

Exotica, ornaments and idolatry in the poetry of Jan Six van Chandelier (1620–1695)

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Abstract

In the seventeenth century, the Dutch Republic occupied a central position in the world trade in exotica. Exotic goods were not only popular as foodstuffs, medicines, and *curiosa*, but also as artistic ornaments in Dutch art and literature. The literary representation of exotica in the poetry of drug merchant Jan Six van Chandelier (1620–1695) reveals how these exotic materials did not only promote scientific curiosity, but also gave rise to moral unease. This article analyses a series of eulogy poems Six wrote to the Royal Entry of King Philip IV and Queen Mariana in Madrid in 1649, where he over-ironizes exotic oil and incense as poetic means to apotheosis. The article shows how these poems are not just meant as criticism on Counter-Reformation Spain, but also served as a means of self-representation, with self-scrutiny as literary strategy. Jan Six articulates criticism both of the literary hype of exotica in the Dutch Republic and of his own identity as *drogist-dichter*.

Keywords: exotics, global trade, Jan Six van Chandelier, ornaments, apotheosis, emotions

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In the early modern period, interest in exotica permeated the European culture; it could be called a *hype* of the period. The period saw the introduction of an array of foreign goods to Europe in greater quantities and variety than before. This was especially visible in Amsterdam, which became the marketplace for Asian goods in the seventeenth century, not just for the Dutch Republic, but for all of Europe. René Descartes' comment on the circulation of goods in Amsterdam has become a commonplace in the research on the Dutch global trade: 'What place on earth could one choose where all the commodities and curiosities one could wish for were as easy to find as in this city?'¹ Exotic materials also became popular motives among Dutch artists; the representation of exotics is particularly visible in Dutch art – it is enough to mention the still life paintings of Willem Claeszoon Heda and Willem Kalf; their sumptuous *pronkstillevens* depicting rich groupings of Chinese porcelain and tropical fruit.

Although it has not been examined to the same degree, poets also incorporated references to exotic materials in their works.² An important name is the merchant poet Jan Six van Chandelier (1620–1695). Six is probably the poet who pays most attention to exotics in early modern Dutch literature. In the only collection of poems which he published, *Poësy* (1657), he included gratitude poems for exotic gifts which he received from fellow merchants, such as West Indian bezoar stone and Baltic amber, poems on foreign rarities in cabinets of curiosities, and eulogy poems on Joyous Entries and other civil festivities, which are permeated with references to exotic plants, perfumes and

¹ For the quotation, see F. Braudel, *Civilization and capitalism, 15th–18th century. The perspective of the world*, vol. III, Berkeley, Los Angeles 1992, p. 30. For the circulation of global goods and knowledge in the Dutch Republic, H.J. Cook, *Matters of exchange. Commerce, medicine, and science in the Dutch Golden Age*, New Haven 2007, E. Bergvelt and R. Kistenmaker (eds.), *De wereld binnen handbereik. Nederlandse kunst- en rariteitenverzamelingen, 1585–1735*, 2 vols., Amsterdam 1992. E. Bergvelt, D.J. Meijers and M. Rijnders (eds.), *Verzamelen. Van rariteitenkabinet tot kunstmuseum*, Heerlen 2005.

² There are statements that literary reflections of foreign goods and knowledge 'were remarkably scarce.' The editors of the 2013 edition of *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art, Netherlandish Art in its Global Context*, address this question, with relation to, what they call, the increased interconnectivity of the early modern world. Published 05.10.2014: <http://arthist.net/archive/8577>. In my view this statement is too rash, as long as the impact of exotics in the history of Dutch literature has not received a systematic inquiry. This article forms a contribution to this purpose.

frankincense. Even in a poem on his favourite classical poet, Horace, we find peculiar references to the world of exotics; he compares the Roman with the so-called bird of paradise, a sought-after object for early modern connoisseurs.³

A pressing question in this context is whether the religious background of artisans, artists and poets engaged with exotics – whether Protestant or Catholic – made them develop moral reservations against these luxurious and expensive materials. To judge by recent studies on exotics in early modern Netherlands, the answer seems to be negative. The emphasis there lies on the positive effects of global trade, and how they are expressed through objects of arts; this tells us how Amsterdam became a centre for global exchanges of tastes, techniques and knowledge, demonstrating the curiosity and the engineering of the Dutch.⁴ The representation of materials in Six' poetry has been presented in similar terms. M.A. Schenkeveld-van der Dussen has stressed Six' conspicuous interest for the material world, his so-called realist poetics; to her, Six is a poet who writes about the everyday life of a merchant in an open, inclusive way. This attention includes love for luxury food and curiosity about foreign things.⁵

I will argue that there also were narratives about exotica as sources of moral unease in the Dutch Republic. In this paper, I will address these questions by examining the literary representation of exotics in Six' poetry. Next to the openness for the material world, the poetry of Six is characterized by a distinct ironic and exaggerated tone; this is paralleled by the large number of satirical poems in *Poësy*. These texts have been studied in the light of the so-called rhymester poetics of Six, his critical attitude towards the more pretentious, universal aesthetics of the Dutch Golden Age literature, such as the poems of Joost van den Vondel and P.C. Hoof. However, the divided view of Six as realist on one hand, and satirist on the other, does not correspond well with the fact that Six himself could be seen as representative of phenomena that were associated with abundance and immodesty. Six was a *drogist-koopman*, he traded in exotic materials and ran a drug store in Amsterdam, 'De vergulde Eenhoorn' in Kalverstraat, and bought foreign materials from the West and East Indian companies, which he sold

3 For example 'Dank, aan Isaak de Bra, voor een besaarsteen, van Rio de Plata meegebracht, en my vereert' (J467), 'Dankdicht aan Jakob Breine te Dantsich, voor een paar barnsteene hechten' (J165) and 'Verrukkinge der sinnen, aan Joannes Hoorenbeek, dr., profir., en predikant t'Utrecht: en Simon Dilman geneesheer' (J177). The number with a J in parentheses refers to the place of the poem in the commented edition of Six' collection of poetry: *Joannes Six van Chandelier. Gedichten*, ed. A.E. Jacobs, 2 vols., Assen 1991.

4 For example, recent scholarship on the introduction of Asian lacquerware, porcelain and banyan (morning gowns) into the Dutch Republic, shows how these novelties were praised and even copied by Dutch artisans, see K. Corrigan, F. Diercks, M. Gosselink, *Asia in Amsterdam. The culture of luxury in the Golden Age*, Salem, Amsterdam 2015.

5 For Six' realistic poetics, see M.A. Schenkeveld-van der Dussen and W.B. de Vries, *Zelfbeeld in gedichten. Brieven over de poëzie van Jan Six van Chandelier (1620-1695)*, Amsterdam 2007. For the representation on exotic drugs in Six' poetry, see R. Spaans, *Godenbloed te koop. Exotica, extase en verboden kennis in de poëzie van Jan Six van Chandelier (1620-1695)*, PhD-Thesis, Oslo 2014. Compare M.A. Schenkeveld-van der Dussen's view on Six: 'Ik ervaar hem niet als een in zichzelf verzonken persoonlijkheid, maar eerder als een nieuwsgierig ronddraaiend zoeklicht'; Schenkeveld-van der Dussen and de Vries, *Zelfbeeld in gedichten*, p. 117.

to the home market or exported to other European countries. I argue in this article that Six himself is an example of the phenomena which he ridicules in his satires. I am thus interested in poems which testify to his ambiguous writing strategies towards exotics. By drawing on both literary analysis and the material and medical culture in the early modern period, I will show how exotics – both as rhetoric figures and tropes and as physical objects – are perceived as a source of moral unease and self-examination in the poetry of Six van Chandelier.

Material and figurative ornaments

Before I turn my attention to Six' poems, I wish to dwell upon the representation of exotic materials in Renaissance poetry. I argue that literary representation of exotic goods must be understood in the light of an anti-cosmetic discourse in the seventeenth century. I also argue that a physical perception of these literary ornaments was prominent in the literature of the Dutch Golden Age, especially in the case of Six, a writer with a pharmaceutical background. In this article, I will therefore include a methodology that accounts for early modern theories of physical properties of materials in my analysis. Next to rhetorical and poetical theories, I will address early modern notions on the passions and body, including such concepts as identity and ethnicity.

The latter is present in the research of Tanya Pollard into the chemical vocabulary of early modern English theatre.⁶ She demonstrates the physiological powers early modern writers attributed to language. Central to her study is the dominant medical paradigm of the early modern period, the Galenic humoral theory. Literary works exerted as much influence on the body as on the mind of the reader, she argues, because the humoral physiology made no clear distinction between the mental and physical processes, and because thoughts, emotions and imagination were perceived as parts of the human body. A change in the state of mind caused a corresponding change in the body. The emotional impact of literature on the human mind had therefore also consequences for the human body. Whether talking about material or figurative drugs, Pollard shows how pigments and aromatics were perceived as powerful transformative substances. Just like human bodies, materials were attributed humoral qualities; for example, tropical dyes and fragrances were generally considered as hot and dry. For a person with the opposite humoral constitution, however, consumption of these drugs could cause an unhealthy change in the balance of the humours, causing the arousal of immoral appetites and desires, and even alteration of the person's identity.

The transformative power ascribed to foreign drugs not only gave rise to a medical anxiety, but also to an ethnocentric and a religious fear. This is the topic of Farah Karim-Cooper's study of cosmetics in English Renaissance drama, where she states, '[t]he fear of a diminishing Englishness in an ingredient culture that thrived upon

6 T. Pollard, *Drugs and theater in early modern England*, Oxford 2005, esp. p. 1–22.

foreign commerce is quite central to the anti-cosmetic case.⁷ Here, the concept of *ethnicity* needs to be understood in the light of the early modern discourse surrounding the term. The physicality of emotions indicates that ethnicity was defined more by emotional differences than by external characteristics such as skin colour. According to Mary Floyd-Wilson and her term *geohumoralism*, ethnicity was defined through humoral-climatic theories, in accordance with what she calls a ‘regionally framed humoralism’. In the early modern period, race was a flexible concept: a change in diet and lifestyle could lead to a radical identity change.⁸ Foreign, ‘hot’ products had thus a negative impact on the ‘cold’ body of northern Europeans. In this article, I will show that, in the same way, the exotics of Six’ pharmacy were perceived as a threat to his *Dutchness*.

The theological opposition to ornaments is based on a central concept in the anti-cosmetic argument, the view of the human body as the sacred ‘work of art’ of God. Moralists argued that cosmetics such as face paint, pigments and perfumes which alter the external body, jeopardise divine workmanship. And, since there were no clear distinctions between the mental and physical, this fear also includes an anxiety about the spiritual state of God’s workmanship. Cosmetics thus undermine God’s creation and distract one from spiritual meditation and reflection.⁹

In this context, it is useful to take a look at Karim-Cooper’s definition of ‘cosmetic’. Karim-Cooper operates with a broad approach to the term: ‘it is material and symbolic; it is that which beautifies. It refers not only to makeup, but also herbs, and even aesthetic commodities such as tapestries, which ‘beautify’ a room’.¹⁰ I will use the same definition in this article; as we soon will see, this definition corresponds with the broad field of application that was ascribed to exotic drugs in the poetry of Six van Chandelier.

The juxtaposition of exotic smells and colours with literary composition is not a new device; it has been known in rhetoric since Antiquity. Classical writers define *ornatus* (adornment) as the culmination of the skills of the speaker: Cicero writes that the speaker should decorate his texts with *colores rhetorici* (rhetorical colour, i.e. tropes and figures) to win the attention of his listeners. These rhetorical ‘pigments’ make thus the text vivid for the audience. The view of rhetorical metaphors and tropes as pigments reappears in the literary theory of the Renaissance. In his authoritative poetics, *The Art of English Poetry* (1589), George Puttenham defines rhetorical devices, echoing Cicero, as ‘coulours in our arte of Poesie’. He compares writing poems with applying paint: ‘a Poet setteth [...] upon his language by arts [...] as th’ excellent painter bestoweth the

7 F. Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance drama*, Edinburgh 2006, p. 41.

8 According to Floyd-Wilson: ‘Ethnicity in the early modern period is defined more by emotional differences than by appearance: distinctions rest on how easily one is stirred or calmed – on one’s degree of emotional vulnerability or resistance – or one’s capacity to move others’; see Idem, ‘English mettle’, in: G. Kern Paster, K. Rowe and M. Floyd-Wilson (eds.), *Reading the early modern passions in the cultural history of emotion*, Philadelphia 2003, p. 130–146, quotation, p. 133.

9 Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance drama*, p. 41–42.

10 Ibidem.

rich Orient colours upon his table of pourtraire.’ The prominent position Puttenham assigns to ‘rhetorical colours’ signal their power to create vividness; in the words of Elizabeth D. Harvey, implicit in these arguments is the idea that colours are not simply ornamental to poetry but constitutive of them.¹¹

But, as Pollard and Karim-Cooper show in their studies, just as old as the linkage of language with cosmetic materials, are the linguistic, medical and religious warnings against the ‘druglike power’ of literature. Cicero warns against an extensive use of *flores*, saying that this is typical of a sophistic style. Quintilian likewise warns against an abuse of artistic ornament: it will have the effect of deception. These warnings are based on an older critical attitude to literary composition. A famous commonplace is the rejection of rhetoric in Plato’s *Gorgias*; in this work rhetoric is placed in the same category as cosmetics, cooking and sophistry.¹²

In order to understand Six’ ambiguous writing strategy, we need to study the Dutch parallel of this discourse. Like the English moralists whom Pollard discusses in her inquiry, Dutch moralists attached great importance to the senses and body organs in their explanation of the dangers of theatre. For example, the Calvinist preacher Petrus Wittewrongel labelled the theatre as a ‘schadelijk vergift’. The pernicious words of plays corrupt the senses and body of ‘beyde de Speelers ende de aenschouwers’:

Wat soude sulcken bitteren wortel, anders als een galle ende asem der sonde kunnen voort-dringen. Sulcken boom, sulck een vrucht. De mensche werdt uytwendigh ende inwendigh besmet, de ooghen, de ooren werden daer door verontreynt, het herte tot onkuysche lusten, en de daden afghetrocken, wanneer hy alle dese nieuwe vertooninghen der sonde aenschouwt, / ende sich daer in vermaectt.¹³

The discourse of the deceptive power of poetry can also be found in the poetical works of humanist poets in early modern Dutch literature, especially in discussions of mythological decoration in poetry. Dirk Volckertszoon Coornhert (1522–1590) and later Joachim Oudaen (1628–1692) opposed fiercely the use of religious ornaments in Renaissance poetry and labelled this adornment as vicious persuasion. In his opening poem ‘Coornherts rymerien aenden rymlievenden leser’ to *Comedie van lief en leedt* (1582), Coornhert distances himself from the ‘hoge Parnasser spraken’ full of ‘gonst-zuchtige pluymstruykeryen’ and references to ‘onreine’ Roman gods as Bacchus and Venus – a ‘pronckelyc’ style, which serves ‘yemandt te behagen met logens soet’. However, Coornhert’s criticism is not aimed at all forms of poetry. He distinguishes between ‘Poetsche fabriicken’, which contains no truth, and an art of writing stripped of mythological fiction, written in good Dutch and about true things.¹⁴ That

11 E.D. Harvey, ‘Flesh colors and Shakespeare’s sonnets’, in: M. Schoenfeldt, *A companion to Shakespeare’s sonnets*, Oxford 2010, p. 314–329, esp. 322.

12 See Pollard, *Drugs and theater in early modern England* (n. 6), p. 13–14.

13 P. Wittewrongel, *Oeconomia christiana. Christelicke huys-houdinge*, 2 vols., Amsterdam 1661, vol. 2, p. 1168.

14 D.V. Coornhert, *Het roerspel en de comedies van Coornhert*, ed. P. van der Meulen, Leiden 1955, p. 156–159. For a discussion of Coornhert’s poetics, see M. Spies, “‘Helicon and hills of sand.’ Pagan gods in

‘mythological ornament’ refers not only to gods and religious myths, but also to material aspects of pagan religion, is apparent from ‘Godsdienst- en het Godendom ontdekt: aan de Hedendaagsche Dichters’ of Joachim Oudaen.¹⁵ The poem attacks the representation of ‘Wierook, Ooster-kruideryen, / Oliën, en dierb're geuren’ (vss. 10–11) in early modern poetry. Through ‘het zoet vergift der woorden’ (v. 22), the Renaissance poet holds ancient paganism alive, argues Oudaen. The rhymester-poetics of Six become relevant in this context. Schenkeveld-van der Dussen has already pointed to Six’ criticism of Vondel’s notion of universal poetry, but it would also be useful to see Six’ poetics as a follow-up of Coornhert’s ‘rymerien’, and the discourse of ornamental poetry. A comparison between Six’ poetics and the literary program of these writers is not yet done and should be productive. In fact, parallels between ‘Coomherts rymerien aenden rymlievenden leser’ and one of Six’ poetical texts, ‘Het boek, aan den leeser’ (J119), are conspicuous.

An analysis of Six’ rhymester-poetics in the light of the ornamental-cosmetic vocabulary of Dutch Renaissance poetry would enlighten both Six’ relationship to Vondel’s poetics and show that Six’ own position is more ambivalent than earlier assumed. Just as Six forms a continuation of Coornhert’s Christian humanism, Vondel represents a continuation of the classical humanism, in the so-called ‘Parnassus language’ – a literary style, often composed in an epic tone and imbued with references to the sacraments and sacrifices of classical mythology. We find the style also in the writings of poets with affinity to Vondel’s aesthetics, such as Jan Vos and Reyer Anso. The view of poetry as an elevated language is also reflected in theoretical writings of the period. In his *Aenleidinge ter Nederduitsche dichtkunst* (1650), Vondel makes a distinction between the exercise of rhymesters, who study classical writers of the Antiquity, and ‘hemelsche Poëzy’ and ‘de spraek der Goden’ of poets who are filled with divine inspiration.¹⁶

The cosmetic implications of this ‘Parnassus language’ become clear for us when we study Joost van den Vondel’s poem ‘Wierook voor Cornelis en Elizabeth le Blon’.¹⁷ The theme of this short poem is simple: Vondel *performs* Cornelis en Elizabeth le Blon, with poetical ‘wierookgeur van danckbaerheit’, because they brought him a medal which he received from Queen Christine of Sweden. Naturally, Vondel does not mean a physical censuring of the couple, but he displays his gratitude to Le Bon through a metaphorical understanding of the term. In modern Dutch the figurative use of incense is still known through the Dutch verb ‘bewieroken’, which means ‘praise to the skies’. The connections with religious and spiritual rituals that exotic aromatics create, form the basis of the argument. ‘Wierook’ literally means ‘gewijde rook’, and refers to resins that release fragrant smoke when burned, especially frankincense (also called olibanum)

early modern Dutch and European poetry’, in: H. Wilcox, R. Todd, A. MacDonald (eds.), *Sacred and profane. Secular and devotional interplay in early modern British literature*, Amsterdam 1996, p. 225–236.

¹⁵ J. Oudaen, *Poëzy*, vol. 1, Amsterdam 1712, p. 32.

¹⁶ K. Porteman and M.B. Smits-Veldt, *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1560–1700*, Amsterdam 2008, p. 401–403.

¹⁷ L. Simons et al. (eds.), *De werken van Vondel*, vol. 5, Amsterdam 1931, p. 472.

and myrrh, resin from trees native to the Arabian Peninsula. They equip Vondel's text with a character of solemnity and exoticism.

At the same time, I will argue that we have to take into account the physical perception of incense in this poem. A prominent feature of the literary representation of exotic ornaments is the emphasis on senses and sense impressions, apparent from the above quotations as formulations such as 'wieroockgeur van danckbaerheit' and 'het zoet vergift der woorden'. This teaches us that aromatic materials had a broader application in the early modern period. For example, incense served not only as religious sacrament, but was used as a perfume and had several therapeutic purposes. Even a staunch Calvinist as Gisbertus Voetius clutched 'holy smoke' to 'suffumigeeren' his room when the plague swept Utrecht!¹⁸ More than people today, early modern individuals had thus a sensible perception of many of the objects that figured as literary ornaments, both dyes and fragrances. Incense was thus a smell that Voetius knew just as well as his Catholic countrymen, or as well as Vondel. Taking into account Six' profession, his work as a druggist, it is even more reasonable to include early modern medical and physical theories about exotic drugs when discussing his poems. We get a demonstration of the latter if we compare the literary representation of amber in Six' 'Dankdicht aan Jakob Breine te Dantsich, voor een paar barnsteene hechten' (J165) with that of a contemporary poet, Jan Vos' 'Barnsteene koffertje door Haare Keurvorstelyke Doorluchtigheid van Brandenburg, aan Mejoffrouw Leonora Huidekoopers van Maarseveen, gemaalin van den E. Heer scheepen Joan Hinloopen, vereert'. Six' treatment includes on the one hand scientific and medical theories of amber in the early modern period, and on the other hand, the Calvinist – more or less ironically – plays on emotional and religious connotations of the exotic: 'Ik neem het aan, als soete lucht / Van wierook, uit geneegen sucht, / My opgeoffert, sonder schulden' (vss. 35–37). Jan Vos, on contrast, contents himself with a semantic pun on amber ('barnsteen' as 'brandsteen').¹⁹

This emphasis on emotions and physical perception of materials legitimates a broader approach when studying the representation of exotics in Six' poetry. At the same time, it makes Six' position as satirist more ambiguous. In fact, narratives of bodily disturbances occupy a large space in Six' poetry. As scholars have noticed, Six profiles himself as a sinner in *Pöesy*. He launches into religious meditations on vices as avarice and hubris, as well as moral musings on a spleen ailment from which he suffered. As a merchant he travelled to and traded in Spain and Italy – countries which moralists at home considered a threat to his religious and bodily health. Many poems published in Six' poetry collection are actually addressed to Calvinist pastors, the most frequent name is

¹⁸ M.J. van Lieburg, 'Voetius en de geneeskunde', in: J. van Oort et al. (eds.), *De onbekende Voetius. Voordrachten Wetenschappelijk Symposium*, Kampen 1989, p. 168–180, quotation, p. 178.

¹⁹ The olfactory impression of amber is based on both the broader application of the material in early modern Europe and the fact that amber is fossil resin; it releases fragrant smoke when heated. Among other things, Catholic rosary beads were often made of amber; the odour that they released when touched, was regarded as holy, see R. King, "'The beads with which we pray are made from it.'" Devotional ambers in early modern Italy', in: W. de Boer and Chr. Göttler, *Religion and the senses in early modern Europe*, Leiden, Boston 2013, p. 153–175.

Johannes Hoornbeeck (1617–1666), preacher and professor of theology affiliated with the University of Utrecht; he also seems to have had contact with the aforementioned Petrus Wittewrongel (1609–1662). This aspect is important, but it has not been studied systematically. Willemien B. de Vries sees the self-critical attitude of Six in a broader religious context: Hoornbeeck was associated with the so-called ‘Nadere Reformatie’, the pietism movement that focused on the reformation of lifestyle and morals, and she relates Six’ self-examination to this movement.²⁰ As mentioned earlier, these poems have been studied separately from Six’ so-called realist poetics, his interest in objects and materials. By taking account of the physical and religious theories connected to the early modern anti-cosmetic discourse, I, by contrast, argue that Six’ self-criticism is closely associated with his involvement with exotic materials.

In this article, I will confine my investigation to two specimens of exotica – oil and incense – which Six addresses in a sequence of eulogy poems he wrote on occasion of the Joyous Entry of the newlywed royal couple Philip IV and Mariana in Madrid in 1649. Six was present in Madrid during the festivities, and he probably traded in the products mentioned in the poems. Although the poems address an event that took place in Spain, as we will see, they give an indication of the reception of exotic materials in the poet’s homeland. I will examine the representation of exotics in Six’ poetry in three stages: first some facts about the political background of the royal wedding and the content of the so-called Joyous or Royal Entry, followed by an analysis of Six’ eulogy poems. Secondly, I will discuss Six’ reaction to criticism which his poem sequence awoke among Dutch readers, who obviously had misunderstood his intentions with the texts. They are important because they relate the exotics to both artistic trends in the Dutch Republic, and to Six’ person, his profession as *drogist-koopman* and his role as importer of exotics. Thirdly, I will interpret the poems in light of Six’ Calvinist belief and his relationship to the Calvinist theologians.

Deifying the king and queen of Spain

On November 15, 1649, on a business trip in Spain, Six witnessed the triumphal entry into Madrid of Mariana of Austria, daughter of the German Emperor Ferdinand III. The fledgling Mariana, from the German branch of the Habsburgs, had a month earlier been married to King Philip IV, who belonged to the Spanish branch of the family. Mariana was initially engaged to the crown prince of the Spanish Habsburg empire, Balthasar Charles. When he died in 1646, his father, King Philip IV stepped into the wedding shoes of his young son. Philip’s first wife, queen Isabella, was deceased two years before. The marriage between Philip IV and Mariana was controversial. Not only was Philip thirty years older than his Austrian bride, he was also her uncle. It was nevertheless carried through, as part of a geopolitical game. The Spanish empire was in an

²⁰ See W.B. de Vries’ comments in Schenkeveld-van der Dussen and de Vries, *Zelfbeeld in Gedichten* (n. 5), p. 131–132.

economic, political and royal crisis. The commitment of Mariana and Philip IV would increase the power and position of the Spanish and German Habsburgs. The grandeur of the arrival of the fourteen-year-old queen reflected these great expectations: this was the beginning of a new era for the Spanish Empire.

The Joyous or Royal Entry was a term that designated the entirety of the ceremony and festivities accompanying a formal entry by a ruler or his representative into a city.²¹ The festivities in Spain consisted of theatre spectacles, triumphal arches and allegorical and mythological displays. The glorification of the royal couple ran like a connecting thread through the spectacle. The king and the queen were portrayed as two celestial bodies attracted to each other: Mariana as Aurora, the goddess of the dawn, who derives her light from Philip IV, who was portrayed as the sun god Apollo. The royal entry was also celebrated in literature, glorifying eulogies full of Biblical and Catholic symbolism, printed in precious, decorated books that were published in the same year. An example is *La segunda y esposa Triunfar Muriendo* of Pedro Calderón de la Barca. In this so-called *auto sacramental* (a Spanish allegorical drama genre about the mystery of faith), a spiritual reality is mixed with an earthly, political reality: the glorification of the Roman Catholic Eucharist merges with the apotheosis of the royal wedding.²²

Six' poem sequence consists of seven texts. They were published in his collection of poems, *Poësy*. Since his reactions to the criticism that these 'Spanish' poems received were included in the same book, the poem sequence was possibly disseminated among Dutch readers at an earlier stage, perhaps in manuscript form or as a pamphlet. I will discuss two poems in the text group: 'Blyde inkomste te Madrid, van Maria Anna van Oostenryk, kooninglyke bruid van Spanje' (J241) and 'Tempel, aan den kooning van Spanje' (J246).²³ Other poems in the sequence, such as 'Vraage, van een Spanjaard, aan den turkschen ambassadeur, en syne antwoorde' (J245) and 'Op de schoonheit van de kooninginne, aan de selve' (J250), clearly introduce beauty and hubris as the theme for the text group: the first poem thematises the contrast between the high costs of royal feasts and the high level of taxation in the kingdom, while the second poem includes Mariana with Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite in the beauty contest that led to the Trojan

21 For the Royal Entry in the Netherlands, see D.P. Snoep, *Praal en propaganda. Triumfalia in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de 16de en 17de eeuw*, Alphen aan den Rijn 1975.

22 For the Royal Entry of Mariana and Philip in Spain, see C. Justi, *Diego Velazquez und sein Jahrhundert*, Zurich 1933, p. 664-667, and especially R. Walthaus, 'The Sun and Aurora. Philip IV of Spain and his queen-consort in royal festival and spectacle', in: M. Gosman, A. MacDonald and A. Vanderjagt (eds.), *Princes and princely culture 1450-1650*, vol. 2, Leiden 2005, p. 277-308. Walthaus moreover devotes space both on the *Noticia del recibimiento i entrada de la Reyne vestra Señora*, the official report of the festivities, and on the mentioned work of Calderón. 'No costs were spared to give evidence of a wealth and power that it [the Spanish kingdom] no longer possessed', says Walthaus, p. 307.

23 The other five poems written for the event and published in *Poësy*, are: 'Vraage, van een spanjaard, aan den turkschen ambassadeur, en syne antwoorde' (J245), 'Opdracht van den tempel, aan den Kooning van Spanje' (J247), 'Op d' aanstaande wandeling van de kooninginne, na Casa del Campo, of het landhuis' (J248), 'Spanjes Heerschappye, afgebeeldt aan een der triumfboogen' (J249) en 'Op de schoonheit van de Kooninginne, aan de selve' (J250).

War, insinuating an upcoming political catastrophe for the Spanish empire. These texts give instructions of how to read the praise poems: as ironic, satirical poems.

‘Blyde inkomste te Madrid’ is written as a Pindaric ode, a panegyric poetic genre reserved for sublime topics, and written for state occasions such as a ruler’s accession, wedding, or funeral, thus the perfect genre choice for this event, and also the perfect genre for a poem following the ‘Parnassus style’. The theme of Six’ poem is how to approach a royal person – or even a divine person, in this case the goddess of the dawn. Six here instructs the Spanish ‘princes and princesses’ present at the ceremony (vss. 20–21): ‘Versuim geen mirt, noch laaten roosenhoed, / Kroon Venus, strooi haar kruiden, onder voet.’ At the same time, the Dutch poet warns the earthly worshippers from direct eye contact with the ‘Heemlsche Godin’ (v. 9). Invoking a deity is only possible through a ritualized form of rapprochement, is his message.²⁴ The idea of enchanting eyes, the so-called ‘fascie’, is well known in the literature of the Antiquity and Renaissance, it was also a component of the so-called imperial cult.²⁵

Six includes himself among the characters of the poem: he steps forward among the worshippers. The text manifests itself through Six’ words as an altar, ‘een middelmuur’, upon which the Dutch poet offers his own sacrifice to the sacred Mariana. He admits he could place ‘gold from Ofir’, myrrh and ‘smells of Arabs’ (vss. 32–33), i.e. incense, on her altar – the three sacred gifts that the three wise men from the East gave to the Infant Jesus; the apotheosis of Mariana would then become a foreshadowing of Christ. But in the following lines he rejects the idea – gold and incense are but external, superficial sacrifices, the poet explains; he offers instead his odourless soul, his soul’s ‘gum resin’ (‘zielgom’), as the druggist-poet calls it (v. 34). Then follows another modification: if outer beauty is a sign of selfless devotion, his sacrificial gifts may still shine on his literary altar to the Spanish goddess (vss. 35–40).²⁶

24 For an introduction of the Pindaric ode in Dutch Renaissance literature, see R. Veenman, “‘De Thebaensche Swaen.’ De receptie van Pindarus in de Nederlanden”, in: *Voortgang. Jaarboek voor de Neerlandistiek XIII*, 1992, p. 65–90. For the Pindaric ode and the concept of poetic frenzy in Six’ poetry, see R. Spaans, ‘Diagnosing the poetic inspiration. Medical criticism of enthusiasm in the poetry of Jan Six van Chandelier (1620–1695)’, in: J. Grave, R. Honings and B. Noak (eds.), *Illness and literature in the Low Countries. From the Middle Ages until the 21th century*, Göttingen 2016, p. 81–96.

25 Compare the Roman historian Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus’ description of the face of the emperor Augustus in ‘The life of Augustus’, 79, in: C. Suetonius Tranquillus, *The lives of the twelve caesars*, transl. J.C. Rolfe, London 1913, p. 246. For the Roman imperial cult and its significance for the idea of divine kingship in the Renaissance, see S. Bertelli, *The king’s body. Sacred rituals of power in medieval and early modern Europe*, transl. R. Burr Litchfield, Pennsylvania 2001, p. 10–34.

26 The comments of the *Statenvertaling* (the Dutch Bible translation ordered by the government of the Dutch Republic) situates Ofir in the region of the Dutch colonies: ‘Men houdt dit voor een Eylant in Oost-Indien’, comment 48, by 1. Kings 10:28. For the *Statenvertaling*, see http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_sta001sta20_01/. But as apparent from my analysis of Six’ poems, it is not the indigenous knowledge of the exotics’ homeland, Six addresses, but the use in the Christian tradition. The same goes for myrrh and frankincense: Six associates them not with the culture of their area of origin – the Arabian Peninsula –, but to Catholic, counter-reformatory practice and the use in Antiquity.

What, then, is the significance of the poem? First, we may note how Six contrasts outer and inner worship, which reassures the reader that he, as a Protestant, can take part in a quasi-religious event in a Catholic country without infringing his own faith – a line of argument that his Calvinist pastors back at home hardly would have accepted! Further, there is a curious material aspect in the poem, since Six shows how impressed he is by the spectacle through offering his own luxury goods, incense and myrrh, to the queen. The exotic-spiritual vocabulary is not merely a reflection of the high status of Mariana, but is part of the creation of this identity. The political and religious power of the princes is thus legitimized through the spiritual exotics of Six' apothecary. He emerges as one of the wise men of the East contributing to a miracle – the apotheosis of a human being. The tone is, of course, ironical; it is natural to read the poem as a satire on the Royal Entry.

'Tempel, aan den kooningh van Spanje' (J246) follows the same structure – the poet includes himself among the characters of the poem: he takes the role of a poet-priest in a political-religious cult – this time in a temple devoted to king Philip IV.²⁷ The poem to the queen bride had the form of an *ekphrasis* – a vivid description of a scene or a work of art – it was in this case a depiction of the altar for the queen of Spain. The same goes, but to a greater extent, for Six' poem to the king; the poem is a description of a temple made for the king. But it is a fictional temple: Six sees his poem as a contrast to the ephemeral ornaments of the spectacle, as the triumphal arches raised for the Joyous Entry, and also as contrast to the imperial cult of ancient Rome – which all are forgotten today. He will therefore 'een tempel van onsterflike gedichten, / Ter eer van Spanjes Vreegod stichten' (vss. 65–66).

But nonetheless, Six incorporates elements from both the Joyous Entry, and especially the Roman cult in the text: the Spanish monarch rides as a 'gelauwerierde Augustus' (v. 37), into Madrid, Six writes. Here again, Six takes part of a ritual of worship: he steps forward as a cantor of the chorus of singing muses ('Kastals [Kastalias] Sanggodinnen', v. 119), and a chorus of Spanish virgins and young men. In this capacity, Six addresses Apollo, the god of poetry, and asks him to give them their 'jaarliks lied' (v. 120) on the royal wedding. The similarities between this poem and the Augustan ode of Horace, the *carmen saeculare* (the centenary song), is conspicuous. For his glorification of the Roman Pantheon, the Roman emperor awarded Horace the honorary title of *Poeta laureatus*. Six implies that he will receive the same title from the Spanish Augustus, Philip IV.²⁸

The problem of approaching a royal person is thus the theme of this poem, too. This is articulated already at the beginning at the poem (vss. 1–6):

²⁷ For the significance of imperial cult of ancient Rome for the early modern Royal Entry in the Netherlands, see Snoep, *Praal en propaganda* (n. 21), p. 8–9; see also S. Melissen, 'De heedendaagse Goude-eeuw', in: *Spektator* 11 (1981–1982), p. 30–60.

²⁸ In fact, the rhetorical term eulogy, the Greek *encomium*, was originally a choral song in honour of a hero or conqueror. This was the feature, for example, of the odes of Pindar. Apparent from the choral structure of Six' 'Spanish hymns', Six seems to be conscious of the etymology of the word.

Och! dat die swaare straf, van 't al te trotse Babel,
 Myn tongh nu snoert, als met een kaabel,
 En dat myn sanghgodin haar toegeneege luiten,
 Geensins op eedel Spaansch kan uiten.
 Nochtans, o Klio, doe myn geest ten Heemel vaaren,
 Op luide Neederduitsche snaaren.

Even though he feels as if his mouth is strapped with rope, due to the fall of the Tower of Babel, he will try to write a poem in a 'noble Spanish manner', as he calls it. The reference to the 'overly proud Babel' not only indicates a disappointment over a lack of knowledge of Spanish and the need of using his mother tongue, it also refers to a Babylonian hubris, signaling that his pagan temple to the Spanish king and queen forms a violence to such Christian values as modesty and sincerity.

How does he then attain the capability that makes a poetic flight possible, so that Clio, the muse of history, can make his 'spirit fly to the moon', as we read in the citation? Six continues (vss. 59–60): '[Ik] Wil eene kleine straal van varsche sucht doen blinken, / Die my d'olyfboom gaf te drinken.' Oil from an olive tree will provide him with a divine inspiration and bring him into the state of *furor poeticus*, the poetic frenzy. Six probably refers to the ornaments of the spectacle: on the route, the royal wedding couple passed an artificial Parnassus, which was decorated with statues of the nine muses, Pegasus and nine Spanish poets, placed beneath an artificial olive tree. Six tells then, that his temple will contain 'een altaar van olistammen / Na's Kooninghs vreedzaam hart gehouwen' (vss. 89–90). Both the olive tree and the description of the Spanish king as Monarch of Peace point to the Peace of Münster, which took place the year before the royal wedding, and which made it possible for Six to travel to Spain as a merchant, as Six emphasizes in his poem (vss. 57–58).

Besides the olive tree as an iconographic symbol, Six addresses the materiality of the olive oil: Six says he will drink directly from the peace symbol to get into a poetic rapture! This sounds strange to us today, but the cultural history of oil reveals that the liquid we now regard only as everyday cooking oil had a broader and more elevated application in earlier times. When mixed with exotic fragrances, olive oil was, and still is, an important ingredient in the holy ointments and incense. In the book of Exodus, God dictates the high priest Aaron to incorporate among other things 'olye van olijf-boomen' in incense made for divine worship. It was also widely utilized in early modern medicine.²⁹

In 'Blyde inkomste te Madrid' Six spoke of gold, myrrh and incense – and here he also speaks of oil – also an article that belonged to the pharmaceutical commodities of the early modern *drogist-koopman*. Six introduces this product as both a means of poetic inspiration and a divine gift to the king. Six stages himself as a poet-priest who, by means of sacramental oil and incense, turns a civic festivity into an ecclesiastical

²⁹ *Statenvertaling*, Exodus 30:24. See also R. Dodonaeus, *Cruydt-boeck*, Antwerpen 1644, p. 1287–1289; and the English translation of P. Pomet, *Histoire générale des drogues* (1694): *A Compleat History of Druggs*, London 1737, p. 156–157.

ceremony, thereby bestowing the new political leadership of Spain with a theological foundation.

Compared to the poem to the Austrian bride, the ironic tone is more perceptible this time; Six associates the turgid pretensions of the wedding celebration with the ‘overly proud Babel’. In ‘Tempel’, more than in ‘Blyde inkomste te Madrid’, Six describes the wedding as a pagan ritual. We could simply read the poems as satires written by a Calvinist on the pathos of Catholic Spain, but as the matter is more complex than that. As we have seen, Six emerges not only a satirist, but even as the supplier of the materials for the pagan ceremony, and is even tempted to consume some of the luxury himself. An interesting question is whether Six, as a merchant in fragrance and oils himself, was involved in the city celebrations which he describes in his poems.³⁰ Incense was a commodity that Dutch merchants bought in the Arabian Peninsula, brought to Europe and sold to, among others, the Roman Catholic Church. Six tells us in ‘Tempel, aan den kooningh van Spanje’, he was even among the first Dutch merchants to take advantage of the peace treaty between the Republic and Spain and to seek out the Spanish trade market (vss. 57–58). As *drogist-koopman*, as importer of tempting exotics goods, these poems surely must have been relevant to his self-image. I will shortly come back to this.

Reactions in the Dutch Republic

Six received critical comments on his ‘Spanish eulogies’ from contemporary Dutch readers – none of them are known to us today, but from Six’s ‘Verklaaringe teegen arghwaan, oover myn dicht ter eere van den kooningh van Spanje’ (J75), it appears that his poems aroused suspicion in Holland. The critic, or critics, blamed him for making a bow to the Spanish monarchy. Six responds in ‘Verklaaringe teegen arghwaan’ with a rhetorical question – why should his poetic quill not become ‘geMadrilleest’ (v. 7), ‘Hispanicized’ thus, when Caspar Barlaeus emerges as ‘Frans gezint’ (v. 8) in a series of panegyrics which he wrote to the French queen Maria de’ Medici?

Six here refers to Caspar Barlaeus’ *Medicea Hoespes*, which celebrated the royal entry of the French queen Maria de Medici in Amsterdam in 1638. It appeared in book form in the following year, 1639 – thus almost ten years before Six wrote his poems.³¹ His mention of Barlaeus’ ‘French’ poem is no coincidence. In the literary criticism *Medicea*

30 Tamar Cholcman writes that Spanish and Portuguese kings bought materials for their entrance ceremonies and celebrations from Dutch merchants travelling in the Iberian Peninsula; see T. Cholcman, ‘The merchant voice. International interests and strategies in local Joyeuses entrées. The case of Portuguese, English, and Flemish merchants in Antwerp (1599) and Lisbon (1619)’, in: *Dutch Crossing* 35 (2011), p. 39–62.

31 Caspar Barlaeus’ *Medicea Hoespes* appeared in an exclusive, richly illustrated folio edition, where his New Latin original was printed along with French and Dutch translations (the latter was written by Vondel, *Blyde inkomst der alledoorluchtigste koninginne, Maria de Medicis, t’ Amsterdam*). Barlaeus received 1000 guilders from the city authorities for his panegyric, see Snoep, *Praal en propaganda*, p. 39–76.

Hospes is described as introducing a new artistic phenomenon into the Republic. This is D. P. Snoep's characteristic of the work:

Het boek geldt als het eerste officiële relaas van een hier te lande gehouden intocht. In dit opzicht nam de stad een traditie over uit het zuiden [the Spanish Netherlands], waar stadsbesturen halverwege de 16de eeuw opdrachten voor dergelijke pracht-uitgaven verstrekten.³²

We are thus talking about a relatively new 'hype' in the literature of the Dutch Republic: Royal Entries and literary eulogies accompanying them – a phenomenon which had its origin in countries to the south of the Republic. Six calls Barlaeus' work Francophile. But we should not separate this 'hype' from the 'hype' of exotics. The fundament for the Royal Entry in Amsterdam is the same as for the one in Madrid. The link between political power, divinity and exotic materials is in fact also conspicuous in Barlaeus' text: during her visit to Amsterdam the queen had been honoured as Cybele, the mother of the gods, and invited to the East India House for a banquet consisting of all kinds of exotic dishes, that Barlaeus, in Vondel's translation, esteemed 'niet [alleen] tot leckerny voor de tong, maer oock welriekende, en aengenaem in 't oog.' A number of exotics are listed, 'muskeliaet, styrax, sandelhout, indogo', etc. The text continues: 'Het wierooock, en de Myrrhe van Saba, eertijds van de Heidenen den Goden geoffert, dienden hier voor reuckoffer aen de Godin van Vranckrijck.'³³ Obviously, Barlaeus recognized the moral problem of deification of a mortal person, because in the introduction of *Medicea Hospes*, Barlaeus argues for the use of the conception of a royal cult by pointing to the long traditions of divine kingship in European and foreign cultures: 'De kennis van deze dingen zit diep in der menschen gemoeden.'³⁴

That this 'hype' spread within the literature of the Republic is clear when we study other Dutch praise poems addressed to royal persons. There are striking similarities between Six' 'poetic temple' and 'Zegetempel voor zyn Hoogheid Fredrik Henrik, prince van Oranje. Toegewijdt den Heere P.C. Hooff' (1645) by the literary disciple of Vondel, Reyer Anslø.³⁵ First of all, Anslø composes his poem as a literary temple. Anslø writes that this temple should be erected next to Muiderslot, the castle of P.C. Hooff, to whom the poem is dedicated; here the Dutch people may – as Anslø himself does in his poem – worship the Prince of Orange as peace deity and celebrate his heroic deeds. This temple was, of course, never built; it is a fictional sanctuary. Secondly, concepts as 'gewijde altaren', 'wierookreuk' and 'offervier' occupy a central place in the text. They

³² Snoep, *Praal en propaganda*, p. 41–42.

³³ L. Simons et al. (eds.), *De werken van Vondel*, vol. 3, Amsterdam 1929, p. 629. For the link between political power and exotics, see I. Baghdiantz McCabe, *Orientalism in early modern France. Eurasian trade, exoticism, and the Ancien Régime*, Oxford, New York 2008. French royals – especially Louis XIV – utilized imitations of Oriental splendour to project an image of power.

³⁴ C. Barlaeus, *Blyde inkomst der alderdoorluchtigste koninginne, Maria de Medicis, t' Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 1639, 'Toe-eigeninge', un-paged.

³⁵ Schenkeveld-van der Dussen and de Vries, *Zelfbeeld in gedichten* (n. 5), p. 59–60, have pointed out parallels between the poems, but without probing deeper into the similarities.

furnish the poem with the necessary air of solemnity. The following lines, addressed to the god Mars, demonstrate the tone of the poem:

Ey gun, dat wy, eer Fredrik by den Goôn
Is in't gesternte onsterflijk opgevaren,
Oprechten, tot zijn eer, een Zegekerk;
En Koren van triumph, en dankaltaren,
En wierookreuk, en heilig offerwerk.³⁶

The conclusion is clear; both these texts manifest prominent characteristics of the 'Parnassus language', the quasi-religious literary style which became popular in the middle of the seventeenth century. In 'Verklaaringe teegen arghwaan', Six, picking up the thread after Coornhert, thus expands the satirical function of his Spanish satires. We should not just read the poem sequence as a satire on the spectacles in Madrid, it also functions as a critical comment on the exotic-ornamental language of poets as Barleaus, Vondel and Anslo. In Six' view, their poems represent a 'pronckelyc' style incompatible with Dutch and Christian values, to use the words of Coornhert.³⁷

But my comparison also notices differences that bring us still further in the analysis of the texts. Firstly, while Barleaus and Anslo do not thematise their personae in their texts, Six gives prominent position to himself. Not only does he explicitly profile himself as a divinely inspired poet in the texts, but he also highlights his role as druggist, supplying the necessary materials of apotheosis. Secondly, he dramatizes the impact of the literary cosmetics on his body. As we saw, his drinking of olive oil, the peace symbol of the Spanish king, brought Six into a state of frenzy. The alteration that he experiences, however, is presented as a bodily disturbance: his mouth became strapped as with a rope. Six further describes the experience as psychological delusion, as paranoia and megalomania. He is, in one way, diagnosing the Parnassian language.

According to the concept of geohumoralism, emotions were not just considered to be psychological quantities, but also physical parts of the body, and emotional differences could thus be associated with different ethnic identities. It is therefore plausible to consider the new 'hypes' in the Republic as a both a social and bodily threat to the national identity of Six van Chandelier. Barleaus became 'French' by writing his eulogies to Maria de' Medici; Six demonstrates that he would become 'Spanish' if his eulogies were meant seriously. This emphasis on an emotional-bodily base of ethnic identities is confirmed if we look at other poems by Six. In the aforementioned 'Vraage, van een spanjaard, aan den turkschen ambassadeur, en syne antwoorde' (J245), Six points at 'Dat eigen kittlende gemoed / Gebooren, in Kastiljes bloed' (vss. 1-2). And there is actually one more poem in *Poëzy* which refers to reactions from Dutch readers on Six' 'Spanish hymns': 'Aan Pieter Klaaver' (J74). Six deals here with a very different, but equally misguided response to his ironic praise of Philip IV. Here, Six rebukes a certain Pieter Klaaver not only for missing the poem's irony, but also for actually praising

³⁶ R. Ansloo, *Poëzy*, Rotterdam 1713, p. 175-181, quotation p. 176.

³⁷ Coornhert, *Het roerspel en de comedies van Coornhert* (n. 14), p. 156.

the lofty tone. Here too, the exotic ornaments of Six' Spanish poems are described as a negative bodily experience: Six insists that his own eulogies hurt his own 'needrige ooren' (v. 11). 'Men kitt'le kitt'ligen, men pluimstryk Spaansche Gooden' (v. 12): other poets may flatter the ones who like to be flattered – Six writes about others; but he guarantees that his humble, Dutch ears make him immune to Spanish flattery. The identification of exaggeration and paranoia with the Spanish was not an invention of Six, but was a common place in Protestant, Western European culture. According to early modern physiological theories, paranoia and megalomania were widespread among Spaniards.³⁸

The idea of lyric ornaments as contaminating cosmetics brings us back to my question at the beginning of this article: Six' treatment of the materially and literary use of exotics contains an element of internal conflict. We get the same impression if we study the glorifying eulogies that Six wrote to Fredrik Hendrik, on the occasion of the Peace of Münster, and published in his pamphlet *Vreughde-Zangen Over den eeuwigen Vreede, Tusschen Spangien En de Vereenighde Nederlanden* (1648).³⁹ In these poems, the concept of imperial cult is also linked to the use of exotic drugs and is treated with great ambivalence. The baroque language in a poem as 'Hooghloffelijke gedachtenisse, van Freedrik Henrik, Prince van Oranje' (J215) is unmistakable: Six adopts the concept from the Roman imperial cult and celebrates the Dutch prince as a 'sun' and 'god'; but in the opening text of the series, 'Toewydinge aan de Vreegodinne' (J218), where Six addresses exotics as means for apotheosis and inspiration, the tone is quite ironical: Six profiles himself as a rhymester intoxicated on theriac – the famous miracle cure with opium as one of its main ingredients. Six thus refers to one of his exotic

38 For Dutch perceptions of Spaniards, see M. Meijer Drees, *Andere landen, andere mensen. De beeldvorming van Holland versus Spanje en Engeland omstreeks 1650*, The Hague 1997, p. 79–99 and 106–114; W. Frijhoff and M. Spies, *1650. Bevochten eendracht*, The Hague 2000, p. 37–39. For an example, see the anonymous work: *Wegh-wyser, ofte reysbeschryving [...] door de Konincrijcken van Spanjen en Portugael [...]*, 1659: 'Van haer [the Spaniards] zijn de groote eer-namen, de manieren van pluymstrijcken, hoogh-dravende Ceremonien, en dierghelijcke rancken meer voortghekomen. Al hun doen is maer op een uytterlijcke schijn en pracht ghestelt: hooren haer selfs gaerne prysen, en beelden sich ick weet niet wat voor grote dinghen, waer door sy in overmoedt Rodomantadas en opsynery vervallen.' 'Rodomantadas' refers to Rodomonte, the arrogant and boastful king of the Saracens in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*. Citation in Meijer Drees, *Andere landen, andere mensen*, p. 108. However, in this context, it is important to underline that 'Spanish' also awoke positive connotations in the Dutch Republic, as the popularity of Lope de Vega's plays at the Amsterdam City Theatre has proven, see L. Álvarez Francés, 'Fascination for the «Madritsche Apoll». Lope de Vega in Golden Age Amsterdam', in: *Arte Nuevo. Revista de estudios áureos* 1 (2014), p. 1–15. And Six wrote amiable, contemplative poems about the Spanish countryside during his travels through the country; see for example 'Op de ongelykmaatheit der bruggen oover de rivieren van Sivilie en Madril' (J51), a poem that was probably inspired by the poetry of Luis de Góngora; see Jacobs, *Joannes Six van Chandelier* (n. 3), vol. 2, p. 45–47. However, the connotations associated with 'Spanish' in the poems discussed in this article, demonstrate that it still was an ambiguous term at the time of the peace treaty.

39 The poems were published in the following year in the anthology *Olyf-Krans Der Vreede, Door de Doorluchtigste Geesten, en Geleerdste Mannen, dezzes tijds, Gevlochten* – before they were incorporated in Six' *Poësy*.

commodities – and writes further that this text sequence is a poetic offer to the Peace Goddess; when his fragrant poems are sacrificed on her altar, their odour will begot the heavenly throne of the Goddess and fill her nostrils with vapour!⁴⁰

Obviously these texts are written with a tinge of self-criticism. As an importer of exotica himself, Six could be seen as a representative of dangerous appetites and passions. Six' writing strategies are, as we have seen, ambivalent. He emerges just as much a sinner as he does a satirist in his criticism on luxury and ostentation. It is therefore reasonable to read these poems in the light of Six' process of moral self-presentation. At the end, we will have to look at the poems Six dedicated to his Calvinist pastors to come to a deeper understanding of the representation of exotics in Six' poetry.

Six' poems to Calvinist pastors

A number of texts published in *Poësy* are addressed to Calvinist pastors affiliated with the 'Nadere Reformatie'. Important names in this respect are Petrus Wittewrongel and especially Johannes Hoornbeek. Considering the number of texts addressed to Hoornbeek in *Poësy*, the theologian seems to have had the role of spiritual leader to the merchant poet.⁴¹ Hoornbeek spent four years at the beginning of his career as a pastor of the Reformed Church in Cologne. Since the Reformed service was not allowed in the city, he focused mainly on travelling Protestant merchants. Hoornbeek thus had good qualifications to assist a Protestant in Roman Catholic countries. But Hoornbeek was most famous as a learned theologian. He wrote a number of theological works in Latin and is known for his orthodox Protestant stance against a variety of heretical views. As revisionist research has recently underlined, the quality of global curiosity was not only limited to radical thinkers in early modern Holland such as Spinoza, but was also present in apparently conservative Calvinists as Hoornbeek. His *De conversione Indorum et gentilium* (1669), which was published posthumously and discusses the conversion of the 'heathens' to Christianity, is characterized by a surprising openness towards and curiosity for ethnographical information. It is thus likely that he shared Six' interest in new, exotic products brought to Dutch harbours by East Indiamen, but that he also called for caution in dealing with commodities from pagan countries, warning of the temptations they

⁴⁰ '[...] zal beneevelen uwen Heemelschen thron, om als wierook uwe neusgaaten lieffelyk te bewaasemen'. See Spaans, 'Diagnosing the poetic inspiration' (n. 24).

⁴¹ See for example 'Verrukkinge der sinnen, aan Joannes Hoorenbeek, dr., prof., en predikant t'Utrecht: en Simon Dilman geneesheer' (J177), 'Op het boek, examen bullae papalis, quâ Innocentius abrogare nititur pacem germaniae, Van Joannes Hoorenbeek' (J234), 'Brief, aan Joannes Hoornbeek, te Utrecht' (J236), 'Begroetenisse oover de eerstgeboorte van Joannes Hoorenbeek, doctr, professor, en predikant te Utrecht' (J284). See also the poems Six wrote about Wittewrongel: 'Troost aan Sirikzee, oover 't verlies van Pieter Wittewrongel, Kerkenleeraar, hier beroepen' (J123) and 'Op blaamrym' (J391).

might carry and which might take one away from God.⁴² Hoornbeeck would have shared the ambivalent view of spice merchants and druggists expressed in the comments to the *Statenvertaling*: the prophecy of Ezekiel describes how the Jews will be abducted and taken to Babel (Babylon), ‘een stadt van kooplieden’ (Ezekiel 17: 4). According to the comments to the passage, ‘kooplieden’ refers to ‘kruydeniers, ofte, droogisten’, and Babylon was a famous commercial city: ‘om datse vol was van allerley specerijen, drogen, ende kostelicke waren, dienende niet alleen tot nootdurft, ofte vermaeck, maer oock tot leckernije, ende overdadicheyt.’⁴³ Exotic drugs were thus associated with pageantry, idolatry and foreignness.

In this context, I will discuss two central works in *Poësy*, the poem sequences ‘Op het blanketten van ’t vrouwvolk in Spanje’ (J41–50) and ‘Afbeeldinge en wydinge van Roselle, en haare bestraffinge’ (J59–64). Although none of these texts are directly addressed to a preacher, the theologian’s argumentation of the poems makes it likely that persons as Wittewrongel or Hoornbeeck were intended readers. The text sequences have relevance for Six’s eulogies to the Spanish king and queen, because they both thematize an anxiety surrounding cosmetics as instruments of bodily infiltration, and in addition, the scene of both text groups is situated in Spain. The first sequence directs, as is evident from the title, criticism on the use of makeup by Spanish women. In the text group Six expresses his warning towards the transformative power of makeup; it can manipulate the human nature – in this case, erase old age from women’s bodies. Six condemns the use of the power of ‘blanketsel’ as idolatry (‘poppery’) and as a form of hubris similar to the actions of the arrogant Prometheus (I (J41), vss. 11–14). The result of the physical transformation is the growth of dangerous passions: jealousy and *crime passionnel*. According to Six, makeup has made the Spanish revengeful: ‘Leon, o Leeuw, Kastilie o Kasteel, / Wat kryt al bloeds, om wraak, naa’s Heemels daaken’ (vii (J47), vss. 9–10).

The other poem group is more personal. This group tells a narrative of how Six, travelling as merchant in Grenada, is tempted to make a religious statue in honour of his girlfriend Roselle who waits for him at home in Amsterdam: the poems are formed as an instruction to a Spanish sculptor of statues of Mary on how to carve an icon of Roselle. The druggist tells thereafter how he himself paints the statue and consecrates the work of art with incense: he uses ‘een quartjen vyf of ses / Aan Wierook, om heur neusgat soet te warmen’ ((J61), vss. 13–14); by means of a cosmetic drug, he supplies the statue with vividness. At the end, the Calvinist demonstrates how he realises his sin and begs Roselle for forgiveness. The beauty of Roselle is not expressed through outward splendour, but it is located in the heart of the poet, is his message.

The anti-cosmetic argument central in the study of Farah Karim-Cooper, forms a fundament in the both text groups. Six argues that cosmetics equals blasphemy: Adam, the first man was created in God’s image; the ‘fraai panneel’ (‘Afbeeldinge en wydinge

42 J. Gommans and I. Loots, ‘Arguing with the heathens. The Further Reformation and the ethnohistory of Johannes Hoornbeeck (1617–1666)’, in: *Itinerario* 39 (2015), p. 45–68.

43 See annotation 13 to Ezekiel 17: 4: see http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_staoo1stato2_01/.

van Roselle', (viii (J48), v. 14) of the great Artist is sacred and inviolable. What becomes interesting, in our context, is the identification of the human body with a work of art. This argument is reflected in a well-known Bible passage – I here quote Wittewrongel's explanation of this passage: 'Onse Lichamen, de welcke Tempelen des Heyligen Geestes zijn (1. Cor: 6 vers 19) en mogen daer mede niet verontreynight worden. Wy sien insonderheyt / op die verfoeyelicke vercieringen, want door de menschen / selfs het werck hares Godts, soecken te verbeteren.'⁴⁴ Even a painter would not let another person correct the faults in his paintings, because he values genuineness and authenticity above perfection, Six argues in 'Op het blanketten', (ix (J49), vss. 5-8). Six thereby gives a nuanced picture of the concept of the human being as God's 'fraai panneel': for a Christian, the acceptance of one's body as sacred and inviolable is also an acceptance of one's status as a fallible human being. In other words, an acceptance of one's humanness versus pretensions to divinity.

There are many similarities between these texts and Six's eulogies to the Spanish queen and king. The 'Spanish hymns' are in the same way based on a scepticism towards cosmetics as transformative instruments, and the idea of the poet-druggist as a creator of a perfect and divine world – a world that represents an offence to God's image. The choice between an outward versus an inward sacrifice in 'Afbeeldinge en wydinge van Roselle' – luxury ornaments versus the heart of the poet – is analogous to Six's choice between Arabic incense and the 'gum resin' of Six's soul in 'Blyde inkomste te Madrid, van Maria Anna van Oostenryk'. In both texts Six chooses wrongly. And, furthermore, it is possible that the temple of Philip IV, filled with pagan incense, plays a contrasting role to the concept of the human body as God's temple, filled with the Holy Spirit.

The last similarity with Six's poems to the Spanish king and queen also concerns his writing strategy. Rather than merely summarizing Calvinist dogma about sacraments and image worship, he embeds his own authorial persona into a theatrical and fanciful story, with a central place for himself as a vulnerable man.⁴⁵ This structure forms the basis of Six's ironic hymns to the king and queen of Spain, which I have previously discussed in this article. Six outlines how he is carried away by the splendour of the Royal Entry. As a *drogist-dichter*, he feels that he is chosen to bless the Spanish royal couple with both glorifying hymns and sanctifying perfumes, but through hyperbole and irony, Six demonstrates that he is aware of the dangerous social and political potentials of his commodities. Irony, a popular figure in Six's poetry, is of importance in this context. *Ironia* means, according to the Dutch humanist Gerardus Vossius, a device by which through what is said the opposite is understood; Vossius states that when we want it to bite as sharply as possible, its use is highest.⁴⁶ This explains the use of irony

⁴⁴ Wittewrongel, *Oeconomia christiana. Christelike huys-houdinge* (n. 13), vol. II, p. 1151.

⁴⁵ Compare also 'Brief, aan Joannes Hoornbeek, te Utrecht' (J236).

⁴⁶ For Vossius' definitions of irony, see D. Knox, *Ironia. Medieval and Renaissance ideas on irony*, Leiden 1989.

in 'Verklaaringe teegen arghwaan'. Through irony and exaggeration, Six ridicules their prejudices against his role as travelling merchant dealing with foreign goods.

According to Renaissance ideas of *ironia*, the rhetorical device is further a means of wit and of self-depreciation. This would have appealed to Hoornbeeck and Wittewrongel. They were both humanistically-learned theologians, well-read on ancient as well as on present-day 'heathens', and would have no difficulties in comprehending Six' witty and subtle way of writing, such as the medical and theological discussions of spiritual materials. They would also have understood the gravity of Six' self-examination. It is of course difficult to decide whether Hoornbeeck or Wittewrongel were the intended receivers of Six' 'Spanish hymns', but it is likely that Six wrote the poems to people with the same frame of reference: people who were worried about the dangerous influence of drugs on both their own body and that of their countrymen back in the Republic.

Conclusion

This brief study on exotic materials in the poetry of Jan Six van Chandelier gives a clear answer to the question I asked in the beginning of this article: there were also narratives about exotica as sources of moral unease in early modern Dutch culture, beside the narratives of exotic materials as basis for economic prosperity and scientific curiosity. An investigation of exotics in the texts of Dutch poets and writers, as we have seen, has much to offer the scholarship on material culture in the Dutch Republic.

As I have argued in this article, Six' ironical eulogies to the newlywed king and queen of Spain have several layers of meaning. At one level, the text group emerges as satires on the pomp and splendour of the Royal Entry in Madrid. The same goes for Six' reactions on the critical comments he received from countrymen for writing his series of eulogies. What first comes to our notice is their satirical function: according to Six the splendour of the Spanish court is no longer a Spanish phenomenon, but is spread to his own home country. He points to new trends in the literature of fellow writers, especially the 'Parnassus language', where the 'hype' for exotics appears as an essential ingredient.

Nevertheless, to fully understand the texts, we have to include the historical social and religious background of the poet, and read the poems as self-representation, with self-scrutiny as a literary strategy. The Spanish hymns are written by a merchant poet who was himself dealing in exotic materials. Several texts in Six' poetry collection are addressed to Calvinist pastors. The first thing that strikes us in this context, are the intellectual discussions that accompany Six' treatment of exotic goods. Six draws his arguments from both literary, medical and theological sources, and he associates the consumption of exotics goods with concepts of moral, medical and social danger. Secondly, the Northern European, Protestant identity of Six is important for understanding the writing strategies of Six: exotics are linked to different desires, such as pride and hubris – vices that Protestants associated with a South-European, Catholic

temperament. Exchange of morally reprehensible goods means exchange of morally reprehensible sentiments. I have shown what this implies for his identity as a travelling *drogist-koopman*: Six recognizes the crucial role he plays when it comes to transnational exchange of goods and ideas. In this respect, Six' quest for self-knowledge has a psychosomatic factor: the importer of drugs represents a carrier of dangerous bodily desires. For that reason, Six has become a target for suspicion and detraction among readers back in the Dutch Republic, as apparent from poems such as 'Verklaaringe tegen arghwaan'. In the poems I have analysed in this article, Six addresses this suspicion. Through the use of irony, humour and exaggeration, Six demonstrates an awareness of the dangers of his profession, and he proves at the same time that he possesses virtues that were regarded as a hallmark of the Dutch people, including moderation and humbleness.