received much scholarly attention, though more for his accomplishments as a poet, a musician-composer, and a patron of the arts than for his political role and impact. Christiaan Jr. was one of four sons of Constantijn Sr.; he had an older brother, Constantijn Jr. (1628 – 1697), who was the successor of their father, Constantijn Sr., as secretary to the Stadholder, Prince Willem III of Orange. Commonly regarded as a less talented secretary than his father, he work as a painter has received most attention. Christiaan Jr.’s two younger brothers, Lodewijk (1631 – 1699) and Philips (1633 – 1657) have received less attention – the first has been charged of corruption as a public dignitary and the second died during a diplomatic mission in his early twenties.8

Throughout the years 1661 – 1665 (when Christiaan Jr. received his gifts from Louis XIV), his father Constantijn Huygens Sr. – as the representative of the House of Orange – was in Paris and Versailles for intensive diplomatic negotiations with Louis XIV’s ministers Michel le Tellier (War), Hugues de Lionne (Foreign Affairs), De Loménie, and, his most challenging sparring partner, Jean Baptiste Colbert (Finances). Constantijn Sr. actively used Christiaan Jr.’s inventions, instruments and experiments during the talks – diplomatic negotiations normally entailing many digressions in the realms of art, literature, and the sciences – to boost his own and his son’s prominence. Constantijn Sr. frequented the courtly assemblies where Christiaan Jr.’s instruments and experiments were demonstrated and even took an active role at these meetings. But he did more: with a notable status at the French

8 Christiaan Jr.’s mother died when Christiaan was nine years of age – Susanna Huygens (1637-1725) married Philips Doublet, her (rich) cousin. Brother Philip, died during his Grand Tour (see Chapter II, section ii) together with a high diplomat to Pruysse in 1657: Ibid., Vol. II, No. 390 (May 29, 1657)
Court, Constantijn Sr. requested the 1665 privilege in one of Constantijn Sr.’s last formal audiences with the King – receiving the King’s affirmative answer.9

As far as I know, this significant fact (Constantijn Sr.’s request with the King of France) has not been noted by historians, except very recently by Mario Biagioli.10 It has not been given any serious attention that Constantijn Sr. was in Paris at the time of Christiaan Jr.’s professional escalation there nor that Christiaan Jr. moved in much the same social circles – elitist, courtly, and diplomatic circles – as his father did. There has been little interest in the way in which Christiaan Jr.’s scientific successes were also triumphs for the family or for the significance of Constantijn Sr.’s ambitions of social mobility for Christiaan Jr.’s standing as a gentleman of science. More broadly, Christiaan Jr. is commonly observed separately from his diplomatic family, and his accomplishments are regarded as being from quite a different nature than those of his grandfather, father and his brothers. But is this view tenable in the face of historical evidence that indicates that in many ways the social life, work, and ambitions of Christiaan Jr. were entangled with those of his father and his brothers?

In my argument, I will focus on Constantijn Huygens Sr. and Christiaan Huygens Jr., in order to interrogate a persistent tension in the scholarship surrounding these men. In brief, whereas Constantijn Sr. is generally seen as poet, musician and statesman, Christiaan’s achievements are generally considered only within the realm of science. The endeavors of father and son are mistakenly detached from one another and seen as virtually incommensurable accomplishments within totally divergent fields, both professionally and socially. In my thesis, I seek to bridge this fissure by considering their work and accomplishments side by side; not as divergent pursuits, but rather as inextricably related facets of a common (even family-) desire for social enhancement through the entwined paths of intellect and politics.

In Part One – Fashioning a family at the Court of Orange – the career and socio-professional ambitions of Constantijn Huygens Sr., the pater familias after Christiaan Sr.’s death in 1624, are treated. In order to understand the reasons and possible means for Constantijn Sr. to be an unremitting facilitator, patron and secretary (as it were) to his son, it

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9 The abovementioned letter of Jean Chapelain (note 7) continued: "[the King] who is again about to give you a new mark of his esteem by the offering of the Privilege] that Monieur your Father has asked him for your Invention." Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1549 (March 10, 1665). "et qui vient tout fraisement de vous donner vne marque nouvelle de son estime] par la concession du Priuilege que Monieur votre Pere luy a demande pour vootre Invention." Italics added.

is worthwhile to draw a substantial background of his own career and social background. What were his own ambitions, professionally and socially? How did he fashion a position for himself at court, and what does it tell about his expectations of and hopes for his sons? Would Constantijn Sr. have a reason to keep Christiaan Jr. outside academia and seek the protection of a noble ruler? What did Christiaan’s father know about patronage and the working of the court and could his support be needed or relevant for his son’s professional position? Part I handles these questions in two chapters.

In Chapter II – A “Grand Tour” de Force in self-fashioning – it is discussed how the young Constantijn Huygens Sr. grew to be a courtier and developed a thorough understanding of the value of music, poetry and language for social and professional self-fashioning. I discuss the difficulty of getting back into the historical picture the human efforts of someone who made an art of feigning effortlessness (“sprezzatura”) in his actions and writings – i.e. the problem of describing a courtier who wrote and acted according to the best courtly manners. Chapter III – Princely “Friendship” – sketches Constantijn Sr.’s relationship with the House of Orange; the vast possibilities for socio-professional growth and the distinctly economic dimension of serving under noble Dutch Stadholders. Constantijn Sr. is portrayed as an upper-bourgeois, aiming for social elevation into a new elite – the noblesse de robe – and the far-reaching consequences of this desire for his whole family. I give a picture of him as a double-dyed courtier who was completely at ease in the highest echelons of society and who was familiar with all “ins and outs” of the aristocracy. Thus, Huygens could form a central node in Prince Frederik Hendrik’s grand ambitions with the Orange Court.

The main part of this thesis is formed by Part Two – Fashioning a Courtier-Mathematician: a Family Affair. Central stands the intersection (or even unity, at times) of the lives and works of father (Constantijn Sr.) and son (Christiaan Jr.) Huygens. I investigate ways in which Constantijn Sr., and more broadly, the Huygens family, secured and elevated Christiaan Jr.’s socio-professional position, both in courtly-diplomatic and natural scientific spheres. Notably, Christiaan Jr.’s endeavors did also contribute to his father’s ambitions in the social and professional realm, stimulating the interaction between their pursuits. A central theme in Part Two is formed by the conspicuous overlap between the social ambi of the

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11 It will be seen that the emphasis in my thesis lies within the social, political and economic realm and little attention is paid to matters of religion. For a comprehensive picture of either one of the Huygens, a thorough discussion of their religious stance and the impact of religion on their life and works is, of course, needed. I do not have the ambition to be all-inclusive, however, as my main objective is to offer a new perspective on a mostly known complex of historical facts. Hopefully, the presented perspective will be found interesting enough to be included in more comprehensive works in the future.
court, diplomacy and natural philosophy; it is a clear pointer towards a more substantial intertwinement of both men’s worlds than previously thought.

Chapter IV – The Curriculum and Ethics of a young Huygens – treats the most significant ways in which Constantijn Sr. shaped his sons’ lives in their youngest years. Planning and supervising the boys’ education and further upbringing, Constantijn Sr. could secure their formation as small courtiers and their understanding of their considerable role for the future of the family. But Constantijn Sr.’s influence extended beyond Christiaan Jr.’s childhood years. In Chapter V – The Honorable Art of Strategic Communication & Publication – it is seen how high contacts and means and skills of communicating and corresponding were shared by Constantijn Sr. to offer his sons optimal entrance within the court and diplomacy. Extra attention is given to the strategic dedication of Christiaan’s publication of Systema Saturnium and the role for his father in this project.

As most of Christiaan Jr.’s life occurred in and around aristocratic courts, it makes sense to try to develop some understanding for the ways in which Christiaan Jr. managed to get by between the nobles and courtiers. Constantijn Sr.’s ambitions for his son were mainly in the field of diplomacy and public service – how could Christiaan Jr. satisfy his father’s desire and at the same time pursue his natural scientific talents? This is the subject of Chapter VI – Zulekoms at Court (Constantijn Sr. and Christiaan Jr. both carried the title Zuilichem; see Chapter III, section iii). Chapter VII – The Business of Instruments – a Team at Work – describes Christiaan Jr.’s work on scientific instruments as a matter of the whole family – a family affair. Moving between Paris, London, Spain and The Hague, the Huygens family seems to have taken on the challenge of establishing and disseminating Christiaan Jr.’s name as an inventor and instrument-maker through intensive participation in the process of making, distributing and showing experiments and instruments to courtly elites. Finally, before concluding (Chapter IX) I return to the questions, posed at the outset of this Introduction: How did Christiaan Huygens Jr. manage to obtain gifts such as gratuities and privileges from the French King throughout the early sixteen sixtees, and how did he acquire the King’s tutelage? In this final Chapter – Patronage and its Privileges – courting a King – I suggest that Christiaan Jr.’s eventual membership of the French Académie Royale des Sciences was the conclusion of a process in which the French King (in the person of his first minister Colbert) and Christiaan Jr. “courted” each other as to create a patronage-relationship. Constantijn Sr. is seen to have had a central role in this process.
Part One. Fashioning a family at the Court of Orange

Perfect cheerfulness makes the Heart want to jump
(105) And the heart the whole Man, he jumps best who enforces
The countenance of jumping in reason, rhyme and meter;
But does it without earnest, and far from expecting
That it yields the honor that children are seeking;
Thus he esteems the play of fingers, thus the splashing of a Flute,
(110) Thus the sniffing of a Violin, thus the creaking of a Lute;
And, granted by God a throat that can escort the Strings,
He thankfully learns to tell them his wonders,
And possibly through this, that his equal Youth
Pleases so youthfully and delights so duly.

Constantijn Huygens Sr. – “A Wise Courtier” (Een Wijs Hoveling) (1624)12

“Volmaeckte vrolickheit het Herte will doen springen
(105) En ’t hert den heelen Man, best springt hij die ’t gelaet
Van springen dwingen laet in reden, rijm en maet;
Maer doet het ernsteloos, en verre van verwachten
Dat d’eere daer uyt volgh’ die’r kindren in betrachten;
Soo acht hij ’t vingerspel, soo ’tklatren van een’ Fluyt,
(110) Soo ’tsnuven van een Veel, soo ’tkraken van een’ Luyt;
En gond’ hem God een’ keel die Snaren kan versellen,
Hij leertse danckelick sijn’ wonderen vertellen,
En mogelijk daer bij dat sijns gelijckke leught
Soo jeughdelick behaeght als deughdelick verheught.”
II. A “Grand Tour” de Force in Self-fashioning

It was during the slow progress of these negotiations, when our heavily contested patience refused to accept the delays of the Royal council, that I was finally sent by the ambassadors to the King, in order to express their great discontentment. I located the King in Royston, where, as so often, he hounded the fields hunting for concealed game. After returning I was allowed to appear and I expressed the complaint in the mildest of words that complaining offered. They found a willing ear and with patience the King listened, as he walked through the hall while graciously leaning on me. Shaking his head, he condemned the harmful behavior of his negotiators and he promised to correct what may have dismayed us. And while he spoke thus, he raised the sword that the noble Earl of Holland had handed to him on his sign, and completely unexpected he knighted me. At that occasion I was allowed to take the sword from your hand, Sir Henry, as a gift (and what a gift!).

Constantijn Huygens Sr. – My Life, told to my children in Two Books (1677)

Constantijn Huygens Sr. grew to be a true courtier and ‘bonnête homme’ during his ‘Grand Tour’ to Venice and England (1620 – 1624). He accustomed himself with the ethos of eruditeness and the appliance of one of his greatest talents (the spoken and written word) both in order to establish a social network and to create a socio-professional enhancement, giving courtly accounts of past, emblematic events. In this chapter I will explore some of these (social) values that Constantijn Sr. developed.

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14 These journeys, where “[u]pper and middle-class males learned to substitute courage for fear, to cultivate honor, to govern their passions, to understand the demands and obligations of service, and to take responsibility for the family”, served as the “final touch” in the preparation for their future roles in public life. POLLOCK, L. A. (2001) Parent-Child Relations. IN KERTZER, D. I. & BARBAGLI, M. (Eds.) The history of the European family. New Haven, Yale University Press., p205. There also was a distinctly sexual dimension to the grand tour – students “enjoyed special sexual privileges” in order to develop “fine manners to grace [their] treatment of the female sex.” These experiences could turn out useful in a later courtly surrounding, where manners with regard to the other sex mattered a lot. MITTERAUER, M. & SIEDER, R. (1982) The European family : patriarchy to partnership from the Middle Ages to the present, Chicago, University of Chicago Press., p129 Furthermore, Italy and France were often preferred for the commonly acknowledged civility of their elite. See ROODENBURG, H. (1997) How to Sit, Stand, and Walk. Toward a Historical Anthropology of Dutch Paintings and Prints. IN FRANITS, W. E. (Ed.) Looking at seventeenth-century Dutch art : realism reconsidered. Cambridge [England] ; New York, Cambridge University Press., p177
I will contend the way in which Constantijn Sr. used his different talents to establish social connections and tried to use them to fashion his position either socially or professionally, or often both (section i). Furthermore, I will show that these virtues of courtly eruditeness and disinterestedness have resulted in a brand of biographical history that obscures these social processes when read straightforwardly (section ii). I argue that Constantijn Sr. should not just be seen as just a courtier: someone moving around at a court (perhaps successfully) while in his “normal life” staying at a safe distance from the values and etiquettes from the court. Rather, he should be seen as a courtier: someone who modeled his life, work (including his writings), and demeanor after the standards of his professional surrounding: the court (section iii). Constantijn Sr.’s writings thus unavoidably are “member-accounts,” leading to (extra) interpretative difficulties for the modern reader. I argue that new hermeneutical approaches are needed to assess Huygens’s many writings, taking as an example the road to Constantijn Sr.’s knighthood at the Court of James I (section i and iv).

i. From The Hague to Oxford – the usefulness of music and poetry

During his three visits to England in the years 1621-24, the young Constantijn Huygens Sr. accompanied the Dutch ambassador François van Aerssen (1572 – 1641) on three consecutive diplomatic missions to the court of King James I. They formed the final embodiment of his “Grand Tour” through Europe. Van Aerssen, Christiaan Huygens Sr.’s neighbor, had offered the latter to take his son on an unpaid apprenticeship, offering him a fine

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15 With “self-fashioning” I mean to refer to the notion in Stephen Greenblatt’s “Renaissance self-fashioning”: “a way of designating the forming of a self” which gained much ground in the sixteenth century when it became more and more a common ground that human-beings could form themselves and others instead of the previously religious conception of Man as “the imitation of Christ”. “[I]t describes the practice of parents and teachers; it is linked to manners or demeanor, particularly that of the elite; it may suggest hypocrisy or deception, an adherence to mere outward ceremony; it suggests representation of one’s nature or intention in speech or actions.” GREENBLATT, S. (2005) Renaissance self-fashioning: from More to Shakespeare, Chicago, University of Chicago Press., p2-3


opportunity to see the world, learn languages, make contacts, finding one's way at foreign courts and high social places, and perhaps most importantly: to find a decent occupation. And Constantijn did the same; he saw a lot and learned to observe and narrate about his observations in a fashionable way. To his array of fluent languages (French, Dutch, Latin, Greek) he added Italian and English (the last one fairly uncommon at that time).

Traditional history has it that Huygens filled his time usefully, traveling through the country, frequenting the House of the influential and culturally versed Killigrews and enjoying the grandeur and wit of everybody. In all pleasantry, Huygens sometimes had the opportunity to show his talents to his courteous public, now happening to write a long, nice laudatory poem on the university of Oxford after a visit there in 1622 – and, along the way, playing the lute for King James I. Then, after some tough negotiations with an eventual positive result, it pleased the King to knight the talented secretary to the embassy, the young Constantijn Huygens Sr.. However, in the context of the seventeenth century aristocratic courts, the importance of music, poetry and the mastering of different languages should not be underestimated – they were central elements in the process of self-fashioning. They were crucial factors for the betterment of Constantijn’s socio-professional position.

Poetry was a life-long project for Huygens. From the age of at least thirteen, Constantijn Sr. was pushed by his father, Christiaan Sr., to spend (at least) an hour a day on poetry. In the years 1614-5 Constantijn Sr. is known to have written two French wedding poems for the marriages of two of his father’s friends of high position; the first he also translated into Dutch, and the second was even published. Encouraged by his father not only to write these (musical) poems, he was also urged to publish his disputation for his law-degree, including his public speech, at the age of twenty (June 1617). He continued his poetic endeavors in the period following his graduation and when his professional outlook seemed to be a little dim.

As Constantijn’s father Christiaan Sr. had some problems finding his son a patron whom he could accompany on a ‘Grand Tour’ through Europe, an increasing concern of, to all probability, his father with a broader public for Constantijn’s writings surfaced as he had two

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20 Huygens, “Academiae Oxoniensi Perpetuum Florere” (September 17, 1622)
21 HUYGENS, C. (1911) BW. Vol. I, Lett. 12, Constantijn Sr. to Christiaan Sr. (May, 1610)
22 Philips van Lake (Philips the Zoete Houthain), who soon after became governor of the town of Slujs and Willem van Lyere, lord of Oosterwijk and ambassador of the Republic to Venice.
24 Ibid., Vol. 15, Lett. 24, Constantijn Sr. to Christiaan Sr., June 1617

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of his poems published in The Hague, even needing a reprint. Also in these same years (1619-1620), Constantijn wrote another wedding poem, an “Entrée de ballet” for the Princess of Chimay, and expressed his excitement that the great Dutch writer and internationally-acclaimed law-theorist Hugo de Groot (Hugo Grotius, 1583 – 1645) and Prince Frederik Hendrik (1584 – 1647, brother of the Dutch Stadholder Maurits) had read some of his poems. When his father’s influential neighbor in The Hague, the diplomat François van Aerssen, eventually gave a start to Constantijn’s public service by taking him to the Republic of Venice on a diplomatic mission (spring 1620) Constantijn Sr. fulfilled his tasks to such contentment that Van Aerssen recommended him formally to the Dutch States General.

One can clearly sense the socio-professional plans that accompanied the time and energy that was put in writing verses – fatherly plans that seemed to crystallize when, after Huygens’ return from Venice, he was assigned by the Stadholder to write a Latin epitaph for the monument to the Oranges in the Nieuwe Kerk (New Church) in Delft. The epitaph “summarizes the great contribution of the Orange family to the country’s history” – a statement that came to fit nicely in the broader representation strategy of the House of Orange (see Chapter III, section iv). This emblematic assignment also shows the level of appreciation that Huygens had already established for his poetry and the door it opened in social and professional terms. Constantijn had become highly visible through frequent and strategic publication and by dedicating his poems to people of increasingly higher social positions. His publication of his English tribute to the University of Oxford in 1622 – the most important English university at the time, with strong bonds to the Royal House – should be understood in this respect. It achieved the effect it needed to: Huygens received several responses of Oxford professors and a higher visibility at court.27

25 Ibid., Vol. 15, Introduction, xxxvii. HUYGENS, C. & HEESAKKERS, C. L. (1987) Mijn jeugd, Amsterdam, Querido, p121-2. The second verse (of seven) of Huygens’s jubilating poem on the fact that Prince Frederik Hendrik has read his poetic work (Feb. 27, 1619 – “Monseignr. Le Prince Henrij de Nassau m’ayant faict l’Honneur de Lire quelques miens escrits.”) expresses relief that from now on a Prince instead of savants would judge his writings:

“Volumes animez, peres-grands des sciences,
(10) Pedantes de Papier, magasins de sentences,
Ne vous presumez plus de faire des scavants
A peser mes escrits: s’il a esté un temps
Qu’innocence me fit trembler à la censure,
Le bon-heur m’a rendu la cervelle plus dure;
(15) Ie n’apprehende plus les yeulx de l’ univers;
Un prince a veu mes vers.”


A same strategic use of his musical talents can be discerned, but from an even younger age. Starting with the viola da gamba on the age of six and-a-half and participating around the age of seven in an elite “master class” in Amsterdam under the auspices of the Dutch Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562 – 1621), music brought Huygens in contact with people of considerable standing. It resulted in musical ties with noblemen at the house of the English diplomat Henry Wotton (1568 - 1639) and it brought Constantijn before socially and professionally very appealing people. Constantijn Sr. sang and played the lute for the Venetian ambassador to the Dutch Republic in 1610 (he was fourteen) as he had done before for the Danish ambassadors.

Aside from sheer pleasure and pleasantry, there was a clear element of socio-professional fashioning to these artistic activities that pleased the eyes and ears of many. Pushed by his father, Constantijn learned to appreciate the utilitarian facet of being artistically and culturally well versed. Handily employing one medium (words and music) to stimulate another (connections, his social network) Constantijn learned to estimate the value of his talents for both his social and his professional position. Though one will find hardly any direct mention of the socio-professional importance of both poetry and music for Huygens, in a piece of advice to his children on diplomatic negotiations Huygens did lift a corner of the veil: his sons should remember that earnestness could be reached with musical and poetic amusement: “where someone’s talents are, his favor can be won”.

ii. Early self-fashioning through the eyes of a bonnête homme

Constantijn Huygens’s own narration of these stories often entails a laconic recounting of both youthful innocence, playfulness and, of course, talent. As a courtier or bonnête homme, the terms “courtier” and “bonnête homme” (in contemporary French: bonnète homme) do not have the exact same meaning. The concepts as such changed meaning over time (see ELIAS, N. (1994) The civilizing process, Oxford [England] ; Cambridge, Mass., Blackwell., p499-502), as the aristocratic elite needed to adjust or redefine its own character and behavior so as to keep the ambitious bourgeois from entering their realms. I will use the terms interchangeably nonetheless, for both were objects of
later in life, Constantijn Sr. wrote in a courtly manner about the way he became, or had always been, this courtier or *bonnête homme*. Though I discuss some of the problems of reading Constantijn Sr.’s own ‘member-account’ of the events in his, and his family members’ life later on (Chapter III, section ii), I deem it worthwhile to give some reflections on the difficulties of using Constantijn Sr.’s sources to describe and judge the same actor’s actions and identity.

In both his autobiographical work and his poetry, Constantijn Sr. wrote with *sprezzatura*, in Harry Berger’s words:

> an art that hides art, the cultivated ability to display artful artlessness, to perform any act or gesture with an insouciant or careless mastery that delivers either or both of two messages: “Look how artfully I appear to be natural”; “Look how naturally I appear to be artful.”

However, it is not simply “the ability to conceal effort. Rather it is the ability to show that one is not showing all the effort one obviously put into learning how to show that one is not showing effort.”

Constantijn Sr. served himself well of this art, explained by Baldassare Castiglione in *Il Cortegiano* (more below). In his unfinished autobiography, modestly started at the age of thirty-three, he recounted his astonishment of the value that “the learned” attributed “to those weak experiments of a not yet full-grown muse”, i.e. his poetry for the ambassador to Venice, which was deemed appropriate for publication by these men. “I truly mean it when I say that on that age I have not accomplished anything, of which the experts should take account, or for which the common people should have admiration”.

This is Huygens’s paradoxical style: on the one hand mentioning an extraordinary accomplishment or characteristic and emphasizing its special nature, while at the same time asserting the meaninglessness or triviality of the achievement or event. The result is a narrative that provides an exceptional picture of Constantijn and his family, while formally never abandoning the rules of modesty.

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Constantijn’s objective – putting himself in the limelight as a modest man – was also reflected in (the titles of) his major poetic works when his name as a poet was already established. These works of the Stadholder’s secretary reflect his courtly standards and anticipated public. His poetic volumes “Otia” (“empty hours”/“leisure,” 1625), “Momenta Deculoria” (“idle moments,” 1644, republished 1655) and “Korenbloeemen” (“cornflowers,” ornaments on the acre of his true public work, 1658, republished 1672) all expressed their almost effortless forthcoming and the lack of attachment of their composer to its quality. Presenting his poems as compositions during “empty hours” of riding horseback, dressing or finding his sleep, he appealed to the idea of the erudite, well-versed man of the world. Furthermore,

[t]he nature of the creations fitted the gentleman who was positioned at the court too.\(^{34}\) Firstly, the lion’s share of his poems and music was consisted of compositions of small proportion. The Pathodia [Constantijn Sr.’s set of musical compositions Pathodia Sacra et Profana, 1647] contained exclusively short pieces, half of the Korenbloeemen counted, in the last edition, epigrams and a mere twelve out of fourteen books of the Latin Momenta Deculoria in the final print consisted of epigrams. And above all that small work was refined. Presented with sprezzatura as careless trifles for which he did not twist a hand, compact, intricate and intellectual, playing with words, sounds and citations, they demonstrated great dexterity and cultural baggage. And they required the same of the reader or listener.\(^{35}\)

A beloved statement of Huygens was that the title of “bad poet” seemed very much appropriate to that of a “bonnête homme,”\(^{36}\) therewith expressing that he had no interest in being

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\(^{34}\) This can be seen for instance in Samuel Sorbière’s mentioning of Constantijn Sr.’s Momenta deculoria in: SORBIÈRE, S., MAURY, J., MORE, A. & HUYGENS, C. (1660) Relations, lettres, et discours de Mr de Sorbiere, sur diuerses matières curieuses, A Paris, Chez Robert de Ninuille rue de la Bouclerie au bout du Pont S. Michel à l’Escu de France & de Nauarre., p144. Sorbière: “par-ce que l’Auteur [of the Momenta, Constantijn Sr.] les auoit faites aux heures qu’il déroboit à ses occupations de la Cour, & qu’il se pouuoit aller diuertir en cette belle maison de plaisance que le mesme Barlaeus nomma son Vitauliu, d’vn mot plaisamment imaginé.”


\(^{36}\) Ibid., p8
seen as a (great) poet – and thus a *specialist* – but rather as an erudite man of the world. The mechanics of court-culture shaped the way in which he would express his ideas about this. The louder he would call himself a poet or even a good poet amidst of his network of courtiers and intellectuals, the more he would risk being seen as a specialist, instead of an erudite *bonnête homme*. Instead, the best rhetorical strategy was probably that which he used – *establishing maximum recognition by denying to deserve any*. That, in the course of his life, he had happened to “spill” a Latin volume and thirty books of collected works in the Dutch language “out of his pen” in his spare time was a minor detail Huygens would mention laconically. Thus, Huygens’s image would not be hurt by negative criticism, and he secured that he would be seen as a courtly virtuoso who was not attached to the outcome of his work. In fact, of course, he did care about the negative critique of “savants” – their “sharp teeth” he feared, such that in 1619, at the age of twenty-three, he rejoiced the fact that Prince Frederik Hendrik had read some of his poems and that from then on his work would be judged by princes rather than censured by his critics.

As a secretary (Constantijn Sr. was appointed secretary to the Stadholder in 1625) with a broad correspondence network, Constantijn Sr. could choose his own public for his poetry and music. He had his *Pathodia Sacra et profana* (1647) printed by a deluxe publisher in Paris, distributing most of the copies himself amongst his friends within the Republic, but especially elsewhere. For instance, Huygens sent his *Momenta Desultoria* to the Queen of Sweden and Poland and the French cardinal Jules Mazarin (1602 – 1661). His books were ornamented with introductory poems of his famous friends – Daniel Heinsius (1580 – 1655) introduced Huygens’s *Otia* and Caspar Barlaeus his *Momenta Desultoria*. The best distributive strategy was *donating* his works as playful tokens of friendship and appreciation often to great

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37 The courtier should avoid, to all costs, to be seen as a “specialist.” He distinguished himself by not being attached to any subject in specific, neither in speaking, nor in writing. ELIAS, N. (1994) *The civilizing process*, Oxford [England] ; Cambridge, Mass., Blackwell., p30
39 Constantijn Sr., in the preface of his *De vita propria sermonum inter libertos* (1678), told his children that: “(…) not for the eyes of the great public did I mean this work to be, but solely for you. It is playfulness that ought to stay within these walls, where all those savants have nothing to say, whom I otherwise surely feared for their sharp teeth; I know my shortcomings.” Ibid., I, p63
40 See note 25
authorities out- and inside the Republic, as it prevented Huygens from being seen as wanting to make money or fame by selling them. These were not objectives of a *honnête homme*.

If the reader of Constantijn Sr.’s autobiographical works gets the feeling that Huygens was a natural talent in most things he did and that his socio-professional elevation went almost effortlessly, it means that Huygens has realized his goal. The courtier Huygens covered all his efforts with a veil of courtly *sprezzatura* – of effortlessness – in order to create an optimal appearance of the *honnête homme* he described: himself. Strategic self-fashioning and the connected efforts did not fit this courtly narrative and had to be left out, though Constantijn Sr. knew that his courtly readers would in fact appreciate the concealed efforts (writing with *sprezzatura* about his life) he took to camouflage his efforts (his endeavors in self-fashioning). However, this artfulness of concealing and deceiving is often understandably lost on the modern reader.

### iii. “The perfect Courtier” – a natural authority

Before returning to the main point of this chapter – distinguishing early ways of courtly self-fashioning of Constantijn Huygens Sr. during his “Grand Tour” – I want to elaborate a little further on his values and sense of authority as they appear in his later writings and to trace them back to his younger years in the first half of the 1620s. During the birth-year of Christiaan Huygens Jr. (1629), only four years after Christiaan’s father’s last journey to England, Constantijn Sr. began two poetic projects: the already mentioned Latin *Autobiography* and the long Dutch poem *Dagh-Werck* (Day’s Work). This second work, in which Huygens “wanted to expose and illumine all the principles on which he proposed to build the

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44 With this attitude he lived up to the courtly standards that were expressed in several of the ruling manner-books that circulated in seventeenth century Europe. Cf. BURKE, P. (1996) *The fortunes of the Courtier: the European reception of Castiglione’s Cortegiano*, University Park, Pennslyvania State University Press., p39-40 on Castiglione’s *Il Cortegiano*: “By the standards of the time, writing a book and having it printed was a somewhat ambiguous activity for a courtier. Publication was associated with profit as well as fame (...). All the same, publishing a book did not quite fit the image of the aristocratic amateur, the dilettante portrayed in the pages of the *Courtier*."

45 Constantijn Sr. knew the value of what he wrote – it seems as though he always wrote as if someone was watching him, a good courtly characteristic, later put in words by Baldassare Gracián: GRACIÁN Y MORALES, B. (1685) *The courtier’s manual oracle; or, The art of prudence*, London., Printed by M. Flesher for A. Swalle., p269: MAXIME CCXCVII: “To doe all things, as in the presence of witnesses.”

intellectual, moral, and religious existence which his wife and family should share with him," \(^{47}\) started out with an introductory quote from an Italian authoritative writer in which it was argued that certain obscurities in a written text should be regarded as an intellectual challenge, rather than a nuisance. \(^{48}\) More interesting than the exact words and meaning of this particular passage, is the book from which it was extracted: Baldassare Castiglione’s *Il Cortegiano* (*The Courtier*, 1528). \(^{49}\) Castiglione’s book of courtly manners counted as the epitome in its genre, setting the standard for what the ideal *courtier* was or should be. \(^{50}\)

It is striking that Huygens chose to quote from this book and use its authority — a book that describes the daily behavior, manners, values and language that ‘men and women of the world’ should have and use — as the preface of his exemplary account of his and his wife’s life. To my mind it expresses even more: to Huygens it was a completely natural thing to use the authority of Baldassare Castiglione, who coined the term *sprezzatura* and codified the elements of gentile behavior and polite discourse.

During the formative years of his “Grand Tour” Constantijn Huygens had lived and worked together intensively with ambassadors like van Aerssen (who effectively was, as

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Barendrecht argues, the foreign minister of the Republic\textsuperscript{51}, Noël de Caron, Lord of Schoonewal (d. 1624) and Willem Boreel (1591 – 1668), and had moved in the courtly circles of Venice, James I of England and the Killigrews, only to mention the most illustrious. In the diplomatic surroundings of the court, “gesture” was everything, and behaving \textit{comme il faut} was not just important, it could make or break matters of state. In the case of the international position of the Dutch Republic, Roodenburg provides us with a good example:

[...] only in 1650 would the Estates-General finally capture the position they had been striving for. In that year Louis XIV rendered the new Dutch ambassador, Willem Boreel, the same honour that he had rendered thus far only to the Venetian Republic. Of course, in entering the hall where he was received in audience, Boreel had to doff his hat and bow three times in approaching the King; that was standard procedure. But at the third bow Louis had taken his headgear off and had asked Boreel, who had covered himself again, to follow his example. All this had happened even before Boreel had presented his credentials and started to deliver his solemn speech on behalf of the Estates-General. The whole event was a victory for Dutch diplomacy.\textsuperscript{52}

Dutch diplomats, as much as others, needed to understand and master the proper codes of comportment and delicate manners (“hat-honour, giving the right of way”, etc.), first and foremost in the presence of a foreign sovereign,\textsuperscript{53} but also while pursuing the negotiations with their colleague diplomats from abroad, for they represented the Dutch Republic (embodied in the person of the stadholder-prince).\textsuperscript{54} The historical view of the definition of the Dutch Republic as an essentially bourgeois, mercantile Republic\textsuperscript{55} has stood in the way of acknowledging that the rules of “courtoisie” and “civilité” inextricably belonged to the life-style and ethos of the Dutch representatives, and not just when they were away from home.

\textsuperscript{51} BARENDRECHT, S. (1965) \textit{François van Aerssen, diplomaat aan het Franse hof (1598-1613)}, Leiden, Universitaire Pers., p1
\textsuperscript{52} ROODENBURG, H. (1991) The 'hand of friendship': shaking hands and other gestures in the Dutch Republic. IN BREMMER, J. N. & ROODENBURG, H. (Eds.) \textit{A Cultural history of gesture : from antiquity to the present day}. Cambridge, UK, Polity Press., p170. Italics added. As will be seen, Christiaan Huygens Jr. came to know ambassador Boreel closely during his different stays in Paris.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibíd., p166: “These complicated rules were made even more complex, because persons of higher rank needed more ‘personal space’ than others. At court, one was advised to doff one’s hat even when a servant went by carrying the monarch’s food. The same gesture was required in front of a royal portrait, or even when reading a letter coming from his majesty. In other, more concrete situations, the monarch, like every person of higher rank, had the right of ‘precedence’: the ‘right hand’ or \textit{hogerhand} as it was termed in Dutch. In other words, one had to keep left of this man or woman, walking one step behind them.”
\textsuperscript{54} Ibíd., p170.
François van Aerssen is a case in point. A diplomat for the Dutch at the French court of Henry IV during the years 1598 – 1613 until the latter's death, he had “breathed” the vapors of court for a decade and a half before he was sent on his missions to the courts of Venice and London, missions on which he chose Huygens as the embassy’s aide. He “had his hundred eyes at all the keyholes in Paris” as another diplomat put it, and was part of the Dutch diplomatic mission to France in 1610 where the ambassadors received the highly unusual honor to be awaited at the border by a prince, two marshals and four or five hundred noble horsemen. The Dutch Republic had to wait until 1650 (see quote above) until a French King gave a comparable honor.

Stating that the rules of courtoisie and civilité only started to enter Dutch public life with the appearance of Dutch translations and homeland writers’ editions of manner books seems unjustified as the Dutch, often francophone, elite could do well with Italian and French editions. Furthermore, and more importantly here, forms of etiquette and behavior in diplomatic circles often preceded national trends. Roodenburg tells us how “the resemblance between the ‘pointilles’ cherished in these [Dutch diplomatic] circles and the rules that were later expounded by De Courtin and Van Laar [in their Dutch manner books] is really remarkable.”

A part of several high Dutch diplomatic missions together with van Aerssen, Huygens was nourished extensively with the appropriate codes of demeanor, probably by a combination of apprenticeship and available textual guides like “Traité de la Court”, “Le Parfait Ambassadeur” or “Le parfait Courtisan” – the French translation of Il Cortegiano.

56 BARENDRECHT, S. (1965) François van Aerssen, diplomaat aan het Franse hof (1598-1613), Leiden, Universitaire Pers., p263. Maria de Medici, mother and Regent of the young King Louis XIII after the death of her husband, King Henry IV, declared van Aerssen persona non grata in 1613.

57 Ibid., p242, 255


59 De Courtin, “Nouveau traité de la civilité,” with its first Dutch translation published in 1672 in Amsterdam one year after the first edition in French.

60 C. van Laar, “Groot ceremonie-boek der bevoetaele zeeden,” 1755


62 All of these titles can be found in the catalogue of Constantijn’s library (HUYGENS, C., RIJKSMUSEUM MEERMANNO-WESTRENNIANUM & STOCKUM W.P. VAN PUB. (1903)
Constantijn Sr. may have encountered the book and the manners it promotes in many ways. First of all, the curriculum developed by his father, the diplomat Christiaan Huygens Sr., retold and sharpened by Constantijn Sr. himself in his autobiography of his youth,\(^{65}\) has been seen to resemble the ideal courtly education as extractable from *Il Cortegiano* by modern commentators (see Chapter IV, section ii).\(^{64}\)

Whether or not “*Il Cortegiano*” was handed over from father to son, Constantijn had many other occasions that made an encounter with the book likely. On his first diplomatic assignment – his accompaniment of Van Aerssen’s mission to the Republic of Venice – the young Constantijn Sr. by his own account impressed the Doge with his fluency in the Italian language. But more than a court, Venice also had an active printing press, and “*Il Cortegiano*” knew many reprints there over the first two centuries after the book’s first edition.\(^{65}\) A few years later, Constantijn Sr. was in England and resided at the house of the Killigrews where he met the English poets John Donne and Ben Johnson, the later Lord Chancellor, Sir Francis Bacon and the renowned Dutch instrument-maker Cornelis Drebbel, only a few people in their wide courtly, artistic and intellectual network.\(^{66}\) It was Sir Henry Killigrew, a renowned courtier (1525 – 1603), who had given Thomas Hoby’s first English translation of *Il Cortegiano* to Mary Queen of Scots. Huygens became close friends with Henry’s son, Sir Robert Killigrew, a diplomat of great cultural standing, known just like his father as a “complete gentleman.”\(^{67}\) It was through their mediation that

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\(^{65}\) BURKE, P. (1996) *The fortunes of the Courtier: the European reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano*, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press., p40-1, 140-1, p158-162 (Appendix I – Editions of the courtier 1528 – 1850). What is more, the book circulated in many translations over Europe, Huygens speaking and reading several of these languages, and he may have bought it in any big city or received it via the diplomatic communication networks.


\(^{67}\) Ibid., p57; and also BURKE, P. (1996) *The fortunes of the Courtier: the European reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano*, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press., p98: “[Sir Henry] Killigrew, a Cornish gentleman, made the acquaintance of Thomas Hoby in Italy in his youth. Like Hoby, he
Huygens was invited to perform for the King. He could see the full potential of being a courtier here, of fashioning a social position through music, words and culture with perhaps a copy of “Il Cortegiano” from the Killigrew’s bookcase in his hand.

Huygens took great care in being seen and judged as a noble courtier, a bonnête homme of ‘Constant’ dedication and impeccable honor. He insisted on being recognized as a “man of the good” (“un homme de bien”) or a “bonnête homme.” It comes as no surprise that during his life Huygens filled his bookcase with the courtier’s appropriate literary armor and ammunition: tracts on social standing, guidebooks on social demeanor and pleasant conversation, handbooks on “the perfect secretary,” volumes on emblemata and impreca, embassy- & travel-logs and “updates” on the wishes of princes (see Appendix A for a selection of court-related titles on Constantijn Sr.’s book catalogue). They seem to fit the picture of Constantijn Huygens Sr. – a courtier in ambition and practice – very well.

iv. A “qualité extérieure” – Patronage and the making of an English Knight

“And while he [King James I of England] spoke thus, he raised the sword that the noble Earl of Holland had handed to him on his sign, and completely unexpected he knighted me” (see the quotation at the outset of this chapter). With sprezzatura Constantijn Sr. artfully concealed the efforts that had been taken in order for this special event to happen. Constantijn Sr. was not made a knight overnight, but through the lobbying and recommendation of several people, notably his patron, François van Aerssen.

In early modern societies ruled by aristocracy, “[c]onnection and patronage were crucial (...) [-] perhaps the means – of matching candidates and vacancies.” In diplomacy, and the preparatory Grand Tour, it was indispensable to gain the patronage of a high diplomat. Christiaan Sr., as we have seen, arranged Van Aerssen’s high patronage for his son Constantijn Sr., and Constantijn, on his turn, made sure that his own sons gained high

married into the Cooke family of learned ladies, and like him, served as a diplomat, which gave him occasion to present a copy of the Courtier, in Hoby’s translation, to Mary Queen of Scots. Killigrew was remembered in the seventeenth century as an example of the ‘complete gentleman’, a student of history, geography, fortification, and a man skilled in riding, shooting, music and painting. In the case of painting, he was ‘a Dürer for proportion, a Goltzius for a bold touch, an angelo for his happy fancy, and an Holbein for oil works’. If contemporaries did not compare him to Castiglione’s ideal courtier, they surely should have done so.”

patronage of different ambassadors and other high-ranked nobles too (see Chapter V, section i and ii). Van Aerssen, with a property of f 800,000 in 1627, was the richest person in The Hague, not entirely coincidental, for the government sought rich negotiators who could pay for the expensive ceremonies; “the representation costs far exceeded the funds that were assigned to the diplomats” and probably was everything a man like Christiaan Sr. wanted as a patron for his son.

Van Aerssen was pleased with Constantijn Sr.’s diplomatic work and behavior during his first diplomatic mission to Venice, expressing not just his contentment to Christiaan Sr., but also formally to the States General. Constantijn Sr.’s position during the following missions to England was given extra weight by the letters of credence he received from the States General consequently, and the fact that he was appointed sécretaire d’ambassade by Van Aerssen instead of sécretaire d’ambassadeur. Thus he could partake in the genuinely political negotiations between the high-ranking diplomats while the preliminary talks were left to less significant lawyers.

That Van Aerssen had great plans for his pupil Constantijn, became clear when he speculated about the possibility of Constantijn Sr.’s succession of Noël de Caron in his position of ambassador of the Republic to England. As this was discussed, however, Van Aerssen indicated that the reality of their world was “that good meat hardly knows itself appreciated without a sauce” – i.e. in order to be suitable for the position of ambassador, Constantijn Sr. had to obtain a “qualité extérieure” (an “external quality”). It was rather unusual for someone of Constantijn Sr.’s social and professional position (bourgeois and still merely a secretary) to

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73 SCHINKEL, A. D. (1856) Nadere bijzonderheden betrekkelijk Constantijn Huygens en zijne familie, [n.p.], p10-3. Van Aerssen started his letter to his friend and neighbor Christiaan Sr.: “Monsieur, Sy je contribue quelque office au contentement de vostre fils, il n’est pourtant nullement besoin, que vous m’en reconnaissance aucune obligation, car je vous diray sans flatter, qu’il le merite par le soin et pene qu’il prend de se rendre utile et aggreadable;”
77 Ibid., p65
be knighted – even some of the ambassadors had not received this honor⁷⁸ – but this was Van Aerssen’s objective: he wanted Constantijn Sr. to be promoted to Knight of the Order of St. Jacob. As Van Aerssen lobbied via the Earl of Holland (a courtier at the court of James I), ambassador Caron and the Killigrews, Constantijn Sr. published a poem on the university of Oxford and performed for the English King in the same year in which he was eventually knighted: 1622.⁷⁹ The efforts of Constantijn Sr.’s significant patrons, combined with his visibility through his diplomatic audiences and musical performance with the King ultimately paid off well in the form of his first title.

There were limits to Van Aerssen’s power, however. His title notwithstanding, Huygens was not appointed Dutch ambassador to England when Caron died in 1624.⁸⁰ Constantijn Sr.’s father died in that same year, much concerned about his son’s future – as a diplomatic aide, Constantijn Sr. did not receive an income. When repeated attempts of Van Aerssen and others failed to get Constantijn a high diplomatic position – even approaching the King of Denmark for a position under his protection⁸¹ – Constantijn Sr. eventually took a relatively ‘safe’ path by requesting the position of secretary to the Stadholder, against the wishes of his patron Van Aerssen, who had greater plans with his protégée.⁸²

Constantijn Sr. knew as no other that courtly self-fashioning was neither a private, nor a straightforward endeavor. One’s talents in language, music and poetry counted only when applied in high social contexts under tutelage of a powerful patron – in order to obtain even a higher one. Erudition, courtly behavior and disinterestedness needed to be demonstrated in both diplomatic negotiations and writings – and all this with sprezzatura, artfully displaying perfect naturalness. Constantijn Sr. learned to see his linguistic, poetic and musical skills as assets in courtly, diplomatic surroundings. In Chapter VI, section ii, it will be seen that Constantijn Sr. saw Christiaan Jr.’s talents in the sciences in much of the same way: useful for obtaining a good professional position at court. At court, the possibilities for maintaining a high social position were by far the best (see the following chapter), and one’s other talents

could be employed in that context very well, as Constantijn Sr. did at the Court of Orange (see Chapter III, section iv).
III. Princely “Friendship”

See, furthermore, whether it does not make sense to take in consideration the merits of a stranger of such sorts, against that what I am permitted to say that we merit, either together, or head for head, in a House, where ever since eighty years our fidelity has been approved for the service of four consecutive Princes.

Constantijn Huygens Sr. – To my sons (1655)\textsuperscript{85}

I have chained myself, my days and my work for life in these courtly shackles.

Constantijn Huygens Sr. – My Life, told to my children in Two Books (1677)\textsuperscript{84}

When, after a failed attempt of van Aerssen to appoint Constantijn Sr. as plenipotentiary for Holland to England, Constantijn Sr. was appointed secretary to the Stadholder, Huygens took a position he would fulfill for almost the rest of his life. After starting out as a young subordinate, sharing his position with an older colleague that Constantijn Sr. disliked, Huygens managed to obtain the trust of consecutive princes and eventually to monopolize the secretariat – a move that his father had made too, a few decades earlier. Though it was couched in language of \textit{love} and \textit{friendship}, the bond between ruler and servant was one of economic and social dependency – dimensions that sometimes seem to have been ignored. The reliance that the consecutive princes put upon the consecutive Huygens by making them secretary and members of the Estates Council had important consequences for the family as a whole. As elsewhere in Europe, a new nobility of high courtly servants was rising – the \textit{noblesse de robe}. Constantijn Sr. also had the ambition to make his position under the Stadholder hereditary within the Huygens family and to belong to this novel elite. The “friendship” between the princes and their secretary was one of mutual understanding of the

\textsuperscript{85} HUYGENS, C. & JORISSEN, T. (1873) Mémoires de Constantijn Huygens : publiés pour la première fois, d’apres les minutes de l’auteur, précédées d’une introduction, La Haye, Nijhoff., À mes fils, p146 "Voyez de plus, si ce n’est pas bien raisonné que de porter en compte les mérites d’un estranger de ceste sorte, contre ce qu’il m’est permis de dire que nous méritions ou ensemble, ou teste pour teste, dans une Maison, où il y a tantost 80 ans de suite que la fidelité de la nostre est approuvée au service de quatre Princes consécutifs.”

involved social and material benefits for Constantijn Huygens Sr. and his family, and the limits of the power-relationship between both parties.

Huygens was not just a loyal servant; his life and position were dedicated to the prince, and by the acceptance of this devotion the prince shared a small part of his fame and position with Huygens. The latter, in turn, could use this share of power to enhance his social network and find increasingly better and visible ways to apply his broad talents in name and honor of the prince. In this act of reciprocity, the net effect was betterment of position for both – the prince’s stature grew through Huygens’s established work, and Huygens grew both by the realization of the act itself and through the consequential increase in the prince’s position. To make the circle round, the prince rewarded Huygens’s loyalty at several moments in his career with gifts that entailed concrete improvements in social position (and wealth), thus stimulating Constantijn Sr.’s ambition for social mobility. Furthermore, such gestures of course had its immediate positive effect on the benefactor. The Stadholder was known to be a generous donor and “shared his household” with a courtier of higher social standing. In modern terms, one might call this a “win-win-situation” serving the purposes of both.

In order to grasp fully the importance of the House of Orange for Constantijn Sr. and his ambitions for his sons’ careers (including those of Christiaan Jr. until his early thirties), one has to take into account its socio-economic dimension for Constantijn Sr. (section iii). When merely relying on the language in which Constantijn Sr. put the connection with the House of Orange (section i) one runs the risk of missing out on this important aspect of the relationship between Constantijn Sr. and the Princes of Orange (section ii). The final section of this chapter shortly discusses Constantijn Sr.’s proximity to Prince Frederik Hendrik and Huygens’s key role in creating a more magnificent and powerful court at The Hague. His centrality in the strengthening of the Oranges’ dynastic representation further shows his knowledge of and involvement in aristocratic matters, later enabling him to be of crucial support for his son Christiaan Jr. during his years in Paris and London (see Part II).

i. Chains of “Love,” “Affection” and “Friendship”

In some respects, Huygens’s relationship with the consecutive Stadholders (Prince Frederik Hendrik in particular) and Her Highness Princess Douairière (Amalia van Solms, Frederik Hendrik’s consort) resembled a relationship of lovers. A recurring theme in Huygens’s language on the bond between him and the princes (or their direct kin) is an emphasis on love and friendship and a deep affection that has turned him (voluntarily) into a humble servant, even a slave. An old Huygens at the end of his life told his sons in his De vita
propria sermonum inter liberos libri II (“My life, told to my children in two books”) about the son (Willem II) of the first Stadholder (Frederik Hendrik) with whom Huygens had a strong connection: “[a]s soon as he was given the Stadholderate, he closed the irons that had fallen off of me, with love, inherited from his father. Thus he made me his and had an open ear for my Constant recommendations.”

This period, in the direct years after the death of Prince Frederik Hendrik, according to Huygens turned out better than expected – “[e]verything smiled upon me, a beautiful career was in sight and it could even appear as though I had not been orphaned of Frederik Hendrik, sharing such a beautiful friendship with this amicable, humane, approachable and good Prince Willem.”

With this choice of words, explaining professional ties in terms of intimate love and servitude, economic and social advantages were tied to the family Huygens as a whole (see section ii). As Constantijn wrote in 1625 to Frederik Hendrik in his “application” for the position of secretary to the Stadholder, love, constituted by dependency, dedication and material gifts, was presented as a transferable relationship within descendant lines. It was through “the sincere and loyal affection during the service to the House of Orange, which he [Christiaan Sr.] had assured himself that the late Madam, the Princess of Orange [probably Louise de Coligny, the widow of Willem the Silent, who had died recently in 1620] and Your Excellence had recognized so manifestly in him,” that Constantijn had considered to write on this occasion.

Becoming a secretary to the Stadholder, Constantijn Sr. deviated from the wishes of his patron Van Aerssen who saw more possibilities for Constantijn Sr. in the diplomatic realm (and a future ally for himself). Huygens however preferred what arguably was the safest path: obtaining the trust and support from the House of Orange by means of a prolongation of his father’s ties with the princely family. Christiaan Sr. had been the secretary of Willem of Orange (the Silent) for six years until the Stadholder’s death in 1584 and secretary of the


87 HUYGENS, C. (1911) BW., vol. I, Lett. 269 – Constantijn Sr. to Frederik Hendrik (1625) Constantijn Sr. of course did not rely completely on this “love” between the House of Orange and the Huygens. The letter to the Prince was accompanied by letters of recommendation of his brother Maurit (secretary of the States General), the deceased Louise de Coligny, the Queen of Bohemia (who resided in The Hague) and the English ambassador Dudley Carleton. HOFMAN, H. A. (1983) Constantine Huygens (1596-1687) : a christian-humanist bourgeois-gentilhomme in service of the House of Orange, Utrecht, HES Uitgevers., p131-4
Council of States (Raad van State) for forty years – starting first as one of five secretaries, eventually ‘surviving’ as the sole secretary.\(^88\) The call upon the strong and affectionate linkage between the House of Orange and the family Huygens was tactically applied by Constantijn Sr. on more than one occasion. It worked as a device to establish professional \textit{survivance} (inheritance of a courtly function, see section \textit{iii}) from one generation upon the other, but it was also called to arms when the position \textit{within} a lifetime was endangered and old ties needed to be strengthened urgently.

Arie Hofman has described two “attacks” on Huygens’s position as a secretary in the year 1646 before and not long after Frederik Hendrik had died in 1647. Rather than the specific details of the case\(^90\) the written defense of Constantijn Sr. is of main interest here. As Huygens’s relationship with Princess Amalia had never been very good, it was not to be hoped that she would use her influence to bring Constantijn Sr. in disfavor with the new Stadholder, Frederik Hendrik’s son, Willem II. Offended and his honor directly threatened, Constantijn Sr. wrote to her in a long letter:

\begin{quote}
(...) and thus to acquit me before God and man of the obligations of a \textit{truly loyal slave and servant}, in a period, when it seems to me that that sort of people are needed who are content to \textit{sacrifice themselves for the honor of their master}, as a great number of persons of honor at hand and an infinity of my letters moreover to absentees can verify is a quality of me.\(^{91}\)
\end{quote}

The careful preservation of his honor, Huygens said in an earlier letter to his friend David de Wilhem, had always been his objective during his 21 years of loyal servitude.\(^92\) It was the “affection” which had taken him beyond the limits of his “commission” to do the “impossible” – he had “purely and simply over-served” (“surservi purement et simplement”) while keeping all “diligence” and “fidelity”.

\(^{88}\) HUYGENS, C. (1911) \textit{BW}., Vol. 15, Introduction, xxvii-xxviii  
\(^{89}\) HUYGENS, C. & BLOM, F. R. E. (2003) \textit{Mijn leven verteld aan mijn kinderen in twee boeken (De vita propria sermonum inter libros)}, Amsterdam, Prometheus., p10  
\(^{90}\) An ‘intrigant’ (van Lee) knew to gain access to the Prince and threatened to take over Huygens’s position, while after the Prince’s death Huygens’s position became very precarious when Amalia van Solms seemed to support van Lee and other fierce political opponents of Huygens. HOFMAN, H. A. (1983) \textit{Constantin Huygens (1596-1687) : a christian-humanist bourgeois-gentilhomme in service of the House of Orange}, Utrecht, HES Uitgevers., p186-96.  
\(^{91}\) Both quotations: HUYGENS, C. (1911) \textit{BW}., vol. 24, Lett. 4452 (Constantijn Sr. to Amalia), p551. Italics added. My translation of: "(...) et enfin pour m'acquitter devant Dieu et les hommes des debvoirs d'un vray fidele esclave et serviteur, en un temps, où il me semble qu'on a besoin de ceste sorte de gens qui sont contens de se sacrifier pour l'honneur de leur maistre, comme un grand nombre de personnes d'honneur presentes et une infinîte de mes lettres à autant d'absentes pourrait verifier ceste qualité de moy."
\(^{92}\) Ibid., Vol. IV, Lett. 4397 – Constantijn to De Wilhem, 1646
He had always "trotted" with great pace

... when it has been a matter of obeying the honor of the commandments of a Lord and Master of whom I really want that it is known that I have not merely served a great Prince, but more a Father, and a Father of the Fatherland, I say from affection and duty.\(^93\)

In other words, Constantijn Sr. fulfilled Messer Federico’s desire in "Il Cortegiano", that

... in addition to making it evident at all times and to all persons that he is as worthy as we have said, I would have the [perfect] Courtier devote all his thought and strength of spirit to loving and almost adoring the Prince he serves above all else, devoting his every desire and habit and manner to pleasing him.\(^94\)

Huygens indicated that the prince’s recognition of Huygens’s love for and dutiful and complete affection to him had created such a powerful connection that it could and should not be broken by Amalia now that the prince had died and his son was not yet in power. Huygens’s strong outcry for recognition of his honor\(^95\) and service and the restoration of the reciprocal trust-relationship with the House of Orange shows a proud, yet subservient Huygens, fighting to preserve his position as a princely “favorite” – feeling little for the dangerous spectacle of the “fall of the favorite.”\(^96\) Eventually the storm blew over, as Willem II did restore the old relationship “clos[ing] the irons” with inherited love.\(^97\)

\(^93\) Ibid., Vol. IV, Lett. 4538 – Constantijn Sr. to Amalia (1647), p384. Italics added. "[sinon que, comme j’avoý un carosse à la main, en ces deux allées et venues je ne marchqy jamais qu’au grand trot, qui a tousiours esté mon pas,] quand il a esté question d’obeîr à l’honneur des commandemens d’un Seigneur et Maistre à qui je veulx bien qu’on sache que je n’ay pas seulement servi comme à un grand Prince, mais de plus comme à un Pere, et comme à un Pere de la Patrie, je dis d’affection et de debovoir." My translation. Huygens on Frederik Hendrik as pater patriae and a second father in: HUYGENS, C. & BLOM, F. R. E. (2003) Mijn leven verteld aan mijn kinderen in twee boeken (De vita propria sermonum inter liberum), Amsterdam, Prometheus., p133.


\(^95\) Many Dutch historians of literature tend to project the picture of a quintessentially "Dutch" Huygens. One of many characteristics in which Huygens provides us with evidence to substantially relativize this categorization is his seeking for honor. As Temple stated in the late 1660s: "To conclude this Chapter: Holland is a Countrie where the Earth is better than the Air, and Profit more in request than Honour." TEMPLE, W. (1972) Observations upon the United Provinces of The Netherlands, Oxford, Clarendon Press., p97.

\(^96\) Constantijn was told by his friend de Wilhem after the first attack on the former’s position that: "Il vous suffist que Madame persiste avec ardeur en ceste bonne volonte et que Monseig.r le Prince Guillaume vous favorise en ce que vous jugez estre de vostre droit et honneur." HUYGENS, C. (1911) BW., Vol. IV, Lett. 4401 – De Wilhem to Constantijn Sr. (1646). See: BIAGIOLI, M. (1993) Galileo,
From Huygens’s defense it shows that there was a certain issue that may have caused some jealousy with other courtiers. Constantijn Sr. wrote to Amalia that:

[o]ne will find that I have gained some commodity [in the service of His Highness], but at the expense of my sight, and well below the level that many imagine it to be, who would find it hard to believe that much more often I have refused and sometimes given than received, and, at the least, they will never prove, that I have enriched myself either at the expense of His Highness’s glory or wallet, as many others do, who have not been chastised for it.  

The “love” between the Stadholder and his secretary had not been purely platonic. As Castiglione had taught, the Courtier’s unconditional love for his prince would eventually result (in the case of a good prince) in well-deserved “favors” of the patron to the Courtier. Constantijn Sr.’s rebuttal could not disguise that his prince had been more than generous to him – a crucial element of the “unconditional” love.

ii. Seeing through linguistic fog

Thus, language, however important, was only language. Though by Greenblatt’s standards “self-fashioning is always, though not exclusively, in language,” in the end what made it such an interesting enterprise were the “real” effects it accomplished. Courtly language was directly intertwined with professional power, social prestige and material wealth for the courtier and his family, and, if they preferred, a possibility to do good for the public cause. “Sympathy” and “love” were terms with a much wider recollection of
attached meanings than one would recognize in our present day: connecting oneself to another could mean being seen or mentioned together, "brokering" a different or higher position for someone (while thus gaining status oneself too) or creating a direct economic relationship (through gifts or straightforward payment). In a world where honor and status came to count as socio-professional measures, “linking” or “attaching” oneself to another person was a precarious enterprise, for one’s network co-determined one’s status. However, apart from some more recent works, much of the work on Constantijn Huygens (and on his son Christiaan too, as I will argue later) seems to show a certain “linguistic literalism” or, in other cases, a certain “presentism” or “essentialism”.

The literalist approach seems to take the actors’ language too much for granted, not (always) taking in account the directly connected economic and political mechanisms behind it.101 Take the following quote of Hofman – from what is one of the better historical works on Constantijn Huygens:

From the outset, the performance of this Stadholder [Frederik Hendrik] characterized itself by a high measure of loveliness. Traits like patience, courtesy and tact adorned his character. This way, the Stadholder won the sympathy of many, also that of Huygens, and used this respect to build up his power further.102

This statement – based on statements of contemporary witnesses – is true within the actor’s categories of the early modern courtier Huygens and the Prince of Orange. It does not, however, access a level of explanation to make the quote fully understandable to the present-day reader. A plain reading has its reader thinking that the Stadholder was just a nice man with a decent set of manners, handling his political contacts tactfully – just like a cautious politician may do nowadays – and thus making a lot of friends. It looks like no translation is needed for the early modern terminology (“frankness,” “courtesy,” “sympathy,” and


“honesty”), thus inviting the reader to draw his or her own conclusion, informed or not, according to present-day standards. The socio-economic depth of much of what is said thus is lost.

Stating that the Stadholder was blessed with certain character-traits, *inter alias* “courtesy,” rather proves other things: it may show how, through years of intensive education and courtly upbringing at foreign royal courts, the prince had learned to behave with *sprezzatura*, so as to render all these previous efforts invisible and have his courtesy and tact appear completely ‘natural’. It also tells us something about the value-pattern of the prince’s social interlocutors, reporting on the prince’s sympathetic character. Having learned the importance of comportment and politeness and the usage of the language of “friendship,” “sympathy” and “love” in national and international public life and service to express ties of economic and political dependency, they naturally praised the highest of all – the prince – publicly for his genuineness in, and mastery of, interpersonal matters.

Another example of literalism is the statement that Constantijn Sr. became a Knight at the English Court essentially through his “pleasant character” and “appropriate frankness”, factors that “had to lead to feelings of sympathy, even with a monarch who, by the way, was hard to influence.” As I think the previous chapter has shown, things were much more complicated and less “innocent” – there was in fact a lot of strategic planning in order to obtain an important socio-economic advantage for Constantijn Sr..

Besides this literalist approach, one that is often taken by historians of or specialists in a specific discipline, may perhaps be called “essentialist” or “presentist.” It is the specificity of the studied discipline that drives a wedge between the different elements, talents and characters of the subject – Constantijn, but also Christiaan Huygens Jr.. In the case of Constantijn Sr. by far the greatest territory has been captured by students of the Dutch language and poetry. For some, the inconceivable greatness of Huygens’s work in poetry is thus, that study of other elements of his life and work is both uninteresting and irrelevant.

Though there has also been a continuous discussion of Constantijn’s contributions to music and his role as a patron of the arts, most biographical and more comprehensive

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works have been written by Dutch historians of literature, overly focusing on Constantijn's all-encompassing greatness as a poet and the central role of poetry in his life. This approach, equaled by some historians of science writing on Christiaan, takes a sole focus on what is seen from a present perspective as the “essence” of their life and work – in the case of Constantijn poetry, in Christiaan’s case “science.’ According to this view, contemporary “linguistic fog” obscures the true “essence” of what is being described, sometimes even resulting in an intended downplaying of certain qualities and talents outside the realm of Dutch language. The strict disciplinary categorization of both men requires that we read Constantijn’s life and work as essentially Dutch (despite its Latin, French and English elements) and poetic – even though


It is shown that Huygens apparently needs to represent the ‘ideal Dutchman,’ both in his role of adherent to ‘God, the Netherlands and Orange’ and in his quality of ‘multisided cosmopolitan.’ STREEKSTRA, N. F. (1997) Constantijn Huygens 1596-1996 : lezingen van het tweede Groningse Huygens-Symposium. Groningen, Passage., p20-1. Gelderblom (1991), Mannen en maagden in Hollandstuin. An example can be found in ALPERS, S. (1985) The art of describing : Dutch art in the seventeenth century, Chicago, University of Chicago Press., p4, 10, 23-4. Constantijn Huygens is taken to be the signaling factor that Holland moved from history painting to a more descriptive approach. However, both Alpers and Slive are forced to take Huygens as a “true Dutchman” – for his theoretical writings on the theory of painting are the only available Dutch writings of the time – and too easily take him together with the wider Dutch community, a community in which Huygens moved less than in the
this constituted but a relative small part of his activity, and certainly not the main element. The immense body of correspondence, memoirs, poetry and other writings are used to find this back-projected “essence of Constantijn Huygens,” and deviating language and motivations are either neglected or seen as incomprehensible aberrations of an otherwise very well understandable personality. The answer to the question why certain poems or musical works are composed at specific moments during his life, when this is asked in the first place, is sought in the direct textual or historical vicinity, i.e. paying little attention to a bigger context of Huygens’s socio-professional considerations or his long-term ambitions.

I do not see the solution to a deeper understanding of the life and work of both Constantijn and Christiaan Huygens in either of these approaches. The meaning of Constantijn’s language is not obvious – it is historically contingent and deeply colored by socio-economic and political factors and circumstances – nor is it irrelevant. The important use of poetry, music and the mastery of several languages for Huygen’s social and professional fashioning has not been discovered by a permanent gaze on his poetic works itself. Hofman, though at some points giving a too literal reading, should be given much credit for setting an important first step in the direction of integrating political, social and religious explanatory and descriptive elements. It is Roedenburg and especially Blom, however, whom I take to have

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109 The preface of DEURSEN, A. T. V., GROOTES, E. K. & VERKUYL, P. E. L. (1987) Veelzijdigheid als levensvorm : facetten van Constantijn Huygens’ leven en werk : een bundel studies ter gelegenheid van zijn driehonderdste sterfdag, Deventer, Sub Rosa. (p7) states that the poet ought to take the first place, something “one should not wish to be otherwise.” However, the editors are happy that substantial attention is paid to Huygens the musician and that this element is not regarded by their authors as a “theme apart.” “(…) Huygens in his multi-sidedness is more than the sum of a series of connected components.” Other “accents” are “lighter:” the natural sciences, theology, politics and architecture. However, “[c]alculated after their meaning for Huygens himself their share expressed in quantities could have been greater.” Other writers show a likewise prioritization.

110 Poelhekke, for instance, sees it as an impotence of a selection of Constantijn Sr.’s contacts that they did not appreciate him just for the thing Poelhekke and other historians of literature appreciate him: his Dutch poetry. Furthermore, he is tempted to say that Constantijn Sr. was almost secretary ‘in the meantime’ – and thus is surprised that Huygens was so successful at it. POELHEKKE, J. J. (1973) Luidiek met Constantijn Huygens : voordracht gehouden te Nijmegen op 15 Februari 1973, Amsterdam, University Press., p2, 7


recently set the most successful steps in a new direction – both taking inspiration from Norbert Elias and Stephen Greenblatt. Avoiding the pitfalls of literalism and essentialism, they both make Huygens’s language explicit and argue that certain socio-economical circumstances and ambitions need to be taken in full account in order to make (true) sense of the larger picture of Constantijn Huygens’s life and work. Taking on this challenge, I would like to shift the attention from Huygens’s courtly language to the “nitty-gritty” of his socio-professional ambitions and the way in which the Stadholder offered exciting possibilities for him and his offspring.

iii. The social and professional possibilities of gift-giving

The gifts she [Amalia] rewarded my long endeavor and loyal service with, were princely, the great guardian worthy and very generous for a servant who perhaps had not been completely without merit but, in all frankness surely did not expect such a thing.\(^{114}\)

In conformity with the best courtly standards Constantijn Sr. was “highly surprised” by the voluntary gifts Amalia presented him with at the end of his career. As a secretary, Huygens was thoroughly informed of the mechanics of gift giving – he had a complete scheme for himself in which he categorized the formalities of different sorts of communication with the prince’s correspondents.\(^{115}\) It is plausible that Huygens’s astonishment was almost purely “stylistic;” it was mainly by gifts of the House of Orange (and the prince in particular) that he grew in social and professional position. As Hofman concludes after showing the unequal growth in wealth for the higher social strata in seventeenth century Holland: “It is of course completely clear that those earnings cannot be explained by the annual salary, but instead by all the additional advantages connected to the fulfillment of the office.”\(^{116}\) Huygens is no exception, he rather is a case in point: the total value of his possessions grew from f 80,000 in

1627 to approximately f 300.000 in 1674, showing a social boost from the ranks of the wealthy patricians and average public servants to the “grand-capitalists” (“groot-kapitalisten”) while fulfilling the task of secretary to the Stadholder.\textsuperscript{117} Effectively, it would come close to an insult to suspect that Huygens, ending his life as one of the richest men of the Dutch Republic, had not anticipated the socio-economic possibilities of service under the Stadholder.

In fact, patronage of a prince was lucrative business, patronage of the Prince of Orange no less than that of other European princes at the time. Though it was important and profitable to obtain a stipend from the prince, there was a lot more to raise expectations about and to direct one’s ambitions to. While receiving only f 500 as an annual salary for his secretariat, he earned an extra f 1000 annually when he became a member of the Nassau Estate Council in 1630.\textsuperscript{118} On top of this came extra payments for the drafting of letters, patents and other documents\textsuperscript{119} – which may have stimulated Constantijn Sr. to be extra active in his correspondence for the prince and in his intensive contact with writers and academics. Compared to other high officers in the Republic his annual income was somewhat modest: the country’s advocate, Oldenbarnevelt, had made f 1,200, but Adriaen Duyck in the years 1621 – 1631 earned f 3,000; De Witt, the grandpensionary during the Stadholderless years (1650 – 1672), was paid f 6,000 in the last years of his reign, and Gaspar Fagel (de Witt’s successor) a modest f 12,000.\textsuperscript{120}

However, serving under the prince was profitable in many other ways – Constantijn Sr. knew many different channels for obtaining fortune: gifts, exonerations and “discounts” of the Stadholders and his many friends, correspondents, contacts and clients. Where those with a high salary received this “in part at least to limit the incumbent’s dependence on such sources of income [“gifts from various sources”]” – in the case of de Witt this was explicated in his instruction\textsuperscript{121} – Huygens knew no such restrictions. With a “Maitre” as Frederik Hendrik, who “probably had more money to spend on his artistic fancies than many ruling princes, although his resources could not compare with those of the French or English royal houses” and who “felt the need to use these financial resources to build up his prestige by giving his court a

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., p221-2
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., p157, 143
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid., p130
certain monarchical éclat\textsuperscript{122} (see section iv of this chapter), Huygens need not care that his reward would halt with his stipend.

More than one reason existed for the prince to appease his busy secretary financially and materially. The two most important I will elaborate. First, Huygens needed to be a credible and "honest" intermediary between the prince and the outer world, donating Huygens the needed authority and trustworthiness he needed to act comfortably on behalf of the prince in his circle of high-ranked contacts. Second, Huygens’s loyalty to the prince and attachment to the House of Orange needed to be secured. This happened by the offering of very favorable socio-professional conditions that satisfied Huygens’s ambitions for his career and his family’s social standing. Though thoroughly intertwined, these two elements will show some of the intricacies of the socio-economic relationship between Huygens and the consecutive Stadholders – Frederik Hendrik during the longest period.

The correspondent with almost all of the prince’s contacts and clients, Huygens the secretary was a central “node” in the mechanics of gift-giving of the consecutive princes of Orange. He was the constant mediator between the prince and his relations: either in the army, where Huygens was instrumental in negotiating many important (and less important) positions for ambitious soldiers; at court, where Huygens mediated the many mutual gift-giving relations of the prince with artisans, intellectuals, poets, painters and other artists; or in international relations, where Huygens functioned as an important channel of political and diplomatic communication (see the last section of this chapter). With Huygens’s increasingly greater role as broker between the different parties he became a patron of the arts and sciences, gradually building an immense and hardly detachable network of both personal and “professional” correspondence. An increasing number of people knew to find its way to the secretary of the Stadholder, who created an ever-greater web around himself and the prince.

Constantijn Sr. pushed up the status of both the prince and himself, and that of the correspondents, by the entrance that Huygens offered them to the prince. The princely messenger and connection for many did not just need the formal backing of the prince for the execution of his tasks; he needed to reflect the prince’s rising greatness and fair-mindedness somehow in his own social status, enlarged through the reception of princely gifts. It was imperative that the intermediary between the prince and so many of his petitioners received appropriate compensation for his own way of contributing to the status of the House of Orange.

Orange – which itself in turn showed the prince’s gratefulness and greatness to those, most loyal to him.

The second reason (as shortly mentioned) why the prince would want to satisfy Huygens with substantial gifts lay in the latter’s socio-professional ambitions. Though Constantijn Sr. would always feign polite and modest surprise when receiving princely gifts, he had good reasons to long for these rewards and the related social enhancement. The prince and his wife Amalia – center points in aristocratic The Hague, where status was measured by wealth, “genealogies and family connections”125 – knew this and used growing rewards to secure his loyalty.

As second-generation immigrants from the Catholic Southern Netherlands, the Huygens were not acknowledged as “complete” Dutchmen. This “hereditary malfunction” gave rise to an inherent limitation to Constantijn Sr.’s possibilities in Dutch civilian public service, where the higher regions knew a “void” of Southern Netherlands.124 A possible route to both social and professional success was obtaining a noble status, a characteristic that the family Huygens lacked too, as the lines of Huygens’s parents only consisted of rather wealthy Belgian merchants on the one hand and civilian servants affiliated to the House of Orange.125 The settlement of Christaan Huygens Sr. in The Hague, a center of diplomacy and a wealthy upper class made the need for distinction and acceptance in the true aristocracy even more urgent.

Huygens was one of the first of the Dutch upper-bourgeois126 to put everything to work to cross the intractable yet existent line between bourgeoisie and nobility – and an early example of the newly rising European elite in the seventeenth century, the noblesse de robe. As Francisco de los Cobos (1477 – 1547) had already done in the sixteenth-century Spain, these new nobles acquired landownership, lordships, and titles, thus increasing their wealth and status. Typified by their service for the state, they worked under the direct patronage of

aristocratic rulers, leading to royal and princely favors and great material and social advantage. “Down the centuries the service of government implied not an alternative aristocratic distinction, but a means for newcomers to acquire it: both for themselves and for their heirs.”

They spoke and behaved much like the old nobles and they tried to distinguish themselves from the “lower ranks” of the other upper-bourgeois. The Condés, courtiers under Cardinal Richelieu (1585 – 1642), built a multitude of “lordly domains” (after first buying the land), arranged several “judicious marriages” and secured a number of royal gifts. Under Cardinal Mazarin, the non-noble Le Telliers were permitted in 1655 “to share the post of state secretary between them; if sons were encouraged to follow the distinguished example of their father, so the letter of privilege explained, the state itself was likely to benefit.” In England, Sir James Hay, First Earl of Carlisle (1580 – 1636), with his “lesser gentry origins, his emphasis on civilian government employment (...) [and] his devotion to the court over the country” was “the model in almost all respects of the new aristocrat that James [I] was creating in the southern kingdom.”

In these years, the same development occurred in the Spanish and Austrian Netherlands.

Thus, in a like manner, Constantijn Sr. directed his efforts for social elevation along several (interconnected) lines – a. survivance, b. obtaining lordships, estates and titles, and c. family representation. In all this, Constantijn Sr. thankfully used the generosity of his Master, the Prince of Orange.

a. After the failed attempt to penetrate the higher regions of civilian (other than princely) public service as an ambassador during his protégé-ship under Van Aerssen, Constantijn Sr. is likely to have taken up his father’s connection with the House of Orange in an attempt to give this link a hereditary savor (see section i). “Survivance,” a recurring theme in his

correspondence with and poems for his sons (see Chapter IV), was the important attachment of a hereditary line of father to son to a high public function.\footnote{133 Parival, for instance, also used \textit{survivance} as a term to indicate hereditary professional functions: “Au commencement de 1631, les Etats Généraux donnèrent à Guillaume, fils unique du Prince d’Orange la \textit{survivance} des Charges & des Gouvernemens de son Père.” \textsc{P}ARIVAL, J.-N. D. (1710) \textit{Les délices de la Hollande, contenant une description exacte du pays, des moeurs et des coutumes des habitans}, The Hague, van Doolen., p332, italics added.}

Christiaan Sr. (Constantijn Sr.’s father), in Frans Blom’s words, was a “\textit{homo novus}”, the “initiator of a family of public servants in The Hague’s administrative centre.”\footnote{134 HUYGENS, C. & BLOM, F. R. E. (2003) \textit{Mijn leven verteld aan mijn kinderen in twee boeken (De vita propria sermonum inter libros)}, Amsterdam, Prometheus., p11} He had fulfilled the position of secretary to the Stadholder for a few years, but more importantly the secretariat of the Council of State for forty years of which the last decades on his own (see the first section of this chapter). When Constantijn Sr.’s elder colleague, Junius, was severely ill, Constantijn took his chances to take up the dormant linkage between the House of Orange and the Huygens family.

In his letter of June 17, 1645 to his master, Huygens “in all humility” indicated that a certain “hope” had lingered in him “during some years” to take over that little bit of function that Junius did as his colleague-secretary – “that is to say, to be able to continue doing that which I [Huygens] have done since so long.”

I see that normally it is the fruit and recompense of long service that the honor of functions, parted amongst several officers, comes back together with the last survivor \textit{[survivant]}. Of four secretaries that late Mr. the Prince [Willem of Orange the Silent], father of Y[our] H[igness] [Frederik Hendrik], has left, Mr. the Prince Maurits [Frederik Hendrik’s brother and predecessor] has reposed just at Mr. Melander. Of the four that he had for the Council of State, the function stayed, without any more colleagues, to my late father, who survived \textit{[survocut]} the three others.\footnote{135 HUYGENS, C. (1911) \textit{BW}, Vol. 24, Lett. 3981 – Constantijn Sr. to Prince Frederik Hendrik. p158. “De quatre secretaries qu’avoit laissé feu Monsign.r le Prince, pere de V. A., Monsign.r le Prince Maurice s’est reposé au seul S.r Melander. De quatre qu’il y en avoit au Conseil d’Estat la function demeura, sans plus de collegues, à feu mon pere, qui survescut aux trois autres.”}

Along the lines of this tradition, Huygens wished to be the \textit{survivor}, thus duly rewarded with an honor for all his efforts to protect that of the Stadholder. Huygens also took the liberty to reflect on the fulfillment of the position after his own last breath, clearly showing his greater idea about his family’s position and its relation to that very-illustrious House:
But if [your] Highness deigns to gratify me with that public mark of his beneficence, that I offer him at his good pleasure, and of which I would hold the introduction as not done, if it displeases him; I will leave all other foreign consideration and I would estimate myself to be obliged of a new bond of service of his very illustrious House for the number of days that I still have, and after me the children that God has given to me, and that through all the cares that are possible to me I cherish the same objective, and with the successes that make me hope that one day they will find themselves capable to let themselves know by their obeisance and fidelity [...]  

As Blom rightly points out, with the Stadholder’s consent from that moment on the family Huygens fully possessed the position of the princely secretary again and ‘incubated’ it during the years of hardship that were to come – the Stadholderless years (1650 – 1672) – until, with de Witt’s death in 1672, Constantijn Sr. managed to move the new Stadholder Willem III to appoint his son Constantijn Jr. (Christiaan Jr.’s brother) as the new secretary. 

These “gifts” to Constantijn Sr. and his family as a whole – his appointment first as secretary and later as the sole secretary and the accepted survivance of the function within the family with Constantijn Jr.’s succession in the function – should be regarded as crucial to Huygens’s program for his and his family’s socio-professional fashioning. The link and “love” between the prince and his family – i.e. his family’s servitude to the princely patron – was tightened with every gesture of the prince. For instance: the donation of a racehorse in September 1633, or the gift of the membership of the Estates Council of the Oranges in 1630. The latter function gave Constantijn Sr. an endowment of another f 1,000; shared supervision over the domain and possessions of the Oranges and another platform for political

136 Ibid. p159. “Mais si V. A. daigne me gratifier de ceste marque publique de sa bienveuillence, que je luy propose soubs son bon plaisir, et dont je tiendray l’ouverture pour non faicte, si elle luy desplaist, je lairray là toute autre imagination estrangere et m’estimeray obligé d’un nouveau lien au service de sa tres-illustre Maison pour le nombre de jours qui me rest, et après moy les enfans que Dieu m’a donnez, et que par tous les soings qui me sont possibles je nourris à mesme dessein, et aveq des succes qui me font esperer qu’un jour ils se trouveront capables de faire coignoi tre par leur obeïsance et fidelité, qu’ils ne degenerent point de celuy qui ne veult coignoi tre de plus haute condition que d’estre repute toute sa vie.”


advice to the Stadholder.\textsuperscript{139} This extra tie to the House of Orange proved vital when there was no longer a Stadholder to serve in the Stadholderless period and thus no secretary needed, because it was in this period that the Oranges, more than ever, needed their Council to protect their possessions and their crucial Principality of Orange against the aggressive geographical politics of Louis XIV (see Chapter VI, section ii).\textsuperscript{140}

The Princes of Orange, like other aristocratic rulers in Europe, could safely attract ambitious courtiers to their core of power. The social elevation of the Huygens family was at least partly dependent on the incubation of a public function within the family, as was the social mobility of other upper-bourgeois families. This contrasted with the old, established nobility that had an independent status and could thus pose a threat to the ruler. Paradoxically, though courtiers like the Huygens could grow socially, they would never be able to acquire a status that would bring the position of the ruler in danger. In other words, as a relationship of dependency existed between courtier and ruler, the latter could control the former and limit his possibilities. Huygens validated the social and economic possibilities of courtly love, the princes appreciated its restrictions too.

\textit{b.} Following the example of the old Dutch, French, German and English nobility and putting Van Aerssen's adage "that good meat hardly knows itself appreciated without a sauce"\textsuperscript{141} to work, Constantijn Sr. obtained several lordships and titles. Constantijn Sr. was knighted in England by James I, as we have seen, and later, in 1633 at the French Court by Louis XIII through the brokerage of Henri de Beringhen – the King’s First Knight – he was made a knight in the Order of Saint Michel. Huygens was given the right to carry a golden lily on a blue field in his armament, an important sign of stature.\textsuperscript{142} Of equal strategic worth, though coming at considerably higher price, was Huygens’s getting hold of different lordships and their connected titles, and the building of two prominent houses – one at the central Plein in The Hague and the other a 'retraite' at Voorburg.


\textsuperscript{141} Quoted in: Ibid., p65.

Zuilichem, Huygens’s first lordship, a respectable piece of land Huygens bought in 1630 (giving him financial distress for many years), was immediately added as a title to his name. He shared the title with his son Christiaan, who was known from that moment on as jeune-homme or lord of Zuylechem, Zulekom or Sulkom (depending on the nationality and accurateness of the writer) and kept the title for life. When Huygens had his eye on another lordship – Zeelhem – he managed to move the Stadholder to grant it to him at a greatly reduced price. Not only was this important for its financial advantage, it also strengthened the ties between the prince and Huygens by his acknowledgment of Huygens’s want for social elevation and his support for Constantijn Jr. as his future successor – for Huygens’s son was the one who was to receive the attached title “lord of Zeelhem.”

More important than the third lordship, which was purchased with an eye on the establishment of a firm social position for Huygens’s third son, Lodewijk, was the piece of ground in The Hague that Huygens had received in 1634 from the Stadholder. The novel Plein (Place), new center to courtly life in The Hague and vibrant center for many courtiers, ambassadors, diplomats and their attachés and nobility from all over Europe, had been constructed by the Stadholder on Constantijn Sr.’s advice. The very valuable ground at the Plein was highly wanted by many others – and the free gift of a substantial piece of it to the courtier Huygens was a thorn in the eye of many. Of course, the prince’s advantage of having his secretary close to his working space was considerable, but more than that, the gift seems to have aimed at enabling Huygens to bolster his social position. The vitruvian, rather majestic house that Huygens designed and that was built (ready in 1637) by Jacob van Campen (1595 - 1657) – who had been given the opportunity before to design and build palaces for the Stadholder through Huygens’s mediation – made a clear expression about Huygens interpretation, or rather wishes, about his family’s social position. He found comfort in the direct proximity of the Binnenhof (the Inner Court), his rich patron-neighbor Van Aerssen (seen as the “richest Hollander” of that time) and the court-in-exile of the Winter King and Queen of Bohemia.

His visions were also shown by his retraite at Voorburg (Hofwijck – literally: “refuge from the court”); despite the fact that this castle was rather small, it was part of an architectural masterpiece (a cooperation of Constantijn Sr. with Jacob van Campen and Pieter

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144 Ibid., p33
Post) by its natural inclusion in the geometrically perfected, expansive garden. And aside from its architectural impressiveness, as many have already remarked, it fitted the image of the bonnête homme, able to afford a calm refuge from the frenzied court, a lordly and rustic haven to unwind the spirits. ¹⁴⁶ Only with the support and gifts of the Stadholder – though these were not half as unexpected as Huygens presented them to be, for he requested them himself – Huygens could build his impressive record of "qualités exterieures."

c. Constantijn Huygens Sr.’s writings, work and endeavors are completely permeated with his social consciousness and ambitions. Huygens took perfect care for his honor and that of his family and took all necessary measures aimed for social elevation. Whether bourgeoisie or “bourger” (Schama’s shorthand to the individual in the “center of the Dutch world”; “a citizen first and homo oeconomicus second”¹⁴⁷), Huygens did everything he could to distinguish himself from lower ranked people. At several points he reprimanded his sons for their sharing company with boys of lower classes after their teacher, Bruno, had warned their father about this, and he had problems with the spouse of his son Constantijn Jr., a daughter of a rich merchant.¹⁴⁸

Two ways that Constantijn Sr. used to help accomplish this divide was through representative imagery and the careful composition of historical sources on the family. A way in which Constantijn Sr. worked on the second – aside from the examples of rhetorical strategies that we have seen in the sections ii of Chapter II and Chapter III – was to assure a place for his father in Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft’s De Nederlandsche Historiën (the Dutch Histories, 1642).¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, Constantijn Sr. used his contacts with the important painters he contacted on behalf of the Prince of Orange to have himself and his family depicted by them. The Huygens family, and Constantijn Sr. in particular, probably is the most depicted Dutch family of its time. This visual representation of the family was aimed at ensuring a place for the Huygens family in history, but even more specifically, in the highest social layers of its time.

Despite Constantijn Sr.’s *sprezzatura* in matters of receiving gifts and establishing wealth and social promotion, these issues were central pillars of Huygens’s life and work. His ambitions in the professional and social realms were high, like his father’s, and the patronage of the Prince of Orange enabled him to materialize these ambitions. Gifts were means of strengthening the socio-economic bond between the ruler and his courtier – as gifts grew, so did the bond, and vice versa.

*iv. The love for three Oranges embodied; building a court*

Constantijn Huygens Sr., however, was no passive consumer of the Prince’s gifts. He supplemented his own social ambitions with ambitions for the House of Orange – gaining trust from the ruler while at the same time increasing the ruler’s power and influence. This final section on the relationship between Constantijn Sr. and the House of Orange serves to show the closeness that Constantijn Sr. had to the consecutive Princes of Orange, most notably Prince Frederik Hendrik. It also serves to enlighten the central role that Constantijn Sr. had in the building of a full-fledged early modern court at The Hague, a role that was made possible by his proximity to the prince. Constantijn Sr. had an important hand in establishing a dynastic representation of the Oranges, a weighty factor for the aristocratic family that lacked sovereignty within its territory.

Constantijn Sr.’s position with regard to his patrons, the Princes of Orange, Frederik Hendrik in particular, was one of constant negotiation. The number of secretaries over the years and the different princes fluctuated (see section i and iii of this chapter) and this seems to have depended on the personality of these courtiers. Constantijn Sr. “survived” his colleague Junius and obtained much influence and intimacy with the Princes Frederik Hendrik and Willem II and the princess; Constantijn Jr., however, failed to attain a comparable trust-relationship with Prince Willem III – this honor was reserved for the prince’s equerries. Notwithstanding his ambitions, Constantijn Sr. was but of bourgeois background, which makes his proximity to the Oranges unusual, a closeness that can be seen in the courtly ceremonies and public appearances.

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151 Closeness to the prince or princess was honorable, “[H]onourable places at table, honourable seats in church, honourable positions in public processions” endowed people and their families with status –
Amongst the highest of the bourgeois civilians – the non-nobles – Constantijn Sr. joined the head of the internal organization of the court, the Steward, and the other members of the Estate Council of the Prince at the Council Table for the courtly dinner, enjoying the privilege of being served the most luxurious dishes at the same time as the prince. Lower courtiers had to serve the higher, adding a sauce to the meal for the higher-ranking, but more importantly it “reinforc[ed] the hierarchy” – something that had been a long-time tradition but was taken more serious by Prince Frederik Hendrik and Princess Amalia. Huygens’s position was visible for many, as high army-officers, high aristocrats and courtiers from all over Europe shared the dining table.

The greatest distinction, however, lay in events that touched the core of the court’s existence and position, such as princely marriages, funerals, coronations, grandes entrées and international tournaments. During a five-day ring-tilting contest with abundant festivities and splendor for thousands of guests, organized by Frederik Hendrik in 1638 on the occasion of the marriage of Johan Wolfert, Count of Brederode, the highest aristocrats in attendance enjoyed a collation every evening at Constantijn Sr.’s new villa at the Plein. Finally, Constantijn Sr.’s (posthumous) proximity to the Prince and his House can be seen in the privileged position he had on the prints of the deathbed of Prince Frederik Hendrik. Though at a distance of the Prince, Constantijn Sr. is depicted very prominently – amidst the highest nobles affiliated with the House of Orange-Nassau he is presented en face, on the foreground in full length and in detail.

Constantijn Sr. was close to the center of the House of Orange in more ways, however. A cosmopolitan courtier with great ambition for his own social growth, Huygens also knew that the Oranges needed splendid, courtly representation and extravagant spending in order for their House to settle its position in the European aristocracy. The Oranges, unlike many

\[\text{On the numerous occasions that the Prince was on military missions, Amalia would normally head the court. ZIQLMANS, J. (1997) Life at the Hague Court. IN KEKLUSEK, M., ZIQLMANS, J. & MUSEUM, H. H. (Eds.) Princely display: the court of Frederik Hendrik of Orange and Amalia van Solms. The Hague; Zwolle, Historical Museum; Waanders.}\]
\[\text{FRIJHOFF, W. Ibid. The Princely Court at The Hague: a National and European Perspective., p15}\]
\[\text{Ibid., p42}\]
other aristocratic families in Europe, were not sovereign within their territory: the States, represented in the States General, held the sovereignty. Despite the private nature of the Stadholderate, however, it was not a superfluous feature of “the Republic.” It was an essential and integrated part of the Dutch system of government\(^{158}\) – though its position was open for discussion.\(^{159}\) Shortly after the Union of Utrecht (Unie van Utrecht, 1579), the States explicitly denied the Republican nature of the Northern Netherlands (“the republican state form is not adapted to the Netherlands”)\(^{160}\) and indicated the need of a leader – the Stadholder.

Strong and clever mythological imagery and ubiquitous self-representation had to make up for a lack of formal “competency” in order to show effective leadership. As the courtier-diplomat William Temple put it in 1673: “As the States-General represented the Sovereignty, so did the Prince of Orange the Dignity of this State, [...] By the splendour of his Court, and magnificence of his Expence.”\(^{161}\) After the neo-Stoic teachings of the Flemish thinker Justus Lipsius and the absolutist views of Machiavelli, the Stadholder put much effort in gaining the unconditional respect of the malleable (Dutch) people for his reign.\(^{162}\)


In many ways, Constantijn Sr. was pivotal in this “program.” He believed to be a secretary of the same rank as those of the most influential Kings and princes in Europe and did everything to make this ambition come true. Huygens took care of the contacts and assignments for (dynastic) paintings of the Orange family, commanding paintings from Pieter Paul Rubens, Rembrandt, Gerrit van Honthorst, Jan Lievens and many others. Princess Amalia, while ordering the new palace, Huis ten Bosch, to be built, leaned heavily on the judgment and knowledge of Constantijn Sr. when it came to the dynastic representation that was to fill the central hall of the palace: the Oranjezaal (the Orange Hall). Like Giorgio Vasari (1511 – 1574) for the Medici family, Huygens devised a commanded a series of paintings that traced back the ancestry of the Oranges directly to the ultimate source of authority: God. Furthermore, he was put in command of the construction of a multitude of grand palaces and residences that the Prince of Orange built in these years, working in close cooperation with the most important architects of the Northern Netherlands of the day (Jacob van Campen, Pieter Post). Finally, Huygens generally was the main channel via which poets attributed their wedding poems, panegyric verses and obituaries to the Prince and Princess of Orange – often taking time to read and comment on them. Huygens also was central in the negotiation process between the Houses of Orange and Stuart concerning the dynastically tactical marriage of Willem II and Mary Stuart.

The ambitious representational strategies of Frederik Hendrik and Constantijn Sr. sorted the effect they needed to, though the level and size of the great courts in Europe was never reached.\textsuperscript{170} This was of no small weight for the Oranges. Though their \textit{de facto} leadership was substantially increased by the clever use of patronage in the army (using war-time competences given by the States General to make tactical appointments, thus securing the loyalty of many officers – another process in which Constantijn Sr. had a central role\textsuperscript{171}) their power also depended much on the effects of strong representation on a national and international scale.

Courtly life-style, manners and fashion were increasingly adopted by the Dutch public,\textsuperscript{172} and people started to see the Prince of Orange more and more as the country’s leader, whereas the States were seen as administrative bodies.\textsuperscript{173} In the international and diplomatic spheres, the Dutch “Republic” grew from almost irrelevant (in 1598 both France

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and England refused the diplomatic honor of states to the Republic to increasingly important. In 1634 the German emperor suggested seeing Frederik Hendrik as Prince of an empire, and in 1637 the French King started calling the Dutch Prince Son Altesse. An absolute token of the success of dynastic representation was given by the diplomatic success in 1650, when the French King gave ambassador Boreel the same honor as the ambassador of Venice (see Chapter II, section iii).

With this picture of the centrality of the cosmopolitan courtier Constantijn Sr. in the creation of a more powerful House of Orange and his firm understanding of the socio-economic potential of high patronage, it will be easier to understand why he was capable of preparing his sons successfully for a career as courtiers under aristocratic rulers. Importantly, it will also help to see why Constantijn Sr. was able to stimulate Christiaan Jr.’s career in the natural sciences more than has been commonly supposed. The natural sciences, like poetry and painting, could contribute notably to the standing of an aristocratic ruler, and often its public and protagonists reached far into the courtly realms – creating a common ground for Constantijn Sr. and his son Christiaan Jr..

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174 MÖRKE, O. (1997) The Orange Court as a Centre of Political and Social Life during the Republic. IN KEBLUSEK, M., ZIJLMANS, J. & MUSEUM, H. H. (Eds.) Princely display: the court of Frederik Hendrik of Orange and Amalia van Solms. The Hague; Zwolle, Historical Museum; Waanders., p71. This is remarkable: both states were allies of the Dutch at that time.

175 FRIJHOFF, W. Ibid. The Princely Court at The Hague: a National and European Perspective., p14
Part Two – Fashioning a Courtier-Mathematician: a Family Affair

Oh you, Huygens, who adds such an important part to the glory of your father […]\textsuperscript{176}

\textit{Nicolaas Heinsius} – “À l’Auteur du Système:” first line of introductory poem to Christiaan Huygens Jr.’s Systema Saturnium (1659)

Constantijn Sr. helped Christiaan Jr. with some very concrete points in establishing his natural philosophical career. Despite the fact that he repeatedly failed in his efforts to obtain public functions for his sons after the death of the Stadholder Willem II,\textsuperscript{177} he used his social and professional stature to push them forward. The field in which Christiaan Jr. moved – the intersection between the court, diplomacy and the natural sciences – was a realm where his father felt very much at ease and could be of great help. I want to deepen the insight of the way in which Constantijn Sr. used his political influence and his own talents to create optimal conditions for his son’s (predominantly diplomatic) career. It is interesting to see how Constantijn actively helped creating a firm social and diplomatic network for his son, Christiaan Jr.. Later on he was actively involved in obtaining privileges for discoveries and inventions and he was occupied with the dissemination of Christiaan’s natural philosophical work and fame. I will argue that the father was an important determinant in Christiaan’s self-fashioning, using his contacts, his political power, his poetry and his strategic knowledge of social processes.

Constantijn Huygens Sr. has been characterized by historians of science and others as a “dilettante” when it came to the natural sciences – an amateur (in the modern sense of the word) who, due to his eclecticism and many other activities never really deepened his


knowledge of the natural sciences. True as this generally may be (though probably untrue for optics as will be seen in Chapter VII), it has however caused many historians to belittle automatically his possible stimulating influences on his son’s work or that of others.\(^{178}\) It seems to me that this view is no longer accurate: there is more in history that has constituted “the sciences” than merely brilliant, purely scientific thoughts. In many ways, Constantijn Sr. seems to have been Christiaan’s publicity-agent, his negotiator and his patron or powerbroker, and together with Christiaan’s brothers, he was a non-negligible factor in the establishment of his son’s work.

This part will start out with the most obvious way in which Constantijn Sr. gave direction to the life and endeavors of his second oldest son, Christiaan Jr. – that is: the education he gave to Christiaan Jr. and his brothers.

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\(^{178}\) Andriesse, for one, dismisses him as a “propagandist” who did not participate, choosing a role as “witness” rather than “judge or patron.” Ibid., p55-6
IV. The Curriculum and Ethics of a young Huygens

The Nobility, beautiful frame of bad paintings.

Is the Mask of his actions, that is where he ventures to trust on

Constantijn Huygens Sr. – “A Foolish Courtier” (Een Sott Hoveling) (1624)179

Nobility could be in one’s actions, rather an inherited right at one’s birth. If there was one thing that Constantijn Huygens Sr. learned and showed at the eve of his sons’ education, it was that a man of medium social ranking could find his way into the highest regions through unremitting application of his talents. He also knew, however, that his endeavors for the family would be lost if his sons would not be able to acquire equal social and professional distinction like their father had. Survivance was crucial (see Chapter III), and for early noblesse de robe like Constantijn Huygens Sr. and his father in the competitive The Hague milieu, the fundamental means of securing their sons’ continuance of the position they had earned was a comprehensive and intensive education and further upbringing.

The story of two generations of Huygens-education has been told many times.180 Most accounts are based on Constantijn Sr.’s own generous account of his own and his sons’ education. Despite the necessary focus on Constantijn Sr.’s version of the story181 (for we do not really have other sources) it is essential to pay heed to the almost natural exaggeration that

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181 The main source is: HUYGENS, C. & HEESAKKERS, C. L. (1987) Mijn jeugd, Amsterdam, Querido.. In Blom’s words: “The moment on which [Constantijn Sr.] Huygens wrote this youth biography, is significant. Completed when he made a start as a young father with the education of his two eldest sons, My youth could serve as a mirror and guideline.” HUYGENS, C. & BLOM, F. R. E. (2003) Mijn leven verteld aan mijn kinderen in twee boeken (De vita propria sermonum inter liberos), Amsterdam, Prometheus., p17. Furthermore, there are the Norma Studiorum that Constantijn Sr. gave to his sons as they studied in Leiden (HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. I, No 4. – Constantijn Huygens Sr. to sons Constantijn and Christiaan (May 9, 1645)) and the letters that were sent between Constantijn Sr., and Hendrik Bruno and Caspar Barlaeus respectively.
Constantijn Sr. used in his writings (see section ii of Chapters II and III). The lack of ‘independent’ or new sources renders the task of telling an original, new story difficult and, for my purposes, unnecessary. Rather than telling a new or comprehensive story, it seems worthwhile to investigate the intentions of Constantijn Huygens Sr. with the intensive, broad and much-demanding (from both the father and the students) curriculum. Against the background of Constantijn Sr.’s socio-professional position and ambitions – nourished, naturally, by his own father’s ambitions and the education he had received from him – the educational program of Constantijn Sr.’s sons may be understood differently than has been done by some historians.

Though it was quite common in the early modern period for the “affluent ranks” to use their offspring’s childhood to create “a model adult,” a “perceived advantage” had to be established for them to invest in their children’s higher education.\(^{182}\) Constantijn Sr.’s\(^ {183}\) intentions were clear (as had Christiaan Sr.’s intentions been): his sons needed to be prepared for the fulfillment of a position in public service and their education needed to be tailored according to this prospect. What is more, they needed to be able to move in diplomatic and courtly circles, and to speak (multilingually) and behave accordingly. Erudition, multilingualism, musicality and skill in several practical arts thus needed to be developed and taught by the right teachers. Taking the education of their children in their own hands, the Huygens made great investments – investments that paid of handsomely later on.

In many ways, Christiaan and his brothers learned to think about themselves together with their father in terms of a “team,” and “survivance” and the preservation and advancement of their family honor became part and goal of their teamwork. The boys were reared in the direction of a career in diplomacy or elsewhere in public service, and, as will be seen in the following chapters, this educational background proved to be essential for the successful development of Christiaan’s career in the natural sciences.

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\(^{183}\) As the mother of the boys died when Christiaan was eight (in 1637), it is difficult to distinguish which role she played in their education. It seems that Constantijn Sr. had the strings in hands as it came to the planning and program, but this is mostly speculation. Steven Ozment holds that “[p]arenting was not only or even primarily woman’s work; it was too high a responsibility to be left to one parent. Mother and father shared it to an unusually high degree, the maternal role being greater in the infant and early childhood years, the father’s role increasing in importance after age six or seven, when the maturing child could respond to a regular discipline.” OZMENT, S. E. (1983) When fathers ruled: family life in Reformation Europe, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press., p132
The curriculum – erudition from father to sons

Constantijn Sr.’s sons received a very broad educational program. They were taught rhetoric and logic; several modern languages: French, Dutch, English, Italian; the classical languages: Latin and Greek; calligraphy, drawing and painting; singing, dancing, acting and playing instruments; music(theory), mathematics and natural philosophy. Furthermore, Constantijn Sr. regarded different sports as important parts of his sons’ education: ice-skating, riding horseback, running, fencing, hunting and swimming. Constantijn Sr., just like his father Christiaan Sr., put extra emphasis on the art of writing, teaching it to his boys himself. “[E]veryone mastering this skill well, could, under all living conditions, be sure of at least a modest livelihood.” Moreover, it is unclear whether the list of languages is complete; in 1649 Constantijn Sr. wrote to Hendrik, Count of Nassau-Siegen in a letter of recommendation for his son Christiaan Jr. (see Chapter VI, section i) that Christiaan was not just very well trained in law, music, painting, mathematics, French, Latin and Greek, but also in Hebrew, Syrian and Chaldaic. Perhaps some exaggeration may have nurtured these statements, for there will have been few people with the ability to verify their truth, in particular those concerning Christiaan Jr.’s mastering of Syrian and Chaldaic.

Constantijn Sr.’s sons received their lessons at home from private teachers and from their father. Constantijn Sr. thought classes were too big at the public schools and he repeatedly complained that the average schoolteacher taught pupils to dislike learning and ventilated his opinion that corporeal punishment of pupils was intolerable. Education should be enjoyable and thus he tried to find ways (like his father, Christiaan Sr., had done too) to

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make “dry” matter more interesting: the boys were to write letters in the floor-sand and their father composed nice verses for them with the rules of Latin syntax. A certain Abraham Mirkenius was first appointed mainly to teach Latin to the boys; later the young Hendrik Bruno replaced him. The famous Latinist Caspar Barlaeus was asked by Constantijn Sr. to continue the boys’ study of Latin and stimulate their poetic activity. The sons were taught mathematics at home by Jan Jansz. Stampioen (the Young) and when Constantijn Jr. and Christiaan Jr. studied law in Leiden (1645 – 1647), Frans Van Schooten – who had been a student of René Descartes – was asked by the boys’ father to take over the instruction in mathematics. In the meantime, Christiaan Jr. was put in contact by his father with Marin Mersenne, the French monk and mathematician (see Chapter V). Finally, Constantijn Sr., notwithstanding his demanding post, taught his sons music, doing sums and, as mentioned before, writing.

The father had a decisive role in the whole educational program and process. It was he who decided who would be his sons’ teachers, what courses they would get and where they would study, not his sons, as some seem to suppose. When his two eldest sons studied in Leiden he even sent them a short list of rules on their schedule, the number of hours to be spent on classes and self-study, literature, music and (respectable) friends. Constantijn Sr. may have aimed to please the Stadholder with the placement of his sons on the Orange-sponsored Illustre School (“Illustrious School”) in Breda in 1647. The boys could expect a privileged position there. Apparently, Constantijn Sr. did a successful job, because he was appointed to plan and supervise the education of both Prince Frederik Hendrik’s bastard-son,

ii. “Survivance” through judgment, style and standing

The curriculum bespeaks certain social and professional ambitions that were complemented by Constantijn Sr.’s way of writing about it. Making music, to begin with, for Constantijn Sr. was not just a matter of playing an instrument. Singing “to the accompaniment of the viola” had to be performed “reading at sight and in fine style,” as prescribed by Baldassare Castiglione for his perfect Courtier.\footnote{CASTIGLIONE, B. & JAVITCH, D. (2002a) The book of the courtier : the Singleton translation : an authoritative text, criticism, New York, W.W. Norton., quotes from p55, 76. Huygens indicates in his HUYGENS, C. & HEESAKKERS, C. L. (1987) Mijn jeugd, Amsterdam, Querido., p50, that when it came to playing the lute, he had “mastered his teacher even before the two years altogether had passed, during which he had lessons. In the first place, one could hardly show me a score that I couldn’t play immediately. Secondly (something that occurs less often but for that reason deserves all the more appreciation) I didn’t normally play pieces that I had learned to dislike through practice, but with success I let my own ability and improvisation skills do the work.” My translation.}
The same could be said about doing sports – the right composure and style while pursuing sportive activity was just as important for Constantijn Sr. as was the sport itself. Christiaan Sr., according to his son Constantijn Sr., had “observed the manners ‘deemed proper for young people of rank’ [at the Court of Orange] and had apparently decided ‘to put this behaviour into practice at home with his children.’”\footnote{ROODENBURG, H. (1997) How to Sit, Stand, and Walk. Toward a Historical Anthropology of Dutch Paintings and Prints. IN FRANITS, W. E. (Ed.) Looking at seventeenth-century Dutch art : realism reconsidered. Cambridge [England] ; New York, Cambridge University Press., p177-8 with quotes from: HUYGENS, C. & HEESAKKERS, C. L. (1987) Mijn jeugd, Amsterdam, Querido., p24-52. “[Gesture] has always been an important ingredient in social differentiation. (...) Aspiring groups have long used distinctive modes of bodily comportment as a means of setting themselves apart from their inferiors.” THOMAS, K. (1991) Introduction. IN BREMMER, J. N. & ROODENBURG, H. (Eds.) A Cultural history of gesture : from antiquity to the present day. Cambridge, UK, Polity Press., p7.}

While swimming, ice-skating, horse riding, dancing and fencing, it was essential that the young Huygens kept an upright posture – “one of the most important requirements [for] well-mannered people.”\footnote{ROODENBURG, H. (1997) How to Sit, Stand, and Walk. Toward a Historical Anthropology of Dutch Paintings and Prints. IN FRANITS, W. E. (Ed.) Looking at seventeenth-century Dutch art : realism reconsidered. Cambridge [England] ; New York, Cambridge University Press., p176} Constantijn Sr. even decided that his oldest son, Constantijn Jr., while still a young boy, had to have surgery due to his slightly leaning head. As upright posture was
emphasized by Erasmus and Castiglione, a loving father with a son for whom he had great plans had hardly any other choice than securing an upright posture for his son – despite the great hazards of such an operation.\textsuperscript{198}

Drawing also fitted Constantijn Sr.’s idea of a proper education. According to Svetlana Alpers, “[d]rawing had already been considered a skill suitable to the wealthy in ancient times. Huygens established this by quoting Pliny, to which we can add the example of Castiglione’s \textit{The Courtier}, which also commends drawing.”\textsuperscript{199} The similarity of Constantijn Sr.’s educational program for his sons – and Christiaan Sr.’s curriculum, forming the model of the former’s plan – with Castiglione’s envisioned education for his perfect Courtier has been noticed by others too.\textsuperscript{200} There may also have been significant influences from Justus Lipsius’s \textit{neo-Stoic} teachings. Christiaan Sr., Constantijn Sr.’s father, had based the core of his educational program on “a little known tract on the education of princes and nobles, written by Philips Marnix [Lord of] St. Aldegonde.”

What strikes one directly is Marnix’s emphasis on relieving mental exercise with physical exercise. Books are important, so the author tells us, but so is relaxation. Boys should exert their limbs and thereby develop an elegant gait and posture.\textsuperscript{201}

The writer also put great emphasis on “self-control, rationalism and the judicious weighing of alternatives before making any decision or acting on it,” essential \textit{neo-Stoic} values.\textsuperscript{202}

What is more, the curriculum that Constantijn Sr. taught his sons seems to have aimed at creating judgment, Castiglione’s sprezzatura or the “inexpressible somewhat” or “secret charm” as Baldassare Gracián would later call it in his manner book The Courtiers manual oracle; or, The art of Prudence. 203 In Gracián’s words, the “art of conversing,” writing and moving was more important than “the seven liberal Arts all together.”204 Sports, writing, drawing and languages did not matter when they were not complemented by a certain way of moving and verbal expression. Constantijn Sr.’s social ambitions (just like his father’s) not only imposed that his children be well versed in a variety of subjects and languages, but also behave in ways appropriate to young people of their standing (or, their desired standing). 205

The young men were raised as polyglots, well versed in law, and all subjects that might come on the scene at court or in diplomacy. Following their father, Constant Sr., and their grandfather, Christiaan Sr., they were brought up as close as possible to “potential ’uomini universali.” 206 They learned to love what we now think of as “leisure” and learned to see it as a nice, yet necessary part of their future courtly accomplishments.

iii. Team play: realization of the self and the family

It was during this program of education and their further upbringing that Christiaan Jr. and his brothers learned to think as a “team,” and came to realize their responsibility for the survivance of the family. Many activities were done together and shared accomplishments cherished; personal decisions were weighed against the advantage for the family. And despite

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204 Ibid., p21-2, Maxime XXII

205 "One of the priorities of parenting was what the upper ranks termed ‘breeding’: ensuring that their sons and daughters exhibited behavior appropriate to their rank, birth order, and gender." POLLOCK, L. A. (2001) Parent-Child Relations. IN KERTZER, D. I. & BARBAGLI, M. (Eds.) The history of the European family. New Haven, Yale University Press., p204-5. That Constantijn Sr.’s and Christiaan Sr.’s attempt to belong to the highest echelons in society was serious can be seen in the fact that their educational program was almost completely similar to that of the aristocracy: “Besides following the manuals on civility, these latter groups [aristocracy and courtiers] also had to master such ‘techniques de corps’ as the art of fencing or horse riding, thus establishing a major distance between themselves and the ‘bourgeois gentilhomme’ who in Molière’s famous play attempts to mimic them (1670).”


the seemingly dominant position for Constantijn Sr., the family seemed to function as a team indeed.

The brothers were accustomed to learn and to do useful things for the family together. For instance, Constantijn Jr. and Christiaan Jr. often helped their father with the grinding of lenses, and helped making the prints for the publication of their father’s *Momenta desultoria*, together with their teacher, Hendrik Bruno. With the death of René Descartes, both Constantijns and Christiaan Jr. wrote poems remembering the deceased; the efforts of the boys were taken very seriously by Constantijn Sr.. In the winter of 1657 Christiaan Jr. was asked by his father (who was sick for some time) to take over the preparations for his new collection of poems, “Cornflowers” (“Korenbloemen,” published in 1658). This task included collecting introductory verses for the volume from famous friends – an assignment that Christiaan Jr. did more than successful. A year earlier, Christiaan Jr. had made a drawing of his father that was included in the book, and he was awarded with several Latin poems of his father and Dutch poems of Joost van den Vondel – a good friend of his father’s. All poems took the theme of “survivance;” how thankful the could be to be given back the life he had once given to his son, through the beautiful portrait (in which Constantijn Sr. lived forth – “survived”), made by his son Christiaan.

The titles that were attached to the lordships that the family acquired through Constantijn Sr.’s purchases and lobbying were shared as family property between the sons. The brothers all received their own title: Constantijn Jr. became lord of Zeelhem, Christiaan Jr. lord of Zuilichem and Lodewijk lord of Monnickelant – and Christiaan Jr. would often call his older brother “le Zeelhem.” The children were all urged to address each other according to their status; Christiaan Jr. was sometimes addressed with “UEd” – meaning “Y[our] E[xcellency]” and on the instigation of his father Christiaan started addressing the letters to his older brother with “Monsieur Secrétaire de Son Altesse [His Highness] d’Orange,” well

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208 HUYGENS, C. (1888) *OC*, Vol. I, No. 77, No. 79 (Mar. 29, 1650), n1; No. 80 (Mar. 29, 1650)
209 Ibid., Vol. I, No. 426 – Christiaan Jr. to J. van den Burgh (Nov. 14, 1657); No. 428 – Christiaan Jr. to Coppenol (Nov. 16, 1657); No. 429 – Bruno to Christiaan Jr. (Nov. 17, 1657)
212 Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1220
twenty years before Constantijn Jr. actually was allowed to carry this title. Marriage was also a family matter, which can be seen clearly in the case of Constantijn Jr.’s engagement with a rich merchant’s daughter of lower social background. Christiaan Jr.’s opinion, shared by his sister Susanna, was that “[w]hen I will be asked for my view, I will say it freely and hold always that my brother should aspire to an alliance more considerable and useful, and that otherwise he will be very bad at ease with the rent of those 40 thousand livres.” The money was not much during their father’s lifetime, and it was insensible to marry such a low-ranked girl.

In a way, it is remarkable that teamwork existed despite the father’s seeming dominion and the high ambitions that were shared within the family. Also, the whole family was dependent on the financial support of Constantijn Sr. for many years. It was not until 1663, when Christiaan Jr. was thirty-four, that, through a gratuity of the King of France (see Chapter VIII), he began to get his own income. Until at least 1666, when Christiaan Jr. received an income for his role in the Académie des Sciences, Christiaan Jr., like his brothers, had to rely on his father’s wallet and approval. “Il Padre,” or “Signor Padre,” as Constantijn Sr. was called either lovingly or teasingly, gave his sons a reasonable monthly payment, yet this had the consequence that hardly any extra money could be spent without their father’s consent. Nonetheless, the correspondence hardly betrays any significant frictions on this point.

Constantijn Sr. gave his sons an education and upbringing devised to create little erudite courtiers. The boys were prepared for diplomacy and public service through a thorough training in classics, a variety of contemporary languages, music, poetry and sports. Constantijn Sr. aimed to secure his family’s survivance by training his sons’ comportment, composure and judgment. By his supervision of the educational process of his sons and his

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213 Ibid., Vol. I, No. 72 – Christiaan Jr. to Constantijn Jr. (Feb. 8, 1650); No. 73 (Feb. 12, 1650); No. 75 – Constantijn Jr. to Christiaan Jr. (Feb. 23, 1650)

214 “Quand on me demandera mon avis je le diray librement et soutiendrai toujours que le frère devroit aspirer à quelque alliance plus considerable et plus utile, et qu’il sera d’ailleurs tresmal a son aise avec la rente de ces 40 mille livres et ce qu’il apportera de son costè, qui durant la vie de Pere ne sera pas grand chose.” My translation. In: Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1214 – Christiaan to Lodewijk (Feb. 28, 1664)


prominent role in the rest of their upbringing, he could ensure that his sons came to see the family as central and came to realize their important future roles for the family. Despite his dominance, the sons cared about their father and reprimanded one another when needed, as this quote from a letter of Constantijn Jr. to Christiaan Jr. (thirty-four at that moment) shows:

I do not see how you could withdraw yourself from there and leave il signor Padre alone and deprived of his whole progeny [...]²¹⁷

V. The Honorable Art of strategic Communication & Publication

“My father, who has a very particular care that we continue our correspondence"


In Part I we have seen how Constantijn used his talents to create and preserve an immense correspondence-network with many of the most important people of his time (socially, politically, intellectually, artistically, etc.). He built his own status and that of many others (including, of course, the consecutive Stadholders) by increasingly taking an active role of patron and broker of patronage-relations. Constantijn Sr. knew the importance of correspondence-networks and social contacts and shared them with his sons in order to enhance their future possibilities significantly. He taught his sons how to use these resources advantageously. Furthermore, I will show that he was also involved in the strategic publication of several pieces of Christiaan Jr..

i. Aristocratic networking

Aside from the array of high-placed friends whom Constantijn Sr. had invited to teach his sons, he brought Christiaan Jr. in contact with many men and women of standing. Constantijn Sr. would take Christiaan with him to the court-in-exile of the Winter-Queen, Elizabeth of Bohemia, who lived close to their home in The Hague. In this thin aristocratic air Christiaan and his father would have both “witty” and deep intellectual discussions with the Queen’s daughters, Princess Elizabeth Palatine in special, and many other visiting gentle women and men.218 Christiaan also got the opportunity to share many of his father’s contacts

ZUYLEN VAN NYEVELT, S. V. (1906) Court life in the Dutch Republic, 1638-1689, London, New York, J. M. Dent & co.; E. P. Dutton & co., p78 and GODFREY, E. (1909) A sister of Prince Rupert : Elizabeth princess Palatine and abbess of Herford, London, H. Lane., p122; “With such men as Huyghens and his clever son, the brothers Dhona, the courtly de Pollot, the Queen’s friend, Lord Craven, and perhaps occasional visits from the philosophical young Englishman, Charles Cavendish, to say nothing of the brothers coming and going, there can have been no lack of brilliant conversation.”
within the Dutch aristocracy through their shared membership and participation in l’Ordre de l’Union de la Joye contacts that reached in the highest echelons of Dutch aristocracy.  

When Constantijn Sr. came to understand Christiaan’s unusual talent for mathematical and natural philosophical matters, he made some nonchalant remarks on this in his correspondence with Marin Mersenne, leading to a challenging correspondence between Christiaan and the reverend. Mersenne, like Constantijn Sr. a node in an international network of intellectuals and courtiers, was quick to recognize Christiaan’s exceptional talent (he warned Constantijn Sr. that Christiaan might surpass Archimedes if he continued his work in this direction) and he was instrumental in spreading Christiaan’s name via his net of contacts. Constantijn Sr. was also instrumental in showing people of significance Christiaan’s accomplishments as he still is a young man – for instance Princess Elizabeth Palatine, the secretary J. J. Stöckar of city of Schaffhausen and J. Ph. Von Schönborn, to whom he sent Christiaan’s books and promises to keep informed.

A wide range of other people who in some way or another had been in previous contact or acquainted with Constantijn Sr. would fill Christiaan’s list of illustrious correspondents – and, to a greater or lesser extent, friends. Of the French intellectual-courtly Montmor-group that had formed an Académie since 1657 and met on Tuesdays in the hôtels of its members, several members had been in contact with Constantijn Sr. before. Amongst the many others whom Constantijn Sr. had been in some form of contact with before his son did were three rather significant men at the court in Versailles: ministère Hugues de Lionne

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221 HUYGENS, C. (1911) BW, Vol. IV, No 4510 – Mersenne to Constantijn Sr. (Winter 1646)


223 In HUYGENS, C. (1911) BW, Vol. V, No. 5592 – Constantijn Sr. to the King of England (Oct. 14, 1658). Constantijn Sr. offers the King Christiaan’s telescope. In HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC, Vol. IV, No. 996 (Mar. 15, 1662) Christiaan tells his brother Lodewijk that he has also donated a telescope to the Elector and will be offering one to the Louvre (or rather, he does the distinguished guess that his telescope will be “confiscated”!). Constantijn Sr., as we will see, was Christiaan’s main contact with the highest offices at the Louvre, so it seems safe to assume that the father offered the telescope to the French King, and, in the same manner, to the Brandenburger noble – though it is unclear exactly when.


(Foreign Affairs), long-time prime-minister of the King, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, and, of course, Louis XIV the King himself.

ii. Using and profiting from international communication-networks

But more than just a huge aggregate of renowned people, Christiaan Jr.’s father provided important channels of communication. He formed the direct entry to the communication-network of the Oranges, and he had comprehensive knowledge of and access to the important other national and international diplomatic and academic webs of communication (a). Secondly (b), he was an incomparable source of information as how to use communication and both preserve and enhance its systems. Constantijn Sr.’s many year of experience with diplomatic networks and the nuances of courtly and political communication made him very well suited as both a patron for and secretary to his son. Thirdly (c), Constantijn Sr. knew his way with publishing books – be it in his case mostly poetry – and he could provide his son with essential support in the tactic of publication.

a. To start with, Constantijn Huygens Sr. had no problems using the princely “communication-services” for purposes not directly connected to the House of Orange. One of the reasons that Descartes appreciated the intimate friendship with Constantijn Sr. lay in Huygens’s active role in sending letters and books all over Europe, to Mersenne and other philosophers and intellectuals. Huygens would be an intermediary correspondent (a secretary, in a way) for many others too, sometimes also during controversies. Thus, challenges became less direct, and a third, independent party could oversee the politeness of discussion and make sure that the controversy was made public (by circulating copies). Mediating such debates was advantageous for Constantijn Sr.: he learned a lot from the matter at hand (including the latest developments) while contributing to the virtual “Republic of Letters,” it was a means of increasing his network and of being publicly associated with important discussions and people, and, if nothing else, it was interesting.

Father Huygens’s centrality in the postal network of the Oranges offered Christiaan Jr. means to reach out over intellectual and courtly Europe, efficiently and inexpensively.

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Importantly, Constantijn Sr. made sure that Constantijn Jr. in the first place and Lodewijk in the second place increasingly took care of parts of his secretarial tasks. Moreover, Constantijn Sr. also stimulated his son to seek for other means of dispersing his scientific opinions – in cases of controversy, Christiaan had to look for a mediator other than his father, for, clearly, neutrality in his case could not really be expected.

Virtually everywhere Constantijn Sr. was he had entrance to diplomatic networks, an asset he thankfully used during his many stays abroad. In the years 1655 – 1665, years in which Christiaan Jr. grew to be a leading European mathematician–inventor, both he and his father traveled around Europe with considerable frequency, either together or apart, with or without one of Christiaan’s two brothers, Constantijn Jr. and Lodewijk. Whenever Constantijn Sr. and his son would stay in Paris or London together (sometimes for long periods) they could use the ambassadorial communication networks for Christiaan’s and his father’s many letters, books, instruments (they sent many pendulum clocks, microscopes and lenses – see Chapter VII) and other packages that needed to be sent. Furthermore, Constantijn made sure that Christiaan was well acquainted with the ambassadors of France to Holland and those of Holland to England\textsuperscript{228} and France, so that he could profit from their connections and the use of their communication-systems. The French ambassador to Holland, Jacques-Auguste de Thou II (1609-1677) was a neighbor of the Huygens in The Hague, and Christiaan was on good terms with him and his wife and de Thou’s aide and astronomer Bouillau.\textsuperscript{229} Christiaan Jr.’s relationships with the Dutch ambassadors to France and England, Willem Boreel, Konrad van Beuningen, and Noël de Caron, were of a comparable nature as the French ambassador’s close relationship to Constantijn Sr. was. Christiaan’s correspondence indicates that at several points he used their services for communication purposes.\textsuperscript{230}

\textit{b.} A secretary for most of his working life, Constantijn Huygens Sr. did his utmost to provide his sons with the necessary skills and mindset needed to be successful in courteous correspondence and the managing of high-ranking contacts more generally. He made sure that contacts were shared and enhanced \textit{as a family} and that the boys kept a high frequency of communication with each other. The teamwork between the brothers and their father –

\textsuperscript{228} HUYGENS, C. (1888) \textit{OC.}, Vol. III, No. 887 – Christiaan Jr. to Robert Moray (Sept. 16, 1661)


\textsuperscript{230} Probably, part of the load of communication was taken over by the communication network of the French King when Christiaan became a member of the \textit{Académie} – already on July 2, 1665, Christiaan indicated that the King would assist him in sending letters to the Kings of Sweden and Denmark. HUYGENS, C. (1888) \textit{OC.}, Vol. V, No. 1426 –Christiaan to Lodewijk (July 2, 1665)
something we will see in their making of instruments also, should to an important degree be regarded as fruits of the father’s efforts.

As the previous chapter has shown, Christiaan and his brother learned to speak and behave in a courteous, civilized way according to the best standards of the time. During their upbringing – which, I think, did not effectively stop when they left university – special attention was given to the skill of writing letters. The boys were pushed to write their letters in French and Latin – the first the language of nobility and the second that of intellectual and philosophical discourse – and were pushed from an early age on to address each other by their proper titles and with courteous introduction and closing. Christiaan’s early letters to Constantijn Jr. were addressed: “To Monsieur Monsieur of Zeelhem in The Hague” or, for a while, “Monsieur Monsieur Huygens, Secretary of H[is] H[ighness] of Orange.” They closed with “Your [Votre] very-affectionate brother and servant Chr. Huygens”231 and “vous” was used throughout all letters according to the conventions of the nobility. The twenty-year old Christiaan, on behalf of their father, was reproached by Constantijn Jr. when he wrote his father and brother too infrequently. Later on, in a letter written two days before Christiaan’s birthday, Constantijn Jr. stated that “[m]y father, who has a very particular care that we continue our correspondence” would like to see his sons increase the frequency of their correspondence – an indication that their father kept following their correspondence until at least the early 1650s.232

This fatherly investment in his sons’ correspondence proved to be important – Christiaan’s correspondence with many mathematicians and courtiers from his day was read by a critical public that requested civilité and courtoisie.233 This concern can be seen, for instance, in a comment of Valentin Conrart (1603 – 1675) on Christiaan’s letters in 1661: Christiaan is not civil enough in his descriptions of “divertissements” – a concern that is countered by Constantijn with a polite request to Conrart to “ascribe the trace of incivility in matters of writing, to the most sublime thoughts, which render him [Christiaan] negligent in everything that is lower than there where they [the thoughts] are.” His father also expressed hope that Christiaan’s small lack of civility in these matters would be made up for by the useful

232 Ibid., Vol. I, 55: “[m]on pere, qui a un soin tresparticulier de faire continuer nostre correspondence.”
applications he would later give the public.\textsuperscript{234} A few months after Conrart’s letter, Christiaan urged his brother Lodewijk who was in Paris with their father in the summer of 1661 to visit the weekly meeting of the Montmor-group, though at the same time warning him that he may encounter some negative talk about him too there, “caused by my sluggishness in matters of correspondence.”\textsuperscript{235} The problem seems not to have been about Christiaan’s ability to write courteous letters (an aptitude which Christiaan demonstrated at different points throughout his correspondence\textsuperscript{236}), but rather his inability to manage the great number. As he indicated: “I believe that I would have been dead a long time ago if I would have put it in my head to be punctual in observing all my correspondences” – therefore he chose to maintain his correspondence’s quality, while at points limiting its quantity.\textsuperscript{237}

Writing well was not just an asset, it was essential; for this reason one finds a variety of books on the list of Christiaan’s book catalogue that deal with the art of bien dire and gallant writing.\textsuperscript{238} These titles were extra to the already extraordinary list of manner books, diplomatic reports and other court-literature (see \textit{ii. Zulekoms at Court} and Appendix B). Their help and support by other people (for instance Jean Chapelain\textsuperscript{239}) could especially be used in the case of difficult and critical letters, such as the thanking letters Christiaan was advised to send to Colbert and Louis XIV after they granted him a privilege for his pendulum; in Christiaan’s words: “I hardly know the style of those communiqués.”\textsuperscript{240}

It seems that the family had its ways to relieve Christiaan for a substantial part from his communicative obligations. After Lodewijk and Constantijn Jr. were introduced to the Montmor-group in Paris and Sir Robert Moray (1608 – 1673) in England, they were not only

\textsuperscript{234} HUYGENS, C. (1888) \textit{OC.}, Vol. III, No 844 (Feb. 1661); No 860 – Constantijn Sr. to V. Conrart (May 8, 1661)
\textsuperscript{236} An example: HUYGENS, C. (1888) \textit{OC.}, Vol. I, No 361 – Christiaan Jr. to Barholin (Dec. 24, 1656)
\textsuperscript{237} Ibid., Vol. III, No 952 – Christiaan Jr. to Lodewijk (Jan. 4, 1662). “Je croy que je serois mort il y a longtemps si je me fusse mis en tiete d’estre punctual a observer toutes mes correspondences.”
\textsuperscript{238} For instance: \textit{Lettres familiaires et galantes} (No. 316, p46), \textit{Huomo di Lettre} (No 205, p53), \textit{Lettres galantes de Mad. Dejardin} (No. 355, p54), \textit{l’Art de bien dire} (No. 569, p57), \textit{Lettres de respect, d’obligation et d’Amour par Bourouault} (No. 614, p58), \textit{Lettres Galantes de Girault} (No. 696, p59), \textit{Lettres galantes} (No. 751, p59), \textit{The Rules of Civility} (No. 1145, p64) and \textit{Estilo y Metodo de Escribir Cartas Modistias} (No. 1240, p65). See appendix B for a more complete overview.
\textsuperscript{239} As we will see later on (Chapter VI) Chapelain, as Christiaan’s broker of patronage-relationships, helped Christiaan with some courtly formalities that were of great importance to him.
\textsuperscript{240} HUYGENS, C. (1888) \textit{OC.}, Vol. V, No. 1241 – Chapelain to Christiaan Jr. (Jul. 12, 1664); No. 1349 – Chapelain to Christiaan Jr. (Mar. 10, 1665); No. 1350 – Christiaan Jr. to Constantijn Sr. (Mar. 12, 1665): “Je ne connoisse guere ce stile de telles depesches.”
kept well informed by Christiaan and his father, but they were also often used by Christiaan, his father and the French and English colleagues as mailing-aides and intermediaries. In fact, the intensity of the involvement of Christiaan’s brothers and father with his contacts can hardly be overestimated. Especially Lodewijk’s role as a “secretary” to his older brother is striking: he sent books, copied important letters and sent them to Christiaan’s peers, wrote out letters that Christiaan dictated only roughly. And he was reprimanded several times when he did not do the assignments the way Christiaan wanted it. At many points in Christiaan’s correspondence it also shows that his brothers and father became well acquainted with many of the members of the London and particularly the Paris group that Huygens frequented and Christiaan used his brothers to keep up the good relationships when he was not in town. Sir Robert Moray, Melchisédech Thevenot (ca. 1620 – 1692), Pierre Petit (ca. 1594 – 1677), Jean Chapelain (1595 – 1674), Carcavy, Montmor, ambassador de Thou II and Chaise all knew the whole Huygens-team and were used to discuss and arrange both scientific and social matters with Constantijn Sr. and Christiaan’s brothers. Via Christiaan, Constantijn Sr. (often through Lodewijk’s mediation) visited many of Christiaan’s new contacts (Cheauveau,

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241 See for instance Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 996 (Mar. 15, 1662); No. 1058 (Sept. 7, 1662); No. 1066 (Sept. 28, 1662); and 1142 (Aug. 1663)

242 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1080 – Christiaan Jr. to Moray (Dec. 1, 1662) makes explicit that father Huygens normally arranges things for Christiaan – “mais en l’absence de mon pere il faut bien que nous autres fils de famille partagions entre nous ces soins quelque importants et malplaisants qu’ils puissent estre.”

243 Lodewijk was an intermediary for sending books: Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 954 (Jan. 1662) and copying, sending and writing (much alike the amanuensis of the Royal Society amanuensis: Vol. IV, No. 964 (Feb. 3, 1662). In the case of Thevenot he is his copyist: Vol. IV, No 974 (Feb. 1662). For others: Vol. IV, No. 960 (Jan. 1662), No. 962 (Feb. 1, 1662), No. 967 (Feb. 8, 1662)

244 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 962: Christiaan to Lodewijk on letter to Thévenot: “Cependant remerciez le de ma part, de ce qu’il me fait la faveur de me communiquer tant de belles choses et si diverses.” To Chapelain Christiaan Jr. wrote that it was Lodewijk’s fault, not Christiaan’s, that he hadn’t yet contacted Monsr. Amprou and to Auzout to say hello and bring the latest news. Sometimes the tone to each other is rather business-like when certain things are not done as they should. Conflict: Christiaan wants his brother Constantijn to do his commandments well! HUYGENS, C. (1888) Oeuvres: Vol. III, No. 915 (Nov. 2, 1661). Christiaan Jr. complains as Lodewijk has not distributed his letters on a certain journey: No. 919 (Nov. 16, 1662), Vol. IV, No 986 (Feb. 28, 1662): complaints about Lodewijk’s insufficient distribution. See also: Vol. IV, No. 1001 (May 18, 1662); Vol. V, No 1202 (Jan. 11, 1664).

Marquis de Chambonière, Vicquefort, Auzout, Amprou (conseiller du parlement) – as I would argue not just for his own networking-purposes, but also Christiaan’s. Often it was Constantijn Sr. asking favors of a “political” nature, such as: “could you do a good word for my Archimedes [Christiaan Jr.].”

Constantijn Sr. seems to have had a strong hand in the handling of contacts and correspondence. Though a lot of the direct correspondence between Constantijn Sr. and Christiaan has been lost, it seems safe to say that a significant part of Constantijn Sr.’s contact with his son would go via either Lodewijk or Constantijn Jr. – depending on whom he traveled with. Lodewijk accompanied his father for a long time to Paris and also in the Dutch Republic he would function as an aide to the busy secretary. When with Christiaan, his father would give him commands as how to deal with his contacts, and when apart, Christiaan would ask for his father’s opinion and consent when it came to strategic matters. The old courtier’s opinions and authority did not stop when his sons entered the wider world – to say the least.

c. A third way in which Constantijn Huygens Sr. helped his son Christiaan in matters of strategic communication – besides offering entrance to a variety of high-placed people and Europe-wide networks and preparing and supporting his son in his correspondence and contacts with his colleagues and (possible) patrons – was advice in matters of book publication.

Alice Stroup explicates that – as was also the case with Christiaan’s other work on instruments and theory –

Huygens’s development of the air-pump and his exploration of the problem of the void (...) reached more than two dozen scientists, professors, patrons of science, philosophers and popularizers of science, diplomats, ministers of state, clergymen, nobility, and nameless workers. (...) Huygens’s work with the air-pump is a reminder that books and articles were not always the most effective carriers of scientific news, and that scientific meetings might be crucial instigators of scientific discovery.

246 Monsieur Cheauveau, Marquis de Chambonière: Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 952 (Jan. 4, 1662); Chapelain, Auzout, Amprou: Vol. IV, No. 962 (Feb. 1, 1662), No. 977 (Feb. 15, 1662)
247 For example: Ibid., Vol. IV, No 1175 – Christiaan to Lodewijk (Nov. 30, 1663): on the sending of instruments to different contacts: “Il Signor Padre le desire aussi ainsi et m’a commandè de vous l’escrire”. Vol. V, No. 1419 – Christiaan to Lodewijk (Jun. 15, 1665): asking him to ask their father whether it would be a good plan for Christiaan to stay in Paris, where he has been asked to stay by Colbert and Louis XIV. Vol. V, No. 1325 (Feb. 6, 1665) – Christiaan to Constantijn Sr.: asks him what route to take with his privilege. Vol. VI, No 1576 (Feb. 11, 1667) – Christiaan echoes Constantijn Sr.’s request to Lodewijk that their clockmaker Severyn be paid.
Scientific correspondence was essential; more than publications, letters were what journals are in our present day. One can see Christiaan’s preference for the “letter-publication” (and the first signs of the transition from letter to journal) by his many contributions to the brand-new Journal des Scavants from its inception in 1665 onwards. It was Constantijn Sr. who informed Christiaan about its commencement and who gave the Journal Christiaan’s first international publication in five years: “Extrait d’une lettre du 26 février à Const. Huygens père,” about the “sympathie des horloges.”

In courtly surroundings, moreover, scientific books often seemed to function as a “closure” of an ongoing or even earlier debate, rather than the standard means of innovation. For instance, Galileo’s publication “Il Saggiatore” formed the closure of an ongoing debate at the court in Florence, and, as Pierre Petit wrote to Christiaan in January 1665, he had written his treatise “On the Nature of Comets” for the Court & the ladies more than for Mathematics.

One can clearly distinguish the book publication as a means of social visibility here, a way of self-fashioning.

Christiaan was confronted with the importance of integrating laudatory poems into one’s scientific work when he was asked by his sick father to edit his new collection of poems, “Cornflowers” (see Chapter IV, section iii). On his father’s instigation Christiaan arranged the contributions of a range of important poets as prefaces to Constantijn Sr.’s bundle. When Christiaan published his “Horologium Oscillatorium” in 1673 he had a long introductory poem added from Hadrianus van der Wall, a Dutch poet for which he had started the “negotiations” with the poet in 1665 already. If Christiaan could learn one thing from his father about publishing books, it was that it was important whom you gave them to. Constantijn Sr.

249 HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. V, 1311 – Christiaan to Moray (Jan. 16, 1665): “Mon Pere m’envoie par sa derniere le premier eschantillon d’une nouvelle gazette Française qu’on appelle le Journal des Scavants. Elle seroit pour faire savoir toutes les semaines les Livres nouveaux considérables qui se mettent au jour, et le sommaire de leur contenu. Les nouvelles découvertes en physique et Inventions de Méchanique, décisions célèbres des Tribunaux seculiers et Ecclesiastiques, et en fin tout ce qui se passe dans l’Europe, digne de la curiosité des gens de lettres. Il me semble que le dessein est tres bon et utile et pourvoi qu’il ne soit point gasté par la faute de ceux qui l’entreprendront j’en espère le succes”.

250 Ibid., Vol. XXII, p376-81


254 Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1366-8 (March 1665)
donated his books to many of his noble colleagues and contacts – and gained much renown and international appreciation for his work (and person) in this manner. For instance, in August 1655 (seven months after he had donated one of Christiaan’s books to Princess Elizabeth Palatine) he donated a copy of the above mentioned *Momenta Desultoria* to the Queen of Sweden.\(^{255}\)

iii. *Systema Saturnium: the strategic fashioning of a young courtier-mathematician*

The most striking work in which all this seems to come together and the role of Constantijn Sr. and the family as a whole plays a great part is Christiaan’s *Systema Saturnium* (1659). In this book, Christiaan Jr. presented his discovery of Saturn’s satellite Titan and the hypothesis of Saturn’s ring. Christiaan dedicated the work to Prince Leopold de Medici, who was the prominent brother of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and patron of the Accademia del Cimento. This was clever for more than one reason, several of which Christiaan revealed in his dedication. “In the first place I believed that such an illustrious celebrity and abundant clarity would descend on my work” – the bright light of Leopold’s name was to shine its light on Christiaan’s work, making it visible for everyone.\(^{256}\) The publication of the book in the dominant country for telescope making – Italy – in conjunction with the strategic dedication served the purpose of a high visibility and demand for the book. But what is more, with the most important telescope-maker at the time, Eustachio Divini, attached to the court of Florence, it was an ambitious, yet smart move to ask Leopold de Medici to approve “by means of your very exact judgment” Huygens’s discoveries and his “attempt to explain perplexing mysteries.”\(^{257}\) The likeliness that the prince would be pleased by this gesture was substantial – of the new, and according to Christiaan final,\(^{258}\) total of twelve divine heavenly bodies, a


\(^{257}\) RIGHINI BONELLI, M. L. & VAN HELDEN, A. (1981) Divini and Campani: A Forgotten Chapter in the History of the Accademia del Cimento. *Annali Dell’Istituto E Museo Di Storia Della Scienza Di Firenze*, 1-176., p12. Quotes from: HUYGENS, C. (1888) *OC*, Vol. XV, p216, or: *Systema Saturnium*, p27. On this page, Huygens indicates the three reasons he has for dedicating his work to Leopold. The first was the illumination of Huygens’s work by the prince’s illustrious name (already mentioned), second was the credibility that Huygens’s work would get by a recognition of his discoveries by the prince, and thirdly, and most important according to his own words, Huygens’s desire to publicly declare the greatness of the prince’s patronage for the arts and sciences (see the following).

\(^{258}\) “Cependant, plus longtemps ce satellite de Saturne, découvert par nous, est resté caché et plus il a fallu d’effort pour le faire descendre à la terre, plus aussi devons-nous nous réjouir de cette capture;
number of five would be connected to the family de Medici – thus further boosting the dynastic prestige of the Tuscan familia. Galileo had dedicated the four “wandering stars” of Jupiter to Cosimo II\(^{259}\) and Huygens connected Leopold’s name with the last celestial body to be discovered – Saturn’s moon Titan. And finally, Christiaan’s straightforward flattering, by stating that he was glad to have found an occasion “to declare publicly how much the better arts and the better sciences owe you, and amongst them mathematics in the first place, because you show yourself as its patron and its defender and against the barbarity that increases day by day.” Huygens increased Leopold’s status as a patron, and asked him to accept the work of Christiaan as part of “the better sciences.” Just like his “illustrious” ancestors, the prince was attributed an “innate virtue” and “eminent disposition” that made him fit for this task.\(^{260}\)

But there were more strong elements of strategic self- and family-fashioning to the presentation of the Systema Saturnia. Christiaan did not only connect his name to Prince Leopold, but also to two other great authorities: Galileo Galilei and Christiaan Jr.’s father. Christiaan Jr. put his name on the same level as his renowned predecessor in celestial observation, by mentioning the moons of Jupiter and Saturn in one breath, dedicating his discoveries to the de Medici-family in a likewise manner as Galileo did in his Sidereus Nuncius and asking, like Galileo had done, de Medici’s patronage. Christiaan Jr.’s inspiration from Galileo’s work does not seem to have stopped with the dedication – the way in which

\[\text{nous le devons aussi, par ce que, manquant seul jusqu’ici, il complète maintenant la collection des astres errants et leur nombre de douze: j’oserai presque affirmer qu’à l’avenir on n’en trouvera pas davantage. Ce qui est certain, c’est que les petites planètes existent désormais en nombre égal à celui des planètes grandes et primaires, parmi lesquelles il faut compter cette Terre, et que les deux groupes ensemble sont exprimées par le nombre que nous considérons comme parfait, de sorte qu’on pourrait croire que ce mode d’existence a été prédestiné par la volonté de l’architecte souverain.} \]

HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. XV, p212-4


\(^{260}\) HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. XV, p218, or: Systema Saturnia, p29. “de declarer publiquement combien vous doivez les meilleurs arts et les meilleures sciences, et parmi celles-ci les mathématiques en premier lieu, parce que vous montrez leur patron et leur défenseur contre la barbarie grandissante de jour en jour.” It did not work right away, however. After dedicating his book and discoveries to Prince Leopold, Huygens waited a few months on the prince’s reaction in vain. After inquiring what had gone wrong, he learned that he had forgotten one “procedural” detail – he should have sent Leopold a notificatory personal letter accompanying the book he had sent him (HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. III, No 755); now the prince did not feel obliged to answer Christiaan’s gesture. After sending the letter, Leopold expressed his gratitude and accepted Christiaan’s gesture. HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. III, No 623 – Boulliau to Christiaan Jr. (Jun. 6, 1659); No. 704 (1660) p5; No 775 – Christiaan Jr. to Chapelain (Sept. 2, 1660).
Christiana presented his evidence of the different appearances of Saturn strongly resembled Galileo’s presentation of Jupiter’s four moons. There was also a prominent role for Constantijn Sr. – on the title page and first page of the treatise, Christiaan presented himself as “Cristiani Hvgenii Zvlichemii, Const. F.” – “son of Constantijn.”

Furthermore, in the introductory poem of Nikolaas Heinsius (1620-1681) – a friend of Christiaan Jr. and a son of Constantijn Sr.’s friend Daniel Heinsius and like his father an important Latin poet and minister – Christiaan was praised as an important addition to his father’s glory. One can clearly sense the double function: on the one hand the father’s glory increased by the Systema’s publication, but on the other hand this act, in itself, gave grandeur to Christiaan – for it was quite an accomplishment to enhance Constantijn Sr.’s glory, who was of such standing that he needed no introduction, not even to an international public! A final sign that Christiaan’s concerns were family-concerns is shown by the fact that Christiaan added another introductory poem. It was a laudatory poem from the person he devised the instrument with, the instrument with which he had done the observations that had led to the book at hand – his brother Constantijn Jr.:

[...] The well-deserved glory, the acquired universal reputation, constitute a sufficient recompense for the young man. This glory ought to be as durable like the stars and should not quench but until the heavens perish at the same time!

With these words, Constantijn Jr. (also presented as “son of Constantijn,”) implied, besides the effects for his brother Christiaan, the related effect on both his own and his father’s reputation.

The Systema Saturnium made quite an impact after its publication, and regarding the nature of its claims, it seems that this was at least partly foreseeable. It seems a little unlikely to

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263 “[.] La gloire bien méritée, la reputation universelle acquise, constituent une récompense suffisante pour le jeune homme. Il convient que cette gloire soit aussi durable que les étoiles et ne s’éteigne que lorsque le ciel pérent en meme temps!” My translation. The original poem is in Latin. HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. XV, p222, or: Systema Saturnium, p53
me that Christiaan devised the discussed “strategic” part all by himself. The hand of his father to me seems omnipresent in the way in which Christiaan strategically used his father’s name, applied clever dynastic connections in his dedication to Prince Leopold – a skill that his father, as we have seen, mastered very well – and finally, it seems present in the way Christiaan integrated uplifting poems and enhanced not just his own, but his family’s glory by sharing the connection to the house of de Medici.

High social contacts, the finesses of communication and strategic publication – these were factors in which Constantijn Sr. was of great help for his sons, for Christiaan Jr. in particular. They also show that there was a decisively social dimension to the development of Christiaan Jr.’s natural scientific career. This dimension forms the theme for Chapter VI, as Christiaan Jr.’s movements at three different courts in Europe (London, Paris and The Hague) are discussed, with a focus on the specific social surrounding in which Christiaan’s work and endeavors were to take root.
VI. Zulekoms at Court

Three galas in one week is much in The Hague but here no single night passes on which there are not 8 or 10. I went to see one in good company, and the divertissement there is good fun but accompanied by much superfluity. Last Sunday I saw the small Ballet at the Louvre that was performed in the salon of the Queen Mother.

Christiaan Huygens to Lodewijk Huygens – Oeuvres Complètes, Vol. IV, No 1211 – Feb. 8, 1664264

Studying Christiaan Huygens for a while may cause one to ask why he, though commonly seen as a talented and promising young man, never sought a position at a university, neither in the Dutch Republic – where he probably would have been welcomed with open arms – nor in Paris or London? Why would not he begin his career in the way people like Galileo Galilei, Johannes Kepler, his teacher Frans van Schooten (a professor of mathematics in Leiden) or later Isaac Newton had done – i.e. at the university? Why did he stay “unemployed” – as many historians have put it – and did not “get a job?” The answer to the question makes more sense once one places Huygens in his social framework and tries to recognize the expectations and values he was brought up with. A gentlemanly social surrounding with a fair part of his socio-professional life playing at several international courts – that was the direction in which Constantijn Huygens Sr. moved his son. A great deal of preparation needed to be done before Christiaan could fashion himself a position at court. He needed to go on a “Grand Tour” in order to finish his upbringing as a young nobleman. Furthermore he needed to create name and status and learn how to make sure that the people who needed to know about him did so. At twenty-six Christiaan promised to his father that

I shall do my best to perceive the world as you understand it, and I think it will be possible to do that if you are kind enough to let me have the time.265

264 “Trois bals en une sepmaine c’est beaucoup a la Haye mais icy il ne passe point de nuict qu’il n’y en ait 8 ou 10. J’estè les veoir une fois en bonne compagnie, et le divertissement en est assez joie mais accompagnè de beaucoup d’embaras. Dimanche passer je vis au Louvre le petit Balet qui fut dansè dans le salon de la Reine Mere. (...)

He seems to have been granted his time, and under the unremitting guidance of his father Christiaan learned to feel comfortable moving in courtly circles according to the expected standards of behavior and comportment. Developing patronage-relations could take a while, but eventually they would pay off. Rather than being “unemployed,” Huygens in fact worked very hard to establish a privileged position at court.

Niccolò Machiavelli’s “The Prince” (and several versions of the rest of this author’s works) and books with titles such as “Nouveaux intérêts des Princes de l’Europe” and “Éducation d’un Prince” were well represented in the catalogs of both Constantijn Sr. and Christiaan Jr. at the end of their lives (see Appendix A & B). In order for the family Huygens to create survivance it was important – at least in the father’s mind – for its members to stick to powerful rulers. Christiaan, just like his brothers, had to stay out of civilian (“burgberlijke”) service and seek the protection of mighty, aristocratic patrons.\(^{266}\) It was important to learn to know what the interests of princes and other rulers were – and how one could behave in a similar manner – rather than spending one’s time at institutions like universities. If Christiaan was to find his luck somewhere else than in Dutch public service – where both his brothers did get positions when the Stadholderless period was over and their father was again in a position to direct them to favorable positions – he had better find it in surroundings appropriate for someone of his background. Not entirely coincidental, the aristocratic realm where this \textit{jeune homme} of the \textit{noblese de robe} came to move in provided many ways in which the older, dyed-in-the-wool courtier could help his son to optimize his and the family’s socio-professional elevation.

\textit{i. A false start?}

When, in the summer months of 1649, Constantijn Sr. determined to withdraw his sons from the Illustre School in Breda after a sword-fight between Christiaan’s brother Lodewijk and another student,\(^{267}\) he decided to make a quick start with the Grand Tours\(^{268}\) of Constantijn and Christiaan. While Constantijn Jr. went to Angiers (France), to get his Law-degree\(^{269}\) and went to Switzerland and Italy under the auspices of the Count of East-Friesland,


\[\textit{\textsuperscript{267} HUYGENS, C. (1911) \textit{BW}., Vol. 24, No 4924 - Constantijn to A. Rivet, March 18, 1649. Constantijn Sr. added the comment that he had not “had him have lessons in the trade of arms for that”!}\]

\[\textit{\textsuperscript{268} On the Grand Tour, see Chapter II, section \textit{i}.}\]

\[\textit{\textsuperscript{269} Constantijn Jr. received a letter of recommendation of the college in Breda, and the director, A. Rivet, provided him with enough money to buy the degree. HUYGENS, C. (1911) \textit{BW}., Vol. IV, No}\]
the father’s plans for Christiaan fluctuated. The initial plan – Christiaan would accompany his father on a diplomatic mission to France, offering the former the opportunity to meet his correspondent Mersenne – was altered when the opportunity arose for Christiaan to accompany his father’s high-ranking friend, the Count Hendrik of Nassau, on a diplomatic mission to Denmark.

As the Count’s “most prominent Councillor” ("mijnen voornaemsten Conseiller") Christiaan spent ten or twelve days at the splendid court of Frederik III, the new King and younger brother of the deceased Christian IV. Though in the first few years of his reign Frederik III (who ruled from 1648 until his death in 1670) was forced to reduce the size of his Royal household due to the vast national debt that had been created by the great expenditure of his brother Christiaan arrived at a court of pageantry. Theatre, expensive attire and especially music, dancing and ballet, had characterized the Danish Court since the 1580s, and Frederik III used this courtly display as an effective means of creating international appreciation for the King’s power – a power that in fact had received a blow through the restrictive terms of his coronation, dictated by the aristocratic council of the realm.

During his stay at the Danish Court he did what according to him was the only occupation there: “eating and drinking, dancing and playing.” After dinner “we relaxed in frauwenzimmer where there were 12 ladies of the Queen and some freuleins, all dressed in French fashion but not a single one speaking French,” and later on the King and Queen would both dance with the diplomats and aides – something Christiaan was surprised about. Christiaan later wrote to his brother Constantijn (who was in Geneva at the time) that the most striking differences with

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4943 – A. Rivet to Constantijn Sr. (April 30, 1649) and HUYGENS, C. (1911) BW., Vol. IV, No 4963 – Hoeufft to Constantijn Sr. (July 24, 1649).

270 Hendrik, Count of Nassau-Siegen (1611 – 1652) served in the Dutch army, often also fulfilling diplomatic tasks in France and Sweden. HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., p112, note 1. On the initial plans to go to Paris: HUYGENS, C. (1911) BW., Vol. IV, No 4787 – M. Mersenne to Constantijn Sr., (March 17, 1648). Then, the trip was cancelled, and instead Constantijn Sr. urged Christiaan to frequent the chamber of lawyers of the Court of Justice. Christiaan rather filled his time with music: HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. I, No. 64 – Christiaan to Constantijn Jr. (Sept 6, 1649). Seemingly answering on a request of Constantijn Sr. Hendrik of Nassau indicated his willingness to take Christiaan with him on the mission. Though appreciating Christiaan’s erudition and broadness of talent, he expressed his appreciation for the fact that law is part of his baggage: Vol. I, No. 65 – Hendrik of Nassau to Constantijn Sr. (Oct. 16, 1649) and HUYGENS, C. (1911) BW., Vol. IV, No 4984 – Constantijn Sr. to Count Hendrik of Nassau (Sept. 15/23 1649).


his experiences with presumably the Orange Court and that of the Winter Queen, were that even some of the high-ranked did not use napkins, and that they drank their beer from silver cups – almost too heavy to lift.

In terms of a Grand Tour, the following period did not exactly qualify. Christiaan apparently stayed in and around Holland for the following few years, while his brothers saw several courts throughout Europe. It was not until 1655 that Christiaan would leave for Paris in a “continuation” of his tour.

What happened in the mean time? The fact that Christiaan produced several treatises in the period 1650–1655 and had a rather intensive correspondence with Father Gregory of St. Vincent has been taken as a reflection of Christiaan’s full-time dedication to what he had become at that point against his father’s wish: a mathematician/natural philosopher. Limited as the available sources from this period are (constituted mainly by Christiaan’s scientific correspondence), another hypothesis is possible.

The years following 1650 were difficult ones for the family Huygens; Constantijn Sr. had lost his powerful patron, Stadholder Willem II. He saw his and his sons’ future in danger, falling into the hands of the capricious Princess Amalia and his adversaries at court and in the States General. Several documents show the intense efforts that the father took in these years to appoint his eldest son (“mon Aisné”). In a mémoire to his sons, a plagued Constantijn Sr. wrote in 1655 that the princess and many of Constantijn’s supposed friends were turning against him and his sons, but that he would continue “to make you capable for the service of our Fatherland, thus, that if they persist in withholding it from you, those two great contrarieties, your merit and the injustice of the century, can conduce to illustrate your honor and to display the shame of the unthankful.” Though Constantijn Sr.’s main efforts for survivance clearly aimed at Constantijn Jr. the problem was a family affair – after all, eighty years of loyal service to the House of Orange was at stake.

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274 “à vous rendre si capables du service de vostre Patrie, que si l’on persiste à vous en déboutter, ces deux grandes contrariettez, vostre mèrite et l’iniquité du siècle, puissent tendre à illustrer vostre honneur et à estaller la honte des ingrats.” HUYGENS, C. & JORISSEN, T. (1873) Mémoires de Constantin Huygens : publié pour la première fois, d’apres les minutes de l’auteur, précédées d’une introduction, La Haye, Nijhoff., p149; my translation. Also: p146-7
It seems likely that the father still had his hopes for Christiaan too: the fact that Christiaan spent a substantial part of his time on scientific work did not necessarily matter, for in a likely manner, Constantijn Sr. had spent the years before and in between his Grand Tour on the composition of several poetic volumes, plays and musical pieces. Though Constantijn Sr. has been seen by many historians as a professional poet, he was not, and would not agree with the classification (as we have seen in Chapter II). Instead, this talent, whether poetic or “scientific,” had an important function: it created public fame and appreciation, leading to favorable circumstances for a future position in public service. This could work for mathematics as much as for poetry. The most important man in the Dutch Republic at that point – the Grandpensionary, Johan de Witt, who had shared the classroom with Christiaan under Van Schooten for several years – had also been regarded as a “mathematician” until his quick rise in public service.

Though Christiaan did not continue his Tour in the five years before his journey to Paris in the second half of 1655 – perhaps due to the dangers of the armed conflicts at the borders of the Dutch Republic, the incapacitating influence of the plague or perhaps his father’s thought that it was worth waiting for a quick reversal of the political outlook in their favor, so that he could arrange higher patrons for Christiaan’s Tour\(^\text{275}\) – Constantijn Sr. made sure that Christiaan Jr. moved in the right milieu. During this period, the Zuylichems were welcomed as members to the illustrious Ordo de l’Union de la Joye, a highly elitist gathering at the court of the Brederodes in The Hague,\(^\text{276}\) allowing as “knights” the initiated who “enjoyed laughing, dancing, and rejoicing.” Apart from its function of chasing away “lady melancholy and her full cousin, chagrin,” a facet that Christiaan and his father may have liked, the membership provided them with yet another informal entrance to the ruling elite, with members as Willem Frederik of Nassau, the already mentioned de Witt (of course “known as a skilful dancer, a pleasing versifier, and a good performer on the violin”) and the Brederodes.\(^\text{277}\) Furthermore, Constantijn Sr. took his son with him to the nearby court of Elizabeth of

\(^{275}\)HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. I, No. 84 (Aug. 2, 1650) – one of reasons why Christiaan stayed home was a situation of turmoil around the Republic.


Bohemia – a court of high aristocracy and, at least in the beginning, even higher expenditure\textsuperscript{278} – and on several diplomatic trips to Flanders, Germany and Friesland.\textsuperscript{279} Christiaan’s letter to Lodewijk after a weeklong wedding in Germany shows that the twenty-three-year old did not move solely among mathematicians:

The wedding [of Count Willem Frederik of Nassau-Dietz, Stadholder of Friesland, with Albertina Agnes, sister of the deceased Willem II of Orange] took place on the second. It was splendid, with ceremonies that are quite customary in Germany. If you wish to imagine it, just think back to all you saw in Kassel, and then many times more splendid. On the sixth I saw the procession, which quite outdid the wedding of Mr van Brederode. The one half, under the leadership of the Elector, came dressed as Romans, the other half as Moors with the Count of Waldeck. They marched in perfect time, and the three leaders brought up the rear, I think you can guess how. (…) But I have forgotten to tell you about the magnificent fireworks on the fourth, when often three to four hundred rockets would be let off into the air, all in one go. On the eighth there was a ball, but that was nothing special for those who have attended such balls here in The Hague. (…) But here it was only princes and counts who danced (indeed, there were so many of these), so that the nobles and their ladies must be satisfied with the spectacle alone. Sometimes I ate with the nobles, at three or four tables, or else with the ladies – there were quite a number of these, and now and again with my father and Count Maurits, who always dined at his leisure in his hotel, with just a few servants in attendance.\textsuperscript{280}

\textit{ü. Attempt nr 2?}

Christiaan, like his brothers, thus learned to feel comfortable among aristocrats and courtiers and to behave with civility before princes, princesses and kings – all important assets for a public function. His own, his brother Lodewijk’s, and his cousin Philip Doublet’s \textit{curriculum vitae} would further be very well served by a law-degree and further involvement in important diplomatic and courtly networks. With this in mind, Constantijn Sr. sent them out in


\textsuperscript{279} HUYGENS, C. & JORISSEN, T. (1873) \textit{Mémoires de Constantin Huygens : publiés pour la première fois, d’après les minutes de l’auteur, précédées d’une introduction}, La Haye, Nijhoff., p86, 90. These trips were in 1652 and 1654, bringing their paths along several nobles and foreign dignitaries.

the summer of 1655 – first to Paris, and a trip to the Loire-valley to buy three law-degrees was attached. The second objective of the stay in Paris was “la bonne et belle conversation,” a goal that was served partly by the modest group of people that his father had approached to receive and facilitate his sons’ stay: Henri Brasset (an old resident of The Hague), Willem Boreel (ambassador of the Dutch States), Tassin (a dignitary of the Prince of Orange in Paris who served as the young men’s guide), and also Henri de Beringhen, first Knight of the French King. Christiaan took the opportunity to meet famous men of letters and musicians (Scarron, Lambert, Gobert, La Barre, Chambonnière) – most of whom were or had been correspondents of his father’s – and mathematicians (Bouillau, Roberval, Mylon). Though he did not really “enter” the court yet, Christiaan and the others, as “hommes de qualité,” actively observed Paris’s vibrant social scene – including visits to the theatre and the opera – and Christiaan also made valuable contacts with the high courtier Jean Chapelain via the leader of the literary Académy Française (founded in 1628) and old friend of his father’s, Valentin Conrart. There seems little reason to assume that Christiaan in fact was already “officially” deviating from his father’s plans for his future.

Five years later, the situation had changed, though it is unclear whether father Huygens already envisioned his son in another position than that of a high public servant. When Christiaan went to Paris in October 1660, followed by a visit to London, he had had his astronomical “‘coming out’ – mainly through conversations and letters with Bouillau – and for the establishment of contacts with other virtuosi in Paris – mainly through Jean Chapelain,” and through his publication of the Systema Saturnium. Constantijn Sr.’s position in Dutch politics had not improved – he had great difficulties to get his son Constantijn Jr. appointed at positions he deemed worthy for him, and people close to him knew this.

283 Ibid., p27, 29-30
286 WORP, J. A. (1918) Het leven van Constantijn Huygens. In Die Haghe, Jaarboek, 1917/18, [1]-151., p97. Constantijn Sr., to his great frustration, failed to have his son appointed at a position at the Court of Holland and at different functions throughout the years 1655 – 1658.
Chapelain, who was close not just to Christiaan, but to his father also, wrote to Nikolaas Heinsius in 1659 (nine years after the death of Willem II) “[j]e plains Monsieur Huygens le père et Messieurs ses enfans de cette revolution de fortune qui les a affoiblis de credit et de consideration dans leurs pays.”287 Christiaan’s second trip to Paris must have meant more than training his conversation-skills; Constantijn Sr.’s name in Paris was considerable – his influence at the French court perhaps extending that in Holland – Christiaan’s own name was on the rise, and a combination of the two could navigate Christiaan in a favorable position. Whether or not Christiaan’s main occupation would be mathematical or in public service, he had to use all resources at court – showing himself as a “man of the world,” creating a useful network of courtiers and men of letters, and obtaining increasingly powerful patrons.

The position of his father and the family Huygens enabled Christiaan Jr. to accompany an ambassadorial mission to Louis XIV, bearing words of praise of the Dutch state for the King’s success in negotiating his politically strategic negotiations with Maria Theresa of Austria and Spain.288 Christiaan’s growing fame had already reached Paris before and received support from his father’s, making a way into the partly overlapping social groups of aristocracy and the mathematically and astronomically interested and knowledgeable. The courtier Chapelain had done Christiaan important favors by spreading and showing Christiaan’s letters in aristocratic houses and gentlemanly gatherings, and the “permanent secretary of the Montmor Academy,”289 Samuel Sorbière, had integrated a rather extensive description of Christiaan’s work on Saturn in his new Relations, lettres, et discours de Mr de Sorbière, sur diverses matieres curieuses (1660). In this publication of several letters, dedicated to the effective ruler of French policy, the powerful patron of the arts Cardinal Mazarin290 (1602 – 1661), and including several short assurances of allegiance to high-ranking courtiers and a central letter (De l’Estat des sciences en Hollande) to the Knight and Baron Segré, “Conseiller ordinaire du Roy en ses Conseils,”291 the author used Constantijn Sr.’s name and status to build that of Christiaan. A

287 HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. I. No. 596 – Chapelain to N. Heinsius (7 Mar 1659)
289 The Académie presumably found its start at the end of 1657. BROWN, H. (1934) Scientific Organizations in Seventeenth century France (1620 - 1680), Baltimore, The Williams & Wilkins Company., p74
laudatory verse of Constantijn Sr. was included in the preface and Christiaan was introduced in the long letter on the Dutch sciences as “[t]hat young Gentilhomme [...] the second son of Monsieur of Zuylchom [Zuilichem],” remembering the reader first of Constantijn Sr.’s *Momenta desultoria* and the courtly character and virtue of this bundle. It is worth quoting Sorbière extensively when, after having discussed Christiaan’s work, he introduced Christiaan to the greater courtly public – it shows how Christiaan’s virtue was perceived as an accumulation of *knowing, subtility and judgment* and the social standing and refinement of his father and family:

He [Christiaan Jr.] has youthfulness, he is born in an ample fortune, he is adroit & laborious, he has sublety, knowledge, & modesty; qualities that go together very well: Because I do not esteem *knowledge & subtilty* all alone, & those who do nothing but following their ends; that I do not longer take these two things in a man who accompanies them with *judgment*, who does not presume much of his own soul, who is capable of returning on his steps, & who knows how to make several reflections on his own reasoning. He [Christiaan Jr.] made us observe Saturn almost in the form that I have described to You, coming back from a promenade in Volburg [Sorbière means Voorburg], where Monsieur of Zuilichem his father [Constantijn Sr.] had taken us to see the beautiful gardens, & the agreeable country house of which I have informed you. Beforehand, he also had us admire the beautiful architecture of his house in The Hague, the propriety of his rooms, the curiosity of his tableaux, the sumptuosity of his furniture; but above all several volumes of Latin lettres written to Lipsius, & of the hand [sic] of the most learned men of Europe who lived in his days.

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292 Constantijn Sr.’s verse: "Sorbere si quis possit, & simul flare, Nouisse Sorberium potest, & odisse." I translate as: “If he can swallow down and blow simultaneously, he can become acquainted with Sorbière and hate him.” Ibid., introduction. In itself it is not remarkable that Constantijn would add a laudatory poem to Sorbière’s work, for “[p]erhaps no poet has been plagued for laudatory poems such as Huygens” HUYGENS, C. (1911) *BH*, Vol. III, xiv. However, the fact that this request happened by a French courtier of standing and the explicit link between father and son, makes the inclusion remarkable.


294 “Il a de la jeunesse, il est né dans vne ample fortune, il est adroit & laborieux, il a de la subtilité, du sçauoir, & de la modestie; qualités qui marchent fort bien ensemble: Car ie n’estime pas tant le sçauoir &
In discussions of Christiaan’s consecutive stays in Paris, the focus, understandably, has been on his mathematical and astronomical contacts. His active involvement with the Montmor-Academy, its distinct members and other mathematicians during his stay in 1660–1661 has been described along the lines of the diary that Christiaan kept during his stays abroad. However, this primary concern with the natural sciences has had the negative effect of somewhat neglecting the crucial broader social dimension to Christiaan’s visits. According to Roger Hahn, “[d]uring this stay, he [Christiaan] met few amateurs genuinely concerned with astronomy, Bouillau being at the time away on a trip,” and instead Christiaan “[drank] up the Parisian scene” in a “whirlwind of activities,” while “displaying little of his originality.”

However, these social activities and the attached contacts were essential to the establishment of Christiaan’s network, the spreading of his name and his development of patronage-relationships. It is true, that “the savant and the “honnête homme” on their turn found their twist there,” though I think it pays off to try to see them as one, instead of seeing them as two distinct, and hardly reconcilable appearances. In Paris many astronomers, mathematicians and inventors moved at court, and the wondrousness of natural and experimental phenomena and inventions, combined with the intellectual playfulness of theory attracted the interest of many, including sometimes influential, courtiers. The case of Galileo shows the possibilities that the court could offer for an ambitious mathematician-astronomer.

Christiaan worked hard to establish and broaden his courtly networks in Paris and later in London, profiting, as we have seen in the previous chapter, from his father’s contacts.

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la subtilité toutes seules, & qui ne font que suire leur pointe; que ie ne prise encore dauantage ces deux choses en vn homme qui les accompagne de iugement, qui ne presume pas beaucoup de son esprit, qui est capable de retourner sur ses pas, & qui scâit faire plusieurs reflexions sur ses propres raisonnement. Il nous fit voir Saturne à peu prés en la forme que ie Vous ay décrite, au retour d’une promenade à Volburg, où Monsieur de Zuylchom son pere [Constantijn Sr.] nous auoit menés voir les beaux iardins, & l’agreeable retraitte dont ie vous ay parlé. Il nous auoit auparauant fait admirer la belle architecture de sa maison de la Haye, la propreté de ses chambres, la curiosité de ses tableaux, la somptuosité de ses meubles; mais sur tout plusieurs volumes de lettres Latines écrites à Lipse, & de la main des plus sçauans hommes de l’Europe qui viuoient de son temps.”


Constantijn Huygens Sr. had managed to get Lipsius’ correspondence in his possession.


and sharing them with his brothers. In 1660, he invested in many of the contacts he had made during his previous trip, ranging from “genuine mathematicians” and instrument makers to powerful courtiers and potential patrons. As said, Christiaan traveled with a Dutch diplomatic mission to Paris,\(^{298}\) keeping intimate social and professional contact with the Dutch and French ambassadors and diplomats throughout his stay. Ambassadors such as Willem Boreel and the Count of Durazzo (ambassador of Gênes) attended meetings where instruments and experiments were shown,\(^{299}\) and amidst of pageantry\(^ {300}\) and courteous activity, Christiaan would show his experiments and instruments at the diplomatic household of de Jacques-Auguste de Thou II. He also took the Dutch ambassador Van Beuningen to a meeting of the Montmor-Académie in January 1661, leading to his frequent return afterwards.\(^ {301}\)

But Christiaan’s network reached beyond the diplomatic sphere: he acquainted the Duke of Roanes (with whom he would later receive a privilege from the French King for their horse-drawn carriage), Le Roy (secretary of Jean-Baptiste Colbert) and Councillor to the Parliament, Amprou.\(^ {302}\) His contact with particularly the First Knight of Louis XIV, De Beringhen, turned out to be crucial to obtain good spots at exclusive social happenings – he would take care that Christiaan was situated favorably (close to the podium and the King or next to three nieces of cardinal Richelieu).\(^ {303}\) At times Christiaan was too busy even to tell his brothers about all his activities and contacts.\(^ {304}\)

It was also in this period that Constantijn Sr. came to Versailles for the diplomatic negotiations to preserve the principality of Orange – the state that was essential to the House of Orange, for it gave the House its name and justified its noble status as sovereigns – which was under threat of French occupation.\(^ {305}\) Christiaan Jr. would write to Lodewijk in 1662 that it was exciting to see with how much honor their father had been treated with at the court in

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\(^{301}\) Oeuvres, III, No 865; BROWN, H. (1934) *Scientific Organizations in Seventeenth century France (1620 - 1680)*, Baltimore, The Williams & Wilkins Company., p112


\(^{304}\) Ibid., 831. Conrart complained to Constantijn Sr. about the fact that, due to his busy social schedule, Christiaan neglected some social contacts that he (Conrart) deemed to be important. HUYGENS, C. (1888) *OC*, Vol. III, No. 844 (Feb. 1661)

\(^{305}\) For more on these negotiations and the results, please see: HOFMAN, H. A. (1983) *Constantine Huygens (1596-1687) : a christian-humanist bourgeois-gentilhomme in service of the House of Orange*, Utrecht, HES Uitgevers., p266-89

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Versailles – a pleasant surprise, considering the circumstances, and it will have had its fruits for Christiaan too. It was on the basis of his father’s wishes and contacts, moreover, that Christiaan would finish his journey with a visit to London. Constantijn Sr. wanted to make sure that Christiaan would attend the coronation at Westminster Abbey of Charles II, of the restored Royal House of Stuart, and he had asked Prince Maurits to request the Elector of Brandenburg whether the latter would accommodate Christiaan. Christiaan Jr.’s next visit to London (June – September 1663) was together with his father, and again it was his father who used his contacts and influence to arrange favorable social occasions and honorable seats at dance-performances at the Royal Court.

In the following years, Christiaan would profit a lot from his many contacts at court, in the Dutch Republic and England, but predominantly in Paris. The social network of ambassadors and diplomats secured a fine platform for meeting useful and important people (Huygens dined together with Thomas Hobbes and Sorbière “at the house of the French ambassador”) and Christiaan made sure to partake actively in the pomp and pleasantries that brought the courtly elites together.

### iii. Ethos and aesthetics

Christiaan (and his brothers) dressed, behaved and read books according to the needs of their social circumstances. They worked on “[l]a bonne et belle conversation,” learned to develop a cosmopolitan taste for clothing-fashion and paid great attention to their public

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307 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1132 (Jul. 13, 1663), No. 1126 (Jun. 29, 1663)


309 HUYGENS, C. (1888) *OC*, Vol. V, No. 1211 (Feb. 8, 1664). A week from Christiaan’s life in Paris in 1664 (italics added): “Trois bals en une sepmaine c’est beaucoup a la Haye mais ici il ne passe point de nuit qu’il n’y en ait 8 ou 10. J’ay estè les veoir une fois en bonne compagnie, et le divertissement en est assez joli mais accompagné de beaucoup d’embaras. Dimanche passé je vis au Louvre le petit Balet qui fut dansé dans le salon de la Reine Mere [The Queen Mother]. C’est une petite Comedie de Moliere fort plaisante qui a nom le Mariage forcè, entremeslee avec des entrées de ballet, et quelques recits de Musique, desquels font Mademoiselle Hilaire, et la Signora Anna. Le roy y danse luy meme, et je croy que c’est aujourduy pour la 6me et derniere fois. Le premier essay du grand ballet se sera lundy qui vient mais le lieu estant fort petit, qui est la Salle au Palais Royal, je me donneray la patience d’attendre jusques a la 2me ou 3me representation.” Christiaan’s library catalogue names some fifteen booklets and more voluminous publications, published and disseminated either during or after these great, splendid events. The publication for this celebration of the Queen was also on Christiaan’s list: under “Different Packets of Scarce Printwork (folio), one finds: 7. Les plaisirs de l’Isle enchantée, Course de Bague, Collation, Comedie, Danses, &c. fait à Versailles en 1664. De l’Imprimerie du Louvre, fig. (Appendix B).
appearances. Widely available and much-read literature on these subjects filled several rows in Christiaan’s bookcase, showing his close awareness to these matters – and on several points in his correspondence the importance of this attention for his career shows.

If the “Grand Tour” helped the young men in anything, it was in the understanding that other cultures embraced other ways of dressing and rules of comportment and behavior. The brothers were concerned with the fashion at court – clothing at the French Court according to Christiaan was neither “assured nor universal,” one needed to stay in tune with the latest mode: which was, for example, primarily gray in the winter of 1660.\(^{310}\) In specific, wigs became a topic of discussion in the brothers’ correspondence from 1650 onwards, and were a recurring theme throughout the years that one or more of the brothers resided in the direct vicinity of a court – Versailles especially. Apparently, these expensive hairpieces (between forty and sixty livres – paid for by their father) were too important to be left to their assistants, for in many letters they were discussed at length – their making, costs and quality (they needed to be “frisée naturellement,” “naturally curled”) – the same letters in which, scientifically speaking, other much more interesting subjects were treated.\(^{311}\) Christiaan also was very conscious about the required gestures – while Christiaan was in The Hague he urged his brother Lodewijk in Paris never to forget to kiss the hands of Chapelain, “that good soul.”\(^{312}\)

According to courtly standards, both in conversation and correspondence, parties had to address each other in all formality and civility until one party – usually the socially higher-ranked – offered to drop the formal tone and converse “normally.” Right after his stay in London in 1661, Christiaan wrote to Moray that their friendship and love was such, that all civilités could be dropped (so that they could speak as intimate friends).\(^{313}\) In December 1660, while Christiaan was in Paris, Constantijn Sr. wrote to Louis XIV’s First Knight, de Beringhen, that:

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310 Ibid., Vol. III, No. 801 (Nov. 5, 1660)
311 The focus on these scientific subjects, to all probability, has been the reason that these other elements often have been overlooked. Ibid., Vol. I, No. 70 (Jan. 17, 1650) – Christiaan thought his brother Constantijn had grown a lot in importance now that he wore a wig. Christiaan gets several requests from his brother Constantijn to have a wig made: HUYGENS, C. (1888) **OC**, Vol. IV, No. 1118 (May 30, 1663), Vol. V, No. 1198 (Jan. 5, 1664). On the need that the wigs be “naturellement frisées” (curled naturally): HUYGENS, C. (1888) **OC**, Vol. IV, 1118 (May 30, 1663), 1149 (Sept. 20, 1663), 1153 (Oct. 12, 1663), 1155 (Oct. 19, 1663). 1155: Christiaan has an extra one made for himself. Also see Vol. V, 1206 (Jan. 17, 1664).
312 HUYGENS, C. (1888) **OC**, Vol. IV, No. 1079 (Dec. 1, 1662)
313 Ibid., Vol. III, No. 864 (May 1661)
I have always believed that Monsieur le Premier [the First Knight] would have the goodness to remember toward my children the old friendship between Monsieur de Beringhen and their Father; but this Monsieur le Premier does not leave my expectations unanswered by an excess of favors and civilities which my Archimedes informs me he does not stop to honor him with. He mentions it to me, monsieur, not just as a story that I ought to rejoice in, but as to call me for help, and not knowing how to provide for the gratitude that he acknowledges he owes to you.\footnote{Ibid., Vol. III, No. 821 (Dec. 9, 1660). "J’ai toujours bien cru que Monsieur le Premier aurait la bonté de se souvenir à l’endroit de mes enfans de l’anciene amitié d’entre Monsieur de Beringhen et leur Pere; mais ce Monsieur le Premier ne laisse pas de tromper mon attente par un exces de faueurs et de ciuilitez dont mon Archimede me mande qu’il ne cesse de l’honorer. Il me le mande, monsieur, non pas seulement comme une histoire qui me doibt resjouir, mais comme m’appellant au secours, et ne sachant de quoi fournir à la reconnoissance qu’il avouë vous en debuoir."} Promising to inform himself about the universal medicine in Amsterdam so as to find “Elixirs” to lengthen the old First Knight’s lifespan, Constantijn Sr. asked him to accept his son Christiaan Jr.’s friendship. Monsieur de Beringhen would give a clear sign that the bond between the old Knight and Constantijn Sr. would be renewed in the form of a bond between the Knight and Christiaan Jr. when he would drop the “excessive” civilities in their conversations.\footnote{Ibid., Vol. III, No. 821 (Dec. 9, 1660)}

Over the course of his life, as we have seen Christiaan filled a small library with books on the art of conversation, the art of pleasing and how to be the perfect courtier and bonnête homme (see Chapter V, section ii and appendix A\footnote{\textit{BURKE, P. (1996) The fortunes of the Courtier : the European reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press.}, p166. "That he [Chapelain] also owned copies of Du Refuge [Du Refuge, Etienne (1616) \textit{Traité de la cour ou instruction des courtisans}, revised and enlarged edn Rouen 1631] and Faret [Faret, Nicolas (1630) \textit{L'honeste homme ou l'art de plaire à la cour}, ed. M. Magendie, paris 1925] offers a clue to the way in which Chapelain read the text [of ‘the Courtier’]." BURKE, P. (1996) \textit{The fortunes of the Courtier : the European reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press.}, p128. Christiaan’s book catalogue makes an unexpected and important contribution to Burke’s list.}). It is a striking fact that Christiaan Huygens Jr., the famous mathematician-astronomer, had three copies of Baldassare Castiglione’s \textit{“Il Cortegiano”} (“The Courtier”) in his library at the end of his life (see Appendix B), while only a handful of other people in Europe are known to have possessed an equal or higher number of them (Chapelain was one of them; he possessed five copies\footnote{I have made a selection from the many books on Christiaan’s catalogue that are, I think, relevant with regard to the social circumstances in which he lived. I have left out titles of religious, historical and ‘disciplinary’ books \textit{BURKE, P. (1996) The fortunes of the Courtier : the European reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press.}, p166. "That he [Chapelain] also owned copies of Du Refuge [Du Refuge, Etienne (1616) \textit{Traité de la cour ou instruction des courtisans}, revised and enlarged edn Rouen 1631] and Faret [Faret, Nicolas (1630) \textit{L'honeste homme ou l'art de plaire à la cour}, ed. M. Magendie, paris 1925] offers a clue to the way in which Chapelain read the text [of ‘the Courtier’]." BURKE, P. (1996) \textit{The fortunes of the Courtier : the European reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press.}, p128. Christiaan’s book catalogue makes an unexpected and important contribution to Burke’s list.}). At court the manner book was an important aide, and especially when one moved at different courts, a cosmopolitan outlook and grasp of courtly manners were essential. These functional characteristics of the early-modern canon of courtly manners and aristocratic behavior, rather
than its literary value, may explain Christiaan’s interest in collecting these books.\textsuperscript{318} Furthermore, at least some knowledge of princely preferences, the mechanisms of absolutism and ambassadorial habits and observations was indispensable to move successfully in the highest ruling classes.

Clearly, in a social surrounding of gentlemen, \textit{bonnêtes hommes} and princes, it was not just the “content” of what was discussed that mattered, not even when one had come together essentially for that purpose. One had to please one’s interlocutors in an intelligent, playful and erudite manner, and this had to be accompanied by gallant and respectful demeanor, such as keeping the right distance while walking.\textsuperscript{319} Disrespectful behavior could yield serious problems – such as when Roberval had insulted Montmor in his own house by stating that “he had more wit than he [Montmor], and that he was less only in worldly goods and the office of Maître des Requêtes [the position that Montmor held at court], and that if he were Maître des Requêtes he would be worth a hundred times more.” The incident almost meant the end of the year-old Montmor-Académie, for reasons of Roberval’s “boorishness and pedantry.”\textsuperscript{320} Earning and keeping the appreciation of high courtiers – such as De Beringhen, Conrart and Sorbière – for purposes of scientific recognition, was partly a matter of conscientious courtly behavior.

Perhaps Christiaan’s great concern with court-literature indicates that he had problems making the courtly etiquettes his own, but in the context of the latter seventeenth-century courts this should not come as a total surprise. Life at court was dangerous and one of the ways in which the absolute elite distinguished itself from those it judged as lower, was by changing the rules of the game without any notification or specific reason. On average, Christiaan seems to have had this necessary diligence,\textsuperscript{321} but sometimes the help of his father or

\textsuperscript{318} ELIAS, N. (1994) \textit{The civilizing process}, Oxford [England] ; Cambridge, Mass., Blackwell., p67. Previously, historians (of literature) have neglected manner books for their lack of literary value. Elias argued that another perspective was needed: “if we examine the modes of behavior which in every age a particular society has expected of its members, attempting to condition individuals to them; if we wish to observe changes in habits, social rules and taboos; then these instructions on correct behavior [the manner books], though perhaps worthless as literature, take on a special significance.”

\textsuperscript{319} This was relevant, for some of the scientific matters were discussed over dinner or during a walk in the park. For instance: HUYGENS, C. (1888) \textit{OC}., Vol. IV, 1165 (Nov. 11, 1663), Vol. IV, 1154 (Oct. 1665)


\textsuperscript{321} Christiaan’s “terminology” was compliant with courtly standards: HUYGENS, C. (1888) \textit{OC}., Voll. 4, No 1103, 26 March 1663. “C’est un fort honnest homme que vous ne connoissez pas mais le frere de Moggershill et ma soeur très particulierement en ayant receu beaucoup de civilité lors qu’ils surent icy, comme aussi il en a offert a moy. Il loge ceans depuis quelque jours. De plus 2 gentilhommes Parisiens qui s’en vont veoir la Hollande avec les quells je me suis associée cette apresdinee a veoir des maisons et jardins des plus beaux ou moins laids de cette ville.” Apart from the critique he received from Conrart and others on his scientific correspondence, and Conrart’s critique on his handling of his busy social
Chapelain was needed. A repetitive pattern can be seen in the different occasions where Christiaan received the aid of his father or other courtiers when very important matters at court needed to be arranged – such as audiences with Colbert or Louis XIV or letters to monarchs.

In short, Christiaan Huygens Jr. learned how to move and survive in the elevated layers of society, and this acquired ability was just as much a part of his personality and career as his scientific genius was. In fact, throughout his youth until well in his twenties, this courtly dimension was probably more relevant with regard to Christiaan Jr.’s professional outlook, for it seems that his father, Constantijn Sr., kept his ambitions for his son within this field. Though perhaps ironic, the important steering role of his father, pushing Christiaan Jr. into courtly and diplomatic social surroundings, created the boundary conditions for the establishment and perseverance of Christiaan’s natural scientific work, name and position within, notably, the Parisian courtly scene. One important element of Christiaan Jr.’s work and fame during his early years in Paris was formed by his work on scientific instruments – a subject that fitted the courtly and diplomatic surroundings very well and that will be investigated in the following chapter.

 schedule during his second trip to Paris HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. III, No. 844 (Feb. 1661). Christiaan’s correspondence does not show significant other frictions on manner-related issues.

322 See for instance the way in which Chapelain helped Christiaan to prepare for his audience with Colbert after receiving his pension (See Chapter VIII, section i).
VII. The Business of Instruments – a Team at Work

My father desires to have a telescope, bigger than the one that my brother [Constantijn Jr.] has made for him, [...] you can have the other if you want, because I know better than to give it to someone else, because of the secret of the invention.

*Christiaan Huygens to Lodewijk Huygens – Oeuvres Complètes, Vol. IV, No 1058 – Sept. 7, 1662*323

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323 “Mon Pere desire d’avoir une lunette plus grande que celle que mon frere [Constantijn Jr.] luy a faite, la quelle seconde, lors qu’elle sera venue, vous aurez l’autre si vous voulez, car d’en faire present a quelqu’autre il n’a garde, a cause du secret de l’invention.”


a very unequal representation compared to the effort and time that was put in the building and showing of the instrument. Though Huygens’s importance for the development of and discoveries with the telescope and his invention of the pendulum clock and watch have been studied quite extensively, there has been comparatively little attention given to the “political–judicial” dimension of obtaining special rights on these objects – a dimension that carried quite some weight for the Huygens family. Recent studies have set out to deepen some of the socio-economic-political dimensions of technical invention, showing a substantial gap in available scholarship on Huygens and others. Furthermore, the social dimension of close family-cooperation has remarkably stayed out of sight. Though some attention has been given to Christiaan’s cooperation with his brother Constantijn, the greater picture of family-teamwork has been largely neglected.

Insufficient consideration of the issues of family teamwork and the pursuit of privileges for inventions becomes problematic when one realizes that during the years 1655 through 1665

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327 Cf. ILIFFE, R. (1992) ‘In the warehouse’: Privacy, property and priority in the early Royal Society. History of Science., p29-31. Iliffe indicates that this lack of attention has been a general feature in the history of science and technology.

328 Ibid. gives a detailed study of Christiaan Huygens’s controversy with Robert Hooke at the Royal Society in London on obtaining a privilege for the sea-clock. BIAGIOLI, M. (2006a) From Print to Patents: Living on Instruments in Early Modern Europe. History of Science, 44, 139-215. offers a comprehensive survey of most literature on the subject, problematizing the categories of “inventor” and “credit” and providing some insight in these issues for Huygens.

at many points the whole family Huygens was actively involved in the construction, development and dissemination of scientific instruments, that a considerable part of Christiaan’s fame was a direct consequence of his technical inventions and that Christiaan’s rising status at the court at Versailles and within the new Académie Royale des Sciences probably was in close connection to his recent accomplishment of obtaining a privilege with Louis XIV for his sea-clock (see Chapter VIII, section ii). Huygens’s interaction with the Royal Society for the Promotion of Natural Knowledge (the Royal Society for short) revolved mainly around the air-pump and his pendulum clocks – fitting well in the Society’s primary objective of establishing experimental matters of fact \(^{330}\) – as did his interaction with the Montmor-group in Paris, which also had great interest in his and his brother’s telescopes. \(^{331}\) It is striking, as we will see, how much of Christiaan’s correspondence with his father and brothers treats a variety of different matters concerning instruments, ranging from their invention and working, and their production, costs and distribution to their display and patenting. Also remarkable is the constant perfecting of the different instruments – at high cost! – and the many occasions throughout these years that Christiaan considered the possibility of obtaining privileges for his air-pump, his telescope, his pendulum clocks and the post-coach (see Chapter VIII, section ii).

The comprehensiveness and intensity of Huygens’s involvement with instruments is corroborated by the fact that of his ten treatises written during these years, six had to do directly with measurements with, respectively the working and/or theory of, his horologium and his telescope. \(^{332}\) After Huygens’s *Brevis Assertio Systematis Saturnii* (1660), a response to critiques on his *Systema Saturnium* dedicated to Prince Leopold de Medici, he did not publish

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again until 1665 – giving the public two treatises on the *Horologium*. Now, as has been remarked upon in Chapter V, publication was not as important as it is today and scientific correspondence and theoretical and experimental meetings offered equal or more “visibility.” It also mattered that experimental and instrument claims were assigned much quicker when the person making the claims would show the experiment or the working of the instrument in person – something Christiaan discovered on several occasions. It turns out that the role for his father and brothers was important in this respect too – on several occasions, even when rather important, they would be in charge of showing instruments and experiments to other gentlemen of natural philosophy and thus on occasion be responsible for preserving the secret of the working of the different instruments. In the competitive culture of early modern ambitious families, the “team-work” of the Huygens may be deemed remarkable.

The ongoing chapter deals with the family’s teamwork in the business of making, distributing and showing instruments. At times residing in three or four different countries, the four men all seem to have had different, hardly negligible roles in establishing Christiaan’s alluring international status as an inventor. Furthermore, having discussed earlier the courtly circumstances in which Christiaan and his family functioned, the issues of patronage and privileges for instruments and inventions will be discussed in the last chapter of this thesis.

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335 In the higher social ranks affection and trust were not self-evident characteristics within families. The system of primogeniture (inheritance of the eldest son) and other distributive traditions could seriously affect relations between siblings. See, for instance, POLLOCK, L. A. (2001) Parent-Child Relations. IN KERTZER, D. I. & BARBAGLI, M. (Eds.) *The history of the European family*. New Haven, Yale University Press., p213-4. It seems that Constantijn Huygens Sr. managed to prevent envy affect the bonds between his children.
ii. Making and distributing instruments

The family Huygens had a small “history” with the making of and interest for (scientific) instruments. Constantijn Sr.’s fascination for instruments has been explained by several as being developed during his diplomatic missions with Van Aerssen to England in the early 1620s. He came to know Nicholas de Caus and, according to his own testimony, became good friends with Cornelis Drebbel. Their machines and instruments – their “air- and water-driven engines,” ornamenting the magnificent gardens at court, theatrical machines and microscopes – fascinated Constantijn Sr.. He developed a particular liking for optical instruments, probably triggered by his own bad sight and need for glasses since the age of sixteen. In the years 1635-1638, Constantijn Sr. actively helped Descartes and his young student Van Schooten (who later became Christiaan’s mathematics-teacher) in the philosopher’s attempts to improve micro- and telescopes, by taking care of the development process of a grinding-machine for hyperbole lenses. He guarded the production process at the grinder and advised Descartes on different practical and theoretical aspects, developing his skills as an optician to such an extent that he could promise Princess Elizabeth Palatine in 1654 that “I could serve as a sufficient enough Optician.”

The skill of grinding lenses and making optical instruments was taken over by Christiaan and his brother Constantijn. They worked together successfully; they developed a new eyepiece (later called the “Huygens-eyepiece”) and devised a telescope that first “revealed” the ring around Saturn and with which Christiaan directly challenged “Divini’s position as Europe’s best optician.” Though it is unclear precisely how the work was divided between Christiaan Jr. and Constantijn Jr., it seems that they had a similar role in the actual grinding of the lenses, the making of the telescope and doing the observations. When Christiaan was in Paris in 1655, Constantijn Jr. wrote from The Hague to notify his brother


HUYGENS, C. (1911) BW., Vol. 19, xiv


that he had no new observations yet and to ask whether he had discovered anything new on
the making of telescopes of interest to them. When his brother was in London in April 1661,
Constantijn Jr. wrote him that he made observations of Jupiter with his own telescope and
that he had just sent Christiaan’s *Lunettes* to him. In December 1663, with Christiaan’s name
climbing to great heights, the demands for staying in the “telescope-race” were increasing.
Constantijn Jr. wrote to his brother on the latter’s plans to devise a longer telescope:

> [y]ou talk to me about Telescopes of 55 feet as if it were nothing. If they are of a good
> proportion they might bring about great effects. Let me know a little bit of what you discover
> with them more than with ours and, in a few words what form they have to grind and polish.

Christiaan showed active consideration of his older brother’s opinion in these matters, even
when he already was a member of the *Académie des Sciences*.

In fact, *all* three brothers and father Huygens were actively involved at several stages
and elements of the production and distribution of the many instruments that Christiaan
worked on. All three were constantly kept informed of the novelties, adjustments and
improvements of instruments, were in contact with the different instrument-makers that
worked on the instruments, and sent or took the instruments all over Europe.

For instance, in Christiaan’s active correspondence with his brother Lodewijk he
regularly discussed the telescope, and there is ample evidence that Constantijn Sr. was
involved in the strategies of distribution and the business of production. When Christiaan
complained to Lodewijk about the costs of the different telescopes that he was obligated to
donate (rather than keeping or selling them) to the highest aristocracy he did not have to
bother about the extra difficulty of the act of giving them to the sovereigns – this was
something his father did. Constantijn Sr. had sent one of Christiaan’s telescopes to the King of

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342 Ibid., Vol. III, No. 856 Constantijn Jr. to Christiaan Jr. (Apr. 28, 1661)
343 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1177 – Constantijn Jr. to Christiaan Jr. (Dec. 6, 1663): “[v]ous me parlez de
Lunettes de 55 pieds comme si ce n’estoit rien. Si elles sont bonnes à proportion elles devroyent faire de
grand effets. Mandez moy un peu ce que l’on en decreuvre de plus que par les nostres et en peu de mots
quelle forme de doucir et de polir ils ont.” My translation. Earlier during Christiaan’s stay, Constantijn
Jr. asked his brother information on the making of the telescope in order to be able to proceed: Vol. IV,
No. 1107 – Constantijn Jr. to Christiaan Jr. (Apr. 12, 1663).
344 Ibid., Vol. VI, No. 1576 (Feb. 11, 1667)
345 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 996 (Mar. 15, 1662); No. 1067 (Oct. 5, 1662); No. 1576 (Feb. 11, 1667); No. 999
(Mar. 29, 1662) Christiaan to Lodewijk : “car il est necessaire que ces lunettes à miroir soient appuiees
par devant a fin de ne point bransler. Et pour cette consideration je croy qu’il vaudroit encore mieux de
la faire de la grandeur qu’est celle du Roy”.

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England in November 1658 and was asked by Christiaan to offer one to the King of France three years later (Nov. 1661). Though I have not found a reference, it seems to be plausible that the Elector of Brandenburg also received a telescope from Constantijn Sr.’s hands.

The father’s important role in showing the instrument to courtly groups – which we will see shortly – was accompanied by a need for new and better versions of the instrument. In 1662, between his second and third trip to Paris, Christiaan wrote his brother Lodewijk from The Hague with the message that his father (who was in Paris, together with Lodewijk) wanted a bigger telescope than the one that Constantijn Jr. had made for him, so that Lodewijk should keep the older, smaller version – “because of the secret of the invention” – after Constantijn Sr. had received the new one by mail. (A nice detail: Christiaan expected that Constantijn Sr. would not be prepared to give away his telescope to Lodewijk unless he had received a new one.)

In his role as Christiaan’s “high representative” in London and Paris (see below), Constantijn Sr. did not take a passive stance. For instance, when the Campani-brothers made new claims about Saturn and Jupiter – distinguishing shadows on Saturn and Jupiter as Christiaan’s respectively Galileo’s theory demanded – copies of the new telescope of the Campani’s were sent out over Europe at the end of 1664, Constantijn Sr. was the first to know about it and arranged to obtain one. Christiaan had to await Constantijn’s written descriptions of Campani’s telescope to enable him to make a judgment on the competing telescope – apparently a task that Christiaan entrusted to him – while his father was showing the instrument, together with Christiaan’s microscope, to the Parisian societies.

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547 HUYGENS, C. (1888) *OC*, Vol. IV, No. 996 (Mar. 15, 1662); No. 920 (Nov. 23, 1661): “La Lunette a ce qui me semble court grande risque, s’il faut que Sire Louis la voie; car il sera tenu de dire qu’elle est fort bonne et mon Pere qu’elle est a Sa Majesté si elle l’agree.”
548 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1066 (Sept. 28, 1662); No. 1058 (Sept. 7, 1662): Christiaan to Lodewijk: “Mon Pere desire d’avoir une lunette plus grande que celle que mon frere luy a faite, laquelle seconde, lors qu’elle sera venue, vous aurez l’autre si vous voulez, car d’en faire present a quelqu’autre il n’a garde, a cause du secret de l’invention. Que si’il en arrive autrement, je verray ce que je seray pour vous.”
549 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1066 (Sept. 28, 1662). “Quelque bonne qu’el signor Padre trouue la nouuelle lunette je ne doute pas qu’il ne vous la cede, aprés qu’il aura receu l’autre.”
550 Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1260 – P. Petit to Ch (Oct. 1664): “Vous auez veu aussi bien que nous a ce que Ma dit Monsieur vostre Pere lescrit de ce nouveau lunetier de Rome Joseph Campanus qui a observé Saturne avec des Ombres telles que vostre Hypothese les demande & Juppiter avec deux Manches ou ombres de ses satellites comme porte sa figure.” According to astronomical theory, a shadow of the ring was expected on the body of Saturn, and also a shadow of the body of Saturn on its ring. In the case of Jupiter, four smaller shadows were expected on the planet’s body.
551 Christiaan trusted more often on the descriptions of his father of instruments of others. For instance: Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1067 (Oct. 5, 1662), where Christiaan mentions that he has received a description by his father of Petit’s new and smaller telescopes. In this case, Christiaan initially expressed some
The making of the horloge ran almost entirely parallel to that of the telescope. Its production was of a greater scale than that of the telescope, as by its nature the pendulum clock was an instrument that generated the demand of more people. In the first years after Christiaan’s invention of the pendulum clock in 1656 he took his time for its improvement and the recognition for his priority. Throughout the years 1662-1664 Christiaan and his brothers Lodewijk and Constantijn corresponded intensively on the technical details, the fabrication and the dispersal of the pendulum clock. Whether he was in Paris\textsuperscript{355} (1662) or in The Hague\textsuperscript{354} (1663), Lodewijk functioned as Christiaan’s main channel for arranging the “production-line” with the clockmakers, getting all the necessary information for devising them and providing impatient peers with news or details – without bringing the secret mechanisms in danger. Christiaan also gave him many requests to send pendulum clocks either to him or to others – sometimes asking Lodewijk, or more commonly his father, to pay for them\textsuperscript{355} – and discussed his father’s ideas as how to improve the pendulum clock such that it could be used at sea with him.\textsuperscript{356} Constantijn Jr. also took an active role in arranging the distribution of pendulum skepticism: HUYGENS, C. (1888) \textit{OC}. Vol. V, No. 1260 (Oct. 1664); No. 1263 (Oct. 30, 1664): “Pour la forme de la lunette de Campani je le crois, mais pour la bontè non. Nous avons fait essayer sur vostre description”.

\textsuperscript{355} HUYGENS, C. (1888) \textit{OC}. Vol. V, No. 1266 (Oct. 31, 1664): “L’on admire a Paris le microscope, que mon Pere y a portè de sa facon qui m’escriit aussi des merveilles d’une lunette de 2 ½ pieds a 4 verres de Campani, qui fait voir droit et fait a ce qu’il dit, une fort belle ouverture.” Robert Moray, in England, was very impatient in his wish for father Huygens to obtain and show the Campani telescope in England: HUYGENS, C. (1888) \textit{OC}. Vol. V, No. 1280 (Dec. 5, 1664); No. 1268 (Nov. 7, 1664): “Je serois rauy de voir ce Telescope de Campani. Voyez si Monsieur vostre pere le peut avoir.”

\textsuperscript{356} Oeuvres, Vol. 4, No 1010 (Apr. 6, 1663): Christiaan orders Lodewijk to bring the new horloge to Severyn. “Je voudrais bien que vous renvoiassiez ma nouvelle horologe a Maistre Severyn a fin qu’il la fit aller comme it faut, et la gardast jusqu’a mon retour”. Vol. IV, No 1151 (Oct. 5, 1663): Christiaan to Lodewijk: “Donnez ordre aussi au dit Horologer de faire une horologe a pendule de 3 pieds comme la miene mais qui aille une sepmaine, a contrepoids, et simplement sans sonnerie.” Vol. V, No. 1228 Christiaan to Lodewijk (April 26, 1664): “(...) on nous l’a delivree ce matin. L’ayant ouverte nous avons trouué 2 des horloges en trespiotyable estat, a scavoir celle avec la caille de tortue, et celle de 8 jours; toutes les pieces de la premier s’estant defaites, et les arbres de 3 ou 4 roues rompus. (...)” “A celle de 8 jours le timbre est en pieces, la queue du marteau, et quelques autres pieces rompues, parce que l’ourage s’est detachè de la platineet a roulè ainsi par la boete, qui est aussi fort endommagee par les costez. La 3me horologe comme par miracle est demeurè entiere, ayant estè couchée entre les 2 autres”
Generally, the role of Constantijn Sr. was more of commanding specific mailings or commenting on possible improvements or mistakes.

More than one of Christiaan’s brothers was also involved in the development and building of the air pump. In order to realize the coming about and constant functioning of this extremely expensive instrument, Christiaan had arranged that his brother Constantijn and brother-in-law Philips Doublet would give him financial support. However, faced with several initial set-backs “due to an unevenly bored cylinder and a recalcitrant workman” and extra costs, both young men eventually pulled back from the project, surrendering Christiaan completely to his own stipend he received from his father – or perhaps his father paid him extra for the machine’s maintenance. Furthermore, his brother Lodewijk – at the time in Paris – was chartered by his brother to convince Jacques Rohault “to construct a pump, and to test it by producing anomalous suspension, of which Huygens enclosed a diagram;” a project at distance that failed for reason of Christiaan Jr.’s absence. Throughout 1661 – 1663 the air pump was a subject of intensive discussion between Lodewijk and his brother.

The “business” of instrument invention was serious enough for father Huygens to invest some extra time in it – round about the time that he was sent out for the negotiations to

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357 Ibid., Vol. IV, 1166 – Christiaan to Constantijn Jr. (Nov. 16, 1663): “Chez le Sieur Pascal il y a 2 horloges a pendule que Monsieur Chieze a fait faire pour la Signora Anna et un autre Italien de nos amis. Ils sont desia achevez et le frere Louis s’estoit chargè d’avoir soin de les envoier. Mais estant absent je voudrois bien que vous les addressassiez a L’unicus, et par luy a Mademoiselle vander Elst, qui les envoyera a Paris par les Rouliers”. Vol. IV, No. 1175 – Christiaan to Constantijn Jr. (Nov 30, 1663): “Talks about horloges for Milord Brouncker (80 livres) – 110. 2 pendules for Pascal. Other has to be given to Don Diego. “Cela vous sera tout aussi facile ou au frere Louis que de les adresser a Rotterdam, et nos amis ont grande impatience de les tenir, en seront trois fois plusfort servis. Il Signor Padre le desire aussi ainsi et m’a commandé de vous l’escrire.” Vol. IV, No. 1177 – Constantijn Jr. to Christiaan (Dec 6, 1663): “Les tro quarts seront envoyées selon que vous desirerez la septime prochaine by Anuers avec les plumes et les cordes que mande mon Pere.” “Les rapports du pendule me rejouissent fort et Seuryn aussi. Il dit qu’il croyd auoir trouvé quelque chose pour les suspendre encore mieux que ces autres ne l’ont esté.” Vol. IV, No. 1178 (Dec. 1663) Christiaan Jr.: “J’ay escrit a mon frere qui est a la Haye qu’il fust le marchè avec l’horologer pour la monstre de Milord Brounker au plus juste prix qui est a ce qu’il me mande de 110 livres monnoye d’Hollande.”

358 Ibid., Vol. VI, No. 1576 – Christiaan to Lodewijk (Feb. 11, 1667): “Mon Pere m’escrit par vostre suggestion ou celle du frere de Zeelhem touchant le payement de Severyn l’horologer de la pendule que je luy ay fait faire pour Monsieur Morray. Il y a un peu de ma faute, je l’avoue, de ce que je n’ay pas insistè assez pour ledit paiement mais j’auray soin qu’il n’y perde rien et vous pouvez luy dire que je luy seray avoir son argent ou que je luy paieray moy mesme.”


maintain the possession of the Principality of Orange (see Chapter VI, section ii), he proudly presented his invention of an alternative candleholder. The design was fairly simple, intended to increase the number of burning hours of candles and it immediately captured the attention of Christiaan, who was “rather eager to see the treatise with figures.”

If nothing else, it reflects the unrelenting attention of the Huygens for each other’s accomplishments.

iii. Experimental showing

During the years 1660-1666 Christiaan Jr. was, as we have seen, rather itinerant. His irregular presence at the Montmor-group (Paris) and the Royal Society (London) caused impatience with his French contacts. Adding to their already described partaking in and care for Christiaan Jr.’s scientific endeavors, Christiaan Jr.’s brothers and father took over parts of the burden of experimental demonstration of new instruments, inventions and phenomena during their stays in these cities. Generally, they were well informed about the secret elements of the inventions – the ‘causes’ of a phenomenon, the mechanism of the instrument – and Christiaan Jr. trusted their sincere and careful handling of matters that, when fallen in the wrong hands, might cause all loss of primacy and priority. Importantly, the correspondence suggests that the substantial role for Christiaan Jr.’s father and brothers was commonly accepted by the French and English contacts. Though sometimes Christiaan’s absence would still be felt, they would be seen as the socially and intellectually acceptable representatives of Christiaan. Furthermore, the wondrous and striking effects that some of the instruments brought about, Constantijn Sr. handily applied for “greater” purposes – his position at court.

The interest for Christiaan’s inventions reached many layers of seventeenth-century upper-society and sometimes assemblies and experimental showings could attract people of considerable standing. In January 1662 the Dutch ambassador to France Van Beuningen informed Christiaan that Queen Christine of Sweden might visit one of the assemblies of the Académie in Paris. The Elector of Brandenburg, together with the Count of Fürstenberg and the Counts of Horn (father and son), later that year, paid a visit to the house of the Huygens in The Hague, for an experimental showing of the air pump. Viewing experiments was fashionable, something that can be seen in the great eagerness of the socially well placed to partake in these showings – even resulting in early morning visits, an otherwise unusual

561 HUYGENS, C. (1888) OIC., Vol. IV, No. 998 (March 22, 1662); No. 1002 (Apr. 1662); No. 1004 (Apr. 12, 1662).
562 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 957 (Jan. 25, 1662); No. 1067 (Oct. 5, 1662)
moment for these events.\textsuperscript{363} As Huygens was one out of three (groups of) people who devised and possessed an air pump,\textsuperscript{364} he received many high-ranked requests for experimental showings to the extent that, in order to relieve the almost daily burden on his other work, he would some days tell people that the pump did not work – while in fact it did.\textsuperscript{365} As a gentleman’s house always ought to be open, Huygens needed to find other ways to create the privacy, required for doing his own experiments.\textsuperscript{366}

The most significant experimental meetings however happened at the Montmor Académie and the Royal Society – for here the working of Huygens’s machine and the phenomenon of anomalous suspension would be tested and given or denied the status of matter of fact.\textsuperscript{367} In Paris, Lodewijk was employed as Christiaan’s representative at the Montmor-Académie from the end of 1661 throughout 1662, assigned with the task to instruct Jean Chapelain on the technical working of the machine and how to obtain the desired effects. Lodewijk received extensive information on the machine and its operation, being entrusted the experimental showing of the machine to Chapelain and together with him, to the Parisian group (a group that Lodewijk also frequented).\textsuperscript{368} When the first showings for the Académie took place, it turned out, however, that Lodewijk had forgotten to instruct Chapelain on one or

\textsuperscript{363} Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1067 (Oct. 5, 1662): When “one of those venerable princesses of Portugal” unexpectedly came by the house of the Huygens in The Hague in her coach “le Seigneur de Zeelhem” (Constantijn Jr.) had to ask pardon and send her away with empty hands. In her eagerness to see the instrument at work, she had knocked at the door at eight in the morning, disturbing a sick Constantijn in his sleep.


\textsuperscript{365} See: Ibid., p246. “He [Huygens] told Lodewijk on 25 September/5 October 1662 that he had so many visitors demanding to see the machine that he was forced to pretend that the pump was not working: but “for the most part I am not lying, since it can scarcely ever remain in its perfection because of the piston which easily goes wrong.” Quoted from: HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. IV., p245


\textsuperscript{367} Huygens did not manage to replicate Boyle’s observation of the fall of a Torricellian column of water inside a receiver which he had evacuated of air with a pump similar to Boyle’s and Hooke’s. Despite the fact that he had purged the water of air by leaving it in the receiver of the air-pump for many hours, the water did not descend in the receiver. Huygens’s result was dubbed “anomalous suspension.” More on the phenomenon: SHAPIN, S. & SCHAFFER, S. (1985) Leviathan and the air-pump, p241.

\textsuperscript{368} Christiaan wrote Lodewijk with detailed information on the working of his air-pump – it shows that the instrument was difficult to handle, and the effects hard to realize: HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. IV, No. 977 (Feb. 15, 1662). Lodewijk, on his turn, informed Chapelain: Vol. IV, No. 1008 (Apr. 30, 1662); No. 1016 (May, 1662) and, together with Chapelain, he presented the machine at the Montmor-Académie: Vol. IV, No. 1007 (Apr. 26, 1662). Christiaan kept following all this by mail: Vol. IV, No. 1014-5 (May 18, 1662); No. 1020-1 (June, 1662).
two important technicalities, forming crucial elements in the handling of the machine. After repeated attempts and suggestions, sent to and fro by mail between Christiaan and Lodewijk, Chapelain eventually indicated in June that “I would be more convinced if I was at the place where you are.” Despite Lodewijk’s care, Christiaan was needed to show the experiment and convince his gentleman-colleagues. In March of the next year, 1663, having come to Paris after a stay in England, Christiaan took care of a successful demonstration after all, leading to an important experimental meeting with “Monsieur le Premier President” and the building of another air-pump, baptized, in a courtly manner, “La Machine de Versaille.”

In England, the process of establishing a matter of fact for Huygens’s anomalous suspension also took a long time. After Christiaan’s visit to London in April 1661 where he visited the recently established Royal Society and discussed the experiment with Robert Boyle, he kept up intensive correspondence on the matter with Robert Moray. It seems to me that when, throughout 1662, the Society did not accept Christiaan’s hypothesis on the air pump, it became important for Christiaan to put everything to work to convince the English. Together with his high-ranking father he visited the Royal Society in June 1663, leading Henry Oldenburg, the Society’s secretary, to write to Boyle: “This afternoon we had no ordinary meeting: there were no less than four strangers, two French, and two Dutch gentlemen: ye French were, Monsieur de Sorbier and Monsieur Monconis; ye Dutch, both

369 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1014 (May 18, 1662): “Monsieur Chapelain en faisant ses raisonnements sur mon Experience du vuide, n’a pas esté bien instruit du fait, croyant qu’on ne pouvoit plus faire descendre l’eau, après la premier fois. Car cela n’arrive que lors qu’estant descendue on la laisse par 24 heures dans le vuide se purger d’air, et que puis après on en remplisse une seconde fois la boule avec son tuyau. Mais je luy en esciray bientost amplement.”
371 Probably Monseigneur M. Chrestofle de Thou, knight, seigneur de Cœli, premier president en parlement.
373 SHAPIN, S. & SCHAFFER, S. (1985) Leviathan and the air-pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the experimental life: including a translation of Thomas Hobbes, Dialogue physicus de natura aeris by Simon Schaffer, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press., p244-50. P249: “So in March and April 1663 it became clear that unless the phenomenon could be produced in England with one of the two pumps available, then no one in England would accept the claims Huygens had made, or his competence in working the pump.”
the Zulichems, Father and Son: all foure, inquisitive after you.” The letter bespeaks a respect for father Huygens that he and his son had probably aimed for. It is unclear whether father Huygens attended more meetings with experimental philosophers during his stay in London; Robert Hooke did not mention him in his letters to Boyle in which he indicated that Christiaan managed to show him the phenomenon of anomalous suspension.

The most substantial role for Constantijn Sr. and Christiaan’s brothers in the showing of Christiaan’s instruments was in Parisian meetings during the period 1661-1665 where telescopes were compared and phenomena in the skies observed. Though effectively the “reign” of the Huygens-telescope may have been over with the coming of the Campani-telescope in 1662, the Paris- and London-groups could not compare the two until Constantijn Sr. managed to get a Campani-telescope in 1664, and the Huygens telescope was at the center of attention until at least the beginning of 1665. It seems that all of the Huygens carried their own telescopes – Lodewijk received Constantijn Sr.’s old version when the latter wished for a better one – not just to stare at the heavens at night, but also to show the instrument to members of the Montmor-Académie and other courtiers. Constantijn Sr. showed Christiaan’s telescope to the French King at the Louvre somewhere between November 1661 and March 1662 – an event where the instrument (adjusted to a size worthy for the French ruler) was “confiscated” by the King, as Christiaan had expected. Later, as both Constantijn Sr. and Christiaan’s brother Lodewijk frequented the Montmor-group, Lodewijk received a lot of technical information on the telescope and was used as an intermediary to disclose the secret

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574 Oldenburg continued: “They were entertained first with some Experiments, which the bearer hereof will give you a good account off: and afterwards with good store of occasionall observations, discoursed of promiscuously, pro re nata: which the strangers (as well as our company) seemed to be much more pleased with, than with set and formall discourses.” In: HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. IV, No. 1122 (Jun. 20, 1663)
575 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1136 (July 20, 1663); No. 1138 (July, 1663)
577 Constantijn Jr., himself an experienced grinder and telescope-maker, carried his own. His father received a new telescope around October 1662, leaving the older, smaller one for his other son Lodewijk. HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. IV, No. 1058 (Sep. 7, 1662), No. 1066 (Sep. 28, 1662)
578 Ibid., Vol. III, No. 920 (Nov. 23, 1661): “La Lunette a ce qui me semble court grande risque, s’il faut que Sire Louis la voie; car il sera tenu de dire qu’elle est fort bonne et mon Pere qu’elle est a Sa Majesté si elle l’agree.” Vol. IV, No. 996 (Mar. 15, 1662): “Je prevoiois bien que ma lunette seroit confisqueé si elle venoit au Louvre”. Christiaan was prepared to adjust his telescope (lunettes) according to “la grandeur” of the King: Vol. IV, No. 999 (29 March, 1662).
of the lens making to the Paris-group.\textsuperscript{379} It seems that Constantijn Sr. made active use of his son’s telescope, while taking great care not to disclose the secret of its working.\textsuperscript{380}

During, between and after Christiaan’s two periods in Paris (March–June 1663 and September 1663 – June 1664), when there were many visitors for Christiaan’s tele- and microscopes,\textsuperscript{381} his brothers and father maintained their supportive roles. Constantijn Jr. played an active role in discussing the quality of Eustachio Divini’s telescope with Monconis, showing a critical attitude: “moreover the tube is so big and heavy that I do not see anything extraordinary about that piece. Is the owner a savant, does he know Mathematics or what sort of man is he?”\textsuperscript{382} Constantijn Sr.’s role was an active one – with his negotiations at both the French and English court he did what he could to help his son’s cause – sending lenses and news on Campani’s new telescope from London\textsuperscript{383} and taking the lead in meetings where his son’s telescope would be compared to that of the Campanis. In November 1664 for instance, he discussed it with Auzout and l’Abbé Charles and in January 1665 Pierre Petit gave notice of meetings of the Montmor-Académie where Constantijn Sr., “who is always cheerful and affable,” discussed several observations of Christiaan with the assembly.\textsuperscript{384}

In another situation than that of the carefully cooperating Huygens family it would have been remarkable that Christiaan shared the secret of his telescope with his whole family and entrusted the original telescopes to them. Galileo, for instance, used very exclusive strategies aimed at keeping the secret of the telescope entirely for himself as long as possible.\textsuperscript{385} When Pierre Petit – lodging Lodewijk and Constantijn Sr. at his house at that moment – accidentally found the telescope under a blanket when his guests were out, he could not resist the temptation and used it to watch the heavens secretly.\textsuperscript{386} As Christiaan learned about this

\textsuperscript{379} Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1067 (Oct. 5, 1662)
\textsuperscript{380} Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1058 (Sep. 7, 1662): father wanted a telescope; Chapelain on Constantijn Sr.: Vol. III, No. 930 (Dec. 20, 1661).
\textsuperscript{381} Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1108 (Apr. 20, 1663): Christiaan told Constantijn Jr. that there were visitors almost every day to see his telescope and microscopes.
\textsuperscript{382} “puis le tuyau est si gros et si lourd que je ne voy rien d’extraordinaire à cette piece. Le maistre est il scuaut, scait il les Mathematiques ou quelle sorte d’homme est ce?” My translation. In: Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1142 (Aug. 1663): “Le Sieur Monconis m’apporta il y a trois jours vostre lettre du 23. Juin. Nous auons conferé sur plusjeurs articles et mesme fait essay de sa Lunette de Diuinis, dont je trouve le principal verre for bon, mais elle n’est pas exempte des defaults qu’ont toutes celles qui sont de cette longueur quand on s’en veut seruir de jour.”
\textsuperscript{384} Constantijn Sr. taking the lead in meetings: Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1273 (Nov. 1664); No. 1316 (Jan. 23, 1665): “Monsieur vostre pere qui est tousjours gaillard & obligeant.”
\textsuperscript{386} HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. IV, No. 1077 (Nov. 17, 1662)
from a repentant Petit himself, he was not so much upset about the idea that Petit could have opened the telescope and seen its precise working, but his main concern was that father Huygens would not forgive Petit easily.  

Aside from a fascination for the subject and the objective to help his son, Constantijn Sr. had another reason for being actively involved with his son’s business of instruments. With the period of 1661-1665 years of intense diplomatic negotiations in both Paris and London, his son’s many inventions, experiments and instruments were good assets for Constantijn Sr. during the political talks. He was likely to entertain or even impress ambassadors, high-ranking diplomats and other courtiers with the inventive instruments of his son, as they presented a show of his and his son’s skills, but also offered a playful and appreciated divertissement of more serious matters. As said, he often showed the telescope, and Christiaan’s microscope. Furthermore, as Christiaan complained to his brother Lodewijk in April 1662: See here still another commission that my father gives me, to get ready for him one lantern with 2 or 3 diverse drawings of which it shows the representation.” He kept it silent to his father, but “to you [Lodewijk] I admit that these commissions do bother me strongly, and that everything else that my father will ask me of similar things [he will ask] in vain.” Making such magical lanterns cost Christiaan much effort, and he thought they were so old-fashioned that people just faked interest. Constantijn Sr., however, thought otherwise, and showed them at court. Christiaan once obstructed these plans, writing to his brother:

As I have promised to send the lantern, then this will have to be done. I have not been able to think up a good excuse not to do so. But when it arrives, you could, if you chose, easily put it out of order. You must take out one of the three lenses standing together. I shall act as though I have no idea what is wrong, and the ensuing explanation shall cause just the necessary waste of time. This is all for his own good for, in my opinion, it does not befit my father to put on such puppetry in the Louvre, and I am sure you would not wish to help him to do so.

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387 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1079 (Dec. 1, 1662)  
388 Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1266 (Oct. 31, 1664)  
389 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1001 (Apr. 5, 1662): “Voila encore une autre commission que mon pere me donne, de luy ajuster une lanterne avec 2 ou 3 diverses peintures dont elle face la representation. Je n’ay rien à luy respondre sinon que je seray ce qu’il desire, et le plus promptement qu’il me sera possible; mais a vous j’avoueray bien que ces commissions m’incommodent fort, et que tout autre que mon pere me demanderoit en vain des choses semblables. Vous ne scauriez croire avec quelle peine je m’occupe a des telles bagatelles qui me sont desia toutes vieilles, outre que j’ay honte que l’on scache par de là qu’elle viennent de moy. L’on y est assez complaisant pour faire semblant de les admirer, mais après on s’en mocquera et non pas sans raison. Pour l’avenir, s’il y a aucun moyen detournez moy je vous prie des pareilles corvées.” My translation.  
390 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1005 (Apr. 19, 1662)
A lot of money went into the making of all the instruments, their sending and showing. As Christiaan seems to have been completely financially dependent on his father until he received a pension of Louis XIV in 1663, it will (however unhappy he was about them) have been hard for him to refuse him these kinds of favors.

Though these processes are hard to document fully, I would argue that there is reason to assume that Constantijn Sr.’s role behind the screens has been greater than previously supposed. As shown by the correspondence, he and Christiaan’s brothers were actively involved in the production, distribution and promotion of the instruments and were much concerned with the success of their endeavors. Having seen some ways in which Constantijn Sr. strategically used his own talents for his and his family’s self-fashioning, it makes sense to see how Christiaan and his father used Christiaan’s talents and inventions to fashion him an ideal identity as a mathematician-courtier. I think it would be a wrong conclusion to state that Constantijn Sr. was not able to distinguish ‘real science” from pleasantries or did not understand what needed to be done to obtain privileges, after all he had been responsible for giving out privileges for the Prince of Orange for many years – including ones for Descartes and Galileo. We have seen that it is likely that Constantijn Sr. also used his son’s inventions to please and surprise the people at court, adding a pleasant, wondrous dimension to his many negotiations, thus enhancing his own position and safeguarding the survivance of the Huygens family.

Constantijn Sr.’s high diplomatic position further helped Christiaan Jr. in a way that would change the latter’s life – Constantijn actively helped his son in the process of obtaining the protection and patronage of Louis XIV and his first minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Partly overlapping in period with this chapter and the previous two, the next chapter will elaborate the process of gift giving and accepting that took place between the French King and Christiaan Huygens Jr. and the vital role that Christiaan’s father had in the creation and nourishment of the bond between the two.

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With my Father having notified me how it has pleased the King to accord to him generously the Privilege he had demanded to His Majesty in my name, for the usage of Pendulum clocks on sea, and how subsequently you had the goodness to make him receive the certificate almost at the same time as he had it asked from you, and in the most obliging manner that we had been able to wish, I would believe it a sin against my obligation, if I would not try to testify to you through these words the sentiment I have about such important favors. You have acted both in my favor and your authority Monsieur, and your good concern for me, of which I have already experienced the effects more than once before this one;


Constantijn Sr., at the age of eighty-eight (!), wrote to H. de Beringhen, son and successor of the already mentioned First Knight of Louis XIV, that “I spend a part of the little bit of life that I have left to arrange the interests of my precious Archimedes.” 393 Christiaan had just fallen from grace with Colbert’s successor le Tellier after he had returned to France from more than a year of rest in Holland due to sickness. This time, however, Constantijn Sr. did not manage to secure high patronage and courtly favor for “his Archimedes” (Christiaan was fifty-five at that point), despite his own offensive via different courtly channels. 394

Huygens’s privileged membership of the Académie Royale des Sciences tends to be seen as the direct consequence and well-deserved reward of his exceptional talent and work.

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392 “Mon Pere m’ayant fait scaver comme il avoit pleu au Roy de luy accorder liberalement le Privilege qu’il avoit demandè a Sa Majestè en mon nom, pour l’usage des montres a Pendule sur mer, et comme en suite vous aviez eu la bontè de luy en faire avoir la depesche presqu’en mesme temps qu’il vous en avoit fait prier, et de la maniere la plus obligeante qu’on eust pu souhaiter, je croirois pescher contre mon devoir, si je ne taschois de vous tesmoigner par ces mots le ressentiment que j’ay de faveurs si signalees. Vous avez fait agir ensemble en ma faveur et vostre authorite Monseigneur, et vostre bonne volontè pour moy, dont desia par cy devant j’ay plus d’vne fois esprouvé [ondervinden, ervaren] les effects;” my translation.


394 Constantijn Sr. also wrote letters to the courtiers d’Avaux and Louvois, but it did not make a difference: MATTHEY, I. (1973) De Betekenis van de Natuur en de Natuurwetenschappen voor Constantijn Huygens. IN BOTS, H. (Ed.) Constantijn Huygens. Zijn plaats in geleerd Europa. Amsterdam, University Press Amsterdam., p385
Exceptional as his scientific work is, there was more to his elevation in position than a judgment based on purely scientific merit (as was the case when he fell from grace at the same court). The brand-new Académie des Sciences, with Christiaan Huygens one of its founding members, was, especially in its first decades, very intricately connected to the court at Versailles and was dominated by rules of courtly patronage – rather than those of a “modern” scientific institution.  

In this final chapter I would like to add a dimension to this view by exploring the more socio-political side of the story. Christiaan Huygens Jr. was not made a member of the Académie all of a sudden nor was this the first time that he had to do with Louis XIV or his first minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert. I argue that Christiaan Jr. was involved in a process of gift giving through which he became increasingly attached to the French King (or rather, his first minister Colbert). Starting with a generous stipend in 1663, the King continued with the granting of an important privilege (1665) and, in a final gesture, he made Christiaan a member of the Académie des Sciences in 1666. It was not just the name of Christiaan that created this successful patronage-relationship, however, it was also the name and promotional work of his father Constantijn Sr. that made a substantial contribution to the acknowledgment of Christiaan Jr.’s work and person. It was no coincidence that Constantijn Sr. was at the French Court – involved in intensive negotiations with the highest courtiers, including the King – while Christiaan’s courtly elevation took place. Christiaan’s father took every opportunity to promote his son’s work and talent and Christiaan could take profit from his father’s good position at the French Court. Thus it was appropriate that Constantijn Sr. formally expressed his gratitude to the King and Colbert when Christiaan was made a member of the Académie – gifts to Christiaan Huygens were also gifts to the Huygens family.

i. First moves – Christiaan Jr.’s regale

On September 22, 1663, Jean Chapelain reacted on a letter of Christiaan Jr.’s friend Nikolaas Heinsius, writing:

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You have acted wisely by not awaiting the permission of the gentlemen your patrons before expressing your feeling to the King and to Mister Colbert about the honor that you have received.\(^{396}\)

Just like Christiaan Jr., Heinsius received a pension from the King of France, but the Dutch Latinist and minister Heinsius had expressed some doubt to Chapelain about the consequences of such a gift – would the Dutch government not see this as an incorrect political move? Did he not need to ask permission first? On the contrary – thus Chapelain – his colleagues in the Dutch government ought to see it as an “honor for their republic that His Majesty [the French King] seeks and finds subjects there for his munificence in matters that in neither way concern public affairs.”\(^{397}\) The pension was presented as a gift without engagement. However, the King’s gift did at least have some strings attached – at least for Christiaan. Before Christiaan could eventually receive the pension from the hands of the King and Colbert,\(^{398}\) he needed to be instructed by Chapelain on the requirements of his expression of gratitude to the King, a performance that had to match “what you [Christiaan Jr.] are worth.”\(^{399}\)

Christiaan Jr. was ranked in the middle segment of the 1663 list of gratifications of Louis XIV to men of letters (see Appendix C for the complete list), measured by the height of the stipend (1200 livres). Several of Christiaan Jr.’s friends and contacts were also on the list (see Appendix C) that was issued in the summer of 1663:\(^{400}\) Sorbière (1000 livres), Petit (800 livres), Carcavy (1500 livres), Heinsius (1200 livres), Conrart (1500 livres) and Chapelain himself (3000 livres). Chapelain had been assigned by his patron Colbert to compose the list,\(^{401}\) and it was he who had included Christiaan on it. Chapelain’s role as a patron to Christiaan had already been important – showing Christiaan’s instruments and experiments to the Montmor-Académie (see Chapter VII, section iii) and bringing him in contact with other mathematicians and courtiers – and they seem to have come even closer with Constantijn Sr.’s coming to Paris in 1661 for the negotiations on the Principality of Orange (see Chapter VI, section ii). Chapelain’s patron, Colbert, was at the same time one of Constantijn Sr.’s most important

\(^{396}\) Huygens, C. (1888) OC, Vol. IV, No. 1150 (Sept. 22, 1663). “Vous avés fait sagement de ne pas attendre la permission de Messieurs vos patrons pour marquer au Roy et à Monsieur Colbert vostre ressentiment de la grace que vous avés receūe.”

\(^{397}\) Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1150 (Sept. 22, 1663). “Ils n’ont garde d’interpréter mal les bonnes intentions de ce grand prince; au contraire ils reputeurent à honneur pour leur republique que Sa Majesté y cherche et y trouve des sujets de sa munificence en matière qui ne regarde aucunement les affaires publiques.”

\(^{398}\) Late October 1663: Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1158 (Oct. 26, 1663)

\(^{399}\) Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1156 (Oct. 20, 1663)

\(^{400}\) The list is already mentioned in a letter from Oldenburg to Boyle: Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1128 (July 2, 1663)

\(^{401}\) Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1156 (Oct. 20, 1663)
diplomatic interlocutors, and Chapelain kept close track of Constantijn Sr.’s position at the court and in the negotiations. Chapelain expressed his servitude to both men and his great appreciation for Constantijn Sr.’s status at several points, showing great interest in a good relationship with the whole family Huygens. There is a good case to make that Chapelain discussed Christiaan Jr.’s inclusion on the list with Constantijn Sr. during one of their assemblies.

The next year, Christiaan Jr. received the same honor again: “[y]ou will again, without doubt, be excited by the new token of the continuation of his [His Majesty the King of France] esteem that you will receive soon (…)”.404

ii. Moving closer – the King’s privilege for the pendulum clock

In 1665, however, Colbert’s (and thus the King’s) patronage of Christiaan Jr. was taken to a new level. On March 6, 1665 Christiaan Jr. wrote to Moray:

My Father notifies me that, at his latest audience, he has demanded the Privilege [for the remontoir pendulum clock] from the King, who has accorded it quickly enough, and if he [Constantijn Sr.] is not forced to leave too early I hope that he will be accelerating the certificate there. 405

Christiaan obtained a privilege for his pendulum clock on sea, after years of technical preparation and strategic planning, granted by the King of France.

Recompenses for tactical investment in patronage-ties typically yielded “privileges” for inventors and authors. Though “procedures and conditions for the granting of privileges to

402 Ibid., Vol. III, No. 912 – Chapelain to Christiaan (Oct. 23, 1661): Chapelain told Christiaan that his father was invited to come for talks on the principality of Orange. HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. IV, No 967 (Feb. 8, 1662): Christiaan’s comment in February 1662 that his father was treated “honorably at that court there [Versailles]” was echoed by Chapelain later that year, who indicated that his father came up to his good reputation and that his dignity grew more and more: Christiaan to Lodewijk (Feb. 8, 1662), No 982 – Chapelain to Christiaan (Feb. 17, 1662)

403 Oeuvres, Vol. IV, No, 1024 (15 Jun. 1662)– Constantijn Jr. & Sr. seem to have been regular visitors of Chapelain. HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., No 875, Chapelain to Christiaan (Jul. 20, 1661) and HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., No 912, Chapelain to Christiaan (Oct. 23, 1661). HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. IV, No. 1152 (Oct. 5, 1663): Chapelain offered his services to Constantijn Sr.

404 “Vous y serés sans doute excité de nouueau par la nouuelle marque que vous receurez bientost de la continuation de son estime.” HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. V, No. 1241 (Jul. 12, 1664)

405 “Mon Pere me mande qu'il a demandè a sa derniere audience le Privilege au Roy, qui l'avait accordè aussi tost, et s'il n'est contraint trop tost a partir j'espere qu'il en sera expedier la depesche.” Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1345 (March 6, 1665)
texts and inventions did vary a great deal across early modern Europe [they] shared a key common denominator: privileges and payments to inventors were gifts, not rights.\textsuperscript{406} In Mario Biagioli’s words, the privilege could entail a patent, “but also other benefits like the authorization to set up business in a certain place, the granting of honorific titles, pensions, cash awards, free housing, capital investments in the invention, the permission to immigrate and assume citizenship, or the exemption from taxes, militia duty, and guilds regulations.”\textsuperscript{407}

The intimate bond between patronage and privilege entailed a requirement for ambitious inventors to participate actively in the higher social layers – though the threshold was high, the reward could supersede it.

Christiaan Huygens Jr. was not different from others in pursuing profitable patronage-relationships and privileges for his inventions – though he was much more successful in his endeavors than most. While Christiaan Jr.’s main efforts in obtaining privileges for his pendulum clocks were directed at the courts of Paris, London and at the Dutch States General, he speculated on getting privileges or recompenses for his invention in Spain, Denmark and Sweden, countries where he knew “people that I will be able to employ.”\textsuperscript{408}

The process of seeking for privileges for his inventions was one of speculation, a constant weighing of his possibilities, contacts and social position. “The right time” to ask for a privilege was dependent on a complex of sometimes-conflicting elements: the need for technical superiority and novelty of his instrument, the desire to have primacy and priority, the strength of his patronage and the occurrence of an favorable opportunity to ask for the privilege. On the one hand, Christiaan wanted to make sure that his pendulum clocks were as accurate as possible, “wanting to be sure about my statement before making noise about it.”\textsuperscript{409}

On the other hand, he had to make an assessment of the strategic situation: did he have enough high contacts to realize the privilege and would it give him more advantage than just (financial) recompense?

During his consecutive stays in Paris, London and The Hague, he laid contact with and obtained the patronage of important people, not just in order to obtain privileges at these

\textsuperscript{406} BIAGIOLI, M. (2006a) From Print to Patents: Living on Instruments in Early Modern Europe. History of Science, 44, 139-213., p147
\textsuperscript{407} Ibid., p147. See quote above in Introduction.
\textsuperscript{408} In a letter to Moray, Christiaan wrote: “Pour l’Espagne, le Danemarc et la Suede je scay des gens que j’y pourray emploier.” HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., Vol. IV, No. 1165 (Nov. 11, 1663). His most important contact for the court of Spain was Thevenot: Vol. IV, No. 1116 (May 25, 1663)
\textsuperscript{409} Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1266 (Oct. 31, 1664): “Je diffère toujours et trop peut estre a la demander, voulant estre seur de mon fait devant qu’en faire du bruit.”
courts, but also elsewhere. In Holland he sought contact with his old classmate, the Grandpensionary Johan de Witt, in England he enjoyed the brokerage of Robert Moray, Knight and Personal Councilor of the King for Scottish affaires, and in France he had a large network where the courtiers Jean Chapelain, Abbè de Beaufort, Mr. Chesnelong, Secretary to the council of Louis XIV and Carcavy were the most significant patrons and brokers (and later on Jean-Baptiste Colbert, first minister of Louis XIV).

The circumstances in England and the Dutch Republic probably were relatively less complicated than in France, for Christiaan had a good contact with Johan de Witt, the Dutch Grandpensionary (see below) and in London, with Robert Moray’s mediation, he had the Royal Society take the privilege. Abraham Hill, the Society’s treasurer took out the patent for the pendulum clock in March 1664 “to bee used at Sea for exact measureing of tyme; towards the finding of the longitude and knowing the true Course and place of A shipp.” Part of the deal, however, was that the revenue for the privilege would be shared, such that Christiaan Jr. would receive only a fourth. A second request by Christiaan Jr. in the Spring of 1665 for another privilege at the English Court after having received the Dutch patent, seems to have consumed a lot more time, however. Unfortunately, the details of this case remain obscure; they warrant further research.

The last few months before Christiaan Jr.’s patent-request to the King of France had been particularly crucial, as Christiaan had obtained a privilege for free with the Dutch States General through his lobby with his old study-mate, the Grandpensionary and mathematician Johan de Witt. Christiaan probably felt that this circumstance enhanced his chances of

410 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 1055 (Aug. 50, 1662)
412 After having received a privilege for his pendulum clock in March 1664, Christiaan Jr. stayed in close contact with Robert Moray about new possibilities for obtaining another privilege at the English Court. In HUYGENS, C. (1888) OC., No. 1255 (Sept, 19, 1664) Moray told Christiaan Jr. that “[j]e fais estat demander au Roy la patente qu’il m’a promise il y a long temps.” It would be impossible, however, for Christiaan to request the privilege on his name, for, as Moray wrote in Vol. V, 1256 (Sept 23, 1664): “Ce qui me fait souvenir de vous aduertir que le vostre [nom] ne peut pas estre dans la patente que nou allons demander pour les Pendules sur Mer, non plus, pour la mesme raison si vous nestes naturalisé.” Christiaan Jr. accepted this condition: Vol. V, No. 1261 (Oct 21, 1664): “Qu’il peut demander le privilege pour les horologes au seul nom de Brus, pourveu qu’il me donne assurance pour ma part, comme s’il estoit donné à nous 2.” Probably the patent was requested in the Spring of 1665 (see MAHONEY, M. S. (1980) Christian Huygens: The Measurement of Time and Longitude at Sea. IN BOS, H. J. M., RUDWICK, M. J. S., SNELDERS, H. A. M. & VISSE, R. P. W. (Eds.) Studies on Christian Huygens: invited papers from the Symposium on the Life and Work of Christian Huygens, Amsterdam, 22-25 August 1979. Lisse, Swets & Zeitlinger., note 57, but this needs further research.
getting a privilege with the French King, as he noted that he wrote to his father in December 1664: “[p]rivilege obtained [in the Republic] can say to King where I stand.”414 Two months later, after his father had indicated that he had already discussed the possibility of obtaining a privilege during negotiations with the King,415 Christiaan asked his father to formally request it.416 Christiaan actively searched for other high courtiers who might take this commission in case his father had to leave Paris to go to the Principality of Orange in the south of France before he had had the chance to discuss the request in a formal audience – the names of Adrien Auzout and Abbè de Beaufort (both favored courtiers in Paris) were mentioned by Christiaan and Moray.417 Eventually, it was his father who requested the privilege and the certificate (the patent-letter) was accorded very quickly on his request too.418

As mentioned above, privileges were gifts, not rights, and the privilege granted to Christiaan Jr. by the King of France should not be regarded otherwise. As Jean Chapelain expressed it, it was a gift by the King,

who has informed you so nobly of his kindnesses, and who has just recently given you a new mark of his esteem through his concession of the Privilege that Monsieur your Father has asked him for your Invention […] 419

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1278 (Nov.-Dec. 1664) In his letter Vol. V, No. 1290 (25 Dec. 1664), Christiaan jotted “Beaumont et de Wit pour rien,” indicating the fact that he had received the privilege for his pendulum clock at the States General for free. I tend to disagree with Biagioli’s judgment BIAGIOLI, M. (2006a) From Print to Patents: Living on Instruments in Early Modern Europe. *History of Science*, 44, 139-213., p159 that the fact that Christiaan “obtained them [the Dutch privileges] at little cost but most of the times gratis” probably “reflected the power of his father’s connections more than the actual costs of patenting on the Continent.” It is true that connections played an important role, but in this case I would argue that Christiaan himself had the best connection with Johan de Witt – they had shared classes under Van Schooten and had kept contact. De Witt’s relationship with Constantijn Sr. probably was more problematic – both men were front men of opposing factions: de Witt a Republican and Constantijn Sr. the highest courtier at the Court of the Oranges.


415 Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1325 (Feb. 6, 1665)

416 Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1325 (Feb. 5, 1665): “qu’il [Constantijn Sr.] demande le Privilege en France. Que je m’offre de payer le sceau [zegel]. Que peut estre il pourra laisser commissione a quelqu’un.”

417 Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1329 (Feb. 13, 1665). De Beaufort was described by Moray as having much credit at the Court in Versailles and knowing his way well between *honnetes hommes*. Auzout is mentioned by Christiaan as a possible replacement of his father: Vol. V, No. 1335 (Feb. 26, 1665).

418 Christiaan expressed his appreciation for his father’s efforts: Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1344 (Mar. 5, 1665) after Constantijn Sr. had requested the privilege with the King.

Therefore it would be sensible for Christiaan Jr. to dedicate the following treatise on the pendulum clock to the King. 420

iii. Success – Founding member of the Académie Royale des Sciences

Not much later Christiaan was asked to become a founding member of the Académie, after first receiving another “present” of 500 escus, awarded by the King. 421 With the membership of the Académie and an income of 6000 livres, Christiaan Jr.’s patronage by the King became a fact. This laudable event was reason for Constantijn Sr. to send Colbert a letter to thank him for his “protection” of his son, stating that the “clemence” of the King and Colbert outweighed the efforts he had done as a father to care for his son’s interests. 422 In the following years, Constantijn Sr. would repeatedly assure his and his son’s gratitude for the King’s and Colbert’s patronage and favors. 423

Christiaan Huygens Jr.’s membership of the Académie des Sciences came at the end of a process of obtaining the influential patronage of the French King, Louis XIV and his first minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Christiaan Jr.’s membership has often been taken as a singular point of attention, appearing almost out of the blue, while in fact this neglects an important socio-political process preceding this great honor for Christiaan. I think it is for this reason that there has been paid hardly any attention to Constantijn Sr.’s role in these mechanics of patronage.

Though it remains hard to determine the exact influence that Constantijn Sr. exerted on Christiaan Jr.’s position at the French Court and within the Académie, his role in obtaining the privilege for the pendulum clock with the French King and his letters to Colbert concerning his son seem to be important indicators that his influence was substantial. They seem to betray a much greater significance for Constantijn Sr.’s activities at Versailles for the history of science than has been supposed previously. The audiences for diplomacy and the natural sciences often largely overlapped at the greater courts, bringing the “fields of

420 Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1349 (Mar. 10, 1665)
421 Ibid., Vol. V, No. 1464 (Sept. 17, 1665): Christiaan Jr. wrote a thank you note to Louis XIV and indicated that he awaited the King’s orders on when and how to come to Paris. Christiaan also sent a thank you note to minister Colbert: Vol. V, No. 1463 (Sept. 17, 1665)
operation” of Constantijn Sr. and Christiaan Jr. very close together. For this reason, Constantijn Sr., while residing in Paris for diplomatic negotiations, could be of tremendous help for his son's career in the natural sciences.
IX. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to question the persistent tension between the scholarship surrounding Constantijn Huygens Sr. and that of his son, Christiaan Huygens Jr.. My conclusion is that much of this tension is the direct consequence of distinct disciplinary foci and that extra attention needs to be paid to the broad intersection between these two men’s life and work. Even though much of the connection between father and son lies in the socio-political realm, its significance stretches out over different fields of study.

My starting position has been the awareness that both men, despite their differences, had a lot in common. They shared the same house for decades, were part and parcel of the same family and moved in much the same social milieus. Constantijn Sr., one of the Dutch “national poets,” in fact put much more time in his work as the secretary to the Dutch Stadholder than in writing poetry, and if he filled his empty hours with versifying, he often did so with an eye on improving his social and professional contacts. Using the diplomatic network of the Oranges, he sent his own works to connections at many courts and universities and later sometimes added work of his son Christiaan Jr. He shared his great interest in the natural sciences, music, poetry and the classical languages with his sons, providing Christiaan Jr. and his brothers with an education at their home that was comparable to the educational program he later administered for the young prince and future Stadholder Willem III. Constantijn Sr.’s high socio-professional ambitions were not just a private matter – they were ambitions for his whole family, each of his sons included.

Christiaan Jr., “the brilliant scientist,” had great interest in music, drawing, and also wrote poetry. Raised in a family of diplomats, with an education steering in the direction of diplomacy or another function in public service under an aristocratic ruler, Christiaan Jr. abided by his father’s aspirations and was drawn in the diplomatic circles completely. While he worked a substantial part of his time on the invention and development of scientific instruments and did brilliant work in mathematics and astronomy, he also continuously moved in the highest echelons of society, frequenting the houses of ambassadors and other high diplomats in Paris, London and The Hague. He was introduced to courtiers and aristocrats from all over Europe by his father and many of his journeys were also arranged for him by Constantijn Sr..

At first sight it is easier to see the differences than the similarities between the two Huygens, but their correspondence and career paths do not seem to warrant these primary
observations. It is not true that Christiaan Jr. swung out of the orbit of his father’s ambitions and had to determine his own path the moment he became seriously interested in the natural sciences – which was during his adolescence. Rather, Christiaan Jr.’s talent for the natural sciences, just like his father’s for poetry and music, seems to have been seen mainly as a very good asset by his father to settle his name and successfully enter courtly circles. This argument is strengthened by the fact that Constantijn Sr. actively used his son’s inventions and experiments to strengthen his own position at court. It was not until Christiaan Jr. began a process of courting the patronage of Louis XIV that a position outside the realm of diplomacy became a real option. In this, Christiaan Jr.’s ambitions and those of his father completely coincided.

The Huygens family had already been working together as a team on the development, production, and distribution of Christiaan Jr.’s scientific instruments for some years when Christiaan received his first gratuity from the French King. The gift was an indication that Christiaan Jr.’s name and fame had been successfully finding its way in the chambers and halls of the French Court, something the Huygens-team had been working on steadily. Christiaan had been given the honor of the gratuity by the courtier Jean Chapelain, friend of Christiaan and his father and client of Louis XIV’s first minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert. There seems to have been a striking “coincidence” of factors: Constantijn Sr.’s years in Paris for diplomatic negotiations with Colbert and the King, both Christiaan Jr.’s and Constantijn Sr.’s good contact with Chapelain, and Chapelain’s central role in Colbert’s program to attract savants and men of science. To my mind this complex of facts is not particularly coincidental, but rather forms a proof that the worlds of Constantijn Sr. and his son Christiaan Jr. have been kept apart unjustifiably. The realms of diplomacy, the court and natural and experimental philosophy were in fact intimately connected. As Christiaan Jr.’s ambitions in the natural sciences came to fit in those of his father – gaining a favorable socio-professional position by seeking patronage from one of the most important rulers of Europe – Constantijn Sr., influential and ambitious, could be of very great help for his son.

The worlds of Constantijn Sr. and Christiaan Jr. were alike in many ways. Christiaan Jr. needed courtly manner books to keep up with the latest finesses of civilized behavior; Constantijn Sr. thankfully used the presentation of his son’s magical lantern and telescopes to create favorable circumstances for his diplomatic negotiations. Aside from being a very
talented and productive inventor, mathematician and astronomer, Christiaan Jr. needed the help of his father to become the best-paid member of the *Académie Royale des Sciences*.\footnote{STROUP, A. (1990) *A company of scientists: botany, patronage, and community at the Seventeenth-century Parisian Royal Academy of Sciences*, Berkeley, University of California Press., Appendix, p250. For three years (1666 – 1668) Christiaan Jr. was the best-paid member of the *Académie*: 5,000 *livres* in 1666 and 6,000 *livres* in 1667 and 1668. In 1669 Cassini I for the first time received a higher salary than Huygens: 6,750 *livres*.}

**Acknowledgments**

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Appendix A

The following list of books is a selection from the titles, included on Constantijn Huygens Sr.’s library auction catalogue: Huygens, Constantijn Sr., Rijksmuseum Meermanno-Westreenianum & Stockum W.P. van Pub. (1903) Catalogus der bibliothek van Constantyn Huygens verkocht op de groote zaal van het hof te ’s-Gravenhage 1688. Opnieuw uitgegeven naar het eenig overgebleven exemplaar, W.P. van Stockum c.s zoon.

Manner books & educational treatises:
- p. 23 - 178. Théatre d’Honneur c.s de Chevalerie de Wilson, Paris, 1641
- p. 25 - 235. Erasmi Opera Omnia, 8 vol. Basil. 1540
- p. 27 - 311. Théatre d’Honneur c.s de Chevalerie, par Wilson, Par. 1648
- p. 27 - 22. Traité de la Noblesse, Paris, 1678
- p. 35 - 240. Favyn Théâtre d’Honneur c.s de Chevalerie, 2 vol. par. 1620
- p. 43 - 55. Le parfait Courtisan.
  - 43. Traité de la Cour
- p. 48 - 336. Le Fâvory de Cour
- p. 54 - 56. Caractère de l’homme sans Passions, en veau
  - 41. Education d’un Prince
- p. 55 - 62. Traité de la Cour, en veau
  - 73. Actions du Jeune Gentilhomme
- p. 56 - 155. Varillas éducations des Princes

Behavior in other cultures/ambassadorial reports:
- p. 21 - 107. Dudley Digges compleat Ambassador, Lond. 1665
- p. 26 - 287. Lettres c.s Ambassade de Canaye, 3 vol. Par. 1655
- p. 27 - 20. Ambassade de Figueroa en perse, par. 1667
- p. 28 - 159. Miraei Diplomata Belgica, Brux. 1627
- p. 35 - 537. Voyage d’Espagne, Par. 1665. En veau.
- p. 39 - 487. Us c.s Coutumes de la Mer Bourd. 1661
- p. 39 - 495. La Nobilita di Verona di Tinto, Verona, 1592
  - 142. Recreazione di Savii
- p. 46 - 196. Wicquefort Memoires des Ambassadeurs
  - 201. Voyage du Prince de Condé
- p. 59 - 341. Memoires de Hollande
  - 382. Deux de la Hollande
- p. 60 - 405. La France Démasquée

On Princes & power:
- p. 19 - 34. Begraeffenis van Sijne Hoogheyt Fredrick Hendrick/seeur curieux afgeset/ Amst.1651

Frederic. Henrico, Amst. 1639
- p. 42 - 599. Opere di Machiavelli 1550
- p. 46 - 197. Cabinet du Roi de France
- p. 47 - 283. Secance de l’Empereur
- p. 51 - 543. Le Prince de Machiavel
- p. 54 - 51. Etat de la France
- p. 55 - 87. Etat de la France
- p. 57 - 191. Estat de la France de 1680. 2 vol.
  - 199. Nouveau Interet des Princes
- p. 58 - 279. Court and Kitchin of Elizabeth
- p. 59 - 584. Etat de la France de 1665. 2 vol. en veau

Art of loving
- p. 49 - 386. Passions Egarrées
- p. 57 - 256. Amours des Dames Illustres
Study of Medailles/lodestones/emblemata:
- p. 28 - 67. *Burgundia Mundi lapus lydus Emblemata*, Antv. 1639
- p. 28 - 91. *Kinschoi Virtutes Cardinales Emblemata*, Antv. 1645
- p. 41 - 552. *Le Pois Discours sur les medailles*, Par. 1579
- p. 48 - 354. *Los emblemas de Alciato*
- p. 57 - 232. *Zevecotii Emblemata*

Promenade & art of speaking/writing
- p. 55 - 80. *Philosophie pour la conversation*
- p. 55 - 110. *Les Fleurs de bien dire*
- p. 59 - 537. *Conversations Galantes*
- p. 60 - 460. *Instruction pour connaître les bons Fruits*

Art of gardening & managing a house-hold
- p. 34 - 270. *The English House-wife*, Lond. 163?
- p. 44 - 118. *Art of Husbandry.*
- p. 49 - 378. *The Good Wife*
- p. 59 - 392. *Jardinier Royal*
Appendix B

The following list of books is a selection from the titles, included on Christiaan Huygens Jr.’s library auction catalogue (1695), published in: Huygens, Christiaan Jr. (1888) Oeuvres Complètes, La Haye, M. Nijhoff, Vol. XXII, p 816 (70pp., not paginated).

Manner books & educational treatises:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Il Cortegiano del Comte Baldecor Cortigiane</td>
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<td>54</td>
<td>L’Homme de Cour</td>
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<td>L’honnête homme</td>
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<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>L’Ecole des Princes</td>
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<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>L’Esprit de Cour par Barry</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>Traité de la Cour ou Instruction des Courtians</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>L’Homme de Cour</td>
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<td>Variallo Educaci des Princes</td>
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<td>Education des Dames pour la conduite de l’Esprit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Instructions pour un jeune Seigneur</td>
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<td>Galatee ou l’art de plaire</td>
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<td>The gentle number, of England’s brave Gentleman</td>
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<td>La Rhetorique Françoise</td>
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<td>Dictionnaire des Pretièses</td>
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Families and illustrious people:

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<td>22</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>Sanzovini delle Famiglie d’Italie</td>
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Horse-riding:

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<td>37</td>
<td>La pratique du Chevalier, ou l’Exercice de monter à Cheval, ibid. 1655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>The Perfect Horseman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

125
Art of loving
- p. 54 - 287. L'usage des passions par Senault
- p. 38 - 400. Voeni Emblemata Amoris, Antw: 1608
fig.
- p. 54 - 290. Amoure des dames illustres
- p. 340. Les Dames illustres
- p. 56 - 513. Traite de la Jalousie
- p. 57 - 603. Morale Galante ou l'Art de bien aimer
- p. 59 - 767. Amours des grands hommes
- p. 64 - 1180. The art of making Love

Art of gardening & managing a house-hold
- p. 34 - 240. The English Husbandman, London 1635
- p. 40 - 432. Booke of Husbandrie
- p. 49 - 551. The Art of Husbandry
- p. 54 - 527. Le Jardinier Royal

Behavior in other cultures/ambassadorial reports:
- p. 17 - 109. L'Ambassade du Japon, Amst. 1680. Fig.
- p. 27 - 408. Ambassades du Cardinal du Perron, Paris 1623
- p. 44 - 200. Voyage en divers Etats de l'Europe, par le P. Avid
- p. 47 - 376. Le Guide des moeurs
- p. 49 - 540. Temple Observations of the Netherlands
- p. 49 - 618. Temple Miscellanea and interests of the Empire, Sweden, Denmark, Spain, Holland, France, &c
- p. 55 - 402. Traité de la Civilité Française, c'est point d'honneur
- p. 57 - 554. Veritable Maniere de Vauban
- p. 57 - 576. Voyage en Danemar
- p. 58 - 581. Voyage d'Espagne
- p. 59 - 608. Différents dans les Moeurs
- p. 59 - 698. Theatre des beaux Esprits
- p. 59 - 726. Grand sublime dans les Moeurs
- p. 59 - 757. Denouement des intrigues
- p. 60 - 804. A Manuel of Controversies
- p. 60 - 842. Memoires des Ambassadors
- p. 60 - 851. Intrigues de Rome
- p. 60 - 863. Denouement des intrigues
- p. 61 - 972. Intrigues de Rome
- p. 61 - 992. Controvers Familiere
- p. 63 - 1089. Denouement des Intrigues du Tems
- p. 65 - 1207. Le cose notabili di Venetia
- p. 65 - 1527. Pratique de vertu et de Devotion pour les Ames qui ont a vivre dans le Monde

Being secretary, ambassador/diplomat:
- p. 40 - 467. Conseiller d'Etat par d'Ablancourt, 1643
- p. 45 - 259. State-Worthies or the State-men and Favourites of England
- p. 46 - 286. Memoires touchant les Ambassadors par Wicquefort
- p. 55 - 345. Memoires des Ambassadors
- p. 55 - 403. Traite de politique concernant le choix des Ambassadors
- p. 59 - 768. Ministre parfait
- p. 59 - 769. Reflexions ou Memoires des Ambassadors
- p. 60 - 867. Parfait Ambassadeur
- p. 61 - 953. Le Parfait Ambassadeur

Study of Medailles/lodestones:
- p. 53 - 240. Introduction à l'Histoire par la connaissance des Medailles par Patin

On Princes & power:
- p. 47 - 387 La Geographie du Prince
- p. 48 - 474. The Workes of that great Monarch King Charles the I.
- p. 476. Burnet the History of the Rights of Princes
- p. 493. Genealogie of the Prince George c'est Anna
- p. 49 - 550. French Monarchy
- p. 49 - 579. The Interest of the Princes
Folios – imprints of palaces, gardens, relations of ceremonies and festivities:
p. 64 - 1181. The Court and character of King James, bis
    - 14. Marche du Roi passant le Pont-neuf, Maison de St. Cloud, Maison de Fontainebleau
p. 68 - 55. 5 Stucks van Palazzo, è Giardino d’Italia
    - 56. 53 Stucks de tous les Palais du Roi d’Espagne
p. 69 - 80. 40 Stucks L’entrée pompeuse du Pape Clement VII è de l’Empereur Charles V. à Bologna, rarissimo
    - 82. 4 Stucks Entrée du Roi à Dunkerke, Vue de la Ville de Salins, de Besançon, è Dole, Fontainebleau, très-beau de Paris.
    - 83. 10 Marche du Roi passant le Pont-neuf, vuë de Versailles, vuë du Château de Vincennes, vuë de la Maison de S. Cloud, vuë de Fontainebleau, vuë de la Maison de Seaux.
    - 5. La pompeuse è magnifique Ceremonie du Sare du Roi Louis XIV
    - 6. Courses de Têtes è de Bagues, faites par le Roi, è Princes, è Seigneurs de sa Cour en 1662. Fig.
    - 7. Les plaisirs de l’Isle enchantée, Course de Bague, Collation, Comédie, Danses, èc. fait à Versailles en 1664. De l’Imprimerie du Louvre, fig.
    - 10. Tapisseries du Roi, où sont représented les quatre Elèmens, è les 4. Saisons, avec les Devises, Paris 1679. Fig.
    - 14. Decoration è Machines apprêtées au Nopces de Thetys, Ballet Royal, Paris fig.
    - 15. Signorum veterum icones, fig.
Appendix C

The list below contains the names of poets, writers, men of letters, savants and men of the sciences who were included on Louis XIV's list of gratifications from 1663. The list was originally published in: *Comptes sur les bâtiments du Roi, sous le règne de Louis XIV. Tome I. Paris 1881. In-4°*


Au Sieur De la Chambre, médecin ordinaire du roi, excellent homme pour la physique et pour la connaissance des passions et des sens, dont il a fait divers ouvrages, fort estimés, une pension de………………………………………………………………………………… 2000.—

Au Sieur Conrart, lequel sans connaissance d'aucune autre langue que sa maternelle, est admirable pour juger de toutes les productions de l'esprit, une pension de………………… 1500.—

Au Sieur Le Clerc, excellent poète français……………………………………………… 600.—

Au Sieur Pierre Corneille, premier poète dramatique du monde……………………… 2000.—

Au Sieur Desmaretz, le plus fertile auteur, et doué de la plus belle imagination qui ait jamais été……………………………………………………………………………………………………… 1200.—

Au Sieur Mesnage, excellent pour la critique des pièces…………………………… 2000.—

Au Sieur abbé de Pure, qui écrit l'histoire en latin pur et élégant…………………………… 1000.—

Au Sieur Boyer, excellent poète français……………………………………………… 800.—

Au Sieur Corneille le jeune, bon poète français et dramatique…………………………… 1000.—

Au Sieur Molière, excellent poète comique…………………………………………… 1000.—

Au Sieur Benserade, poète français for agréable………………………………………… 1500.—

Au père Le Cointe, habile pour l'histoire………………………………………………… 1500.—

Au Sieur Huet, de Caen, grand personnage qui a traduit Origène……………………… 1500.—

Au Sieur Charpentier, poète et orateur français………………………………………… 1200.—

Au Sieur abbé Cottin, poète et orateur français………………………………………… 1200.—

Au Sieur Sorbière, savant ès lettres humaines…………………………………………… 1000.—

Au Sieur Douvier, idem……………………………………………………………………… 500.—

Au Sieur Ogier, consommé dans la théologie et les belles-lettres……………………… 1500.—

Au Sieur Vattier, professant parfaitement la langue arabe……………………………… 600.—

Au l'abbé Le Vayer, savant ès belles-lettres…………………………………………………… 1000.—

Au Sieur Le Laboureur, habile pour l'histoire…………………………………………… 1200.—

Au Sieur de Sainte-Marthe, habile pour l'histoire……………………………………… 1200.—

Au Sieur Du Perrier, poète latin…………………………………………………………… 800.—

Au Sieur Fléchier, poète français et latin………………………………………………… 800.—

Au Sieur de Valois frères, qui écrivent l'histoire en latin………………………………….. 2400.—

Au Sieur Mauri, poète latin………………………………………………………………… 600.—

Au Sieur Racine, poète français…………………………………………………………… 800.—

Au Sieur abbé de Bourzeyzs, consommé dans la théologie positive scolastique, dans l'histoire, les lettres humaines, et les langues orientales…………………………………… 3000.—

Au Sieur Chapelain, le plus grand poète français qui ait jamais été, et du plus solide jugement………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………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dans l'histoire……………………………………………………………………………….. 3600.—

Au Sieur Viviani, idem par gratification et pour luy donner des marques de l'estime que S. M. fait de son merite………………………………………………………………………………… 1200.—
Au Sieur Quinaut, idem…………………………………………………………………… 800.—

6 décembre : au Sieur Lheritier, idem…………………………………………………………… 1000.—
9 avril 1665 : au Sieur Vuangenseil, idem………………………………………………………… 1500.—
21 septembre 1665 : au Sieur Brandon, par gratification et pour luy donner moyen de continuer ses études .......................................................... 400.—

Au Sieur Ollier de Besac, idem……………………………………………………………… 600.—
Au Sieur abbé Olier, bien versé en théologie, et pour l'obliger de vacquer aux belles-lettres……………………………………………………………………………………………………… 800.—

Au Sieur Carcavy, bien versé dans les mathematiques………………………………… 1500.—
Au Sieur Perrot d'Ablancourt, bien versé dans les lettres et principalement dans les langues…………………………………………………………………………………………………… 1500.—

Au Sieur Gombault, bien versé dans la poésie francoise………………………………… 1200.—
Au Sieur Viliotto, Savoyard, bien versé dans la médecine et dans les humanitez……… 600.—
Au Sieur Gratiany, bien versé dans les belles-lettres et qui excelle dans la poésie italienne………………………………………………………………………………………………… 1500.—
Au Sieur Corringius, Allemand, fameux professeur en histoire dans l'Académie à Helmestad…………………………………………………………………………………………………… 900.—

Au Sieur Hevelius, Flamand, consul vétéran de la ville de Dantzic, savant dans l'astronomie………………………………………………………………………………………………… 1200.—
Au Sieur Beklerus, bien versé dans l'histoire et dans les humanitez…………………… 900.—

Au Sieur Huggens, Hollandois, grand mathématicien, inventeur de l'horloge de la pendule…………………………………………………………………………………………………. 1200.—

Au Sieur Gevartius, Flamand, naguères secrétaire de la ville d'Anvers, en consideration de sa profonde érudition…………………………………………………………………………………………. 1200.—
Au Sieur Heinsius, Hollandois, grand poëte et orateur latin……………………………. 1200.—
Au Sieur Vossius, Hollandois, excellent dans la géographie…………………………….. 1200.—
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