THE MOUNTEBANK JOHANNES MICHAEL PHILO (fl. 1667-77) AND HIS DUTCH RELATIVES

The history of early modern quack medicine in the British Isles has long been the focus of considerable scholarly attention. More than eight decades ago, Robert Thin provided a well-documented survey of "the intermittent visitations of peripatetic quack doctors" to 17th- and 18th-century Edinburgh.[1] Taking his cue from Thin, Leslie G. Matthews later investigated some of the pseudo-medical practices engaged in by 17th-century licensed mountebanks, and briefly traced the movements through Britain of a handful of healers, including Cornelis van Tilborch (or à Tilbourne, fl. 1680) and J. M. Philo, the licensed "Physician and sworn operator to his Majesty (Charles II)."[2] In what is easily the most comprehensive examination of "the changing public identity and standing of the quack", mainly in the 18th and 19th centuries, Roy Porter has devoted an entire chapter to the sophisticated verbal routines that were part of "the theatre of the quacks."[3] More recently, M. A. Katritzky has discussed the significance of iconographic sources for the study of contemporary itinerant healers—most of them depictions of mountebank activity highlighting the combined elements of "selling and performance."[4] And Genice Ngg has studied the ways in which the relatively complacent attitude characteristic of 17th-century satirical writings and images which presented mountebanks and their street spectacles as objects of fun gave way in 18th-century prints to a harsher attitude registering a fear of the potential harm inherent in medical quackery.[5]

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(1) THIN (Robert) : 1938, "Medical quacks in Edinburgh in the 17th and 18th centuries", *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club,* 22, pp. 132-159. See also HAMILTON (David) : 1981, The Healers. A history of medicine in Scotland (Edinburgh: Canongate), pp. 72-74.

(2) MATTHEWS (Leslie G.): 1964, "Licensed Mountebanks in Britain", *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences,* 19, pp. 30-45.

(3) PORTER (Roy) : 1989, Health for sale. Quackery in England 1660-1850 (Manchester : Manchester University Press), pp. ix, 91.

(4) KATRITZKY (M. A.): 2001, "Marketing medicine: the image of the early modern mountebank", *Renaissance Studies,* 15, pp. 121-153 (132).

(5) NGG (Genice), "The Changing Face of Quack Doctors: Satirizing Mountebanks and Physicians in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century England" : 2017, in HILGER (Stephanie M.), ed., New Directions in Literature and Medicine Studies (London: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 333-356.

Emerging from the evidence adduced and analysed by all of these historians are two recurring features which, for the purpose of my argument, may serve as a clue to the essence of mountebanks' performances. The first one is the central importance of the quack's own rhetorical routine (or harangue), traditionally bolstered by a number of props (handbills, printed licences, newsletters, a flashy garb, exotic animals, etc.); the second is the theatrical dimension of his appearance evident in the use of a stage on which the quack's medical interventions were carried out and his magical panaceas put up for sale. Both were usually promoted by a captivating show given by musicians and tumblers or by the Merry-Andrew character accompanying the mountebank. In connection with the latter feature, Robert Thin has called attention to the "juggling tricks", comedies, and acrobatics used by itinerant healers such as John Pontaeus (fl. 1633-1680) and John Baptista Quarantine (fl. 1600-1667) as a means to boost the sale of their wares to bedazzled audiences.[6] Quoting the diarist John Evelyn, Matthews has also noted that '"Puntaeus had 10 persons in his company"', and that Robert Bradford, a mountebank who appeared at Norwich between 1668 and 1687, was given permission not only to sell medicines but also "to exercise dancing of the ropes during the twelve days of Christmas vacation."[7]

In the absence of any tangible evidence, the comedians, acrobats, clowns, and rope dancers with whom mountebanks appear to have regularly collaborated have remained unidentified. And the context of their collaboration has never been documented—any more than the careers of 17th-century quack healers in general. This is hardly surprising given that, with the exception of those mentioned by Thin, Matthews, and some other historians, the large majority of mountebanks or empirics have left no more than superficial traces in the annals of popular entertainment. It is my purpose to shed more light on the issue of one mountebank's artistic associations on the basis of a number of unnoticed documents preserved in archives in Leiden, Delft, Rotterdam, and The Hague, all relating to Johannes Michael Philo (fl. 1667-1677), already mentioned, one of the few quacks whose wanderings have been superficially documented.[8] Before considering the significance of this archival evidence, it may be in order to review the known facts about Philo's professional career contained in printed state and civic records for the years 1667, 1670, and 1672.

(6) THIN, "Medical quacks", pp. 134-136. On Pontaeus' poison eating act, see SWIDERSKI (Richard): 2010, Poison Eaters. Snakes, Opium, Arsenic, and the Lethal Show (Boca Raton: Universal-Publishers), chapter 5.
(7) MATTHEWS, "Licensed Mountebanks", pp. 32, 40.
(8) MATTHEWS, "Licensed Mountebanks", p. 41.

On 5 August 1667 Philo was granted a licence by Charles II, "in consideration of his experience and skill in Medicine and Chirurgery, which he hath practised for divers years with good success…freely to vend and dispose of his Medicines & practise his said skill in Physick and Chirurgery."[9] The King's licence explicitly enjoined the town and city officials to whom it was addressed to allow Philo "to expose his said Medicines to sale…upon a stage or otherwise in such manner as he shall judge most proper & convenient for that purpose." In addition, it stipulated that "no stage [was] to be erected by or near the place where he [Philo] hath erected one so long as he remains there, nor any hindrance or molestation to be given to him or his servants…" In subsequent years, Philo appears to have made full use of the privileges contained in the licence. In November 1670, he set up his stage in Norwich.[10] And in June 1672 he was given a warrant by the Scottish Privy Council to "exercise his profession as a doctor and chirurgeon" in Edinburgh, his license expiring on 2 February 1673.[11] Pending the Master of the Revels' decision, however, Philo was forbidden to "have any roap dancing"—an indication that he had run ahead of the approval of his petition. Describing himself as a "traveller and stranger", he subsequently requested another warrant from the Council to ply his trade "throw all the cities" of the kingdom. In support of his request, Philo argued that he had "cured thirteen blind persons, several lame, and cut several cancers". He also claimed to have performed "many other notable cures", while providing both patients and audiences with "their entertainment in the meantime upon the supplicants [i.e. Philo's own] charges."

Neither Philo's medical interventions nor the accompanying spectacles he staged seem to have gone down well with the Edinburgh city authorities. By 19 September 1672 his rostrum had been taken down for unspecified reasons, "without the Councills order", leading Philo to (successfully) reiterate his request to set it up again. Although he was thereupon granted permission to continue his activities until 1 March 1673, on 4 December 1672 Philo was accused of having committed "several abuses in his profession", which made it "greatly

(9) GREEN (Mary Anne Everett), ed.: 1866, Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles II, 1667 (London: H.M. Stationary Office), p. 360. For the full text of the licence, see MATTHEWS, "Licensed Mountebanks", Appendix, pp. 44-45.
(10) RYE (Walter), ed.: 1905, Depositions taken before the Mayor & Aldermen of Norwich, 1549-1567. Extracts from the Court Books of the City of Norwich, 1666-1688 (Norwich: The Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society), p. 125; MATTHEWS (Leslie G.): 1962, History of Pharmacy in Britain (Edinburgh-London: E. & S. Livingstone), p. 286.
(11) HUME BROWN (P.), ed.: 1910, The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland. Third Series. Vol. III. A. D. 1669-1672 (Edinburgh: H. M. General Register House), pp. 540, 579, 604-605; CHAMBERS (Robert): 1874, Domestic Annals of Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution. Third edition (Edinburgh-London: W. & R. Chambers), II, pp. 347-348.

inconvenient to the inhabitants" of Edinburgh "to have the said stage sett up again."[12] The "abuses" at which the city council took offense would have been the rope dancing or other antics staged by Philo—more than his sale of ineffectual concoctions.[13]

While we have no details about the nature of Philo's performances, they cannot have been very different from those engaged in by John Pontaeus earlier on in the century.[14] Having paid visits to several Scottish towns and cities in 1633 and 1643, Pontaeus reappeared on the High Street in Edinburgh in 1662 and 1663, erecting his public stage and selling his drugs to the people. "Each tyme", as the diarist John Lamont noted, "he had his peopell that played on the scaffold, ane [one] ay playing the foole, and ane other by leaping and dancing on the rope, etc."[15] Unlike Philo a decade later, however, Pontaeus appears to have staged his spectacles unopposed. Whether, in the face of the council's obstruction, Philo managed to prolong his stay in Edinburgh in early 1673 the extant civic records do not show. But they do confirm that, like most contemporary mountebanks, Philo combined the three main aspects of the trade, "the medical, the itinerant, and the theatrical"—the last-named comprising a wide variety of stage shows.[16] As much as (if not more than) Merry-Andrew characters and puppet shows, rope dancing as a side show would have called for the recruitment of specialized and experienced artists.[17] Apart from the royal licence's unspecified mention of Philo's "servants", however, it has remained unclear what company of performers may have been part of his retinue.

Some clarification can be provided on the basis of the archival documents already alluded to. These consist of depositions made in Leiden by, or relating to, Philo's relatives, including his parents-in-law's will as well as a set of papers submitted to the "Weeskamer" [Orphanage] of the city of Delft.[18] Dated between 1674 and 1682, each of these diverse

(12) WOOD (Marguerite), ed.: 1950, Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1665 to 1680 (Edinburgh-London: Oliver and Boyd), p. 136.
(13) See note 27 for an instance of the authorities' complacency with regard to the sale of the drugs as opposed to their moral strictures against the entertainment offered by mountebanks.
(14) Of unknown origin—Italian or French?—Pontaeus was described in his own days as "the first *Mountebank* that ever appeared on a *Stage* in *England.*" See HARRIS (Walter): 1683, Pharmacologia Anti-Empirica: or a Rational Discourse of Remedies Both Chymical and Galenical (London), p. 319.
(15) [LAMONT (John)]: 1830, The Diary of Mr John Lamont of Newton. 1649 – 1671 (Edinburgh: no publisher,), pp. 158-159. A graphic description of the daredevil feats performed by Pontaeus' dancers is provided in: CHAMBERS (Robert): 1859, Domestic Annals of Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution. Second edition (Edinburgh-London: W. & R. Chambers), pp. 295-296.
(16) KATRITZKY, "Marketing medicine", p. 121.
(17) This point has been made by MATTHEWS, "Licensed Mountebanks", pp. 33-34.
(18) They are, in chronological order: Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken. Inventaris van de Oude notariële archieven van Leiden, 1564-1811. Archief van notaris Johan van Noort, 1668-1681. 1126: Minuutakten 1674, act nr. 5 (13 January 1674); Archief van notaris Pieter van Scharpenbrandt Cornelisz., 1674-1712, act nr. 80 (17 July 1674);

documents brings to light only a fragment of the new evidence which I am presenting. The brief chronological account below has therefore had to be pieced together by a process of cross-checking, mutual comparison, and inference. Admittedly, many questions about Philo's career and his practices as an itinerant quack must remain unanswered. But apart from bringing to light new particulars about Philo's life, the archival evidence unambiguously reveals his close association with a Dutch rope dancing family, which entertained artistic contacts with England and had more than a casual interest in the sale of medical recipes.

It may be in order to review the facts that can be established with reasonable certainty.[19] The Dutch records provide no clue about Philo's geographical origins but it was probably around the time when he received his royal licence from Charles II, in August 1667, that he married Christina Rijmers (baptized Delft, 12 November 1648), the sixth child of Paulus Rijmers (born near Hamburg, c. 1615 – died at Delft, 1696) and Maria Sasbout Souburgh (baptized 13 July 1618 – died before 17 July 1676), a Delft-based rope dancing couple.[20] Johannes Michael and Christina may have met in England, where her father resided in 1664 (see below) and where, as already noted, Philo had been exercising his trade since the mid-1660s. Their son Paul, born in 1668 or 1669, as of a very young age shared in the honours bestowed on his renowned father. On 29 April 1673, "John Michael Philo, physician to the King, and Paul Philo, his son, a pupil [i.e. "a child below the legal age of puberty", see Oxford English Dictionary]", were enrolled as members of the Guild of Burgesses of Aberdeen. [21] Starkly contrasting with the inimical treatment he had encountered at Edinburgh only a few months earlier, it is not clear why Philo should have become the beneficiary of this mark of honour.

At the time of his marriage, Philo and his wife acquired two Dutch bonds, dated 2 August 1667, both in the name of one Janneke Pieters, the first worth £ 1,600, the second £ 400. Both of these Philo left in the hands of his wife's brother Cornelius (baptized at Delft, 30

Stadsarchief Delft. 161: Oud Notarieel Archief, 1574-1842. 24: Archief van notaris Jacob Spoors 1637-1677. 24: Minuutakten 1637-1677, folios 578-80 (17 August 1674); Stadsarchief Delft. 72: Weeskamer Delft, 1536-1863. Boedels geregistreerd in 1681, inv. 7290, folio 259 (4 and 17 June 1681) and single-leaf paper, dated 28 April 1681; Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken. Inventaris van de Oude notariële archieven van Leiden, 1564-1811. Archief van notaris Johan van Cingelshouck, 1678-1687, act nr. 9 (30 January 1682); Archief van notaris Dirck Toornvliet, 1675-1725, akte nr. 171 (16 November 1682). I owe thanks to Mr Bas van der Wulp, Delft City Archives, for having made available scans of the documents relating to the possessions left by Philo (see above, inv. 7290).

(19) For brevity's sake, I will not footnote specific references to the individual archival sources listed in note 10.

(20) VANDER MOTTEN (J.P.) and ROSCAM ABBING (Michiel): 2020, "Seventeenth-Century English Rope Dancers in the Low Countries", *Theatre Notebook,* 74, pp. 8-31 (13).

(21) MUNRO (Alexander M.), ed.: 1908, "Aberdeen Burgess Register, 1631-1700", in The Miscellany of the New Spalding Club, volume 34 (Aberdeen: Printed for the Club), p. 438.

April 1643), a Leiden hatter, who was expected to collect the annual interests on Philo's behalf.[22] Then on his travels in Britain, Philo may have thought it a cautious move to entrust the bonds, probably meant to guarantee him and his wife a measure of financial security, to the care of his brother-in-law. Upon Cornelius's untimely death in June 1674, the bonds, or one of them, were left in the hands (though they did not become the property) of his pregnant second wife, Leiden-born Elizabeth Toodt, whom he had married on 11 November 1673.[23] In a deposition dated 17 July 1674, a few weeks after her husband's death, Elizabeth declared having returned to Christina Philo the bond worth £ 400, including the interests, as well as the interests due on the bond worth £ 1,600—without the capital sum, however. Part of this Elizabeth's husband Cornelius in January 1674 had lent to Abraham van Berckel (1639-1686), M. D., rector of the Latin school in Delft and a brother of his first wife (see note 22). Philo, as it turned out, was never to recover his money. After having toured England and Scotland in the early 1670s, he "went on his travels" to France and died in Paris in 1677. His death must have occurred unexpectedly for he left no will providing for the disposal of his possessions or indeed the tutelage over his eight-year old son. By 1680, his widow Christina had remarried, to Daniel van Schraven, a professional rope dancer.

In the years after Philo's death, both the ownership of the bonds and the guardianship of his underage son Paul (who, upon reaching adulthood, would have been entitled to his father's share, equalling half the value of the bonds) became a bone of contention between the van Schravens, on the one hand, and Elizabeth Toodt and her second husband Cornelis van Honthorst, whom she had married on 12 February 1675, on the other.[24] The masters of the Delft city orphanage and Paulus Rijmers, Paul's grandfather, had already been appointed as his guardians but in June 1681 Daniel van Schraven, "for the greater security of the child" and no doubt in consideration of all or part of the £1,600 inheritance, requested co-guardianship of his wife's son as well.[25] Whether Paul Philo ever came into his father's inheritance the record

(22) Stadsarchief Delft. Collectie Doop-, Trouw- en Begraafboeken, inv. 00104, Doopboek Evangelisch-Lutherse Gemeente, 17 July 1617 - 10 December 1758, folio 11.

(23) Erfgoed Leiden en omstreken. Schepenhuwelijken, 1592-1795. Periode 1661-1673. Archief 1004, inv. 201, folio 313v. Cornelius Rijmers' first wife was Anna van Berckel, whom he had married on 9 March 1670. See Erfgoed Leiden en omstreken. Nederlands Hervormd Ondertrouw, 1575-1795. Archief 1004, inv. 19, page T-16.

(24) Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken. Schepenhuwelijken, 1592-1795. Periode 1674-1687. Archief 1004, inv. 202, page D-123v. On 30 January 1681, Elizabeth Toodt testified that in the course of the year 1677 Benedictus (de) Haen, the Lutheran preacher at Delft, produced a warrant signed by Philo, empowering him to exact the interests due on the bond worth £ 1,600. After having paid these interests, Toodt and her new husband agreed with (de) Haen not to return the capital sum until October 1680, even though Christina Rijmers/Philo had insisted in 1679 that Elizabeth repay both the interest and the capital sum. I have been unable to locate Philo's warrant.

(25) As late as 16 November 1682, a lawsuit was still pending before the court at Dordrecht brought by "the guardians of Paulus Philo, son of the late Johan Mighiel Phielo", but on what subject is not clear.

does not show.[26] But with a grandfather and an adoptive father engaged in the rope dancing profession, it should come as no surprise that Paul Philo grew up to become a performer himself. On 2 September 1702 a notice in the *Post Man* advised local authorities to collect a 2s. tax from a group of "Stage-players; Mountebanks, Rope-dancers…and such as make the shew of motions and strange sights," including Paul Philo and 14 others.[27] Which of these trades Johannes Michael's son exercised the newspaper notice does not specify but for him to have been mentioned in this context is in itself an indication of the thin line dividing these categories of actors.

Johannes Michael Philo's marriage into the Rijmers family—the most revealing fact turned up by the archival documents—renders it likely that the rope dancers accompanying him on his British and continental travels were either members of that family or performed with him under their management. As early as the late 1640s, Philo's parents-in-law Paulus Rijmers and Maria Sasbout had set up as show business entrepreneurs, who together not only practised the art of rope dancing but gradually ventured into other types of entertainment, including the display of exotic and performing animals. Resourceful and enterprising, the couple over the years managed one or more troupes of their own and entered into partnerships with other continental as well as British performers.[28] Rope dancing often being a family business, it was almost a matter of course that some of their children should have followed in their footsteps. Before May 1682, Christina's sister Eleonora, a "rope dancer", was married to John Palmer, a "surgeon", "master rope dancer", and member of the English community at Delft.[29] And in a notarial act signed at 's Hertogenbosch in July 1685 Sasbout Rijmers, a

(26) In their will dated 17 August 1674, drafted shortly after their son Cornelius's death, Paulus Rijmers and Maria Sasbout bequeathed 600 guilders to their daughter-in-law's unborn child and pledged to provide for their "underage children" [i.e. grandchildren, including Paul?] until they had reached the marrying age.

(27) HIGHFILL (Philip H. Jr.), BURNIM (Kalman A.) and LANGHANS (Edward A.), eds. : 1987, A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660-1800. Volume 11: Naso to Pinkey (Carbondale, Il.: Southern Illinois University Press), p. 299. On 5 March 1696, the Kirk Session of the parish of Greenock, Scotland, appointed some of its members to go to the mountebanks who had recently come to town and erected a stage, in order to instruct them not "to use rope-dancing, men simulating themselves fools, or women exposing themselves to the publick by dancing on the stage, or any indecent behaviour, allowing him only to expose his drugs or medicines to publick sale." See WILLIAMSON (George): 1840, Letters Respecting the Watt Family (Greenock: Printed for the Author), pp. 5-6. It has been assumed–on what basis is not clear—that the "doctor" or head of these mountebanks was "probably James Michael Philo, as one of that name travelled in Scotland about the period referred to". See CAMPBELL (Dugald): 1879, Historical Sketches of the Town & Harbours of Greenock (Greenock: Orr, Pollock & Co.), volume I, p. 136. In 1696 Johannes Michael Philo had been dead for almost twenty years but his son Paul, then around twenty-seven, might have qualified as the troupe's leader.

(28) VANDER MOTTEN and ROSCAM ABBING, "Seventeenth-Century English Rope Dancers", pp. 18-20; and VANDER MOTTEN and ROSCAM ABBING: 2022, "Seventeenth-Century English Rope Dancers in the Netherlands: Some Additional Evidence", forthcoming in *Theatre Notebook,* 76 (2022).

(29) VANDER MOTTEN (J.P.): 2019, "Jacob Hall and other Rope Dancers on the Continent", *Theatre Notebook*, 73, pp. 45-59.

"master rope dancer and vaulter of the English company" and most likely another son of Paulus', teamed up with John Palmer and one Richard Harnis; the three partners agreed for a period of one year "to exercise the art of rope dancing and vaulting …in all parts of the world where they will please to do so."[30]

There is no hard-and-fast evidence that Christina Rijmers was a performer too but it is not unlikely that her marriage to Philo was the result of the latter's professional contacts with the family in the mid-1660s. Most probably, such contacts and the ever-fluctuating composition of travelling troupes were also to account for Christina's remarriage to the rope dancer Daniel van Schraven. (In February 1678, according to a contract signed at Antwerp, van Schraven had concluded an agreement with the famous English performer Jacob Hall, his wife Susanna Conincx/King, and their troupe, both parties agreeing to travel together widely through Europe and England.)[31] If after her marriage to Philo Christina went to live in England, as the notarial records attest she did, she may have done so as a member (or co-manager?) of her husband's company which provided the stage acts luring audiences to his open-air operations.[32] Philo's easy access to the rope dancers employed at various times by his parents-in-law may have made this a matter of course. And if not a rope walker or dancer herself, Christina in co-operation with her husband may well have assumed the part of a healer or drug pedlar in her own right, after the example of several of her relatives, in a profession that was far from being exclusively male territory.[33]

Variously described in the official records as a "chirurgeon", an "operatour", and a "phisitian", Philo would have considered it an essential asset that medical interests ran in his in-laws' families. The father of his mother-in-law Maria Sasbout was Dr Sasbout Cornelisz. Souburgh (1597? - Dordrecht, 6 October 1653), an operator and lithotomist or "master stone- and hernia-cutter".[34] Dr Sasbout's wife, Sara Cornelisdr de Heusde (1598?-1671) was a physician's daughter and a healer who "specialised in nostrums for female conditions", including venereal disease, sterility and the '"rising of the mother."'[35] Two of Maria's brothers followed in their parents' footsteps: Isaac Sasbout Souburgh (1634 - 1660) was an

(30) VANDER MOTTEN and ROSCAM ABBING, "Seventeenth-Century English Rope Dancers", pp. 22-23.
(31) VANDER MOTTEN, "Jacob Hall", pp. 46-48, 51-52.
(32) On 29 June 1681 Christina's name is recorded as a witness at a Delft baptism, together with one Cornelis Tilborgh. (See : Stadsarchief Delft. 14: Doop-, trouw- en begraafboeken, 1367-1811. Doopboeken Oude Kerk, 1616-1811, folio 171.) If he was the mountebank mentioned in the opening paragraph of the present note, the entry in the baptismal register is indicative of a close connection between Christina's family and Tilborgh.
(33) PORTER, Health for sale, pp. 82-85.
(34) Haags Gemeentearchief. 0372-01: Notarieel archief, inv. 263, folio 353 (16 September 1651).
(35) PORTER, Health for sale, p. 84; CRAWFORD (Patricia) : 1984, "Printed Advertisements for Women Medical Practitioners in London, 1670-1710", *Society for the Social History of Medicine Bulletin*, 35, p. 67.

"operator" at Utrecht and Jacob (1635?-buried 26 December 1694) became a renowned city surgeon at Dordrecht.[36] On the Rijmers side of Philo's new family Josina (bapt. 22 November 1637), like her sister Eleonora, was to marry a "surgeon" or wound-dresser, who served in the Delft garrison.[37] The likelihood that professional occupations help account for the association of the mountebank Philo with the Rijmers-Sasbout families is further strengthened by the evidence showing that the latter at one point intended to branch out into the former's area of expertise.

On 22 November 1664, Paulus Rijmers, then living in London, Sara Cornelisdr de Heusde Sasbout, Paulus's mother-in-law (see earlier), and one Cornelis van Groeninge, of 's Hertogenbosch, signed a notarial contract in Rotterdam, by which they agreed, for a period of two years, to work together as a company "for the preparation and sale of medicines, both indoors and outdoors."[38] Intending to travel together "to such countries and places as they shall think fit", the partners also agreed on the apportioning of the profits and the expenses, including the upkeep of their "theatre", or stage. The non-observance of the articles of agreement by any of the partners would render him or her liable to the payment of a fine of "fifty pounds sterling", to be imposed by any judge or court "here in Holland, England, France, or elsewhere"—the extent of the market they envisaged as well as the geographical area that we know Philo travelled. London, where Rijmers had recruited a family of English rope dancers as early as August 1658 and where Sara de Heusde had a medical practice, was evidently intended as their base of operations for what they considered to be a new and lucrative type of undertaking.[39] Rijmers and his partners may have felt that their profits would be substantially increased if their medicinal drugs were not only sold in the Low Countries, a rapidly growing "medical marketplace", but also puffed up and vended across the Channel and elsewhere in Europe as part of the public pitches given by their relative, the healer Johannes Michael Philo.[40] This would have seemed a matter of course given that the

(36) Regionaal Archief Dordrecht. 20: Notariële archieven, inv. 293, folio 123 (8 July 1661); inv. 301, folio 6 (13 December 1670).
(37) Stadsarchief Delft. Collectie Doop-, Trouw- en Begraafboeken, inv. 00056: Doopboeken Nieuwe Kerk, 14 August 1636-1649, folio 17; and *ibidem*, inv. 00133: Ondertrouwboek Gerecht, 7 February 1686-26 July 1687, folio 114v. (29 December 1686).
(38) Stadsarchief Rotterdam. Notarieel archief. 18: Archief van notaris Dirk Block de Jonge, inv. 731, act nr 255, pp. 460-62. I owe thanks to Dr Michiel Roscam Abbing, Hoorn, The Netherlands, for bringing this contract to my attention and for making useful comments on an earlier draft of this article. I am also indebted to Ms Eline Beumer, Rotterdam City Archives, for having provided scans of the relevant pages.
(39) Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Notariële archieven, 1656-62, act nr 457193, pp. 320-321. On Sara de Heusde, see: WEISSER (Olivia) : 2015, Ill Composed: Sickness, Gender, and Belief in Early Modern England (New Haven-London : Yale University Press), p. 33.
(40) COOK (Harold J.) : 2007, Matters of Exchange. Commerce, Medicine, and Science in the Dutch Golden Age (New Haven – London: Yale University Press), pp. 135-136. Sara de Heusde advertised herself as the

boundaries between "legal and illegal medical practice" were no less diffuse than those dividing the quacks from "practitioners of similar suspect professions such as jugglers and rope-walkers."[41]

The archival records do not yield any additional information on the ambitious business plans laid out by Rijmers, Sara de Heusde, and van Groeninge, which apparently provided for the sale of their products both from a shop and town-to-town. Presumably it was this initiative—yet another facet of the Rijmerses' expanding "theatrical" activities—that brought them to Philo's attention. Or was it the other way round, and did Paulus Rijmers only become aware of the potentialities of the medicinal market after Philo had married into his family? Whatever the answer may be, Philo's relationship with the Rijmerses from about the mid-1660s was not only a familial but most probably also a professional one. Their association suggests that Dutch (companies of) rope-dancers, as has been detailed in recent research, not only co-operated with their English counterparts but sometimes also attached themselves to itinerant mountebanks in a form of artistic symbiosis—with both parties capitalizing on their joint public performances in the course of their travels through England, Scotland, Holland, and France.[42]

As yet we know too little about mountebanks' artistic affiliations or partnerships with other performers to consider Philo's case a representative one. But it does open up a new and potentially fruitful avenue of investigation into the significance of mountebanks as figures deserving a place in the history of the early modern popular stage. Orators and showmen, they would have felt closely allied to other public performers. Their co-operation with rope dancers and other entertainers—buffoons, musicians, puppeteers, and others—may have been less incidental and more formally organized than the extant records allow us to determine. And their position, as managers, business partners, or star performers, in *ad hoc* forms of co-operation or in the troupes of actors that accompanied them on a permanent basis, remains to be investigated. So do their social and cultural backgrounds, allowing us to trace the channels—business, familial, or other—through which their partnerships were constituted.[43]

"'Widdow of Dr Sasbout, and Grandmother of the Doctor that had his stage upon the Great Tower-Hill, and did so many cures before the Fire.'" : see SIENA (Kevin Patrick) : 2004, Venereal Disease, Hospitals, and the Urban Poor. London's "Foul Wards", 1600-1800 (Rochester : University of Rochester Press), p. 56. Was this an allusion to Philo, son-in-law to Sara's daughter Maria Sasbout, who would have been practising his trade in London before September 1666?

(41) HUISMAN (Frank) : 1989: "Itinerant Medical Practitioners in the Dutch Republic. The Case of Groningen", *Tractrix*, 1, pp. 63-83 (65, 73).

(42) VANDER MOTTEN and ROSCAM ABBING, "Seventeenth-Century English Rope Dancers".

(43) The issue of itinerants' marital partnerships had been briefly touched upon by HUISMAN, pp. 75-77.

Given the peripatetic nature of their trade and the fact that several of those so far identified in British records were foreigners (including Philo himself?), early modern mountebanks may justifiably be looked upon as members of international, cross-Channel networks so far largely ignored but just as important as their peers in the more "respectable" theatrical arts. Until the names of more of them can be extracted from the records and a "prosopography of quacks" can be established, their role as cultural carriers is another aspect of their history that must remain a matter for informed speculation.[44]

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ABSTRACTS

Based on unpublished manuscript sources, the present article seeks partially to reconstruct some of the facts in the life of Johan Michael Philo (fl. 1667-77), an itinerant mountebank who together with a troupe of (hitherto unidentified) performers is known to have sold his wares in England and Scotland from the mid-1660s. The same sources reveal that Philo married into a Dutch family of rope-dancers, headed by the enterprising theatrical entrepreneurs Paulus Rijmers and Maria Sasbout. In order to attract audiences to his public shows, Philo may have enlisted the help of the company of rope-dancers managed by the Rijmerses, who in their turn appear to have been interested in the commercial opportunities inherent in the manufacture and sale of medicines. Their association offers a fine example of close co-operation between contemporary practitioners of the "medical" profession and well-established public performers, both of whom must have clearly perceived the financial and artistic benefits of such co-operation.

De kwakzalver Johan Michael Philo (fl. 1667-77) en zijn Nederlandse verwanten.

Deze bijdrage is een poging tot gedeeltelijke reconstructie, gebaseerd op onontsloten archiefstukken, van een aantal feiten uit het leven van Johan Michael Philo (ca. 1667-77), een rondreizende kwakzalver, die vanaf het midden van de jaren 1660, samen met een gezelschap van tot op heden niet-geïdentificeerde podiumkunstenaars, zijn middeltjes aan de man bracht in Engeland en Schotland. Uit dezelfde bronnen blijkt dat Philo via zijn huwelijk banden had met een Nederlandse familie koorddansers, geleid door het ondernemende entertainersechtpaar Paulus Rijmers en Maria Sasbout. Beide partijen werkten wellicht gedurende enkele jaren samen. Terwijl Philo op zijn reizen gebruik maakte van Rijmers' gezelschap van koorddansers als publiektrekkers die zijn opvoeringen

(44) The phrase is PORTER's in: Health for sale, p. 237.

omkaderden, blijken de Rijmersen sterk geïnteresseerd te zijn geweest in het vervaardigen en het verkopen van medicijnen, Philo's expertisedomein. Zowel Philo, als beoefenaar van het "medisch" beroep, als de Rijmersen, geroutineerde theatermensen, onderkenden ongetwijfeld de financiële en artistieke voordelen van dergelijke onderlinge samenwerking.

Le charlatan Johan Michael Philo (fl. 1667-77) et ses parents néerlandais.

Cette contribution est une tentative de reconstruction partielle, basée sur des documents d'archives inédits, d'un certain nombre de faits de la vie de Johan Michael Philo (ca. 1667-77), un charlatan itinérant qui, à partir du milieu des années 1660, avec une compagnie d'artistes non encore identifiés, vendait ses remèdes en Angleterre et en Écosse. Les mêmes sources indiquent que Philo, par son mariage, était lié à une famille néerlandaise de funambules, dirigée par le couple d'artistes entreprenants Paulus Rijmers et Maria Sasbout. Les deux parties peuvent avoir travaillé ensemble pendant plusieurs années. Alors que Philo, lors de ses voyages, utilisait la compagnie de funambules de Rijmers pour attirer les foules autour de ses spectacles, les Rijmers semblent avoir été fortement intéressés par la fabrication et la vente de médicaments, le domaine d'expertise de Philo. Tant Philo, en tant que praticien de la profession "médicale", que les Rijmersen, hommes de théâtre chevronnés, ont sans aucun doute reconnu les avantages financiers et artistiques d'une telle coopération mutuelle.

KEYWORDS

-Theatre history: rope dancing

-J. M. Philo

-Quack healers 17th century

-Cross-channel exchanges