De taal der hartstochten. De visie van drie achttiende-eeuwse Nederlandse schrijvers op muziek en hara relatie met de dichtkunst
Strategier, P.E.M.

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Summary

My research is an exploration of eighteenth-century Dutch music aesthetics. It covers the period between 1750 and 1830, during which the principle of imitating nature was a subject of debate, and the aesthetic norms shifted from imitation to expression. Concepts about music and its relation to the art of poetry played an important role in this. In the second half of the eighteenth century many essays about music and its relationship to poetry were published, particularly in Germany, England and France, and in aesthetic discussions painting lost its significance in poetry in favor of music. By the end of the eighteenth century, poetry and music were no longer seen as imitating arts, but as arts in which expression had a central place.

The attention that was paid in the above mentioned countries at that time to music and its tie to poetry was related to the upsurge of the opera, cantata and lieder in these countries. Up to now it was not known how many treatises regarding this relationship were published during this period in the Netherlands. I put the views of Dutch authors in an international perspective and catalogue them.

In the first chapter I account for my choice of subject and the time-frame of my research period. I also give the result of my inventarisation of available original discourses that appeared between 1750 and 1830 in the Dutch language about music and its relationship to poetry. The organist, composer and music-theoretician Jacob Wilhelm Lustig (1706-1796) from Groningen, the poet-theoretician Hieronymus van Alphen (1746-1803) and the organist and carillonneur Jan Robbers (1753-1830) from Rotterdam appear to be the only ones in our country to have published views about this relationship in the eighteenth century. Lustig’s ‘Muzikaal e Digtkunde’ (1756), Van Alphen’s ‘Aanmerkingen’ (1783) and Robbers’s ‘Tweetal Proeven van Verhandelingen over de Muzijk, als beeldende kunst, en de Muzikaale Dichtkunde, in verband met de compositie van zangmuzijk’ (1828) respectively form a unique combination, because each one was written from a different perspective. Lustig writes as music-theoretician, Van Alphen as a poet, and Robbers takes the viewpoint of a composer. These three texts encompass a period of over seventy years and they treat aspects of the link between music and poetry that have been discussed internationally.

In the second chapter I give an overall picture of both the most accepted eighteenth-century opinions about music and its relation to poetry and of the development of opera and cantata in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. This survey was needed to under-
stand the theories of the three Dutchmen.

In the third chapter I describe the musical activities of Lustig, Van Alphen and Robbers, and the musical climate in which their music aesthetical treatises developed. I also give a synopsis of their discourses and I characterize the sources on which they are based.

In the fourth chapter I analyse the thoughts of the three Dutch pioneers about four topics of the international discussion: the essence of music, the Ursprache (primeval language), the recitative (and coupled to this the matter of musicality or nonmusicality of certain languages), and the affect theories.

In chapter five I come to a synthesis and I show the importance of the three authors for the development of music aesthetics in the Netherlands. I also explain why this subject received less attention in here than elsewhere.

Lustig, Van Alphen and Robbers all regarded poetry and music as a unity which they characterize as ‘the language of the passions’. This expression is related to the concept of primeval language which was in vogue internationally with art-philosophers. Inspired by the belief in the perfection of the musical-poetic primeval language English and French authors, later also German ones and my three Dutch authors, publish essays about the relation between poetry and music. All of them believe that the original unity allowed an optimal interplay of both art forms as ‘language of passions’.

While Robbers bases himself on a limited number of texts which represent mostly the traditional way of thinking, Lustig and Van Alphen manifest themselves as erudite authors who richly annotate their discourses. They form their opinions about music and its relation to poetry by linking different intellectual currents. I show that Lustig and Van Alphen treat the sources in a very eclectic way. Both choose those arguments which most appeal to them. In the music aesthetic notions of Lustig the thoughts of Mattheson and Krause are easily traced, and in Van Alphen the voice of Sulzer dominates. Both Dutch authors comment on the aesthetics of Batteux, and each of the three Dutchmen tests his opinions about recitative and musical and nonmusical languages facing Rousseau.

My analysis shows that Lustig, Van Alphen and Robbers all follow the same basic reasoning that the original unity of poetry and music was a language of the passions and about the way that language should sound in the double media of the aria and recitative of opera and cantata. They interweave principles from classical rhetoric, affect
theories and classicistic - normative - art theories with ideas from the new theories of expression. While the classicistic art norms dictated that poetry and music have to imitate an ideal, logical reality which submits imagination and passion to a logical analysis, theories of expression emphasize the individuality in expressions of passions.

As a result, divergent and contradictory views appear in the argumentation of the three Dutch men. Because many eighteenth-century authors worked by way of compiling, they encounter a combination of old and new notions in virtually all of their source-material, one author leaning toward a rational, normative approach of poetry and music, while the other propagates the individual expression of emotions.

The blending of classicistic thinking with ideas of expression is an important aspect of the aesthetic heritage of philosophers, poets and musician far into the nineteenth century. The shifting of aesthetic standards that occurs during the course of the eighteenth century is consequently not a straightforward process, and this explains why the time difference between the publications of Lustig, Van Alphen and Robbers did not lead to substantial differences in their ideas about music and its relationship to poetry. Similarly their different approaches lead to essential differences in their views of the both art forms.

I reach the conclusion that two factors played a crucial role in the fusing of old and new norms of the three Dutch authors and their contemporaries: 1) the enormous influence of the centuries-old rhetoric tradition and 2) the eighteenth-century belief in the eminence of a musico-poetic Ursprache. On the one hand, the rhetoric tradition makes them cling to the universal normative theories of art, on the other, the Ursprache serves as a historical argument for new norms that accord with the theories of expression.

I have found that Lustig, Van Alphen and Robbers all make use of traditional norms when they describe the blending of poetry and music from the perspective of a poet. All three authors argue for a precise poetic imitation of the passions, and they propose guidelines for the choice of words, rhyme, rhythm and metre in aria and recitative.

However, as soon as they try to define the essence of music, they argue in terms of theories of expression. This is evident in their guidelines for the musical imitation of passions in the aria and recitative. A basic demand for composers is that they invoke the passions to
be expressed within themselves: they must feel what they express. Lustig as well as Van Alphen and Robbers propose general guidelines for the musical setting of aria and recitative, but in the end they conclude that the composer has to be guided by his own ‘judgement’ and ‘taste’: flexibility in applying the rules is laudable. Their guidelines give more leeway for the composer than for the poet.

My three authors hardly consider instrumental music, because its musical language is vague. This viewpoint belongs to the traditional, normative art theory where due for the demand for clarity and strictness in musical imitation only vocal music merits the status of true art. The three authors view the blending of poetry and music as an expressive and communicative medium, which has to serve an educative goal. Composer and poet have to engage the mind, imagination and emotions of those who listen. To reach this goal, they have to obey certain rules. After all, according to normative art theories the ‘ars’, the system of rules, stimulates the optimal development of the ‘natura’, the talent of the artist.

In contrast, theories of expression characterize music as the pre-eminent art of emotions. Instrumental music achieves a model status in this theory because musical expressions are universal. They now serve as an example for poetry. This opinion relativizes the existing rules and increases interest for the ‘natura’ at the expense of the ‘ars’. The mimetic principle remains however, the starting point in this theory is that expression is to represent inner experiences.

Of the three authors Lustig is the one to make the most progressive statements about music. This undoubtedly stems from the fact that he is the only one who uses, next to the mimetic approach, also the mathematical one, which allows room to instrumental music. This way he can define the essence of instrumental music as a universal language of the heart which does not require words and can abandon the old rhetoric relation between music and language. He also anticipates the Romantic cult of genius by placing great importance on the imagination and the susceptibility of the mind of the musician to create music from personal emotions. Lustig does not describe this as a creation from within but as the result of a contemplation of nature.

Van Alphen too writes enthusiastically about the effect of musical expression on the imagination and inner sensitivity of the poet. Music engenders him as a poet in extasy, and this gives him an overwhelming urge to share his experience with others.

Finally, Robbers states just like Lustig, but only in one passa-
ge, that music rises above the material world through its abstraction. He does not follow this up by rejecting the mimetic principle, because in his eyes music as an imitating art has a higher status. Thus he is the most conservative of the three authors.

Compared to their French, German and English counterparts, Lustig, Van Alphen and Robbers formed their opinion about the cohesion of poetry and music in a deprived musical environment. While in France, Germany and England the music-loving courts, church music and a network of musical facilities in the towns and cities created an atmosphere that raised opera, cantata and lieder to a high level in the eighteenth century, public music had very limited importance in our country until late in the eighteenth century as a result of the social-political and especially the religious culture here.

Thus, for instance, the royal band of Willem V has barely any public impact, and the downright hostile attitude of the reformed church toward music stunted the growth of public interest for music. Dutch towns, with the exception of Amsterdam, were not large enough for the development of flourishing musical centers. The practice of professional music in most towns was limited to organists and a few musicians in the collegia musica, paid out of town funds. In contrast to the countries surrounding us, Holland did not have an extensive musical infrastructure, and as a result there was little room for intensive public debates about new music-aesthetical insights.

Van Alphen, who gave important impulses to the development of music aesthetics originated with Lustig, had no knowledge of Lustig's musical activities, and most likely was not even aware of his existence. The first results of Lustig's pioneering work were however, noticeable during Van Alphen's time, not in music aesthetics in the strict sense, but in general music theory: a growing number of articles about music theoretical topics in the literary magazines and the music theory publications of some contemporaries praisingly referred to Lustig.

During Robber's time the fundamentals for music theory in general and the music aesthetics in particular started to expand rapidly. *Amphion*, generally recognized as the first Dutch music magazine, started in 1818 and Robbers witnessed shortly before his death the founding of the 'Maatschappij tot Bevordering der Toonkunst' in 1829.

Robbers fulfills, as I have shown, a minor role in music aesthetics. He was primarily influential in the music culture of Rotterdam, the town he served as an all-round musician for sixty years. His
relevance for music aesthetics in the Netherlands stems from the fact that during the early nineteenth century he was the only one in our country to publish articles about philosophical subjects related to music.

Van Alphen, whose importance as an aesthetician is widely recognised, should also be recognised as a music-aesthetician. His 'Aanmerkingen' are unique in late-eighteenth-century Netherlands, for he was the only one writing about the latest approaches to music and poetry. He also had influence on the Dutch music culture in general by introducing the genre of the cantata in our country.

I consider Lustig to be the father of Dutch musicology. His three original voluminous studies, and many translations of renowned foreign works opened up our field of musical scholarship. He created the foundation for music theory, music history, music aesthetics and music journalism. He showed himself to be an erudite musicologist with wide theological and philosophical interests. He was much appreciated by his contemporaries, but largely forgotten after his death. I especially wish to focus attention to the Twaalf Redeneeringen over nuttige Muzikaale Onderwerpen as the first Dutch music magazine, and the need to republish it.

*(translation Marleen Roosen)*