

## WORKING THE SENSES WITH WORDS: THE ACT OF RELIGIOUS READING IN THE DUTCH REPUBLIC

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In 1622, readers of the devotional treatise *Ecce Homo, ofte ooghen-salve voor die noch sitten in blintheydt des ghemoedts* (*Ecce Homo, or Eye-salve for those who still sit in the blindness of their hearts*), written by the Dutch Reformed minister Willem Teellinck, were confronted with the author's deep distrust of the devotional image. In the preface to the *Ecce Homo* Teellinck explained to his readers:

In many places one finds paintings of a head crowned with thorns and covered with blood, with the caption *Ecce Homo*, that is, Behold the Man. This is a human invention, to present us with the inhuman passion, and the most bitter suffering of our Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ, and thus it also awakens merely human emotions and bodily devotion.<sup>2</sup>

Teellinck was obviously acquainted with 'Ecce Homo' imagery, but rejected it despite its biblical origins. The living word of God alone (*alleene*), rather than any image that should be the Christian's compass. In Teellinck's opinion sincere devotion to Christ found expression in the accurate and conscientious reading of God's Word.<sup>3</sup> Despite the fact that the subject of the *Ecce Homo* was visual in nature – *Ecce*

<sup>1</sup> With special thanks to Rex Trewin for his helpful corrections.

<sup>2</sup> 'Men vint in veel plaetsen geschildert een hoofd ghekroont met Doornen, ende albebloedt, met dit op-schrift: *Ecce Homo*, dat is, *Siet de Mensche*: Dits een menschen vont, om ons d'onmenschelicke *passie*, ende het alderbitterste lijden onses Heylandts, ende Salichmakers *Iesu Christi*, voor te stellen, soo verweckt het oock maer menschelicke beweginghen, ende een vleeschelicke Devotie'. Teellinck W., *Ecce Homo, ofte ooghen-salve voor die noch sitten in blintheydt des ghemoedts* (Middelburg: Hans van der Hellen, voor Geeraert van de Vivere: 1622) fol. \*1v.

<sup>3</sup> 'maer hebben ons de heylige Schriftuere enckelicken tot een Exemplaer voorghestelt, om het lijden Christi, ende de vruchten van dien te verclaren; als die daer weten dat het woort Gods alleene, is dat *twee-snijdende sweert*, 'twelck door-gaet tot de *verscheydinge der zielen, ende oock des gheestes, zenuwen, ende leden des herten*, dienstich om de zielen te bekeeren, ende in de ware bekeeringhe te verstercken' ('but have taken only Holy Scripture as our example to explain the suffering of Christ and its fruits; as those who know that the word of God alone, that *two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and of spirit, nerves, and the [hidden] parts of the heart,*

*Homo* after all translates to ‘Behold the man’ – and despite the fact that the volume was intended for unskilled readers, who could have benefited from visual aids, the book remained without illustrations.

The images of the crucified Christ that Teellinck opposed were seldom produced in the Dutch Republic at the time, but they had been especially popular in the Southern Netherlands ever since Antwerp was captured by the Spanish in 1585.<sup>4</sup> Teellinck as well as his readers could well have been acquainted with Southern Netherlandish examples of the genre. Inhabitants of the Dutch Republic could travel to the Southern Netherlands somewhat more freely during the Twelve Years’ Truce and books and prints produced in the Southern Netherlands were most likely also available in the Dutch Republic.<sup>5</sup> An important example of this production is Jerome Nadal’s *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* (Pictures of Gospel History), produced in Christoffel Plantijn’s workshop in 1593.<sup>6</sup> Nadal, who was St. Ignatius Loyola’s closest collaborator in the early days of the Society of Jesus, combined

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can serve to convert souls and to strengthen them in true conversion’), Teellinck, *Ecce Homo* fol. \*1v.

<sup>4</sup> Christ’s Passion had become the favorite subject of the Southern print and book culture in the latter part of the sixteenth century, according to Coelen P. van der, *De schrift verbeeld. Oudtestamentische prenten uit renaissance en barok* (Nijmegen: 1998) 129.

<sup>5</sup> Teellinck even wrote a pamphlet to warn against this kind of ‘image tourism’, urging his compatriots to refrain from the lamentable gawking at idols and at the Papists’ idolatry, which he claimed many of them had engaged in most foolishly in neighbouring provinces since the Truce. See Teellinck W., *Timotheus, ofte ghetrouwe waerschouwinge tegen het verdrietelick begapen der affgoden ende afgodisschen dienst der papisten, twelck by vele vande gereformeerde seer onbedachtelick gepleecht werdt in Brabant ende Vlaenderen by occasie van desen stilstand van wapenen: hier wort oock verhandelt de groote genegentheyt, die alle menschen hebben tot d’afgoderije [...]* (Middelburg, Richard Schilders: 1611) fol. A2r. The second edition is quoted, since no copy of the first edition has survived. On the book trade between the Southern and Northern Netherlands see Clemens, T., “The trade in Catholic books from the Northern and Southern Netherlands 1650–1795”, in Berkvens-Stevelinck C. et alii (eds.), *Le Magasin de l’Univers. The Dutch Republic as the centre of the European book trade* (Leiden: 1992) 85–94.

<sup>6</sup> These prints accompanied texts which were printed in a separate volume, titled *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (Annotations and meditations on the Gospels), originally printed in Antwerp in 1595 at Plantin’s workshop, and reprinted twice before 1607. See for a detailed analysis of these prints and the relationship between Nadal and St. Ignatius Loyola, see Melion W.S., “Haec per imagines huius mysterij Ecclesia sancta [clamat]: The Image of the Suffering Christ in Jerome Nadal’s *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia*”, in Homann F., S.J. (ed.), *Jerome Nadal, Adnotationes and Meditationes on the Gospels*, Volume III: The Passion Narratives. (Philadelphia: 2007) 1–73, esp. 2–3.

engravings, portraying episodes from the Gospels executed by the premier Flemish engravers, with his explanatory notes and meditations on these episodes. Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines* included four *Ecce Homo* scenes – a detail of one of them is shown in [Fig. 1] – in which the reader is turned into a witness of the unfolding action.

Just over a decade later, the Dutch Reformed distrust of the devotional image was even more clearly demonstrated by the Utrecht theologian Gisbertus Voetius, the leading figure of the Pietist movement ('Further Reformation') of the Dutch Reformed Church. Voetius removed a line of text in which Christ was described as the 'Justitiae Solem' (Sun of Justice) from his inaugural address held in 1634, when it was reprinted in 1664, most likely because Utrecht University had begun using an emblem depicting the sun surrounded by the words 'Sol Justitiae Illustra Nos' (Sun of Righteousness, Enlighten Us) as its logo in the 1630s.<sup>7</sup> This kind of emblematic religious imagery was detested by Voetius. In 1642 he wrote with great aversion to any visual representation of Christ – be it a dove, a cross, or any other image – in a tripartite treatise entitled *De idolatria indirecta et participata*:

Apply this [the interdiction against depicting Jesus] to all signs, drawings or symbols representing Christ or the Holy Ghost of the Holy Trinity, be it in a direct manner, or emblem, or in the manner of hieroglyphs such as a lamb, a cross, a sun, dove, or triangle with ray beams and the name of God.<sup>8</sup>

Neither biblical illustrations nor emblematic religious images were allowed in the context of God's Word, in Voetius' view, which dominated

<sup>7</sup> See Voetius Gisbertus, *De Pietate cum Scientia Coniungenda. Inaugurale rede gehouden aan de Illustre School te Utrecht op de 21ste augustus 1634*, ed. and trans. A. de Groot (Kampen: 1978) 72 and 97–98. From its inception in 1634, the Illustrious School in Utrecht was using the sun emblem with Latin motto 'Sol Iustitiae Illustra Nos'. The professor of classical studies Justus Liraeus used the phrase in his inaugural lecture on June 18th, 1634, before Voetius struck these words from his inaugural address. On the opening Day of the Utrecht University, March 26th in 1636, the first Rector Magnificus was presented with the sun emblem and its text on the official seals and crest of the new university. See Broek R. van den, *Hy leeret ende beschuttet: over het wapen en de zinspreuk van de Universiteit Utrecht* (Utrecht: 1995) 18.

<sup>8</sup> 'Haec applica ad insignia quae praeferunt Christum aut Spiritum S., aut trinitatem, idque vel proprie, vel emblematicae seu hieroglyphice per agnum, crucem, solem, columbam, triangulum cum radiis et nomine Dei', Voetius G. *Selectarum Disputationum Theologicarum Partes I–V* (Utrecht, Johannes van Waesberge: 1659) vol. III, 289 (trans. J. Waszink).



Fig. 1. Jérôme Nadal, 'Coronatur Spinis Iesus' [Jesus is crowned with thorns], detail, in *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines ex ordine evangeliorum, quae toto anno in missae sacrificio recitantur, in ordinem temporis vitae Christi digestae* (Antwerpen: Christophe Plantin: 1593). Image © Library of the Utrecht University.

the Dutch Reformed Church at the time.<sup>9</sup> In the Dutch Republic, Calvin's theology had shaped the cultural conventions which guided and restricted the work of authors, engravers and publishers of illustrated religious literature during the first half of the seventeenth century.

In this contribution, I will depart from the observation that religious reading practices in the Dutch Republic were confined to accurate and conscientious reading of unillustrated religious texts based on the Bible – and thus to the authority of the word – during the first half of the seventeenth century. The growing need felt among Dutch Reformers for a spiritual deepening of faith becomes clear from Teellinck's admission to having modelled the devotional features of this work on Catholic tradition, appropriating and, at the same time, adapting it to his aim of spreading his Dutch Reformed program as widely as possible. While personal devotion in the Catholic Church had been enhanced by texts illustrated with images – of Christ, Mary and the saints, for instance – the use of religious imagery presented a problem for authors and publishers in the Dutch Republic, even those who were not members of the Dutch Reformed Church.

My aim is to shed light on the diminishing of the authority of the word in the second half of the century, by demonstrating that various aids were introduced in the Dutch religious literature in order to address their readers not only through intellectual means but also by way of their emotional capacities. I will first focus on some examples of passion lyrics published in the 1650s, which offered textualized images to the reader, to be utilized to examine God's hidden features. I will then discuss religious emblems (produced from circa 1680 onward) which provided Dutch readers with visual instruments to support their religious reading practices, even though there were

<sup>9</sup> In the first half of the seventeenth century, opinion makers such as Teellinck and Voetius seem to have interpreted Calvin's instructions as total prohibitions, as I will argue in more detail in my forthcoming book *Negotiating Differences: Word, Image and Religion in the Dutch Republic*, to be published by Brill in Leiden. For now, I would simply point out that Dutch sixteenth-century disputes on these issues had been dominated by Calvinist theology, as argued (among others) by Veldman I.J., "Protestantism and the Arts: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Netherlands", in Finney P.C. (ed.), *Seeing Beyond the Word: Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition* (Grand Rapids: 1999) 397–421, esp. 421. As has been well established, Calvin was not opposed to all visual art. For recent studies on the subject, see Joby C.R., *Calvinism and the Arts: A Re-Assessment* (Leuven: 2007), and Zachman R.C., *Image and Word in the Theology of John Calvin* (Notre Dame: 2007).

limits to what could be portrayed. Since these literary practices were intertwined with opinions on the role of the senses and emotions in the reading process, I will sketch the outlines of these issues before discussing some exemplary religious texts.

### *The Role of the Senses and Emotions in the Reading Process*

In the early modern era, the Dutch – Catholics and Protestants alike – were generally suspicious of what were then regarded as extreme reading sensations. These sensations were perceived as potentially dangerous, as has recently been demonstrated by Karel Porteman and Mieke Smits-Veldt in their history of early modern Dutch literature, *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen* (A New Homeland for the Muses).<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the printed versions of stories illuminating the conversions of Protestants often incorporated passages describing such extreme reading sensations, as is the case in the *Merkwaardige Bekeringsgeschiedenis* (Extraordinary History of a Conversion) of the eighteenth century farmer Lourens Ingelse. It recounts Ingelse's experience one day while reading the Bible:

It so happened, when I went to read God's Word that I heard God speak to me: when, where and why had I sinned, and what were my sins? What punishment should thus be mine, and could it be anything less than eternal damnation? Hearing this, I believed what He said; the sweat was running from my body, even though it was winter. Just by listening to God, my soul became so distressed that I could not live on, being captured by Him and screaming anxiously: *o God! If I'd known this, I would not have lived this way!*<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Porteman K. and Smits-Veldt M.B., *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1560–1700* (Amsterdam: 2008) 480.

<sup>11</sup> 'Het gebeurde dan wel, als ik in Gods Woord wilde lezen, dat ik God hoorde spreken als tot mij, wat, waar, wanneer en tegen Wie ik gezondigd had, welke straffen ik verdiend had, die niet minder waren dan de eeuwige dood. Dit nu zo klaar horende en gelovende, liep het zweet somtijds van mijn lichaam, ofschoon het nu winter was. Zelfs op het horen dat God nu tot mij sprak en wat Hij tot mij zeide, geraakte mijn ziel zo ontsteld, dat ik niet meer kon leven, zijnde in banden en in nare [=benauwde] wee uitroepende: *o God! had ik dat zo geweten, ik zou zo niet hebben geleefd!*', Ingelse L., *Merkwaardige Bekeringsgeschiedenis van Lourens Ingelse in leven landbouwer op de Hofstede, in de Oranjepolder, eiland Walcheren. Tengevolge van de zware vervolging en verbanning, hem en zijn lotgenoten aangedaan, wegens hun gehechtheid aan de Oude Psalmberijming, tijdens de invoering der Nieuwe Berijming te Westkapelle, Anno 1774–1776*. Door hemzelf te boek gesteld, ed. J. Keersemaeker, (Middelburg: 2001) 8.

Some time later Ingelse is imprisoned in Veere, because of his participation in what has been called the ‘psalmenoproer’, riots which occurred when a new versification of the Psalms was introduced in the Dutch Reformed Church in the second half of the eighteenth century, much to the dislike of the most orthodox churchgoers. Ingelse read some more while he was in prison, with the same terrifying results. The people surrounding him tried to calm him down: ‘My praying, whimpering and lamenting were so loud, that people outside the prison could hear me. As a result, the guard came up to me and said: ‘This is no way to live, you should be more cheerful!’<sup>12</sup>

The physical symptoms described here, the heavy sweating, the loud screaming, are connected to the sensory responses evoked by the reading of God’s Word – or, in Ingelse’s case, even the *thought* of reading God’s Word. His symptoms can easily be interpreted metaphorically, but in the early modern setting it makes more sense to take them literally. Then it becomes clear why Ingelse’s bystanders were afraid. The four-humor doctrine of Galen presumed a relationship between the physical and mental: reading like this, could severely disturb the delicate balance of humors found in the human body and result in sickness or even in death. Ingelse could kill himself if he kept on reading in this manner.<sup>13</sup>

What is more, individual imbalances had larger consequences at the level of the society with a potential for disastrous disruption of fragile social structures.<sup>14</sup> The kind of reading habits displayed by Ingelse could thus not only be devastating to him, but also to Dutch society as a whole. The so-called “Nijkerkse beroeringen” (the Nijkerk turmoil) which occurred around 1750, serves as an illustration of these dangers. This turmoil began during a church service in the Dutch Reformed Church of Nijkerk in 1749, held by the minister Roldanus,

<sup>12</sup> Het bidden, kermen en lantenteren [=weeklagen] was zó sterk, dat de mensen, buiten het gevangenhuis zijnde, zulks hoorden, waardoor de cipier tot mij kwam en zeide: *zulks is geen leven, ik moest maar vrolijk zijn!*, Ingelse, *Merkwaardige Beke- ringsgeschiedenis* 20.

<sup>13</sup> Craik K.A., *Reading Sensations in Early Modern England. Early Modern Literature in History* (New York: 2007) 3; Schoenfeldt M., *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge: 1999) 2–3; and Narveson K., “Traces of Reading Practice in Thomas Bentley’s ‘Monument of Matrones.’”, *ANQ – A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* 21 (2008) 11–19.

<sup>14</sup> Paster G.K., *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (Chicago: 2004) 72 and 244.

when an old woman started to scream and pray while Roldanus was reading from the Bible. Afterwards this incident was repeated at a larger scale: in Roldanus' church, and later elsewhere in the area. Some of the people listening to Roldanus shivered, others even lost consciousness. These effects were widely debated and feared at the time.

In spite of their frightening and feared effects, these kinds of reading and listening experiences were also highly valued and sought after, by Protestants and Catholics alike, mostly because of their supposed ability to unite the reader with God. It was Augustine, in his *Confessions*, who had strongly suggested that intense and impressionable reading could enhance the communication between God and the faithful.<sup>15</sup> To evoke the kind of reading sensations advocated by Augustine, Catholic writers started to produce texts in which the senses of the readers were stimulated to evoke religious sensations.<sup>16</sup> To intensify these emotions and passions, increasing numbers of illustrations were added, as the printing press facilitated the addition of more and more imagery to text editions.<sup>17</sup>

Along with the desire and opportunities to illustrate religious texts there came the fear of the powerful effects these illustrated texts could have. We now know through neurological research, that images address the part of the brain that controls human mnemonic and affective capacities, whereas texts stimulate the area in which the logical processes are performed. This neurological evidence was of course unknown to Augustine, but he was well aware of the dangers involved with imagery.<sup>18</sup> Following the footsteps of Plato, he warned people not to look at religious images as if they were 'animated objects'. He nevertheless emphasized the positive effect which could be achieved by

<sup>15</sup> Stock B., *Augustine the Reader: Meditation, Self-Knowledge, and the Ethics of Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA and London: 1996) 2, 5, 18 and 284.

<sup>16</sup> Kempis, Thomas a, *Qui Sequitur Me, dat is. Die Navolginghe Christi: bedeylt in vier boecken. [...] Overgestelt uutten Latijne in Brabants Duytsch door Heer Nicolaus van Winge Canoninck Regulier S. Martens te Loven* (Antwerpen, Jan van Keerbergen: 1606).

<sup>17</sup> The implication of this was not that all (new) devotional texts were produced with imagery. De Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* (first printed in 1548) for instance was not illustrated till 1657. See Mochizuki M.M., "Ignatius de Loyola, S.J., Geestelycke oeffeninghen van den H. Vader Ignatius van Loyola (Antwerp: Michiel Cnobbaert, 1673)", in Begheyn P., S.J. and Faesen R., S.J. (eds.), *Jesuit Books in the Low Countries 1540–1773* (Leuven: 2009) 196–201.

<sup>18</sup> As argued in Morgan D., "Image", in idem (ed.), *Key Words in Religion, Media and Culture* (New York: 2008) 96–110, esp. 97, based on research described in Thompson R.F. – Madigan S.A., *Memory: The Key to Consciousness* (Princeton: 2007).



visual stimuli.<sup>19</sup> Whether as a direct result of Augustine's opinions on the matter or not, the Catholics started to illustrate their devotional texts on a massive scale when the opportunities arose in the age of the printing press. Catholic imagery in devotional literature was no longer used solely to enforce the readers' memory and comprehension, but also to mobilize their emotional faculties.<sup>20</sup>

The growing habit of illustrating devotional texts among Catholics in the fifteenth and sixteenth century not only prompted discussions of the hierarchy of the senses, but also evoked reflections on the role of emotions in devotional reading practices. These Catholic conventions were at odds with cultural developments in the Dutch Republic in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, which were to a large extent dominated by Calvin's theology. Calvin specifically argued that God taught us – as witnessed by the cry of Jesus on the cross, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me' (*Matthew 27:46*) – to include emotions in our experience of faith; but the intensive stimulation of the eye and mind that Catholics sought through the use of illustrated text, presented a problem for those who wrote and lived according to Calvin's theology.<sup>21</sup> Since they were convinced that faith is in the invisible, all attempts to bring the visual into the *praxis pietatis* were considered to be dangerous. As a result, even the title pages of religious works of Dutch Reformed writers often lacked illustrations.<sup>22</sup>

In the Dutch Republic the situation became even more intense because Calvin also propagated the ideal of independent, individual reading of religious texts.<sup>23</sup> No longer were readers corrected and

<sup>19</sup> Morgan D., *The Sacred Gaze. Religious Visual Culture in Theory and Practice* (Los Angeles: 2005) 142 and 145.

<sup>20</sup> '[...] une nouvelle form de dévotion commença lentement à s'imposer à côté des formes plus officiellement traditionnelles de dévotion publique, strictement liée aux célébrations liturgiques. Une 'dévotion privée', totalement individuelle, s'imposait, liée à la profondeur de la foi vécu à l'intérieur de l'âme humaine particulière, a son rapport avec Dieu et les mystères de la foi', Insolera M., "La spiritualité dans le livre illustré moderne en general", in Insolera M. – Salviucci L. (eds.), *La spiritualité en images aux Pays-Bas méridionaux dans les livres imprimés des XVI<sup>e</sup> et XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles*. *Miscellanea neerlandica* 13 (Leuven: 1996) 4.

<sup>21</sup> See Strier, R., "Against the Rule of Reason. Praise of Passion from Petrarch to Luther to Shakespeare to Herbert", in Paster G.K. et alii (eds.), *Reading the Early Modern Passions. Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion* (Philadelphia: 2004) 23–42.

<sup>22</sup> As argued in Stronks E., "Gewapende vrede: woord, beeld en religie in de Republiek", *De zeventiende eeuw* (2009) 2–25.

<sup>23</sup> Gilmont J.F., "Protestant Reformation and Reading", in Cavallo G. – Chartier R. – Cochrane L.G. (eds.), *A History of Reading in the West*, *Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book* (Oxford: 1999) 213–237, esp. 227.

moved through the communal reading of the Bible. Reading in silence placed one's source of curiosity completely under personal control and could also be extended over a much longer period of time than the reading aloud in the church services.<sup>24</sup> To reduce the possible damage of the act of reading alone and in silence, the Dutch Calvinist minister Willem à Brakel included a chapter on the reading practice in his devotional handbook the *Redelyke godts-dienst* (Rational Religion), published in 1700.<sup>25</sup> Brakel's advice was to limit the amount of hours spent reading alone. One should instead seek the company of others, to sing and pray together, and discuss each other's experiences afterwards. Brakel believed that social structures would provide enough balance and control to avoid the excessive negative effects of such solitary devotional reading.<sup>26</sup> From diaries and stories about conversions we know his advice was not always followed, but Brakel did represent the official point of view of the Dutch Reformed Church on the act of reading.<sup>27</sup>

Protestants like a Brakel and Teellinck could most certainly relate to the words used by Catholics to evoke and describe religious emotions. In Teellinck's last work, the *Soliloquium*, published in 1628, the craving of the soul for the unity with Jesus is articulated in words Teellinck borrowed from the *De Imitatione Christi* by Thomas à Kempis.<sup>28</sup> But in contrast to the Catholics, the Dutch Reformed were of the opinion that these emotions were to be evoked by reading or listening, not by looking at images. Hearing, according to Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, were preferable to seeing, because God made Himself heard but not seen.<sup>29</sup> Traces of this line of reasoning are found in

<sup>24</sup> Saenger P., "Reading in the Later Middle Ages", in *A History of Reading in the West* 120–148, esp. 137.

<sup>25</sup> Lieburg F. van, "De verbale traditie van een piëtistische geloofservaring. De rechtvaardiging in de vierschaar der consciëntie", *Egodocumenten: nieuwe wegen en benaderingen. Speciaal nummer van: Tijdschrift voor sociale en economische geschiedenis* 1, 4 (2004) 66–85, esp. 68.

<sup>26</sup> Stronks E., "Private devotion in a protestant diary: Jacoba van Thiel's Rekenboek van de ziel met God", in Ingen F. van – Moore C. (eds.), *Gebetsliteratur der frühen Neuzeit als Hausfrömmigkeit: Funktionen und Formen in Deutschland und den Niederlanden* (Wiesbaden: 2001) 179–192, esp. 185.

<sup>27</sup> Stronks, "Private devotion" 86.

<sup>28</sup> See for a detailed comparison between Teellinck and Thomas à Kempis, Op 't Hof W.J., *Willem Teellinck (1579–1629). Leven, geschriften en invloed* (Kampen: 2008) 287.

<sup>29</sup> 'according to Moses: Remember: "what Jehovah spoke to you in the valley of Horeb" [Deut. 4:15]; you heard a voice, "you did not see a body"', Calvin J., *Institutes*

Willem Teellinck's treatise *Adam*, based on sermons preached by this Dutch Reformed minister around 1620. The hierarchy of the senses is discussed in relation to Teellinck's interpretation of *Genesis 2:7* ('And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul').<sup>30</sup> Teellinck first discusses the creation of the human body, and the wonderful ability of the human eyes, ears and nose to absorb all that surrounds them.<sup>31</sup> After the Fall however, these bodily sensations and the 'outer senses' were corrupted, so that now only the 'ghemeyne sin' (the inner sense) and the 'oog der ziele' (eye of the soul) can be relied upon.<sup>32</sup> They are needed to transform the impressions of the 'outer senses' into sensible insights. According to Teellinck, true devotion should ideally be indifferent to primary sensations such as taste, sight, smell, health and sleep.<sup>33</sup> Out of the three cognitive processes distinguished by Augustine – the corporal, spiritual and intellectual – Teellinck singled out intellectual activity as the most important.<sup>34</sup> The human

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*of the Christian religion*, ed. J.T. McNeill (Louisville [etc.]: 2006) 100–101, Volume I, book I, Chapter xi, 2.

<sup>30</sup> The treatise was first printed in *Het eerste stuck van de wercken van Willem Teellinck* (1659). See on this topic Westerink H., *Met het oog van de ziel. Een godsdienstpsychologische en mentaliteitshistorische studie naar mensvisie, zelfonderzoek en geloofsbeleving in het werk van Willem Teellinck (1579–1629)* ([s.l.] [Den Haag]: [2002]) 447.

<sup>31</sup> See for an analysis of Calvin's ideas on these issues Dyrness W.A., *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture: The Protestant Imagination from Calvin to Edwards* (Cambridge: 2004) 62–89.

<sup>32</sup> 'sy alleen Capabel bequaem ende geschickt is om in sich te ontfangen, de ghedaente van alle die dingen, die door de uyerlijcke sinnen besinnet worden; [...] als voor exempel de coleuren daer mede d'ooghen sich besich houden; ofte de verscheydene stemmen, en gheluyden, daer mede d'oore sich moeyt; [...] deze ghemeyne sin alleen beseft binnen in sich allerley besinnelijcke dinghen' ('she [the inner sense] is the only one capable of comprehending all the impressions of the outer senses, such as the colours seen by the eyes and the voices and noises heard by the ears; only the inner sense can contemplate on the interior experiences'), Teellinck Willem, *Adam*, in: *Het eerste stuck van de wercken van Willem Teellinck : sijnde het eerste deel van sijne tractaten over sekere texten der H. Schrift / daer in de plaetsen der H. Schrift gestelt sijn na de nieuwe oversettinge ende de tractaten te voren gedrukt van nieuws sijn oversien ende van druck-fauten verb. door Theodorus ende Johannes Teellinck* (Utrecht: 1659) esp. 6, 63, 82–83; quotation on 82.

<sup>33</sup> See Teellinck Willem, *Aenhangsel aen de sleutel der devotie* (Utrecht, Hermanus Ribbius, Herman Specht and Janssonius van Waesberge: 1655), posthumously printed edition of a text written by Teellinck in between 1619 and 1624. See for more details Westerink, *Met het oog van de ziel* 443.

<sup>34</sup> See for an analysis of Augustine's thoughts on the matter for instance Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture* 19.

intellect should, according to Teellinck, be completely dedicated to the study of God's Word. And to comprehend fully what He has said, one should allow the imprints of His Word to enter one's mind.<sup>35</sup> The human eye should therefore not be focused on that which is visible, but on the Bible.

These strict Dutch Reformed opinions did limit the freedom of publishers and authors, but consumers were of course capable of making their own decisions in this matter. In an unillustrated copy of *De gulden harpe* (*The golden harp*) – a hymnbook by the Anabaptist Karel van Mander, first published in 1605 – a print is inserted with the caption 'Innocentes et recti adhaeserunt mihi' (Let perfectness, and righteous dealing wait upon me), a quote from *Psalms* 24 in the Vulgate-translation [Fig. 2].<sup>36</sup> The print was made by Adrianus Lommel, an engraver who worked in Ghent in between 1636 and 1663. Apparently this copy was used by a reader who was not content with the unillustrated character of this hymnbook.<sup>37</sup>

Not only readers, but also authors tried various strategies to get around the theological and ideological barriers to the use of images order to produce illustrated religious literature in the Dutch Republic. A case in point is a Dutch translation of a treatise by Christopher Love, titled *Naackt vertoogh van den algemeenen schrickelicken dagh des oordeels, tot waerschouwinge voor alle christenen* (Plain Treatise on the Last Judgment, As a Warning to all Christians), dating from 1661.<sup>38</sup> Christopher Love, an English Puritan minister, had died as a

<sup>35</sup> Teellinck Willem, *Noodtwendigh Vertoogh aengaende de tegenwoordighen bedroevden staat van Gods volck* (Rotterdam, Pieter van Waesberghe: 1647) 123.

<sup>36</sup> The religious song culture in the Low Countries was devotional of nature ever since the movement of the *Devotio Moderna* had been active. The medieval roots of this culture have not been studied in great detail, but it most likely appears to have been a breeding ground for van Mander and others, see Hascher-Burger U. and Joldersma H., "Music and the *Devotio Moderna*", *Church History and Religious Culture* 88, 3 (2008) 313–328, esp. 320.

<sup>37</sup> Zie Mander Karel van, *De gulden harpe: inhoudende al de liedekens, die voor desen by K.V.M. gemaect, ende in verscheyden boecxkens uyt-ghedaen zijn, nu hier in tot een boeck versamelt, op den A.B.C. ende by hem selfs gecorrigeert. Een is noodigh. Vermeerdert met 't Broodt-huys, verscheyden liedekens ende ghedichten, die in de voorgaende niet gevonden en worden* (Haarlem, Hans Passchiers van Wesbusch: 1627) copy of the Ghent University, shelfmark BIB.BL.002038/1.

<sup>38</sup> The English source for this Dutch translation has not been traced, see Schoneveld C.W., *Intertraffic of the Mind: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Anglo-Dutch Translation with a Checklist of Books Translated from the English into Dutch (1600–1700)* (Leiden: 1983) 215.



Fig. 2. Print included in the frontmatter of Karel van Mander, *De gulden harpe: inhoudende al de liedekens, die voor desen by K.V.M. gemaect, ende in verscheyden boecxkens uyt-ghegaen zijn, nu hier in tot een boeck versamelt, op den A.B.C. ende by hem selfs gecorrigeert. Een is noodigh. Vermeerdert met 't Broodt-huys, verscheyden liedekens ende ghedichten, die in de voorgaende niet gevonden en worden* (Haarlem: Hans Passchiers van Wesbusch: 1627). Image © Library of the Ghent University.

martyr in 1651 to serve as an example to the English Presbyterians, to warn them of what would happen to those who opposed Parliament in favor of Charles II.<sup>39</sup> Many of his sermons and treatises were translated into Dutch; and about thirty-five editions of this work appeared between 1651 and 1690. A 1661 edition *Naackt vertoogh van de dagh des oordeels* was enlarged with fold-out prints with bible illustrations. One of them featured all of the religious symbols detested by Voetius [Fig. 3]. The illustration is accompanied by a line of text, 'voor de wtvercoorene van het gestrecken vonnis vltrecksel', that was full of grammatical errors. Was it made by an English engraver who was not aware of Dutch sensibilities at the time? It can hardly have been a coincidence that the attempt to illustrate a devotional text was adapted from an English example, since Dutch approaches to the use of religious imagery were quite different at the time.<sup>40</sup>

#### *A Change of Tone around 1650*

While the use of religious imagery remained beyond the reach of most Dutch Reformed poets, a new interest in the subject matter of 'the passion of Christ' emerged around 1650. As a number of poems written around that time show, the devotional and emotional dimensions of religious instruction could be enhanced using textual means. It is evident from Teellinck's *Ecce Homo* of 1622, as well as from the popular treatise *De gecrucyghde Christus, ofte XXXV texten van 't lyden ende sterven Jesu Christi* (The crucified Christ, or thirty five texts on the Passion of Christ) first published in 1649, and written by the Groningen Dutch Reformed minister Johannes Martinus, that the change was not brought about by a new focus on the subject on the passion of Christ in itself.<sup>41</sup> Didactic treatises on this subject were popular before 1650, and would remain popular long after 1650. The purpose of these treatises was, as indicated by the Dutch Reformed minister Franciscus Ridderus in his *Zevenderlei gezichten in de historie van het lyden en*

<sup>39</sup> See Kistler D., *A spectacle unto God: the life and death of Christopher Love* (Morgan, PA: 1994).

<sup>40</sup> See Watt T., *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640* (Cambridge: 1991); and for Germany Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture*, passim.

<sup>41</sup> The volume was reprinted in 1656 by Frans Brochorst in Groningen; in 1665 by Hieronymus Sweerts in Amsterdam; in 1698 by Baltus Boekholt in Amsterdam, and again in 1745 by Laurens Groenwolt in Groningen.



Fig. 3 Christopher Love, *Naackt vertoogh van den algemeenen schrickelicken dagh des oordeels, tot waerschouwinge voor alle christenen* (Middelburg, Adriaen Baldeus: 1661) Image © Library of the Utrecht University.

*sterven onzes Heeren Jesus Christus* (Seven scenes from the Passion of Christ), to learn from the example given by Jesus. According to Ridderus, 'We should envision the suffering Jesus, so that we ourselves learn how to be suffering'.<sup>42</sup> Ridderus was instructional and unemotional in tone, even when he wrote about the most touching episodes, which he reduced to bare descriptions, such as, 'He was humiliated, he endured mockery, he suffered, and died willingly'.<sup>43</sup> Martinus was equally dispassionate in his *De gecrucyghde Christus*. When writing about *Matthew 27:45–47*, on the solar eclipse at the time of Jesus' death, he first quoted the biblical verses, then went on to dissect them into little pieces, adding a number of explanations focused on the fact that the solar eclipse must have lasted for three hours, and was visible over the entire earth:

*A wonderful darkness was experienced for three hours; because he [Matthew] let us know*

*A. when it started: Now from the sixth hour*

*B. what happened*

*i. the actual effect, there was darkness*

*ii. the place, over all the land*

*C. and for how long, unto the ninth hour. v. 45.*<sup>44</sup>

Martinus continues in this same disinterested tone of voice, including when he discusses the last words of Jesus on the cross ('My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me', *Matthew 27:46*). As he explains analytically, Jesus meant to address God – as all the faithful should – without any reproach. He simply posed a question 'concerning his fading feelings of divine love, of [spiritual] joy, and [heavenly] support on

<sup>42</sup> 'Dus moeten wy ons zelve den lydenden Jezus voor oogen stellen, op dat wy in onze ellenden ook goede lyders mochten worden'. Quoted in the third edition, Ridderus Franciscus, *Zevenderlei gezichten in de historie van het lyden en sterven onzes Heeren Jesus Christus: vertoonende: 1. De ontleding der texten. 2. Den sleutel der zwa-righeden. 3. Het merg der historie. 4. Den spiegel der werelt. 5. De schole der deugden. 6. Den balsem der vertroosting. 7. Het nabeeld der martelaren* (Rotterdam, Reinier van Doesburg: 1723) fol. \*4r.

<sup>43</sup> 'Hy leed verachtinge, hij verdroeg bespottinge, hij droeg smerten, hy ging gewil-lig naer zyn doot'. Ridderus, *Zevenderlei gezichten in de historie* fol. \*3v.

<sup>44</sup> 'Eene wonderbare Duisternisse gantscher drie uyren lang; want hy [Mattheus] meldt/ A. wanneer dit hebben begonnen: Ende van der sester uyre aen/B. watter zy geschiet, ten aensien i. van de sake self, wiert' er duysternisse/ii. van de plaetse waer, over de geheele aerde/C. hoe lange dit hebbe geduyrt, tot de negende uyre toe. v. 45', Martinus Johannes, *De gecrucyghde Christus, ofte XXXV texten van 't lyden ende ster-ven Jesv Christi* (Groningen, Jan Claessen: 1649) 525. The biblical verses are quoted in the King James Version.



account of his suffering unto death'.<sup>45</sup> There was in fact little difference between a sermon and a treatise like this.

The series of poems published around 1650 were also devoted to the subject of Christ's passion; but they approached the subject in a different manner.<sup>46</sup> The prestigious collection of poems titled *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten* (Various Dutch Poems), published in 1651, contained quite a few of those new poems: Jeremias de Decker's *Goede Vrydag* [*Good Friday*], Franciscus Martinius' *Treur-gedicht, tot verklaringe over 't Lyden en Sterven van onsen Heere Jesus Christus* (*Elegy in Explanation of Christ's Suffering and Death*), Hugo de Groot's *Christelijcke betrachtige des Lydens Christi* (*Christian Meditation on the Passion of Christ*), as well as a poem written by Caspar van Baerle, *Heylige aendacht op het Lyden van onsen Salighmaker Jesus Christus* (*Holy Meditation on our Savior's Passion*) and Constantijn Huygens' *Heilighe Dagh* (*Holy Days*), first printed in 1646.

As Jan Konst has argued, in at least one of the poems in this volume, *Goede Vrydag* by de Decker, new rhetorical techniques were used to evoke affective responses from the readers. An emotional and detailed description of the events, written in words but with the effect of a painting, served to repeatedly and aggressively appeal to the reader's sense of guilt.<sup>47</sup> As is evident from the preface to the volume written by the Remonstrant Geeraardt Brandt, this effect was purposely sought after by the authors through the use of visual language. Brandt dedicated the volume to the painter Geeraardt Pietersz. Syl, to whom he wrote:

Poetry, which is so similar to your Art of Painting, since the one is often painting with words what the other speaks through paint, now allows me to offer you poems in the place of painting and words in the place of colors.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> 'over 't onttrecken van 't inwendige gevoelen sijner godlicken liefde, vreuchde, hulpe, om 't lijden des doots'. Martinus, *De gecrucighde Christus* 530.

<sup>46</sup> This approach had been taken by another Dutch Protestant author, Jacob Revius, in his sonnet 'Hy droech onse smerten', published in 1630, but Revius' work was virtually unknown to Dutch readers. On this Protestant approach is written by Tümpel C., "Der Einfluss der Konfessionen auf die Kunst der Niederlanden", *Acta Universitatis Palckianae Olomucensis facultas philosophica. Neerlandica II. Emblematica et iconographia* (Olomouc: Olomouc University, 2003) 199–220, quotation on 214.

<sup>47</sup> See Konst J., "De retorica van het 'movere' in Jeremias de Deckers *Goede Vrydag ofte het Lijden onses Heeren Jesu Christi*", *De nieuwe taalgids* 83 (1990) 298–312, esp. 311.

<sup>48</sup> 'De Poësy, die sulck een groote gemeenschap met uw Schilderkunst heeft, dat d'eene dikwils met woorden schildert, en d'ander met verwen spreekt, geeft my nu

The readers are invited to step into these verbal paintings, to be spectators of Christ' suffering, following Calvin's opinion that the faithful should not identify themselves with Jesus (such as was the case in the Ignatian tradition) but rather should be witnesses of His passion.<sup>49</sup>

Not only de Decker, but also all of the other poets whose work was gathered in the *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten* meant to engage the readers in their writings by vizualing events in words. Even vivid descriptions of the author's emotions and suffering were meant to serve as a stimulus for the reader's faith.<sup>50</sup> The Dutch Reformed minister Martinius for instance maintained, in the preface to his 'Treurgedicht over 't lyden en sterven van onsen Heere Jesus Christus' to have dipped his pen into Jesus' blood in order to serve as a landmark for his readers:

It would be much better, O Lord, if you left me  
Staring at your cross, speechless;  
Or if you turned me into a post, as a pole or a road sign,  
Saying 'Behold this man', to everyone passing,  
Even if I could not speak.  
I would much rather turn my suffering into tears,  
If only those tears would be bloody as your sweat,  
Or my rhymes as red as your wounds,  
And my pen as sharp as your thorns,  
So that they would press upon my heart, out of mercy,  
What is left of your pitiful body.<sup>51</sup>

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de gelegentheynt om uw E. Gedichten voor schildery en woorden voor verwen aen te bieden', *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten* (Amsterdam, Lodewijck Spillebout: 1651) fol. \*2r.

<sup>49</sup> See Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture* 76.

<sup>50</sup> See Dam-Heringa B. van, "Martinius, De Decker en Oudaan: drie gedichten over het lijden van Christus", *De nieuwe taalgids* 76, 5 (1983) 425–442.

<sup>51</sup> 'Veel beter, Heere, waert, dat gy my onbesweken [=onverzwakt]/Liet eeuwich op u Kruys staroogen [=staren] sonder spreken;/Of setten als een post [paal, wegwijzer] tot teiken aen de wegh//Op dat ick, *Siet de mensch*, tot alle menschen segh//Of so ick niet en kon met seggen, of met swijgen//Veel liever selve smolt in tranen al mijn leet [veel liever smolt tik mijn leed tot tranen]//Indien myn water waer soo bloedigh als u sweet;/Of so men rymen vont so root als uwe striemen//En prickels hebben kon voor [=in plaats van] pennen, ende priemen//Mocht drukken endlyk uyt, met een melydent hert/Het overblyfsel noch [=althans wat overblijft] van uwes Lichaems smert', Martinius Franciscus, *Treurgedicht, tot verklaringe over 't Lyden en Sterven van onsen Heere Jesus Christus* (Amsterdam, Jacob Lescaijle: 1649) fol. B1v–B2r.

In the work of Heymen Dullaert, an apprentice of Rembrandt, the word again prevailed over the image.<sup>52</sup> Even though a painter himself, Dullaert only gave textualized images of Christ's passion:

Do go on, Lord! Behold your bloodied Son, And pour some of His blood from Your Throne of Grace, This blood, this precious blood with can save us from bleeding, Alas, it is too valuable! We are causing it to leak from the scourge.

Depart my soul! Flee to Golgotha where this blood is spread. There is in the Holy Blood a flood of holiness.<sup>53</sup>

In this case, the author and reader are united in their expectations and desires, praying to be enforced by the Holy Spirit, in a style and vocabulary suitable for the expression of their faith, but that borders on the inappropriate in its focus on the bloodiest details of the Passion.<sup>54</sup> Word and Spirit are not sufficient; the blood of God's Son is needed to provide the soul's complete fulfillment. The soul is therefore exhorted to go to Golgotha to seek refuge in this blood.

The new visual approach to the subject of Christ's passion was highly appreciated by Dutch readers. The *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten* was reprinted in 1658 and 1659, and some of the poems contained in the volume were reprinted separately as well.<sup>55</sup> However visual in nature these poems became, these seventeenth-century editions were

<sup>52</sup> Only a few of Dullaert's paintings remain, most likely because he never worked as a independent painter. See Pear T.H., *Remembering and Forgetting* (London: 1922) 83–86.

<sup>53</sup> 'Maar gaa wat verder Heer! zie uw bebloeden Zoon//En spreng wat van zijn bloet uit uw Genadetroon//Dat bloet, dat dierbaar bloet, dat ons van bloed kan hoeden// Ach 't is te kostelijk! wy lekken 't van de roeden./Ga heen mijn ziele! vlugt daar 't Golgotha verspreit./Daar is in 't heilig bloet de vloed der heiligheit', in "Uitbreiding over het Tweede Lidt van het Gebedt onzes Heeren", Dullaert Heymen, *H. Dullaerts gedichten* (Amsterdam, Gerard onder de Linden: 1719) 18–19 and 21.

<sup>54</sup> The specifics of his language are discussed in Schenkeveld-van der Dussen M.A., and Vries W.B. de, *Zelfbeeld in gedichten: brieven over de poëzie van Jan Six van Chandelier (1620–1695)* (Amsterdam: 2007) 136–138.

<sup>55</sup> De Decker's poems were first reprinted in 1654, Decker J. de, *Goede vrydag ofte Het lijden onses heeren Jesu Christi*, ed. W.J.C. Buitendijk (Culemborg: 1978) 139; Martinius' *Treur-gedicht, tot verklaringe over 't Lyden en Sterven van onsen Heere Jesus Christus* had been published before; its first edition did not survive, the second edition appeared in 1649, by Jacob Lescaijle in Amsterdam. De Groot's *Christelijcke betracht-inge des Lydens Christi* had been printed around 1620 without naming any printer's address, and was reprinted in 1631 in The Hague, by Anthony Jansz. Tongherlo. As to maximize the effect of the efforts made in the *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten*, other religious, devotional poems by the same group of poets and some others were collected and published in 1658, in the unillustrated *'t Gebedt onzes Heeren*, in

not illustrated with pictures of the suffering Christ. In all eighteenth-century editions of these poems, however, illustrations were indeed added, suggesting a shift in the Protestant opinions on the use of religious imagery.<sup>56</sup> In the 1702 edition of de Decker's *Rijm-oeffeningen* for example, produced by Willem de Coup, Willem Lamsvelt and Philip Verbeek in Amsterdam, six fold-out bible illustrations were included, made by an anonymous engraver. Exactly the same engravings were reproduced in the 1726 edition entitled *Alle de rym-oeffeningen (Exercises with Rhymes)*, edited by Mattheus Brouërius van Nidek [Fig. 4]. The image of the bleeding, suffering Christ was not longer just to be visualized using textual means.

The 1726 edition included an extra engraving [Fig. 5] whose complex combination of scenes resulted in a more emblematic and allegorical representation of the biblical episodes discussed in the accompanying texts. A similar development can be seen in reprints of Franciscus Martinus' *Gedichten [Poems]*. The 1729 edition included a great number of illustrations based on compositions made by Karel van Mander, such as the *Mocking of Christ* [Fig. 6]. This volume was lavishly illustrated. Every scene of Christ's Passion was now depicted – an indication that Dutch Reformed conventions were becoming increasingly distanced from the strict opinions as expressed by Teellinck and Voetius during the first half of the seventeenth century. Depictions of biblical scenes had been problematic for Teellinck, because they testified to the fact that the artist's hands had been at work on them. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, publishers of Dutch Reformed religious texts appear to have overcome these objections.

#### *A Radical Change around 1680*

This new habit of enhancing personal devotion through texts illustrated with images designed to clarify the faith as well as to facilitate its memorization and internalization, was rooted in developments that occurred around 1680. In 1678, the Amsterdam born poet and etcher

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*rijmen uitgebreidt. By verscheide liefhebbers der dichtkunste* (Amsterdam, Abraham van Blancken, 1658).

<sup>56</sup> See for an overview of reprints of Jeremias de Decker, *Goede vrijdag* 139; and Karsemeijer J., *De dichter Jeremias de Decker* (Amsterdam: 1934) bijlage III: De illustraties in de uitgaven van De Decker.

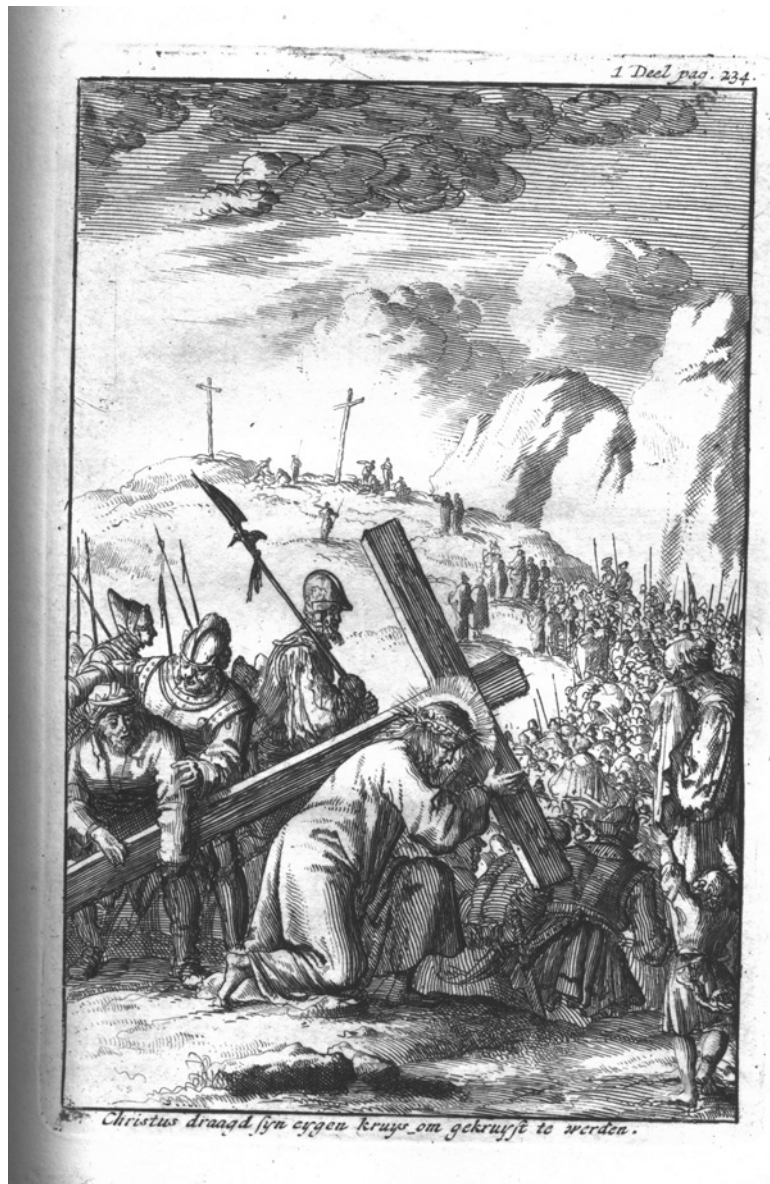


Fig. 4. Engraving in Jeremias de Decker, *Rijm-oeffeningen*. Amsterdam: Willem de Coup, Willem Lamsvelt and Philip Verbeek, 1702. Reproduced from Jeremias de Decker, *Alle de rym-oeffeningen*. Ed. Mattheus Brouërius van Nidek. (Amsterdam, David Ruarus, wed. Antony van Aeltwyk, Hendrik Bosch, Willem Barents, Hendrik Stockink and Adam Lobé: 1726), facing 234. Private collection.



Fig. 5. Engraving in Jeremias de Decker, *Alle de rym-oeffeningen*. Ed. Mattheus Brouërius van Nidek (Amsterdam, David Ruarus, wed. Antony van Aeltwyk, Hendrik Bosch, Willem Barents, Hendrik Stockink and Adam Lobé: 1726), facing 215. Private collection.



Jan Luyken published an emblem book, *Jesus en de ziel* [*Jesus and the Soul*], as a direct continuation of the (religious) love emblems which were published in the Southern Netherlands during the first half of the seventeenth century. About two-thirds of Luyken's *picturae* can be traced back to examples from Vaenius' *Amorum Emblemata* and *Amorum Divini Emblemata*, Hugo's *Pia desideria*, and Benedictus van Haeften's *Regia via Crucis*. The fact that Luyken's work was firmly embedded within the existing emblematic tradition is acknowledged by Luyken himself, in the first sentence of the preface to *Jesus en de ziel*, 'No one, who has ever been in this court of emblems, believes that it all blossomed solely from our soil'.<sup>57</sup>

In *Jesus en de ziel*, this search for God and the communion with His world is compared with the quest of the bride for her bridegroom in the Song of Songs. Luyken does not seem to seek intense sensory responses. His visual language lacks, for instance, references to bodily sensations such as bleeding, sweating and crying which could stimulate the readers' senses. Instead, the text offers a rather intellectual play with and for the reader's eye. Luyken's central theme is 'learning to see God', and this can be achieved by studying God's second book, nature, rather than, for example, by meditating on Christ's passion.<sup>58</sup> In Luyken's view the enhancement of the communication between God and the faithful could best be achieved, not by evoking emotions, but by stimulating the reader's intellect.

Luyken did not share Teellinck's assumption that the human eye should only be focused on the Bible, rather than on the visible world. Nonetheless, Luyken's choice of subject matter for his *picturae* was still highly selective. He did not include images such as this Crucifixion derived from van Haeften's *Regia Via Crucis* [Fig. 7], but rather restricted himself to the appropriation of Catholic *picturae* which were less devotional and emotional in nature. In Luyken's *picturae*, Jesus and the soul are depicted against seemingly realistic backgrounds,

<sup>57</sup> 'Niemant, die in het Hof dezer Sinnebeelden komt, dencke, dat al dese Bloempjes uyt onze eygen Grondt gewassen zijn', Luyken Jan, *Jesus en de ziel* (Amsterdam: 1685) fol. A3r. Quoted in the third, enlarged edition.

<sup>58</sup> Gelderblom A.J., "Binnen en buiten. Symboliek in de emblemen van Jan Luyken", *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde te Leiden 1998-1999* (Leiden: 2000) 18-35. See for detailed analyses of the nature of the Catholic meditative literature in the Low Countries, and the way in which imagery contributed to its meditative qualities Melion W.S., *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print, 1550-1625* (Philadelphia: 2009).





Fig. 7. Benedictus van Haefen, *Regia Via Crucis* (Cologne, Ioanne Carolus Munich: 1673). Image © Library of the Utrecht University.

performing seemingly realistic activities that lack any specifically religious overtones.

Whether Luyken acted in such a way to avoid possible criticism, is hard to determine. Echoes of Teellinck's thoughts could still be found in theological treatises written by people with whom Luyken associated. Exemplary in this respect is Abrahamsz. Galenus' *Korte verhandeling van de redelyk-bevindelyke godsdienst* (*Short Treatise on the Rational-Pietistic Religion*). Galenus maintained that the senses are not to be trusted, and all their sensations should be ignored when one is trying to imitate Jesus.<sup>59</sup> Prayers and concentration on His Word are the most effective forms of devotional practice, according to Galenus. Following St. Paul, Galenus asserts that the 'enlightened eyes of the mind' should be one's guide.

An eighteenth century manuscript, in which Luyken's *picturae* of the *Jesus en de ziel* are copied and supplied with new texts, allows us to speculate on the nature of the restrictions. The manuscript, made by an anonymous writer, looks like a book, but was never published. It even has a title page that reads: *Verborge leven der ziele met Christus* (The Hidden Life of the Soul with Christ).<sup>60</sup> The anonymous writer follows Luyken in great detail, emphasizing the central theme of 'seeing' even more so than Luyken had done. When we compare the *picturae* of emblem number 5 [Figs. 8 and 9] on which the soul is shown climbing up toward a cross, we can see that within the manuscript the mountain is pierced by a tunnel – which offers a view into another world, a visual play often used by Luyken himself in emblem books published after his *Jezus en de ziel*.<sup>61</sup> The tunnel leads to a small road, which leads to the top of another mountain. On this road we see a man carrying a cross.

Interestingly enough, the anonymous writer not only enhanced visual experiences but also evoked and described other sensory responses as well. On Luyken's title page [Fig. 10], Jesus is shown, surrounded by a bright light, guiding the soul by some ribbons he is carrying in his one hand and a censer in his other hand. Judging by the smoke rising from it, appears to spread its vapors around the soul. In the manuscript, a

<sup>59</sup> Galenus A., *Korte verhandeling van de redelyk-bevindelyke godsdienst*. Uitgegeven en toegelicht door Henk Vekeman (Cologne: 1983). First printed (posthumously) in *Eenige nagelaten schriften* in Amsterdam in 1707, but circulating in manuscript form in the 1670s and 1680s in Luyken's circles (of Anabaptists and Collegiants).

<sup>60</sup> Shelfmark The Hague, Royal Library, manuscript, 133 M 129.

<sup>61</sup> Stronks E, "Al kijkend reist de ziel naar God. 'Nieuwe platen' voor Luykens eerste religieuze emblembundel", *Nederlandse Letterkunde* 10 (2005) 161–175.

HET EERSTE DEEL. 27

V.



I.L.

*Hy zal de zachtmoedige leiden in het recht ; en  
hy zal de zachtmoedige zynen weg leeren. Psalm  
XXV : 9.*

Op

Fig. 8. *Pictura emblem 5*, Jan Luyken, *Jesus en de ziel* (Amsterdam, Pieter Arentsz.: 1685) 27. Image © Library of the Utrecht University.



Fig. 9. *Pictura emblem 5, Anonymous, Verborge leven der ziele met Christus.*  
Image © Royal Library, The Hague.



Fig. 10. Title page of Jan Luyken, *Jesus en de ziel* (Amsterdam, Pieter Arentsz.: 1685). Image © Library of the Utrecht University.

globe is added to the image, to illustrate that the soul should leave all earthly matters behind to follow Jesus. This imitative behavior, visualized as a literal act of following, is depicted more emphatically in the manuscript, where the soul is now shown holding one of the ribbons, and thus as physically connected with Jesus.

The title page in the manuscript [Fig. 11] is accompanied by an explicit textual description in which the anonymous writer enumerates one by one, the sensations which should be evoked by his work. He hopes that Jesus' light will not only find the readers' eyes, but also their hearts. The mind of the readers should be enforced by the vapor rising from the censer, which is referred to as 'the priest's vessel', deriving its power from 'a coal of the fire of the heavenly altar'. God's power is not only seen, but also smelt, and felt, and should enter the furrows which have been dug into the heart. On the *pictura* the soul's chest is bare, as if to show that the incense and ribbon will find the way to the heart of the soul without barriers:

When the Light of Grace surrounds a poor Soul  
 and Jesus' love sinks in deeper and deeper  
 not only in the brain, or in the ears,  
 but deep into the heart, in the furrows dug into it  
 awakened by this Grace, one is eager  
 to look around to find the genuine  
 road to sanctification: it can be found without a doubt  
 see how quickly the soul's lover is shown to her  
 this is depicted in this title print  
 you see here a chain that shows us how it binds her inner emotions  
 first love comes to awaken her  
 awakened she arises: so He will tow her  
 filled with love and heavenly light  
 the meaning of which is acknowledged more and more by the soul  
 she will find comfort and hope as a result  
 of rapidly following the soul's groom.  
 in order not to make her tired, or weary  
 he is strengthening her mind: this is shown by the priest's vessel  
 which is filled with the sweet vapor of spices  
 and these are spread around freely  
 because it derives its smell and power of a  
 coal from the heavenly altar and it is fed by the almighty God  
 it is felt and tasted deep inside  
 serving as an encouragement in the battle which has just begun.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Wanneer t genaaden Ligt een Arme Ziel omstraalt/en deese Liefde Trek, van Jesus, dieper daald/als slegts in t' breijn alleen, of in der sinnen ooren/maar sig



Fig. 11. Title page of Anonymous, *Verborge leven der ziele met Christus*.  
Image © Royal Library, The Hague.

All the senses that were considered distracting and earth-bound by the Dutch Reformed and also by Anabaptists like Galenus, are engaged here by the anonymous author. These sensations reach a climax in emblem 40, where seeing, tasting, feeling and hearing collide: 'this weak flesh, born from flesh, from Adam, must sweat to provide its daily bread, but the new spirit, fed by God's Word, rests in peace'.<sup>63</sup>

### *In conclusion*

The cases of Teellinck and Voetius which I took as my point of departure, show that at least some Protestants in the Dutch Republic – contrary to what Barbara Kiefer Lewalski concluded on the basis of her study of the German, French and English situation – did not accept emblematic religious imagery as a God given form of symbolism.<sup>64</sup> The Dutch Reformed objections to the use of any images, including depictions of biblical scenes, dominated religious reading practices in the Dutch Republic for the majority of the seventeenth century.

The widespread interest in the Catholic legacy which arose amongst Protestant emblematisers and their audience around 1680 must have been based on a tacit and newly reached agreement on the acceptability of religious emblematic imagery. The success of the religious emblems made by Jan Luyken serves to illustrate this development,

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verdiept in 't hert, in d omgeploegde vooren/in hijl lust [=heillust] opgewekt: den iver vind bereijdt/om louter om te sien: in waare saligheid/belust om t egte spoor: ontwijfelbaar te vinden/hoe haastig toond sig daar, die trouwen siel beminde/Dit schets dit tafereel, van deese titelprint/hier siet gij eene snoer: die wijst ons hoe t samen bind/het innige gemoed: eerst komt ons liefde wekken/ontwaakt en staat sij op: soo wil hij voorts haar trekken/met liefde seelen: door een proef van t hemels licht/waar in de geest al meer, ontdekt het groot gewigt/en dus ook meer getroost, om in een salig hoopen/den sielen bruidegom, in iver na te loopen/op datse niet beswijkt: en haast wierd afgemat/versterkt hij haaren geest: dit toond het priester vat/gevuld met soeten geur: van diebre specerijen/die sig aan alle kant: wijldlustig heene spreijen/na diense door een kool: van 's hemels altaarvier/haar geur en kragt ontaat: en in gods albestier/gevoeld word en gesmaakt: gedrongen diep na binnen/waar in gemoedigd om den strijd, nu te beginnen', *Verborge leven der ziele met Christus* fol. 2r.

<sup>63</sup> 'dit brosse vlees, uijt vleesch geboren: uijt adam, sweet om t aardse brood/maar t nieuw gemoed, gevoed van t horen: rust salig uijt', *Verborge leven der ziele met Christus* fol. 145v.

<sup>64</sup> See Lewalski B.K., *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: 1979) 185, enforced in Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture* 255.



and it seems to have been announced by a turn toward the visual in Passion lyrics even before 1680. There were certainly limits to the process of appropriation of the Catholic religious emblem, but as the eighteenth century set in Bible illustrations established a firm presence in Dutch religious literature, and even the religious emblem flourished in forms and shapes that Teelinck could have never imagined.

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